

Julia Wolf

**The Nature of Supply Chain Management Research**

GABLER EDITION WISSENSCHAFT

**Einkauf, Logistik und  
Supply Chain Management**

Herausgegeben von

Professor Dr. Christopher Jahns

Die Schriftenreihe stellt den State-of-the-art betriebswirtschaftlicher Forschung am Supply Management Institute SMI™ im Bereich Einkauf, Logistik und Supply Chain Management dar. Die Verbindung von Theorie und Praxis steht dabei ebenso im Vordergrund wie die internationale Ausrichtung und die unmittelbare Verknüpfung der Themen Einkauf, Logistik und Supply Chain Management.

Julia Wolf

# **The Nature of Supply Chain Management Research**

Insights from a Content Analysis  
of International Supply Chain Management  
Literature from 1990 to 2006

With a foreword by Prof. Dr. Christopher Jahns

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## Foreword

Among researchers in the business and management disciplines, there is some kind of a common understanding that research should provide models, concepts and solutions for practical problems. In other words: research is practice-oriented and, personally, I subscribe to this maxim. Still, sometimes, it is important to pause for a moment and reflect upon one's own activities.

The present thesis is one of those comparatively few pieces of research that do so by dealing with the scientific side of research and by asking a number of questions that target at the identification of the nature of a very recent subfield within business and management, namely Supply Chain Management. In particular, the author seeks to understand the processes that characterize the evolution of Supply Chain Management research throughout the past sixteen years and reflects upon avenues for future research - feeling that SCM research seems to have come to a crossroads.

The systematic reprocessing of Supply Chain Management literature and the methodologically sound approach are impressive and enable Julia Wolf to contribute a valuable component to scientific practice and debate in this area. Her work also illustrates that, in terms of philosophical underpinnings, research in Supply Chain Management is still at the very beginning and I hope that this thesis gives rise to more work of similar kind.

Today, I can look back with proud upon three years of inspiring work and discussions with Julia Wolf. I hope that she will demonstrate the same ambition and dedication in the future as she did throughout the time and in the scope of various different projects at the Supply Management Institute in order to further pursue and realize her personal objectives.

Prof. Dr. Christopher Jahns

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- Michael who was convinced that everything would turn out all right. I hope you will make your way while maintaining you’re extraordinary spirit. I still believe in you. Thanks for all.

Finally, I am indebted to thanks to my family. My mother who had to suffer most from bad temper and shortages of time and still never ceded to back me up in my doings - wherever and whenever. My father who never gets tired of philosophical or political discussions without losing his sense for practice. My brother and sister who both made their own way. I am proud of the two of you. My grand-parents for always being so supportive. You’re the greatest.

Julia Wolf

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## List of Abbreviations

CSCMP	Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals
EJPSM	The European Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management
IJLM	The International Journal of Logistics Management
IJOPM	International Journal of Operations & Production Management;
IJPDLM	International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management
IJPM	The International Journal of Purchasing and Materials Management
IJPR	International Journal of Production Research
JBL	Journal of Business Logistics
JOM	Journal of Operations Management;
MS	Management Science
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SCMIJ	Supply Chain Management: An International Journal
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification