

JOURNAL OF BUSINESS LOGISTICS

Call for Proposals: Special Topic Forum

Agile, Adaptive, and Aligned (AAA) Supply Chains for Enhanced Responsiveness: Implications for Theory and Practice

A decades-long focus on logistics and supply chain (LSCM) optimization with goals of minimizing costs, reducing inventories, and driving up asset utilization has diminished the ability of some supply chains (SC) to respond to dynamic market changes. The impact of recent global disturbances even triggered the collapse of some SCs. This underscores that many companies do not have a SC strategy that supports a rapidly changing global environment, and this can leave them unprepared to respond to disruptions from global emergencies (Kovács & Tatham 2009).

Is it possible that the long-lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are forcing more companies to develop strategies for a globally responsive SC? Even more broadly, are companies beginning to understand the significance of the “AAA” (i.e., agile, aligned, and adaptable) SC? (Cohen & Kouvelis 2021; Lee 2021). Are management teams willing to pivot their thinking from short-term cost minimization to a longer-term emphasis on building SC capabilities that can rapidly respond to market dynamism?

As an emerging research domain, AAA capabilities represent an interesting lens to investigate how LSCM strategies are evolving in the face of current global realities (Patrucco and Kähkönen 2021). Concurrent work on the responsiveness view of LSCM also offers a similar conceptual foundation to study this shift, as it provides a theoretical basis to examine several dimensions of responsiveness: agility, flexibility, adaptability, improvisation, and resilience (Richey et al. 2022).

This STF calls for research that will document when, why, and how companies shift their SCs to become more responsive through a reconceptualization AAA capabilities: agility (Gligor and Holcomb 2013), adaptability (Wieland and Durach, 2021), and alignment (Novak et al., 2021). Other responsiveness dimensions such as flexibility, improvisation, and resilience (Iyengar et al. 2021; Pettit et al. 2019; Richey et al. 2022) could also be examined. These capabilities – taken together or deployed in isolation – can enhance LSCM responsiveness. The guest editors seek theoretical and empirical contributions that provide innovative frameworks, conceptualizations, and practical solutions addressing a variety of important issues at the managerial, organizational, community, societal and/or planetary levels. Research papers should seek answers to real-world problems across a variety of topics including, but not be limited to:

- Conceptualization and theoretical development of responsiveness in the context of AAA capabilities.
- Logistics coordination, integration, and/or tradeoffs required for AAA capabilities and/or responsiveness.
- Strategies that incorporate AAA capabilities to mitigate disruptions.
- The impact AAA capabilities on LSCM's interrelationship with environmental or social responsibility.
- Digital technologies (e.g., big data, artificial intelligence, IOT, Blockchain) that enhance AAA capabilities and/or responsiveness.
- Relative importance of agility, adaptability, alignment, flexibility and/or improvisation in achieving resilience.
- Impact of new AAA capabilities on collaboration with and/or governance of SC partners.
- The role of 3PLs and/or facilitators in developing AAA capabilities.
- Role of SC human resource capabilities in driving higher AAA capabilities.
- Role of localization versus globalization for the diffusion of AAA capabilities in SCs.

This STF seeks to publish research that is not only of interest to the academic readership, but also to LSCM professionals. Consequently, research questions should address real-world problems and phenomena within the scope of AAA integration in responsive SCs. As guest editors, we encourage the innovative use of all empirical approaches that yield new knowledge and frameworks for understanding the adjustments adopted. In line with JBL's mission statement the authors must clearly identify how their research extends or contributes to theory and practice. We seek contributions that help to provide insight into the development and contribution of AAA capabilities to the arguably, evolving nature of SCM. Survey analysis, case studies, empirical simulations, qualitative approaches, conceptual development, and experimental designs are all suitable methodologies to explore the phenomenon. JBL is open to all methods as long as the method is well-suited to answer the research question(s) at hand.

The guest editors will organize a research session at the 32nd POMS conference, and we encourage prospective authors to participate (details will be shared in the following months). We invite interested authors to send extended proposals no longer than 1,000 words (references excluded). The proposal should provide sufficient details on the research questions, methods,

data, (anticipated) findings and contribution to the special issue.

Please submit your proposal to apatrucc@fiu.edu and asr0042@auburn.edu no later than **June 1st, 2022**. The submission window for invited papers is between **December 6th, 2022** and **February 1st, 2023**, but early submissions are welcome. Papers can be submitted via Manuscript Central (<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jbl>). Please indicate in your cover letter that your paper is being submitted to this STF. Papers submitted must follow the *Journal of Business Logistics* guidelines and will undergo the standard double-blind review process. Should you have questions about the STF, please feel free to contact the guest editors using the contact provided below.

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