

REFLECTING ON THE PAST 25 YEARS OF THE JOURNAL OF PURCHASING AND SUPPLY MANAGEMENT: THE EDITORS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Purchasing and supply management scholarship and practice has significantly evolved during the past 25 years. In parallel, the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management* has likewise emerged from its origins as the *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management* as an important source for publishing purchasing and supply management research. The purpose of this manuscript is to provide the journal's current and future readership a historical perspective of how the journal has evolved during the last quarter century from the viewpoints of its current and former editors, and where we believe the future of purchasing and supply management is going as an academic discipline.

Key Words: *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*; Purchasing and Supply Management; Historical Perspective; Editors' Reflections

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1. Introduction

The 25th Anniversary Issue of the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management* (JPSM) marks a special time in this journal's history and development. To help commemorate this event, we thought it would be an opportune time to reflect on the journal's history and possible directions of its further evolution. The purpose of this manuscript is to provide the journal's current and future readership a historical perspective of how the journal has evolved during the last quarter century from the experiences of its current and former editors, and where we believe the future of purchasing and supply management is going as an academic discipline.

To accomplish this purpose, all prior and current JPSM editors have provided their perspectives and views of their experiences with the journal and the field of purchasing and supply management. In the following sections, each of the editors has provided a chronology of their tenure as editor, the strategy they pursued in leading the journal, and their view of the future of the field.

2. Editor Perspectives

2.1. Richard Lamming, Editor (1994-2001)

Chronology and Strategy

During the 1980s, interest in formulating a new conceptual basis for understanding the economic activity in purchasing and supply management (PSM) was growing in Western business circles. This interest was born of twin stimuli: the need for improved, better informed, professional understanding and behaviour, and the limitations of traditional economic theories to explain or challenge relevant developments in practice. In North America, the National Association of Purchasing Managers (NAPM) had already developed an academic arm, characterized by

business-university links; research centres; dedicated professors; and an academic journal, *International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management*. NAPM's principal focus was on professional PSM training underpinned by applied research.

By the end of the decade, the professional organisations (institutes) with which those in PSM were affiliated in Europe had developed similar interests, especially in the Netherlands, where NEVI had sponsored academics, and in the UK, where the Institute of Purchasing and Supply (IPS) formed groups of business members keen to take the discussion to the next level – to “raise the level of debate.”

In the early 1990s, several IPS-sponsored PSM professors were installed in British universities, and a new association was formed with IPS guidance: the Purchasing and Supply Education and Research Group (PSERG). PSERG became the International Purchasing and Supply Education and Research Association (IPSERA) and quickly spread from its largely UK roots to a fully European and then a genuinely international network with formal membership and a constitution, an annual conference, and numerous research and teaching partnerships.

To complement this development, IPS negotiated with the large publisher Elsevier on the idea of a new academic journal, the *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management* (EJPSM), which would draw its input from the network of academics being developed with the help of professional organisations and IPSERA. From the beginning, IPSERA was explicitly a partnership between academics and professional practitioners in the PSM field; and the new journal was similarly styled. The intention was to provide rigorously developed “food for thought” for those

conducting PSM at strategic and operational levels and for those involved in creating and teaching new knowledge in the field. Two years later, the journal was announced at the 1994 IPSERA conference in Cardiff. The new journal's success was a result of much hard work by the two people who represented the IPS in matters to do with setting up the journal, Dennis Jones and Ilze Grickus; the publishing editors and the academic editorial team at Elsevier; and the invaluable advice and encouragement of Swansea's Professor David Farmer.

This initiative was not without difficulties. The need to maintain quality and to build to a level respected by academics familiar with other "learned journals" meant that the flow of successful articles was spasmodic. While the need to publish fully developed issues was essential, the editorial team was adamant that quality was paramount. As a result, a decision was made after one year to discontinue publishing until the feedstock of high quality articles was sufficient. Publication was resumed after a year's break.

The journal supported a range of research philosophies, methodologies, topics, and disciplinary origins. Case study papers were welcomed, and space was given to practitioner papers. There was no "party line" nor favoured research paradigm. Gradually, papers from EJPSM began to be cited, and the journal established a good reputation. The initial IPS (now the Chartered Institute for Purchasing and Supply, CIPS) support for academic research that had sprung from the debates in the 1980s gradually faded; but by then, IPSERA and the journal were able to account for themselves. After eight busy but immensely rewarding years, I was delighted that my colleague Christine Harland agreed to become editor and lead the journal through its next stage of development.

2.2. *Christine Harland, Editor (2001-2003)*

Chronology

Taking over editorship from Richard Lamming, I felt as though he'd passed me his precious baby to hold; my main concern was not to drop it. As well as Richard and I being good friends, our offices were next door to each other in the Centre for Research in Strategic Purchasing and Supply (CRiSPS) on the 9th floor of the School of Management at the University of Bath, UK. We both had balconies, and there was no way I wanted to be pushed off mine for being an incompetent editor. Aside from the apprehension, I wanted to help develop what Richard had started; consequently I set out a strategy and some targets to achieve within three years.

Strategy

First, we had to lose the "European" part of the journal title because we had an International Editorial Board and plenty of non-European authors submitting papers. In Volumes 7 and 8 of EJPSM, 25% of the articles published were by non-European authors. Negotiations with Elsevier enabled us to make this change at the end of 2002. In 2003, the journal was reborn as the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*. (Thus, *technically*, I was the first JPSM editor – only joking Richard).

The second target was to broaden our scope not only to publish research about purchasing within an organization and in supply relationships but also to encourage "supply management" to include research in supply chains and networks. Most research published in the field had been from private sector manufacturing. However, purchasing and supply management is just as relevant for public

as for private sector organizations and for services as well as manufacturing. Therefore a deliberate effort was made to encourage and support submissions with a broader scope to populate the public and service sectors' purchasing and supply management desert.

JPSM publications were often conducted using more qualitative, empirical research methodologies that some operations management journals did not favor. Nevertheless we intended to continue with the applied, empirical focus; we had a close alliance with the International Purchasing and Supply Education and Research Association (IPSERA), which had originated at the same time and involved the same international community of researchers and practitioners. Relevance was high on the agenda; with IPSERA we shared the aspiration for papers that had impact beyond academia. As a field, we were ahead of our time with this aspiration because higher education internationally had only recently begun recognizing and rewarding research that evidenced impact on business, economy or society.

At this time, different "tribes" existed within the purchasing and supply community; therefore we wished to host debates on different views to be a journal that openly encouraged different perspectives. The Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) Group was predominantly Nordic academics researching longer-term business-to-business relationships. When the 10th IPSERA conference was held in Jönköping, the Swedes had a special issue in Volume 8 of JPSM and featured papers reflecting this group's perspective. IMP's view that actors mainly cope in industrial networks contrasted with that of other "tribes," notably those researching "lean" and "supply networks" espousing more normative views of managing chains and networks. JPSM published research from all those perspectives.

The third target, to increase the number of issues annually, was explained in an editorial (Harland, 2002). Encouraging a broader scope and more international focus led to a greater volume of submissions; therefore, beginning in 2003 with Volume 9, we increased the number of issues from four to six annually. When developing a still new journal, encouraging willingness to engage with it often precedes developments later in the journal's life to improve quality through increasing the number of rejections. However, we were fortunate in engaging authors publishing on important emerging topics including supply risk, outsourcing, public procurement, supply management involvement in cost and management accounting, strategic supply management, and collaborative procurement. Academics who published articles in JPSM with these themes carved out long-term academic careers. The JPSM Hall of Fame from this period included publications by the following scholars: Bjorn Axelsson, Luitzen de Boer, Paul Cousins, Dirk Pieter van Donk, Lisa Ellram, Lars-Erik Gadde, Matthias Holweg, Louise Knight, Richard Lamming, Ronan McIvor, John Ramsay, Pietro Romano, Robert Spekman, Kari Tanskanen, Helen Walker, Arjan van Weele, Finn Wynstra, George Zsidisin, as well as the sadly missed Alan Harrison, Michael Quayle, and Denis Towill. JPSM would not be where it is today had it not been for the support of all these scholars willing to submit to a young, as then unranked, journal.

Despite the willingness of so many active and well-known academics to participate with us in this new and developing journal, a dominant trend at this time was universities' increased attention to journal rankings and journal impact factors when hiring and promoting faculty. While these statistics had been available since the mid-1970s, they only started to be used as proxies for journal quality around the time of this journal's inception. It is tough to encourage authors to submit to a

developing journal that is not ranked in certain lists or is ranked at a low level. Therefore we faced an uphill battle to legitimize the journal, a battle that my successor, Finn Wynstra, took on with great fortitude and that is still being fought today, in some countries more vehemently than others.

Future of the field

Today there is an active, academic debate about whether purchasing and supply management should develop its own theories and whether its propensity to borrow theories from other disciplines prevents it from becoming a discipline in its own right, as opposed to an applied research field. Many of the past and current editors of JPSM are involved in this ongoing debate. As views in this notes and debates article reveal, the jury is still out. Certainly, purchasing and supply management researchers are showing increasing willingness to use theory in their research and publications, making atheoretical submissions to journals less likely to be published in the future. Methodological and theoretical rigor should continue improving because younger faculty have received so much more education and training on such rigor in their doctoral studies than we did. However, throughout my academic career I have been influenced by those espousing ‘double hurdle’ research that must achieve academic, theoretical quality and rigour, but also relevance (Pettigrew 2001, Van de Ven and Johnson 2006). Doing and publishing research that impacts on business practice, economy and society surely should be the future path of Purchasing and Supply Management academics.

As for the future of the journal, I hope the contentious, maverick voices that openly argued in print (e.g. about purchasing’s strategic relevance or irrelevance and about the direction the field is going and should be going) will not be drowned out by the upcoming masses of homogenized, four-star-

focused researchers many universities are hot housing. We do not want our field and our journal to become dull, now do we? And for current and future JPSM editors, I hope you enjoy the experience as much as I did. Publishing has always been big business, and still is; Elsevier knew how to throw a good party. The expenses-paid journal editors' meeting in Lisbon was sublime. However most memorable was the luxury dinner cruise down the Thames in London. My late husband Alan was a professional singer and my plus one for the evening, but he ended up working by singing with the band on stage all night. Happy memories – thanks, Elsevier.

2.3. *Finn Wynstra, Editor (2003-2009)*

Chronology

In 2003, Christine Harland invited me to become the journal's next editor. This was an offer I could not refuse. Ten years earlier, in 1994, I had attended my first IPSERA conference as a fresh doctoral student in Cardiff. There, I had witnessed the journal's launch, which Donald Dobler—at the time, editor of the International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management (currently, the Journal of Supply Chain Management)—referred to as “A New Venture Aptly Timed” (Dobler, 1994). In the decade after its launch, the journal had quickly become a respected outlet in our field. Becoming editor not only represented a great opportunity to help steer and develop research but also provided many learning opportunities through exposure to a diverse range of research methods and topics.

In January 2004, with the publishing of Volume 10, I became the journal's first non-British editor, assisted by Louise Knight, who became Associate Editor. During the first year, much time was allocated for the journal's operations. First, there was no on-line submission process; everything

was submitted via email. To keep track of the growing stream of submissions, we built a proprietary on-line database, which greatly helped us as an editorial team – with limited secretarial support and located in different countries. Fortunately, the journal moved to Elsevier’s on-line editorial system EES in 2005. With this move, for instance, we could track the progress of reviews in real time.

One of the main goals that Louise Knight and I set was to submit the journal to Thomson Reuters (now Clarivate Analytics) and its Web of Science portal so that it would receive an official impact factor in the company’s Journal Citation Reports (JCR). Possessing an impact factor would not only help assess our citation impact but also attract submissions. At the time, especially in Europe, university research assessments were increasingly emphasizing the journal impact factor as a proxy for journal quality.

While the JCR admission criteria applied by Thomson Reuters (now Clarivate Analytics) were notoriously unclear, our publisher, Elsevier, emphasized to us the absolute importance of publishing issues on time; a challenging requirement at that time. In 2003, along with relabeling the journal from *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management* to *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, Elsevier expanded the number of issues per volume from four to six because of the increasing number of submissions and the fact that publishing more issues would enhance the journal’s exposure. However, the additional issues also meant that we should be publishing substantially more articles. In 2004 and 2005, however, the growth in submissions stabilized; and it seemed it would have been wiser to stay with publishing fewer issues. In 2007, after several discussions with Elsevier, we returned to publishing four issues a year. We did so

without significantly reducing the total number of articles per year, giving us a bit more flexibility (i.e., publishing 22 instead of 24 articles is less noticeable when spread over 4 rather than 6 issues in a given volume).

Once we returned to a stable publication schedule, we applied with Thomson Reuters in September 2008. JPSM was admitted to the JCR roster, and the journal received its first impact factor (1.06) in 2011. (There was a two-year delay since Thomson only starts registering citable articles after admitting a journal, so it collected 2009 and 2010 publications to publish a 2011 two-year impact factor.) JPSM's most recent (2017) impact factor stands at 3.67, ranking it in a respectable 38th position overall in the JCR management category, up 12 places compared to 2016.

Strategies and policies

Obviously, more factors than Thomson Reuters's journal impact factor are involved in attracting high quality submissions. Individual research institutes or national associations may also compile their own journal rankings and classifications, which can have a big impact on where authors submit their manuscripts. Thus, we also worked with our network of authors and reviewers to inform and influence, when possible, such ranking and classification processes. Another way to create more journal exposure was to increase our presence at various international conferences. For instance, during EurOMA and the Academy of Management conferences, we presented the journal for editorial panels and similar events.

Internally, we embarked on several initiatives designed to further enhance the quality of published articles. For instance, together with Elsevier, we started offering workshops for reviewers and

prospective authors. Also, we attracted new reviewers and started tracking more explicitly the quality and timeliness of their reviews. In addition, we established an editorial board consisting completely of research-active scholars and expanded board membership beyond Europe. We split the board into an editorial review board of a pool of trusted, regular reviewers and an editorial advisory board including former editors and scholars from related disciplines (Wynstra and Knight, 2004). Finally, and perhaps the most important change structurally, we implemented a tiered editorial structure by adding associate editors. While the editor decided on possible desk rejects, the associate editors selected reviewers and handled the reviews. Our ability to attract associate editors with different expertise areas (e.g., research methods) helped to provide well-informed editorial guidance to authors, in addition to the reviewer comments.

The contents of JPSM publications from 2005-2009 have been extensively reviewed elsewhere (Wynstra, 2010). Wynstra's review compared three periods of five journals' volumes, rather than the timeframe associated with a specific editor. The review's first main conclusion was that, as before 2004, most publications dealt with the following: supplier relations; purchasing organization; PSM and corporate strategy; and supply base management. The same stability was found in research strategies (with the majority involving a literature review, multiple case study, or survey). However, some changes were occurring in data collection methods (with historical archive retrieval increasingly popular) and in data analysis methods (with statistical data analysis, especially multiple regression, increasingly popular).

Regarding the type of publications, we introduced two innovations. We started publishing topical special issues, in addition to the annual special issues related to the IPSERA conferences (and,

during a certain period, the EurOMA conferences). In 2006, we published a special issue on global sourcing (Issue 12-4) and in 2007 on research methods (Issue 13-3). We also introduced the “Notes and Debates” category “[...] for contributions on, for example, research methodology, research agenda, and critical review of literature and current issues” (Wynstra and Knight, 2004, p. 228). This innovation led to interesting debates between authors such as Ramsay & Croom and Rozemeijer in 2008, on purchasing development models, and Dubois and Choi & Wu in 2009, on dyads versus triads and networks.

The future of our field

In the first place, I am hoping that JPSM will continue to be at the forefront of emphasizing transparency and integrity in research, as demonstrated for instance recently by Erik van Raaij’s paper on data reuse (Knight and Tate, 2018; Van Raaij, 2018). Specific initiatives in this direct could involve explicit encouragement of replication studies and pre-registration of empirical studies. Also, I think it would be interesting to publish summaries of reviewer comments together with the published manuscript. The idea that a published paper is a fault-free paper is a fallacy. Nearly always, papers will still have some weaknesses – and some particular strengths – and by adding the different reviewers’ opinions (which may also diverge) - readers can learn more about the paper and the underlying study.

Secondly, I have always firmly believed that Purchasing and Supply Management (PSM) is a research field, not a mono-discipline (Wynstra and Knight, 2004). An Operations Management lens focusing on PSM may emphasize process, a Marketing lens may spotlight value creation, and a Strategic Management lens may put competitive advantage center stage. JPSM has been, and

should remain, a unique platform for researchers to publish and to engage regarding research on Purchasing and Supply Management, adopting a variety of such lenses. We are the only journal that has explicitly been grounded in and founded with such a multidisciplinary perspective, and in my opinion, we should hold on to this firmly.

2.4. *Alessandro Ancarani, Co-editor (2010-2015)*

Chronology and strategy

The 25th anniversary of JPSM is a great chance to reflect on the exciting period George Zsidisin and I spent as the journal's editors from 2010 to 2015, after assuming the leadership from Finn Wynstra. Two pictures come to mind when I think about my early experience with the JPSM. The first was in Rotterdam in 2009, when Finn, George, and I initially discussed strategies for the journal in the coming years, conjecturing about the qualification process with Thomson Reuters (just started by Finn) and about how to get the best results from changing the leadership from one editor to two (i.e., one from Europe and one from the United States) (Ancarani and Zsidisin, 2010). The second picture includes the entire first year (2010) in which the scientific world was starting to evaluate journals based on the impact factor reported in the Web of Science. At that time, JPSM had two years to go before being rated in terms of an impact factor. We eventually got the rating; and the effective collaboration between George and me allowed for significant improvement in the impact factor during our two terms from a good starting point of 1.061 in 2011 to a very good 2.562 in 2015. Several factors contributed to this result; however, the two most important were the journal's excellent reputation thanks to the previous editors' work and the great team work during our period with the Advisory Board; Elsevier's Editorial Team; and above all, the Associate Editors (Ancarani and Zsidisin, 2013).

The decreased frequency of the words *customer* (-38%) and *market* (-33%) may be due to reduced attention to the relationships with the external stakeholders and a shift to analyses of the relationships internal to the supply chain, with the words *chain* (+59%) and *sourcing* (+33%) increasingly frequent in the text.

Finally, the words *green*, *environment*, and *sustainability* (with the last word becoming one of the most frequent) became relevant only in 2010-2015. The word *socially* was increasingly frequent (+195%), consistent with a shift of the manuscripts toward sustainability studies.

To have a more nuanced understanding of the modifications in the content of manuscripts published in JPSM, another comparison of the two periods was based on the theoretical support used for the analysis and on the data collection strategies in the experimental papers. The coding proposed by Wynstra (2010) was adopted. The average number of theoretically grounded papers increased in 2010-2018 (48%) compared to 2003-2009 (35%). Regarding theories used to support the studies, Transaction Cost Theory (TCT) remains the most used. In 2010-2018, however, those studies decreased while papers based on Resource Based Theory (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) increased. In fact, TCT was by far the most used theory (15.2%) in 2003-2009 with RBV-based papers at 6.6%; however, the two theories' use was almost equal in 2010-2018 (9.2% TCT and 10.9% RBV+DC). The use of contingency theory decreased in 2010-2018. Not surprisingly, the content analysis shows that the number of papers based on Social Capital, Social Exchange, and Social Network Theories almost doubled in 2010-2018, accounting for 9,8%. In summary, the journal has published more theoretically grounded papers in 2010-2018, with TCT, RBV being

the most used theories together with Social Capital, Social Exchange, and Social Network Theories.

Regarding research strategies, the comparison between 2003-2009 and 2010-2018 highlights the clear increase in the number of literature reviews (1.3% vs 8.7%) and of survey-based empirical research (32% vs 36%) during 2010-2018. In the same period, the papers based on case studies (single or multiple) decreased (55% vs 40%), thus confirming the finding of the word frequency analysis. Other strategies—e.g., action research (3%), laboratory experiments (4%), and quantitative modelling (6%)—slightly increased but remained marginal with respect to the traditional strategies based on surveys or case studies. The general trend in management studies toward an increasing use of meta-studies is not present in JPSM, with just three published papers using that approach. To summarise, quantitative strategies have been increasingly used, even though several papers are still based on qualitative approaches.

