

Journal of **Supply Chain Management**

Special Topic Forum on **Non-Significant and Contradictory Results**

Guest Editors:

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Many authors have noted that journals are biased toward publishing manuscripts with statistically significant results that confirm theory (Stanley, 2008). It is rare for a manuscript with non-significant results or with results that reject well established theory to get published. This problem is often called the file drawer problem (Rosenthal, 1979) because authors who have insignificant results and/or results that conflict with prevailing theory end up putting a paper in the file drawer after multiple, perhaps unwarranted, rejections.

Many of these manuscripts deserve to stay in the file drawer, but some will offer important insights, yet remain unpublished. There are likely to be two groups of manuscripts in the file drawer that do deserve to be published. The first are manuscripts that are theoretically motivated, methodologically sound, and yet unpublished because the results do not support accepted theory. These manuscripts need to be published.

The second group contains manuscripts that are flawed, but in ways that only became apparent after the data were collected and analyzed. The author(s) likely learned a vital lesson about methods and/or theory through this process,

but because of the flaw the project remains unpublished. Disseminating the lessons learned from these projects could inform the field by increasing our understanding of a theory or methodology, and/or by helping others to avoid the same pitfall.

This call for papers is focused on manuscripts that are presently languishing in a file drawer or likely to end up there because of findings that are insignificant and/or in conflict with what the authors were “predicted” to find. We are particularly seeking the two kinds of manuscripts described above, papers that challenge accepted theory, and those that advance the discipline although with fatal flaws.

This special topic forum is not restricted to any one topic, but rather about moving empirical supply chain management research forward theoretically and methodologically. The collected manuscripts could spur research in numerous unexpected directions.

The submission and review processes for this special topic forum have been modified to help ensure that those papers that belong in the file drawer stay there, while those with

unique insights do get published. Therefore each submission should have a cover letter that briefly details:

1. The manuscript's history (vital if it has been rejected previously)
2. Changes, if any, made since previous submissions
3. Why the authors think the results and or lessons learned are important.

In addition, for papers that have been previously rejected we will explicitly ask reviewers if they have previously

reviewed the paper. If they have, we will ask for the previous review and an updated review that reflects changes, if any, made to the manuscript.

The focus of this special topic forum is to learn from what is not "important" rather than what is "significant". This special topic forum would allow SCM scholars to focus on the journey that we take during the research process, and learn from insignificant results as much as we learn from studies that confirm hypotheses.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS MARCH 31, 2010

Manuscripts must conform to *JSCM* style guidelines and submission requirements. Early submissions are welcome and the review process will be initiated when papers are received. An electronic copy of the manuscript that conforms to *JSCM*'s format (see www.blackwellpublishing.com/jscm) should be submitted via e-mail to: Lynn Marstiller at lmarsstiller@ism.ws. Please note in the comments to the editors that the submission is for the Special Topic Forum on *Non-Significant and Contradictory Results*.

Questions can be addressed to any of the guest editors:

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- Stanley, T.D. 2008. Meta-regression methods for detecting and estimating empirical effects in the presence of publication selection. *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 70(1): 103 – 127.