

**FROM THE "BRIGHT" TO THE "DARK" SIDE OF RELATIONSHIPS: A
CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF CONFLICT, POWER AND DEPENDENCE AS BI-
POLAR RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS**

Sylvie Lacoste, Ph.D (corresponding author)

Leonard de Vinci Pôle universitaire, Business Lab, 12 av. Leonard de Vinci, 92916 Paris La
Defense cedex, France

sylvie.lacoste@profecogest.com

+ 33 (0)6 66 25 15 41

Rhona E. Johnsen, Ph.D

ESC Rennes School of Business, 2 Rue Robert d'Arbrissel, 35065 Rennes cedex, France

rhona.johnsen@esc-rennes.com

+33 (0)2 99 54 63 63

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to present the findings from a thorough, critical and systematic literature review of bi-polar relationship characteristics which can be associated with both the ‘bright’ and the ‘dark’ side of vertical relationships, namely conflict, power and dependence. This study has been conducted based on a systematic literature review that took account of research in the Association of Business Schools (ABS) journal ranking dating from 2010. The journals included in the analysis are English language journals, more specifically European and North American business and management journals. The targeted journals included in this review are therefore representative of the highest categories of research produced in the business and management field. The review incorporates a total of 182 journal articles. Of the total filtered papers chosen by relevance 79 focused on power, 68 on dependence and 35 on conflict.

Our analysis indicates that conflict can be perceived positively when disputes are resolved amicably: it can be a way to find new solutions to problems and can even trigger group creativity and innovation. When conflict cannot be solved in a satisfactory manner for both parties, then trust and open communication become impossible and the risk of relationship termination is high. Some forms of power are related to ‘bright’ supplier-customer relationships – the non mediated forms (expert, referent and legitimate power), which are considered as implicit power, but one of the mediated forms of power, coercive power, is considered as ‘dark’ and detrimental to relationships. Power by one party is often derived from the other’s party dependence – dependence in very asymmetric relationships can be perceived as negative, because of the costs incurred if the relationship ends, but it can also be perceived as positive, because of affirmative relational benefits, that act as an incentive to maintain the relationship.

Keywords: *conflict, power, dependence, customer, supplier, relationship characteristics, bipolarity*

INTRODUCTION

In a call for papers in Industrial Marketing Management (to be submitted on 15/12/14), Bradley Barnes invites authors to present research on the dark side of business relationships. This scholar stresses that much of the research on inter-firm relationships tends to focus on the positive side of relationships with constructs such as, commitment, trust and cooperation. Much less research tends to focus on the negative side of relationships and the conceptual examination of uncertainty, opportunism and tension remains broadly unexplored. Barnes refers to Moorman et al. (1992), Grayson and Ambler (1999) and Barnes (2005) to explain that firms in dyadic relationships may experience a degree of complacency whereby negativity occurs and deteriorates long term relationships at mid term – the question is, is it just a matter of complacency? Some of the constructs used to describe positive relationships are bi-polar: used to some extent, they help to build “good” relationships, but if one or both parties change their approach to that concept they can turn a “good” relationship into a “bad” one and even terminate that relationship.

The concept of bi-polarity may be a particularly useful way of thinking about the characteristics of relationships between smaller and larger firms. The bi-polarity concept has been used in international relations research to discuss the distribution of power and influence and political stability between two nation states. The states in question could have individual circles of influence but also manoeuvre for position, potentially creating instability, in unclaimed areas (Waltz, 1964). For the purpose of this paper we adopt the bi-polarity concept to examine how customers and suppliers in dyadic relationships deal with the characteristics of conflict, power, and dependence in their relationships. This examination may give rise to insights into how bi-polar situations linked to these relationship characteristics might impact on stability and influence in dyadic customer-supplier relationships. ‘Nonpolarity’ (Haass, 2008) refers to situations where influence resides in many hands, with no one central nation state or organization in a dominant position. Nonpolarity in a business relationship context could be resonant in situations where firms hold relatively balanced positions in a business relationship or network.

Conflict, power and dependence as bi-polar characteristics of relationships

Alternative views exist in the business-to-business marketing literature on the influence of conflict, power and dependence. Their influence can vary quite radically to the polar extremes of having positive or negative consequences and outcomes for relationships (Kumar et al., 1995; Wong et al, 1999). For example, conflict can be perceived positively when disputes are resolved amicably: it can be a way to find new solutions to problems and may even trigger group creativity and innovation (Gemünden, 1985; Matsuo, 2006). But, conflict can also increase the risk of relationship termination (Jap and Ganesen, 2000; Duarte and Davies, 2003; Campbell et al., 2006). So, how should we perceive the consequences and outcomes of conflict when the literature moves from one perception of conflict to the other?

Some forms of power are also related to ‘bright’ customer-supplier relationships – when a more powerful party is supporting a less powerful party in the relationship, encouraging its development and supporting its initiatives to contribute to the relationship in, for example, capability development or internationalization (Johnsen and Ford, 2006). At the same time power may also often be considered as detrimental to relationships, having the capacity to create negative outcomes in the relationship and the surrounding business network (Kumar, 2005; Meehan and Wright, 2011; 2012). So, what can be the different quality and disposition of power from one case to another that can make such a difference to its influence in

customer-supplier relationships?

Power by one party is often derived from the counterpart's dependence. Dependence in asymmetric relationships can be perceived as negative because of its limitations on action in relationships by one party and the corresponding development limitations on the dependent firm and its costs and burdens incurred if the relationship ends (Jacobs, 1974; Provan and Gassenheimer, 1994). Dependence, however, can also be perceived as positive, resulting in focused activities that act as an incentive to maintain the relationship (Pfeffer and Nowak, 1976; Chen and Chen, 2002). So, dependence can be a double-edged sword that creates both restrictions and opportunities in customer-supplier relationships.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the ways in which conflict, power and dependence have brighter or darker outcomes and consequences for customer-supplier relationships through a focus on the concept of bi-polarity. The paper draws on a thorough, critical and systematic literature review which examines the bi-polar outcomes and consequences of conflict, power and dependence in customer-supplier relationships. Our theoretical contribution will be to define how the relationship characteristics of conflict, power and dependence can take different forms and thereby influence customer-supplier relationship dynamics in opposing ways.

The following section discusses the research methodology for the systematic literature review before studying the outcomes of the literature review with the aim of exploring how conflict, power and dependence are manifested and influence the relationship with bi-polar outcomes or consequences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In a seminal paper, Tranfield et al. (2003) commented that the literature review has been a key method in management research for investigating and organizing the diversity of knowledge for particular issues under inquiry. The goal of conducting a literature review is to give researchers a vehicle to investigate the scope of the 'territory' of the subject area and to aid the identification of research questions that may further develop the extent of knowledge in the subject area.

We have taken point of departure from a number of influential literature review articles in the field of industrial marketing and purchasing research in designing and implementing our systematic literature review (Tranfield 2003; Pagano, 2009; Johnsen, 2009; Chicksand *et al.* 2012; Spina *et al.*, 2013). These contributions have enabled us to identify a rigorous process and method of analysis to follow.

This paper aims to present a thorough analysis and critique of the state of play in the field of conflict, power and dependence in customer-supplier relationships. To achieve this aim the study has been conducted based on a systematic literature review that took account of research in the Association of Business Schools (ABS) journal ranking dating from 2010. The journals included in the analysis are English language journals, more specifically European and North American business and management journals. The aim of this selective targeting of journals was to produce an analysis that is as rigorous as possible with regard to the quality of the research reviewed for this paper. The targeted journals included in this review are therefore representative of the highest categories of research produced in the business and management field.

The papers included in the analysis were identified through a multi-stage systematic process of filtering and analysis. This comprised the following stages -

- a) Search of business and management journals using truncated search terms (see Table 1)
- b) Filtering of articles for relevance based on title

- c) Filtering of articles for quality based on ABS journal list and relevance based on abstract
- d) Summary tables created to develop initial analysis of abstracts
- e) N’Vivo analysis of chosen full papers

Table 1. Search terms and numbers of papers

	Customer relations*	Suppl* relations*	Total filtered for relevance
Power	317 initial search	338 initial search	79
Dependence	64 initial search	113 initial search	68
Conflict	161 initial search	199 initial search	35

The review incorporates a total of 182 journal articles. Of the total filtered papers chosen by relevance 79 focused on power, 68 on dependence and 35 on conflict.

FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict

Conflict is often defined as synonymous to disagreements, tension and frustration in inter-firm relationships (Leonidou, 1989). For Emiliani (2003) and Plank et al. (2007), conflict is an integral part of buyer-seller relationships, conflict resolution will determine if the relationship will keep on or be dissolved (Halinen and Tahtinen 2002; Landeros, Reck, and Plank 1995). For Leonidou (2003, p 584) *“although some degree of conflict is useful in making the relationship more active, innovative, and reliable, it can be disastrous if it gets out of hand and becomes pathological. For this reason, it is important to set up a conflict resolution mechanism between the interacting parties that will resolve problems in a quick, amicable, and mutually beneficial way (Anderson and Narus, 1990)”*.

Mohr and Spekman (1994) describe such conflict resolution techniques and rank them in three categories. First, the most constructive resolution techniques include joint problem solving and persuasion and are defined as “internal” resolution techniques. Second, resolutions techniques that require some “external” help, such as an outside arbitration – this may be fine for one single conflict episode but will stop working in case of recurrent conflicts, highlighting an issue with the relationship. Third, ignoring or avoiding the issue, which may help to gain time before the last and destructive techniques - domination and harsh words - that may lead to the termination of the relationship. So the most constructive techniques require a mutual involvement and commitment to the relationship, which is highlighted by Frazier and Rody (1991), studying distribution channels, whereby they identify notice that the distributor’s attitude towards conflict resolution reflects the extent to which the distributor feels it is beneficial to move forward in the relationship with the supplier.

An interesting illustration is found in Lacoste (2010), quoting a Partnership Director telling his supplier, *“do not force us to kick you out ... »*, meaning the termination of the partnership contract. Both parties had reasons to look for an “internal” conflict resolution, the key customer needed to prove internally that what represented the first partnership contract signed with a supplier for 5 years could work and the supplier needed the involved sales turnover – so that both companies worked hard together to solve the issues and even renewed their contract. In that example, we see the expected benefits from the close relationship were

divergent for both parties, but they were of the same level of importance so that finding constructive resolutions techniques were the only solution.

Nordin (2006) highlights that some scholars claim that arm's length relationships are more conflictual than closer relationships, such as partnerships or alliances, but the Lacoste (2010) case study is a counter example, which is aligned with Gadde and Hakansson (2001), who propose that a high level of conflict is only a problem in contexts with low degrees of collaboration and that the optimal situation is where a high level of conflict is combined with a high level of collaboration (Gadde and Hakansson, 1993). This means that high levels of conflict can exist within very collaborative relationships, but when the mutual benefits to maintain the relationship outweigh the mutual drawbacks of relationship termination, internal resolution mechanisms will be put in place to resolve the conflicts.

When relationship benefits become asymmetric, and one party is no longer so committed to the relationship, then conflict resolution mechanisms can move towards the destructive side. What is at stake here is not so much the mechanisms themselves, but the choice of such mechanisms, which depend on the symmetry of both parties involvement in the relationship. Finally, this relates not so much the construct of conflict, but the "conflict resolution", that helps to understand how 'good' relationships can turn 'bad'. As stated by Nordin (2006), *"industrial business relationships are often complex with broad interactions between the involved parties (Webster, 1991) and consequently involve more opportunities for conflict"* – the way conflict is solved is a good indicator how healthy the relationship is. The 'bad' side of conflict simply reflects the fact that one party is retracting from the relationship, whereas the 'good' side of conflict shows that both parties equally value and appreciate the benefits they derive from the relationship and are both keen to positively resolve the conflict.

Power

Based on the previous work of French and Raven (1959) and Maloni and Benton (2000), Zhao *et al.* (2008, p 370) state that two types of power may be defined: non-mediated power (Expert, Referent and Legitimate power) and mediated power (Reward and Coercive power). Reward and coercive power are considered mediated because their use is controlled by the stronger party, often the customer, which can then reward the weaker party (often the supplier) by inducing positive actions, such as increasing customer orders or coercing it through negative actions, such as threatening to terminate the relationship. The customer, as the source of the power, decides whether, when and how to use its power with the objective of influencing the supplier's behavior in his favor. In contrast, Expert, Referent and Legitimate power are considered non-mediated, because *"the manufacturer(supplier), itself, decides whether and how much it will be influenced by a customer."* (Zhao *et al.*, 2008, p 370). We touch here on the bi-polar nature of power: on the one hand the strongest party uses power, on the other hand power is defined by the perception of the weaker party (most often, the supplier).

Hingley (2005a) refers to Webster (1992), Berry (1983), Jackson (1985), Rokkan and Haugland (2002) to draw a parallel between the relationship marketing paradigm, the continuum of which starts from a transactional exchange and moves towards a relational and cooperative one. On that same continuum, coercive power could be linked to transactional exchange, which would gradually disappear with cooperation at the end of the continuum.

