

Special Issue Call for Papers

Reshoring and Sustainable Development Goals

Paper submission deadline: 1st September 2021

Guest Editors

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Motivation for the special issue

A debate between globalisation optimists and pessimists (who support deglobalisation) has been reignited since several political events and a recent global pandemic hit. In the United States, for instance, the administration started encouraging U.S. firms to reshore their business operations back home after the 2016 president election. This resulted in reshoring with related foreign direct investment (FDI) initiatives, which altogether created 171,000 jobs in USA during 2017. Following on, the tax-reform package passed by the US Congress in 2017 emphasised on reduction of corporate-tax, making capital-investment by American multinationals (MNEs) in home market lucrative. Most recently, a wave of populism caused by unemployment anxiety, economic stress and conservative backlash in U.S. has also triggered the intense debate against globalisation and eventually led to an ongoing trade disputes between U.S. and China.

On the other hand, United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union (i.e. Brexit) created strong geopolitical uncertainty during 2016 and posted significant pressure on supply chains from both the UK and EU¹ (Wood and Budhwar, 2016). According to a recent survey of Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply, due to the Brexit one in seven European companies getting supplies from UK, switched part or whole of their incoming supplies from outside of Britain (Giles, 2018). In the meantime, Brexit also triggered some of the UK companies to retrench their operations and consider reshoring as a preferred way of operation (Cumming and Zahra, 2016). Evidence from a survey of 262 UK manufacturing companies revealed that over half of the decision makers were considering building their capacity in the home country rather than investing overseas (Godsell *et al.*, 2017).

Recent incidents of crisis caused by lockdowns during ongoing unprecedented health crisis (i.e. COVID-19) have created push for reshoring because of the disruptions supplies led to

¹ The political uncertainty can be defined as uncertainty about whether the prevailing government policy will change (Pastor and Veronesi, 2012)

undermining of image and capability of local authorities in global value chain model, the most sought after feature of production network paradigm that has characterises international commerce and been influential in shaping economies of countries around the world since early 1980s. National governments were forced to take serious measures to control the crisis at home with measures such as social distancing, stopping the public events, forced closure of business and even locking down the cities. Consumers felt unsafe consuming products made at unknown locations. All combined, the crisis caused by pandemic highlighted inability of manufacturing facilities in different countries to be self-sufficient with most needed products like face masks, personal protective equipment (PPE), ventilators and medicines. Simultaneously, when authorities in different countries were becoming conscious of global manufacturing control in China, pandemic highlighted lack of self-sufficiency and dependency on global trade.

Euromonitor (2020) has forecasted that USA will face the most severe recession since the Great Depression, while European countries will see their GDP decline. The crisis created by the pandemic posits tremendous challenges for MNEs related to governance, reconfiguration of supply chain resources, and regionalisation (Verbeke, 2020). This unforeseen crisis has inevitably created the significant impact on global economy, triggered the surge in uncertainty and pressure on businesses and forced businesses to rethink their business strategies and positions. The report about international production published recently by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2020) demonstrates that pandemic crisis has expanded the challenges of globalisation posed by new industrial revolution about growing economic nationalism and sustainability. The report discusses growth of international production during last two decades, followed by current decade of stagnation and predicts that decade of 2030 will be a decade of transformation because reshoring will result in short and less fragmented value chains with higher level of geographical concentration that will add additional value due to availability of high-technologically driven global value chain (GVC)-intensive industries.

These above-mentioned unforeseen events have led to a new wave of reshoring. Reshoring initiatives have been recently discussed among scholars, practitioners, and policy makers and viewed as possible solutions to address current political or public health crises (Chazan, 2020). Reshoring is defined as “*the return of manufacturing and service operations from previously offshored location to the headquarters’ country*” by Brandon-Jones et al. (2017, p. 31). Reshoring in the past was driven by steady erosion of cost advantages in offshoring destinations and the highly dynamic changes in the global economic and political environment. After initiating the reshoring activities, MNEs would make inverse investment on home country rather than keep expanding abroad (Grappi *et al.*, 2015). They have been accused of economic, cultural and social impact of their actions on deserving and have been pushed and held responsible for delay in achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs). The reversal of economic and social progress due to reshoring have led to another crisis i.e. it affected the financial capacity of developing markets as people in these countries had to shift to unsecure and informal jobs because they lost stable and protected jobs offered by MNEs. The aftereffects of pandemic have also led to food crisis and concerns related to food safety because of increase in consumption of food produced domestically by unskilled workers at uncertified facilities.