In conclusion, this analysis confirms that new topics appear in the papers published in JPSM; however, the basic theories (TCT and RBV) and traditional research strategies (case study and survey) are predominant because they are considered more adequate in our research area.

The future of our field

New technologies are determining rapid changes in our field, though it is not clear yet how technological advancements will affect the profession and the research. The digitalization of procurement can yield several benefits, as procurement will become more focussed on strategic

decisions and activities, potentially supporting the creation of new business models, products, and services (Srai and Lorentz, 2019).

Until 2018, words like Procurement 4.0, big data, artificial intelligence, digitalization, or IoT are barely cited in JPSM, and the related topics almost never analysed. This state of facts highlights a major research gap in the purchasing and supply management literature that promises to affect the development of the field for many years to come. In this respect, the challenge for JPSM will be to attract the nascent flow of publications in this area, and to make the journal a preferred outlet for those investigating drivers and impacts of new technologies in the context of PSM.

2.5. George A. Zsidisin, Co-Editor (2010-2015)

Chronology

I have been fortunate in my career to work with many outstanding scholars in various roles with the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*. My experiences with the journal started when I was a doctoral student at Arizona State University. During my second year of studies, I was required to write a research paper for a seminar (which is true of many seminars); and from this work, I crafted a manuscript to submit for publication consideration in an academic journal. Although the *European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management* (1999) was still in its developing stages, I noticed from my literature reviews many well-regarded scholars were publishing manuscripts in the journal. As a result, I decided to submit my manuscript (with Sue Siferd as co-author), thus beginning my journey with EJPSM (now JPSM).

During August of 1999, I attended the *International Federation of Purchasing and Materials Management Summer School on Advanced Purchasing Research* in Salzburg, Austria. This was my first introduction to supply chain scholarship in Europe, opening my eyes to research outside the United States and Canada. In reflection, this one-week experience helped shape my bonds with colleagues such as Finn Wynstra, Louise Knight, Stephan Wagner, Mihalis Giannakis, and Simon Croom, among others. The common thread among us is our desire to advance and promote new knowledge in PSM; JPSM has served as a critical catalyst for that desire. We are all indebted to Attila Chikan for years of work and dedication in leading the IFPSM Summer School and for his influence on the journal.

For many years, the Institute for Supply Management sponsored the North American Research and Teaching Symposium (NARTS, later renamed the North American Research Symposium, or NARS), where purchasing and supply management scholars met annually and shared their research and teaching insights. This conference was usually held within one to two weeks of the IPSERA conference, making it difficult to attend both conferences. However, occasionally both conferences were held together, such as in April 2006 when Simon Croom hosted the joint conference at the University of San Diego. I will always remember when Finn Wystra approached me during the conference and asked if I would consider serving as an Associate Editor for JPSM. Immediately answering yes, I felt honored to have the opportunity to serve in such a role. During this time, the journal was expanding, and Finn was restructuring the journal leadership to reflect this expansion beyond Europe. This opportunity allowed me to begin understanding how the journal functions and appreciating the editorial team's role in developing and implementing a strategy for ensuring the journal's success and future viability.

Strategy

I remember well the initial meeting and discussions Alessandro noted above in the Fall of 2009 with Finn Wynstra when we were transitioning the journal leadership. Many of the significant drivers of change had already occurred, such as the journal's name change to JPSM, the adoption of the Elsevier Editorial System, and the journal's inclusion in Thomson Reuters JCR. From the solid foundation created by Richard Lamming, Christine Harland, and Finn Wynstra (with Louise Knight), I saw our role as the first co-editors being the journal's growth in terms of submissions and exposure, especially outside Europe. This growth was realized in numerous ways, such as tripling submissions from 80 in our first year to 243 in our final year of service, significantly expanding the number of Associate Editors and Board members, and more extensively representing JPSM at conferences both in Europe and North America.

An important role of editors, in conjunction with the Editorial Board, is providing strategic direction for the journal. In retrospect, I believe that Alessandro and I pursued a SWOT analysis in positioning the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*. We believe one of the journal's strengths was a rich history in methodological openness, with a strong reputation for publishing studies using qualitative research methods. We decided to remain methodologically open, even though we had challenges in finding reviewers who could thoroughly and appropriately evaluate studies using more mathematical/simulation approaches (a *weakness*). At the same time, we ensured all published manuscripts were managerially relevant, a requirement we continue to believe is critically important for an applied academic field.

A concern we had was the lack of knowledge about the journal outside Europe, especially in North America. Being the first North American editor, I felt it imperative to create greater awareness of the journal throughout the United States and Canada. To work towards this goal, we purposefully solicited U.S.-based conference venues (i.e., Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, Decision Sciences Institute) to participate in various sessions and panels, such as doctoral workshops and “Meet the Editors” events.