Doran *et al.* (2005) build on the work of Cox (1997, 1999, 2001), who asserts that possession of market power in relationships will lead to unequal bargaining power – this unequal bargaining power is particularly relevant in retailer-manufacturer relationships, when retailers manifest market power leading to sustained transactional relationships and pressure on a

supplier's prices with the threat to terminate the relationship, as fully documented in Sutton-Brady et al. (2014).

Still, Hingley (2005b) indicates that the presence of power imbalance does not necessarily mean that it is always explicitly exercised (Cox et al., 2001) in supply chain relationships. Hingley (2005b) refers to the study of grocery vertical supply channels by Ogbonna and Wilkinson (1996) and Howe (1998), who classify power to be either exercised or unexercised. Coercive power is exercised power, whereas non-mediated power can be considered as unexercised. In such a case, the supplier's perception of other forms of customer's power will prevail: the supplier's perception of the customer's knowledge or expertise (expert power), reputation (referent power) or its belief that the customer has the natural right to influence it (legitimate power). In non-mediated power, the customer remains powerful (often as a lead actor in the market), but does not wish to use its power.

Brito et al. (2014, p 957) explain that restraint in the use of power can only occur when one of the parties has potentially more power than the other. They quote the example of the packaging industry, where this situation occurs more likely in the relationship with customers. Customers, consumer goods companies, are frequently large multinational organizations, controlling large volumes and possessing bargaining power. Packaging manufacturers are frequently medium-sized companies. There is an asymmetry in both size and power, but in most cases, referent and legitimate power will be in action allowing both parties to work on cooperative relationships, symbolized by the development of sustainable packaging.

As along the relationship marketing continuum, some customers will move from coercive to non coercive power. A medium-sized high range home appliance manufacturer illustrates this: they succeeded to move away from the high price pressure and asymmetric bargaining power from retailers by offering them new services with the emergence of social media. They advertise themselves on their customer's social media sites product features, innovations to create brand awareness and enhancement and draw (potential) customers into their customers' stores. This service (content marketing) has lowered off the pressure during price negotiations, as the buyer is now integrating this more cooperative relationship.

This illustration is aligned with previous studies, which have shown that collaborative relationships can only grow when there is a certain balance of power between the actors involved (van Weele and Rozemeijer, 1999). As stated by Kähkönen (2014, p 25), "*it is rather the willingness to use and to exploit one's position of power that is a significant determinant*". When a strong party wants to remain in a transactional relationship, it will use its power, but when it wants to be in a cooperative relationships and benefit from relational gains, it will remain powerful non-mediated power, without using that power.

The bi-polarity of power is not between having or not having power, but between exercising it or not, according to the type of relationship the powerful party wants to have.

Dependence

Dependence is defined as a need to maintain a relationship to achieve desired goals (Frazier 1983; Ganesan, 1994) or as the cost of irreplaceability (e.g., Heide and John, 1988).

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), quoted by Waheed and Gaur (2012, p 104), also mention three critical factors, which determine the dependence of one organization on another:

- (1) The extent to which the interest group has discretion over resource allocation and use;
- (2) The extent to which they are limited by the availability of alternatives, or the extent of control over the resource by the interest group;
- (3) The essentiality of the resource, the extent to which the organizations require it for continued operation and survival. Frooman (1999) describes resource essentiality as a function of two factors: (1) the relative magnitude of exchange; and (2) criticality.

Those three critical factors can apply to a supplier (detaining some critical resources for the customer) as well as to a customer (representing a high market share).

Whoever the dependent parties, Scheer et al. (2010, p 92) stress the bi-polar aspect of dependence, *“reflecting positive and negative motivations (Scheer and Smith 1996). Benefit-based dependence—the need to maintain the relationship because of the irreplaceable net benefits that result from the on-going relationship—focuses on manifest, presently-realized positive relational benefits. In contrast, cost-based dependence—the need to maintain the relationship because of the new costs that will be incurred if the relationship ends—focuses on the latent, currently dormant negative factors that would be realized in the future upon relationship termination.”*

This positive aspect of dependence can be related to the findings of Caniëls and Gelderman (2007): in their literature review they first posit that, when strategic products are purchased from one supplier (single source), this can cause a significant supply risk, as the customer is totally dependent from the supplier. In order to counterbalance this risk, they suggest customers will aim at building a partnership relationship with their supplier (referring to Elliott-Shircore & Steele, 1985). The mutual trust and commitment that comes with the intensified relationship is likely to reduce the supply risk to a minimum and inter-dependence is thus created, balancing the relationship. Their research findings totally contradict this approach: they observed supplier dominance in a position of single sourcing strategic products, where they expected a balanced power situation (referring to previous academic literature). They call the result “provocative” as it sheds a new light on the buyer’s understanding of dependence. It shows that buyers do not mind being dependent on suppliers when they perceive the partnership to be satisfactory. This is a good illustration of benefit-based dependence.

This benefit-based dependence can only last if the supplier offering is idiosyncratic and if the supplier is considered as a “strategic” supplier (Lacoste, 2012). As further stated by Scheer et al. (2010), even a supplier that excels to generate benefit-based dependence based on current product quality and delivery performance, will not avoid to move to cost-based dependence. Especially in highly competitive environments, supplier’s competitors can quickly match product offerings and services, so that there may be other suppliers capable of providing comparable product and service quality. The customer’s cost-based dependence will depend on the switching cost of changing supplier.

Another construct can consolidate benefit-based dependence: trust. Building mutual trust can avoid terminating the relationship, even when benefit-based dependence is turning towards cost-based one. Jiang et al. (2011) demonstrate that trust has a far more significant effect to build long-term relationships than dependence; they advise suppliers that to sustain their relationship with customers, they should nurture the relationship by fostering the development of trust.

Hald et al. (2009) even see a correlation between trust and dependence. They posit that as long as the buyer's perceived trust is high, the perceived dependence presents no problem to the buyer (even when the nature of the dependence is cost-based); the buyer will probably stay in the exchange relationship, focusing on creating and sharing value. However if the buyer perceives trust on the supplier side as low, the combination of high perceived dependence and low trust will cause the buyer to perceive the relationship as risky and to end the relationship or to lower the supplier’s share of wallet.

In conclusion, dependence is seen as positive as long as it is coupled with a high level of trust and brings relational benefits to the other party. Dependence is seen as negative when it is connected to high switching costs together with a low level of trust.

CONCLUSIONS

Conflict, power and dependence are key characteristics to investigate the bi-polarity of relationships. Those three characteristics can all belong to the “bright” side as well as the “dark” side of relationships.

In table 1, we represent a framework that summarizes this conceptual study of conflict, power and dependence as bi-polar relationship characteristics: this framework highlights the major features of the bi-polar approach for each characteristic.

This conceptual study contributes to build a relationship continuum to better understand when such characteristics move from one side to the other of the continuum. Those three characteristics belong to the “bright” side of the relationship continuum when both parties in the vertical relationship (customer and supplier) believe they derive positive relational benefits from the relationship, and if the repartition of power is not necessarily balanced, at least, it is not exercised by the powerful party. Both parties are committed and trust each other.

The three characteristics move towards the darker side of the continuum when trust is disappearing due to an asymmetry of relational benefits: we move into an adversarial relationship as one party is powerful and desires to enforce such power by keeping ownership of all relational benefits, running the risk of terminating the relationship, in case the other party resists.

At the bottom of table 1, we represent the continuum with the “bright” side of relationships, which leads to the development of such relationships and the “dark” side of relationships, which leads to the relationship termination.

From a managerial perspective, our conceptual study can help customers and suppliers to better read the signs of the evolution of the relationship and to develop a greater awareness of the consequences of their behavior.

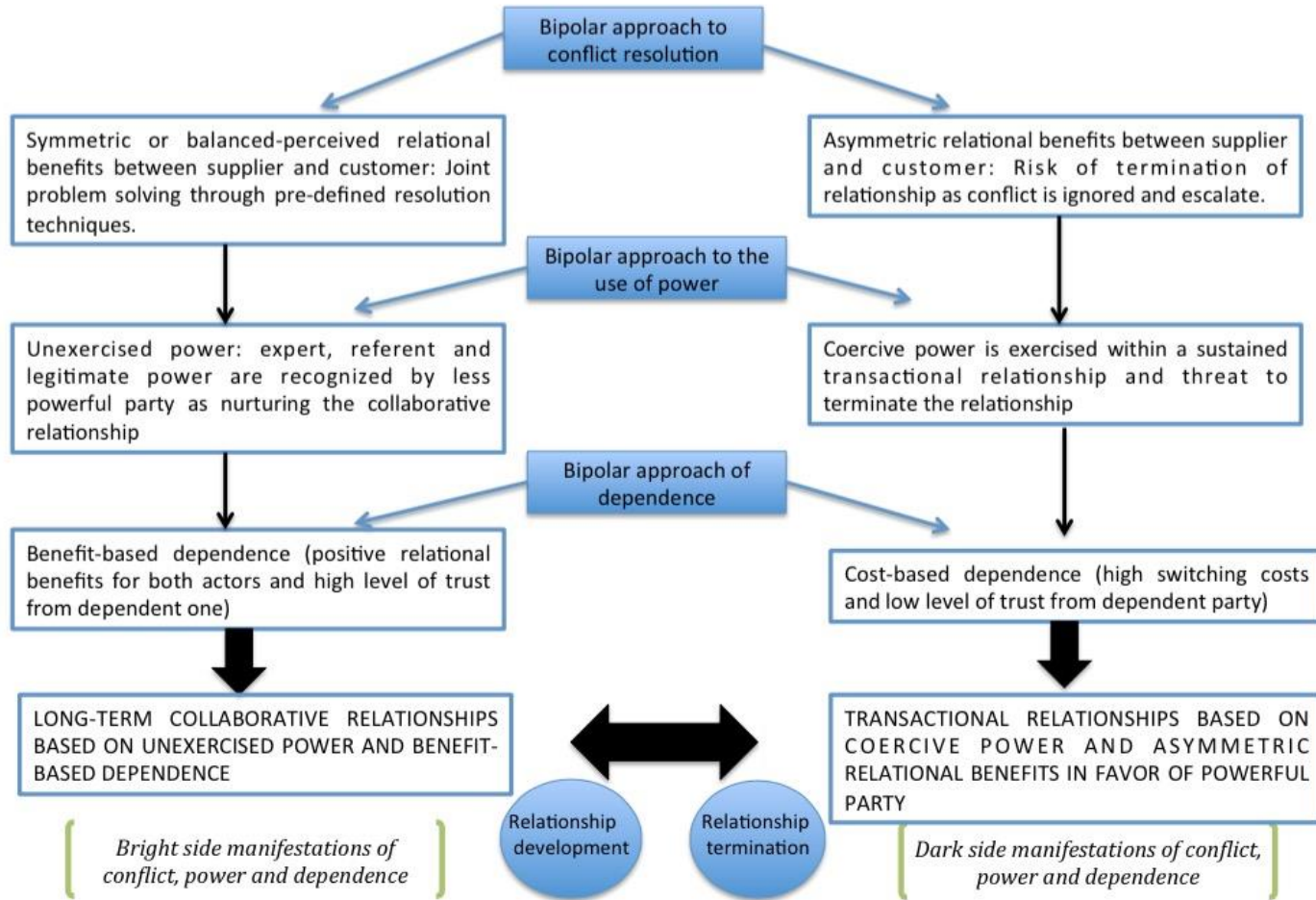


Table 1 - A conceptual framework of conflict, power and dependence as bi-polar relationship characteristics

REFERENCES

- ABS (2010). The Association of Business Schools, Academic journal quality guide, London.
- Anderson, J. C., & Narus, J. A. (1990). A model of distributor firm and manufacturer firm working relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 54(1), 42–58.
- Barnes, B. (2005). Is the Seven-Year Hitch Premature in Industrial Markets. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39 (5-6), 560-581.
- Berry, L.L. (1983). Relationship marketing, in Berry, L.L., Shostack, G.L. and Upah, G.D. (Eds), *Emerging Perspectives on Services Marketing*, American Marketing Association, Chicago, IL, pp. 25-8.
- Brito, L. A. L., Brito, E. P. Z., & Hashiba, L. H. (2014). What type of cooperation with suppliers and customers leads to superior performance? *Journal of Business Research*, 67(5), 952-959.
- Campbell, K. S., Davis, L. & Skinner, L. (2006). Rapport management during the exploration phase of the salesperson- customer relationship, *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 26 (4), 359-370.
- Caniëls, M. C., & Gelderman, C. J. (2007). Power and interdependence in buyer supplier relationships: A purchasing portfolio approach. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 36 (2), 219-229.
- Chen, H. and Chen, T-J. (2002) Asymmetric strategic alliances: a network view, *Journal of Business Research*, 55 (12), 1007-1013.
- Chicksand, D., Watson, G., Walker, H., Radnor, Z. & Johnston, R. (2012). Theoretical perspectives in purchasing and supply chain management. *Supply Chain Management- An International Journal*, 17 (4), 454-472.
- Cox, A., Sanderson, J., Watson, G., & Lonsdale, C. (2001). Power regimes: A strategic perspective on the management of business-to-business relationships in supply networks. In H. Hakansson, C. A. Solberg, L. Huemer, & L. Steigum (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 17th Annual IMP Conference: Interactions, relationships and networks: Strategic dimensions*, 9–11 September, Norwegian School of Management BI, Oslo.
- Doran, D., Thomas, P., & Caldwell, N. (2005). Examining buyer-supplier relationships within a service sector context. *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, 10(4), 272-277.
- Duarte, M. and Davies, G. (2003). Testing the conflict-performance assumption in business to business relationships, *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32, (2), 91-99.
- Elliott-Shircore, T. I., & Steele, P. T. (1985). Procurement positioning overview. *Purchasing and Supply Management*, December, 23–26.
- Emiliani, M.L. (2003). The Inevitability of conflict between buyers and sellers. *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, 8(2), 107-115.
- Frazier, G. L. (1983). Interorganizational exchange behavior in marketing channels: a broadened perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 47(4), 68-78.
- Frooman, J. (1999). Stakeholder influence strategies”, *Academy of Management Review*, 24(2), 191-205.
- Ganesan, S. (1994). Determinants of long-term orientation in buyer-seller relationships, *Journal of Marketing*, 58 (2), 1-19.
- Grayson, K. & Ambler, T. (1999). The dark side of long-term relationships in marketing services. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36 (1), 132-141.
- Haass, R. N. (2008). The age of nonpolarity. *Council on Foreign Relations*, May-June.
- Hald, K. S., Córdón, C., & Vollmann, T. E. (2009). Towards an understanding of attraction in buyer–supplier relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38(8), 960-970.

- Halinen, A. & Tahtinen, J. (2002). A process theory of relationship ending. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 13(2), 163-180.
- Heide, J. B. & John, G. (1992). Do Norms Matter in Marketing Relationships? *Journal of Marketing* 56 (April): 32-44.
- French, J. R., & Raven, B. (1959). Studies in social power. *Studies in social power*.
- Gemünden, H-G. (1985). Coping with inter-organisational conflicts, *Journal of Business Research*, 13 (5), 405-420.
- Hingley, M.K. (2005a). Power imbalanced relationships: cases from UK fresh food supply. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 33 (8), 551 – 569.
- Hingley, M. K. (2005b). Power to all our friends? Living with imbalance in supplier–retailer relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34(8), 848-858.
- Howe, W. S. (1998). Vertical market relations in the UK grocery trade: analysis and government policy. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 26 (6), 212-224.
- Jackson, B.B. (1985). Build customer relationships that last. *Harvard Business Review*, 120-8, November/December.
- Jacobs, D. (1974). Dependency and vulnerability: an exchange approach to the control of organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19(1), 45-59.
- Jap, S.D. and Ganesan, S. (2000). Control mechanisms and the relationship life cycle: implications for safeguarding specific investments and developing commitment. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 37 (2), 227-245.
- Johnsen, T.E. (2009). Supplier involvement in new product development and innovation-taking stock and looking to the future. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 15, 187-197.
- Johnsen, R. E. & Ford, D. (2006). Interaction capability development of smaller suppliers in relationships with larger customers. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 35 (8), 1002–1015.
- Kähkönen, A. K. (2014). The influence of power position on the depth of collaboration. *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, 19(1), 17-30.
- Kumar, N., Scheer, L. K., Steenkamp, J-B. E. M. (1995). The effects of perceived interdependence on dealer attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 32 (3), 348-356.
- Kumar, N. (2005). The power of power in supplier–retailer relationships. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 34 (8), 863–866.
- Lacoste S. (2010). Did you say partnership ? Tensions in the purchase of packaging – case study in chapter two – Organizational Buying Behaviour, in Ellis, N. *Business to Business Marketing: Relationships, Networks & Strategies*, Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Lacoste, S. (2012). “Vertical coopetition”: The key account perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(4), 649-658.
- Landeros, R., Reck, R., & Plank, R.E. (1995). Maintaining buyer-seller relationships. *International Journal of Purchasing and Supply Chain Management*, 31(3), 3-11.
- Leonidou, Leonidas C. (1989). The exporter-importer dyad- an investigation. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 4(2),17–23.
- Leonidou, L. C., Barnes, B. R., & Talias, M. A. (2006). Exporter–importer relationship quality: the inhibiting role of uncertainty, distance, and conflict. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 35(5), 576-588.
- Maloni, M., & Benton, W. C. (2000). Power influences in the supply chain. *Journal of Business Logistics*, 21(1), 49-74.
- Matsuo, M. (2006). Customer orientation, conflict, and innovativeness in Japanese sales departments. *Journal of Business Research*, 59 (2), 242-250.
- Meehan, J. & Wright, G. (2011). Power priorities: a buyer–seller comparison of areas of influence, *Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management*, 17 (1), 32–41.

