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# **SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT – PATHWAYS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE**

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Edited by **Dilek Önköl** and **Emel Aktas**

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## Preface

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Challenges faced by supply chains appear to be growing exponentially under the demands of increasingly complex business environments confronting the decision makers. The world we live in now operates under interconnected economies that put extra pressure on supply chains to fulfil ever-demanding customer preferences. Relative attractiveness of manufacturing as well as consumption locations changes very rapidly, which in consequence alters the economies of large scale production. Coupled with the recent economic swings, supply chains in every country are obliged to survive with substantially squeezed margins. Many supply chains do not have the necessary tools and flexibility to deal with such fast changing conjunctures at either the global or the local levels.

2010s are also witnessing further shortening of the product life cycles, forcing producers to continually work on expanding product categories. Moreover, raw material scarcity emerges as a gradually growing problem along with the increasing labour costs. In this book, we tried to compile a selection of papers focusing on a wide range of problems in the supply chain domain. Each chapter offers important insights into understanding these problems as well as approaches to attaining effective solutions.

The book starts with an investigation into *lean supply chain practices and performance* by Azman Daud and Suhaiza Zailani. *Service supply chain* concepts are explored in the 2nd chapter by Kavigha Mohan and Suhaiza Zailani. This is followed by a series of insightful chapters on the main theme of *quality management*, as examined by Lynn A. Fish in Chapter 3, Goknur Arzu Akyuz in Chapter 4, and Qin Su and Qiang Liu in Chapter 5. The next theme is *supply chain flexibility*, where managerial implications are discussed by Dilek Onkal and Emel Aktas in Chapter 6; while Javier Pereira Luciano Ahumada and Fernando Paredes discuss bullwhip effect and flexibility issues in Chapter 7. Manuel Diaz-Madronero and David Peidro present a fuzzy goal programming approach for *collaborative supply chains* in Chapter 8, followed by Mehdi Sajadifar, Rasoul Haji, Mostafa Hajiaghaei-Keshteli, and Amir Mahdi Hendi's focus on *information sharing* in Chapter 9. Improved supply chain performance and the associated *production and delivery policy* implications are investigated in Chapter 10 by Seung-Lae Kim and Khalid Habib Mokhashi. *Inter-organizational collaboration* issues are addressed by Adrian Tan and Hamid Noori in Chapter 11, while Chapter 12 presents

work on *advanced supply chain planning systems* by Luis Antonio de Santa-Eulalia, Sophie D'Amours, Jean-Marc Frayret and Claudio Cesar. A new *supply chain process management maturity model* is introduced by Oliviera Marcos in Chapter 13. Finally, the book concludes with a discussion of using *internet technologies for supply chain management* by Marincas Delia Adriana.

Supply Chain Management is an important and prolific domain that will continue to generate much research interest. We hope that the chapters collected in this book will serve as a guide to future work on the issues that will influence supply chain management practices, leading to efficient processes and effective decisions.

**Dilek Önkal and Emel Aktas**  
Business School, Brunel University,  
United Kingdom