One significant change occurring in the field was the *Journal of Supply Chain Management*'s repositioned focus on supply chain management instead of its traditional focus on PSM. We believe this *opportunity* created a void in the academic publishing community because our most significant competitor moved toward a different focus for the research it was publishing. Furthermore, JSCM prioritized publishing research using empirical methods. By being methodologically open in its publishing strategy, we explicitly recognize that purchasing and supply management phenomenon needs to be studied using a variety of tools and approaches. Hence, this strategy further emphasized our desire to focus on purchasing and supply management practice with a supplier-facing (upstream) orientation.

A significant *threat* for the journal, which I believe still exists, is how purchasing and supply management is viewed as an academic discipline. As discussed in one of our editorials (Zsidisin and Ancarani, 2016), supply chain management as an academic discipline can be viewed from different perspectives (e.g. orientation, theories, methodological approaches). My view of supply chain management, similar to Mentzer et al.'s (2000), is that of being a “meta-discipline,” integrating the orientations of multiple firms and business functions to manage the flows of

products, services, information, and finances to meet customer/consumer demand and requirements. Supply chain management's emergence as an academic discipline can be argued to originate from other disciplines such as marketing ("Place" of the "4-Ps") as an extension of operations/production, economics, and engineering (industrial, management).

From an individual firm perspective, the supply chain can be viewed from an upstream orientation, with purchasing and supply management serving as a boundary-spanning function; from an internal manufacturing perspective; or from a product flow perspective with a primary focus on delivering product to customers (logistics). In that space, purchasing and supply management as an academic discipline is a critical sub-set of supply chain management. However, from my experiences, especially in the United States, some scholars with an operations or logistics orientation view purchasing and supply management as a sub-set of their respective discipline/orientation. This view becomes a threat for the journal in attaining an even stronger reputation since PSM scholarship may not be germane in determining the list of journals to which scholars are encouraged to submit their research. In many ways, this SWOT analysis and these factors are still relevant.

View of the Future

It was a pleasure, privilege, and honor to serve as a co-editor of JPSM. I believe the success of JPSM, parallel with IPSERA, started with the solid foundation the prior editors and board set forth. The "fuel" sustaining JPSM's growing reputation and influence in supply chain management, and more specifically PSM scholarship, is attributed to the PSM and IPSERA academic community,

including the dedicated work of the board members, AEs, authors, and readership. I believe the future of JPSM is strong with its continued partnership with IPSERA moving forward.

The last several years have seen tremendous growth in data analytics and data mining with large data sets, as echoed in Alessandro's comments. My short-term concern with the field is publishing research utilizing these tools and approaches have been and are continuing to take precedence by many journals over research employing other methodologies, especially those more qualitative or interpretive in orientation. In this vein, I very much support Christine's viewpoints of universities "hot housing" faculty publishing in four-star journals, but with minimal regard for management practice. Further, there is arguably too much emphasis on methodology and not enough focus on business, and more specifically, purchasing and supply management practice. The training of many scholars today seems to weigh more heavily on established methodologies and not necessarily on actual business/ purchasing and supply management practice. This phenomenon is reinforced with junior faculty who need to traverse through reward systems heavily weighted towards encouraging publication in select "prestigious" journals, often at the cost of other critical elements of faculty performance. A warning call in business colleges was sent a decade and a half ago by Bennis and O'Toole (2005) in questioning the relevance of faculty in their contribution to business schools and knowledge. During my tenure with Alessandro, we were very insistent on each published paper having managerial relevance. How do the insights provide guidance for purchasing and supply management professionals to improve business performance and the bottom line?

I believe the immediate future will only become worse in rewarding faculty publishing theory-heavy, methodologically meticulous research with minimal managerial relevance. However, a

tipping point will occur where our ultimate customer in the supply chain of knowledge – the practitioner – wield its influence in changing the priorities of business schools to be the “honest broker” of creating new knowledge. Our students, who in my view are “practitioners in training,” are a key consumer of our research. Industry is a consumer of both our research and our students who are hired by companies. Companies are, or should be, the key supplier of data we use for our research. The more esoteric our research is, the less business practice will need our services of providing new knowledge and talent to industry. Academic journals are the primary outlet for providing new knowledge, with JPSM specifically focusing on PSM phenomena and practice. Utilizing data analytics and large databases will continue to be an important capability and approach for creating new insight to the effectiveness and efficiencies of purchasing and supply management practice. However, in the long-term I envision greater integration and appreciation of journals publishing research solving real-world purchasing and supply management challenges. Unfortunately, it may take a little more time until we get to this point of development in our research focus as an academy. Basic research will always be needed – but we are also an applied discipline, and managerial relevance will remain key to our advancement as a field and journal.

2.6. Wendy L. Tate (2016-Present)

Chronology

I first heard about the journal early in my academic career as a PhD student. JPSM was considered one of the journals where we could publish purchasing related articles. Early in my doctoral career, I attended the IFPSM summer school, where I met several of the great scholars in PSM and several students that would later become leaders in the field. The relationships developed during the IFPSM summer school turned out to be great academic and personal friends that ultimately helped

to build my own career. The instructors at the school included former editors of JPSM and great contributors of JPSM.

