

Identifying risk mitigation strategies for service supply chains in the aftermath of covid-19

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Project Description:

As the world economy is becoming increasingly service oriented, service businesses' activities and the service transactions within and between different entities have grown significantly (Wang et al., 2015; Giannakis, 2011; Arlbjørn et al., 2011), and this have drawn the attention from both scholars and practitioners. Service Supply Chain (SSC) is defined by Baltacioglu et al. (2007, p.112) as "*...the network of suppliers, service providers, consumers and other supporting units that performs the functions of transaction of resources required to produce services; transformation of these resources into supporting and core services; and the delivery of these services to customers.* As any other supply chain, SSCs faces uncertainties from supply and demand side due to several risks. The World Economic Forum annual releases a global risks report that might cause great impacts on global SCs (WEF, 2022). Identifying such risks and the potential mitigation strategies for them are critical to theory and practice, especially to respond to unprecedented disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Major supply chain risks (*e.g.* transportation failures, supply shortages, and demand fluctuations) have been reported by companies as a result of the recent COVID-19 pandemic (Ali et al., 2022; Ivanov & Dolgui, 2020; Sharma et al., 2020). However, some industries tend to be more exposed to supply chain risks than others (Berg et al., 2020; ILO, 2020). This is the case of those embedded in SSCs (Belhadi, et al. 2021), considering the wide range of service characteristics, including its intangible and perishable nature (Baltacioglu et al., 2007; Ellram et al., 2004).

Although there has been a scholar interest in supply chain risk management (SCRM) in the service context, especially after COVID-19 (*e.g.* Hohenstein, 2022; Belhadi, et al. 2021; Ajmal et al. 2021), particular focus has not been devoted to SSCs risks and mitigation strategies by covering different service sectors. Thus, the aim of this project is twofold: a) identify and classify the risks for SSCs, in the context of different service sectors such as tourism, healthcare, education, logistics and professional services; b) determine the relevant risk mitigation strategies, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Thus the research objectives of this project are:

- To examine if current supply chain strategies might be applicable to the service businesses as they are, or do they need to be adapted for service supply chains, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19,
- To determine viable supply chain risk mitigation strategies for the members of service networks and service supply chains in the aftermath of COVID-19,
- To develop a service supply chain performance measurement system in the context of supply chain risk mitigation.

Proposed methodology:

The proposed methodology is based on multiple case studies from different service sectors such as tourism, healthcare, education, logistics and professional services, in order to identify and explore key SSC risks and the relevant mitigation strategies. This allows to include a mixed-method approach using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data can be collected through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, field observations, survey questionnaire, and/or archival data. The student will be based on the Department of People and Organisations, Business School.

Research impact:

By addressing the present research gap, results of this project will provide useful and timely guidance to service business managers by highlighting key risk mitigation strategies to SSCs in the aftermath of COVID-19, additionally to clarify best ways to implement them and show their contribution to the SSC economy.

Proposals should provide a justification on how this aim can be successfully achieved, along with its impact and potential to make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in the ever-growing service supply chain field.

About the Supervisors:

Oznur Yurt is a Senior Lecturer in Operations & Supply Chain Management. Her research interests lie at the intersection of supply chain management and business-to-business marketing. Her recent research focuses on service supply chains, buyer-supplier relations, food supply chains and sustainable supply chains. She has a particular interest in the service supply chains and service operations management. Her research outputs have appeared in leading journals such as *International Journal of Operations and Production Management*, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *Production Planning & Control*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, *The Service Industries Journal*, and *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*.

Nicoleta S. Tipi is an experienced supervisor having supervised to completion 18 PhD researchers studying full and part-time and has examined over 10 PhD theses. Her area of supervision includes topics in supply chain management, sustainable and resilient supply chains, development of performance measurement systems and others. Currently, she has material published in journals such as *European Journal of Operational Research*, *Supply*

Chain Management: an International Journal, Journal of Rural Studies, Computers and Industrial Engineering, International Journal of Systems Science, International Journal of Sustainable Engineering, International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management and others.

Carla Pereira is a Lecturer in Operations & Supply Chain Management. She has a background in Industrial Engineering and has a long-standing interest in supply chain resilience and sustainability. Other areas of interest cover food waste, food recall, supply chain KPIs, purchasing and supply management, and humanitarian logistics. She has supervised undergraduate's scientific projects, master and PhD students in the above areas.

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