While previous studies on reshoring have been well studied in different streams of literature such as the determinants of reshoring (Grappi *et al.*, 2015, 2018; Fratocchi *et al.*, 2016; Gray *et al.*, 2017) and supply chain network and business relationship (Baraldi et al., 2018; Chen

and Hu, 2017), they have yet to determine its impact on social crisis related to multinationals or individuals as human well-being, equality, fairness, diversity, and environmental sustainability. There is an urgent need to link the gap in current research on 'Reshoring' as an outcome of 'Crisis Management Strategy' adopted by multinational companies and its impact on sustainable development of global organisations based on existing debate on deglobalisation. Several theoretical viewpoints could inspire the academic community to explore the intersection between reshoring and sustainable development. For instance, when implementing reshoring, its societal impact on wellbeing of humans and environments should be seriously considered, more importantly finding a strike a balance between economic growth and social sustainability. In addition, socially responsible and market driven business strategies when embedded in contingency theory can explain there is no method that can be recognised as best method and decisions should be made based on the circumstances, even when possibilities are fluid, complex and uncertain. Simultaneously, use of crisis attributional theory highlights that any kind of damage or hurt or harm to any of the stakeholders can lead to reputational or commercial loss. Integration of crisis attributional theory with theory of contingency can bring normalcy in a complex environment of threat.

Objectives of the Special Issue

Attempts made by multinational companies to contribute to achievement of sustainable development goals helps them sustain a competitive advantage in the current changing and dynamic global environment for both manufacturing and service firms considering reshoring in the future. The aim of this special issue is to provide a central platform for cross-disciplinary thinking and cutting-edge studies about reshoring strategy in the SDGs context. The potential discussion of this special issue will serve to holistically evaluate the reshoring strategy from an economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability perspective. Papers published in this special issue will offer how and when implementing reshoring strategy can fit in contemporary SDGs strategies and utilise sustainability theories for research.

This special issue will embrace the research that focuses on the MNEs of which have already implemented or are planning to leverage the reshoring opportunities to respond to the unstable market environment. To unfold the complex phenomenon of reshoring, the perspective submissions are expected to incorporate multi-level and cross-disciplinary research designs. Therefore, this special issue will consider empirical studies using either primary data or secondary data, case study research, experimental research and theoretically grounded research. We encourage submissions to help us comprehensively understand from different perspectives, such as operations management, organisational behaviour, human resource management, information system, and marketing.

Illustrative Topics

This special issue encourages the following topic areas (but not limited to) that both conceptual and empirical studies may contribute:

- Is reshoring a new phenomenon that is being used by MNE to be resilient in a deglobalised world?

- Has reshoring emerged as a potential panacea to reduce economic stresses during situations like COVID-19?
- What are the possible negative and positive associations of the consumer perception of MNE's reshoring initiatives?
- What difference can be found between the perception of home country consumers and host country consumers regarding MNE's reshoring decision?
- How do host countries' consumers emotionally and psychologically react towards reshored brands, and what do these reactions mean for branding, communication, marketing, and sustainability strategies?
- How can reshoring initiatives achieve MNEs' sustainability goals in the global markets?
- How do different company's reshoring strategies (e.g., resource, marketing, efficiency, and strategic asset seeking advantage) and different types of reshoring affect consumer responses, consumer-brand relationship and supply chain dynamism?
- How do MNEs align the reshoring decision with sustainability principles?
- Do sustainable development practices motivate host countries' consumers to continue to support reshoring brands (e.g., positive word of mouth and positive brand evaluations and purchase likelihood)?
- How can marketing resources be reconfigured to help reshoring companies position their brand and target customers in the host country markets?
- How can international marketing initiatives mitigate the negative consequences of reshoring on business practices?
- Will digital transformation or technological revolution foster reshoring? How can emerging digital technologies help MNEs achieve sustainable innovation in reshoring initiatives?
- What are innovative ways of using digital technologies for balancing economic growth and environmental sustainability in reshoring initiatives?

Paper Submission

The paper submission deadline is 1st September 2021 (midnight UK time).

Authors should ensure they adhere to the journal author guidelines which are available at: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html).

Submissions should be uploaded to the *British Journal of Management* ScholarOne Manuscripts site at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bjm>.

Authors should select 'special issue paper' as the paper type, ensure they answer 'yes' to the question 'Is this submission for a special issue?' and enter the title of the special issue in the box provided. The special issue will be published in the January 2023 issue.

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