During the summer school, a paper related to my dissertation and to that of another colleague in the class was presented, and a manuscript idea was born. That manuscript was ultimately my first submission to JPSM. The journal, though small, had a very thoughtful and helpful editorial and reviewing staff; and my journal article developed into one that has had relatively good impact.

A few years later, after graduation and as I was building my career, George Zsidisin asked me to become an AE, a role that helped me better understand the research being produced in PSM. At that time, I was reviewing many purchasing related articles for all of the supply chain journals and I was starting to refine my ability to understand what made an article interesting and relevant. I learned to “garden” versus “gatekeep” with the articles so that they would develop into highly impactful articles. JPSM appeared to be a journal where guidance was provided to authors to ensure that as articles progressed to the publication stage they significantly improved. The team of reviewers and editors at JPSM were highly engaged in the process of publication.

Becoming a co-editor seemed like a natural next step in my career and complemented my increasing involvement with the IPSERA community. There was a domestic association, NARS, that lost its source of funding and the migration to the international community seemed natural. The international community is very supportive of JPSM and the IPSERA meeting is home to the Journal’s annual meeting with the associate editors and editorial review board.

Strategy

Well into my fourth year of editorship, it is time to reflect on my overall perspective of JPSM. Throughout my tenure (and even before), there has been much discussion about the journal's quality and impact. JPSM was left off certain journal lists, rated well below its track record in others and in many countries of the world is not considered excellent or premier. However, over the last three years, JPSM's increasing impact and continued positive trajectory, have seen many scholars pushing for re-classifying JPSM from a B to an A journal. The last three years have seen increased submissions; many special topic forums; expanded geographic reach; and higher impact, rigor and quality of the published articles.

There has been much change in both the academy and the practitioner community. Practitioners are continuing to see procurement's value-adding potential. Our role as procurement leaders has continued to shift from largely transactional and price/cost focused to very strategic with both top- and bottom-line impact potential. Topics that were largely ignored by purchasing professionals and academics are now at the forefront. Those topics include purchasing's involvement in innovation, supply market intelligence, Internet of Things, use of big data, supply chain finance, and strategic cost management as well as many others. More supply chain students want jobs in procurement/supply management, and more recruiters are targeting the top schools to hire those students. Furthermore, the academic community is increasing its focus on integrity and quality in publishing. PSM is developing its own theories as well as incorporating theories from other disciplines.

One of the most interesting developments in the field of supply chain management is the move toward a community of scholars. This community has gained traction by interacting with the OSCM journals. This interaction was prevalent at the last IPSERA meeting, where editors and associate editors from most of the supply chain field contributed to discussions and PDW's on quality, integrity, rigor, and relevance. The reviewers and authors across the journals are the same, and the view is that the journals are not competitors but that each serves a purpose within the discipline. By working together, we feel that we can push the OSCM/PSM discipline further and gain more respect from other disciplines.

PSM, in general, is continuing to increase its exposure to other functional areas and to organizational success. For example, PSM now has access to the C-Suite with a seat at the table. As the practice of PSM continues its upward trajectory, academics must be vigilant regarding relevancy. The businesses that we study are our laboratories, so we must ask appropriate and interesting research questions. We must also be able to explain to a practitioner that our research is important. Furthermore, we must continue developing our own theories instead of borrowing other disciplines' theories. Finally, we must focus on being a well-respected discipline. Many changes in technology, data and resource availability, and governmental regulations, are going to be challenging for our discipline; but with the appropriate training and education, both academics and practitioners will overcome those challenges.

View of the Future

For the few years at JPSM, there is a need to continue the outreach in areas of the world that are sometimes challenged to publish in "western" journals. The community of SCM journals, with

JPSM as one of the leaders, has made great headway in some regions by hosting seminars and professional development workshops at the major conferences that focus on writing, reviewing, theory and ethics. We have been trying to build up the academic community and are working to develop the networks and quality of journal submissions that come from this community.

Also, JPSM has taken a leadership position in terms of ethics and integrity in the academic community and will continue to work to train authors, editors, reviewers and readers to recognize good quality research. Publishing articles and editorials on ethical issues within the community has been one way to position the journal as a leader in this space. Also, hosting PDW's and creating videos to discuss the issue has been a big push. JPSM will continue to publish and ensure that ethical standards are being met.

The tactical issues of editing a journal can be quite challenging, particularly as systems change, AE's change, authors and reviewers change. We have been making great strides in reducing the time from submission to publication of articles. We are working to further develop and train our reviewer base to ensure high quality and timely orders. Our Associate Editors are trained to provide developmental advice to authors. The journal managers very quickly provide details that help make the first editorial decision better.

The choice of the next editors should be very rigorous and thoughtful. The PSM community needs to continue with its support of IPSERA and push to have JPSM recognized across the world as a premier journal with an increasing impact factor and further reach. The UK's Association of Business Schools (ABS) list will hopefully incorporate more supply chain journals, including

JPSM, as three and four star journals. There is still much to do including community building and discipline building, increasing the perception of PSM both within the academy and in practice. Continuing to increase the geographical reach and the quality of submissions will remain on the agenda at JPSM.