- Meehan, J. & Wright, G. H. (2012). The origins of power in buyer–seller relationships, *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41, 669–679.
- Mohr, J., & Spekman, R. (1994). Success : characteristics of partnership communication and conflict resolution. *Strategic Management Journal*, 15(June), 135–152.
- Moorman, C., Zaltman, G. and Deshpande, R. (1992). Relationships between providers and users of market research: the dynamics of trust within and between organizations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29 (August), 314-328.
- Nordin, F. (2006). Identifying intraorganisational and interorganisational alliance conflicts - a longitudinal study of an alliance pilot project in the high technology industry. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 35(2), 116–127.
- Ogbonna, E., & Wilkinson, B. (1996). Inter-organisational power relations in the UK grocery industry: contradictions and developments. *International Review of Retail Distribution and Consumer Research*, 6(4), 395-414.
- Pagano, A. (2009). The role of relational capabilities in the organization of international sourcing activities – a literature review. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 38 (8), 903-913.
- Pfeffer, J., & Nowak, P. (1976). Joint ventures and interorganizational interdependence. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(3), 398-418.
- Pfeffer, J. & Salancik, G.R. (1978), *The external control of organizations: a resource dependence perspective*. Harper & Row, New York.
- Provan, K.G. & Gassenheimer, J.B. (1994). Supplier commitment in relational contract exchanges with buyers: a study of interorganizational dependence and exercised power. *Journal of Management Studies*, 31 (1), 55-68.
- Plank, R. E., Reid, D. A., & Newell, S. (2007). The impacts of affective and cognitive social conflict in business-to-business buyer-seller relationships: a comparison of new versus ongoing buyer-seller relationships. *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, 14(2), 41–74.
- Rokkan, A.I. and Haugland, S.A. (2002). Developing relational exchange: effectiveness and power. *European Journal of Marketing*, 36 (1/2), 211-30.
- Scheer, L. K., Miao, C. F., & Garrett, J. (2010). The effects of supplier capabilities on industrial customers' loyalty: the role of dependence. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(1), 90-104.
- Scheer, L. K., & Smith Jr., W. R. (1996). The case for a bidimensional model of relationship dependence. In A. Parvatiyar, & J. N. Sheth (Eds.), *Contemporary knowledge of relationship marketing* (79–88). Atlanta, GA: Emory University.
- Spina, G., Caniato, F., Luzzini, D. & Ronchi, S. (2013). Past, present and future trends of purchasing and supply management- an extensive literature review. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42 (8), 1202-1212.
- Sutton-Brady C., Kamvounias P. and Taylor T. (2014). Supplier-retailer power asymmetry- an Australian perspective, *Proceedings of the Global Marketing Conference at Singapore*, July 15-18.
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14, 207-222.
- Van Weele, A. and Rozemeijer, F.A. (1999). The role of power in partnership relationships: An empirical investigation of current body of knowledge, Proceedings of the 8th International Annual IPSERA Conference, 28-31 March 1999, Belfast-Dublin.
- Waheed, K.A. and Gaur, S. (2012). An empirical investigation of customer dependence in interpersonal buyer-seller relationships, *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24(1), 102 -124.
- Waltz, K. (1964). The stability of a bipolar World. *Daedalus*, 93 (3), 881–909.

- Webster, F.E. (1992). The changing role of marketing in the corporation. *Journal of Marketing*, 56, 1-17.
- Wong, A., Tjosvold, D. Wong W.Y. L. & Liu, C. K. (1999). Cooperative and competitive conflict for quality supply partnerships between China and Hongkong. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 29 (1/2), 7-21.
- Zhao, X., Huo, B., Flynn, B. and Yeung, J. (2008). The impact of power and relationship commitment on the integration between manufacturers and customers in a supply chain. *Journal of Operations Management* 26 (3), 368-88.
- Jiang, Z., Henneberg, S.C. & Naudé, P. (2011). Supplier relationship management in the construction industry: the effects of trust and dependence, *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 27 (1), 3-15.