2.7. *Louise Knight (2016-present)*

Chronology and Strategy

Like Finn Wynstra, I too remember the launch of the (E)JPSM at my first IPSERA conference in 1994 in Cardiff (UK), when I was working at London Underground. Shortly after, I enrolled to study part-time for an MPhil on a programme led by Richard Lamming. By 1996, I was working with (E)JPSM's founding and second editors, Richard Lamming and Christine Harland, at the University of Bath. Editing a journal is very rewarding, and it is a lot of work; launching a journal and nurturing it through its early years is a much tougher commitment. Since then, as evidenced by the past editors' contributions above, JPSM has greatly benefitted from a good balance of continuity and strategic change. Stability *and* innovation underpin its excellent positive trajectory.

Wendy Tate and I first worked together in 2014 on a JPSM special issue (SI) (published in late 2016, and guest edited with Aris Matopoulos, Jo Meehan and Asta Salmi). We wanted to encourage the use of research approaches and techniques that are novel to purchasing and supply management (PSM). Novel approaches help us to “push boundaries” (Knight et al, 2016, p. 243), to address complex problems that do not fit neatly within established disciplinary domains, to increase research quality, and to address new research problems. For example, we have seen

increasing use of quantitative analysis of real company data, rather than surveys of PSM managers' perceptions.

The journal's growth reflects, and indeed has helped to shape, the field's growth. Within the PSM academic community, specialisms develop and standards rise. The number and quality of submissions and the quality of published articles have risen steadily, aided by the rising quality of reviewing and, often, more guidance from the handling editor. Finn Wynstra, Alessandro Ancarini and George Zsidisin write above of the importance of achieving ISI listing for JPSM. In journal rankings, JPSM now sits alongside many longer-established journals that are widely known in business and management studies, such as the *Journal of Management Studies* and *Long Range Planning*. JPSM may be a niche and a small journal¹, but it punches well above its weight!

Since JPSM was launched, academic life has changed considerably. What was always international has become global. "Pecking orders" based on informal assessments of reputation have hardened into university and journal rankings. Academics' productivity is ever more closely scrutinised. These developments' many benefits are partially offset by some significant problems which, if not caused by these initiatives, have certainly been exacerbated by them. Universities and individual academics have learned to cope with the changing environment and in some cases, learned to game the system (Stern, 2016), sometimes in ways that are highly detrimental to research integrity and quality, as discussed in our recent editorial (Knight and Tate, 2018).

¹ With typically fewer than 30 articles per year

The partnership with IPSERA has been invaluable to JPSM's development. Arguably, without the close links to such an active community of scholars, JPSM could not have prospered in the academic system described in paragraph above. And, as noted by George Zsidisin, IPSERA would not have thrived without the IFPSM summer school previously led by Attila Chikan, and now by Finn Wynstra, which does so much to network PSM scholars within and between generations.

View of the Future

We – the PSM academic community – will continue to work effectively within the system but also must speak up about its detrimental consequences and demonstrate leadership in addressing challenges. In this vein, I agree we need to retain and nurture a strong practice orientation (Lamming and Zsidisin), and encourage authors to send us their papers on a wide range of topics (Ancarani) and from all sectors of the economy (Harland). Wendy Tate and I now also promote the use of novel methods, and are encouraging debate about research quality and integrity. The Notes and Debates category of papers (Wynstra) and special topic forums are invaluable. The partnership approach JPSM has long enjoyed with IPSERA is now extended to working with editors of other journals, especially the Journal of Supply Chain Management and the International Journal of Operations and Production Management.

One of the challenges Wendy Tate and I have to address all too often is how to develop the journal within an academic system that places great emphasis on journal rankings, despite their many flaws and significant unintended detrimental consequences. It is good to see more critical and discerning views are emerging, and being translated into policy (see for example https://responsiblemetrics.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2015_metricride.pdf; <https://sfdora.org/read/>). We aim to have a vision and strategy for the journal that is not beholden

to the rankings, whilst also trying to make sure that JPSM is correctly evaluated in the rankings in which it does appear. It is disappointing that we have yet to achieve the latter, but we are patiently persevering.

Looking ahead, the academic community whose work JPSM publishes has much to offer and should continue to raise its profile and show leadership, especially with respect to research related to the climate crisis, the use of natural resources, and the social impact of buying practices. This will mean continually refreshing and broadening the field in terms of perspectives, topics, and methods, building bridges between disciplines, and taking care to mitigate the risk that (highly desirable) rising standards will also lead to (counter-productive) narrowing of standards and formulaic research (Alvesson and Gabriel, 2013). As highlighted by Christine Harland, originality is crucial. Although SCM's rise is helpful, more is involved. PSM research is not just a specialism within SCM. PSM also encompasses supply-side aspects of strategic management, public policy and management, and innovation. We welcome dialogue about how to accomplish these goals and suggestions for JPSM's contribution to the process.

3. Conclusions

The 25th Anniversary Issue of the *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management* has provided us the opportunity to reflect on this journal's history, evolution, and where we believe the field is evolving. Although admittedly biased we believe the research field of purchasing and supply management has a bright future. JPSM is in an advantageous position to serve as the leading outlet

for this focus of study, and we look forward to continuing to support the journal in the years to come.

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