

POWER RELATIONSHIPS AND NETWORK EVOLUTION IN STATE-DOMINANT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the dynamics of business network evolution and power relationships in public-private partnerships that take place in a state-dominant business (SDB) environment. The study uses a qualitative inquiry to interpret a case study of a port industry development from Asia's untapped market, Myanmar. A two-dimensional conceptual framework is used to investigate the selected case at all three analytical levels and across the country's transitional timeline. It examines the case through business network management and co-evolutionary perspectives. The paper categorised two key external drivers (institutional changes/influences and macro-environmental changes) that influence the entire business network evolution and competitiveness of its actors. The importance of having interpersonal relationships especially ex-military ties with state-actors is highlighted. Power sources and power creation mechanisms of both public and private actors are identified. The study argues that, as a centralised network, asymmetric interactions are almost prominent albeit firms can influence institutions regarding the favour of institutional logics and state actors' commitments. Research limitations, managerial implications, and originality value are also discussed.

Keywords – power relationships, business network management, co-evolution, public-private partnerships, port industry, Myanmar

Paper type – research paper

INTRODUCTION

Network theories streamed in the industrial marketing and purchasing (IMP) literature mainly focus on inter-firm relations and address them in terms of structure, process, and dynamics (Ford & Mouzas, 2013; Håkansson & Snehota, 1995; Olsen et al., 2014). Looked through the IMP lens, a complex *process* of interactions takes place among network-actors of a heterogeneously webbed *structure* in response to the *dynamics* of evolving business landscape. In business networking, power and position shape the network structure (Cook & Emerson, 1978). For decades, power has been researched in the process of business relationships and interactions in networking and inter-organisational research (e.g. Halinen & Törnroos, 1998; Provan et al., 1980; Welch & Wilkinson, 2005). Moreover, business relationships are viewed in terms of *resources*, *activities*, and *actors* (Håkansson & Snehota, 1995; Partanen & Möller, 2012) within *spatial*, *social*, and *temporal dimensions* (Ekström & Danermark, 1991; Ford & Mouzas, 2013). However, the intense focus in these fields mostly came from a narrow social system or milieu, as a primary determinant, rather than from a broader system setting (argued by Olsen et al., 2014; Welch & Wilkinson, 2004). The IMP group has constantly raised theoretical development drawing upon multiple perspectives/domains (see Butler & Batt, 2014; Håkansson & Waluszewski, 2013; Halinen & Törnroos, 1998). Nevertheless, there is a paucity of studies on power relationships and interactions evolving over time at a network level and a broader business ecosystem, with some exceptions (see Salmi, 1995; Welch & Wilkinson, 2005). Moreover, while IMP researchers commonly paid attention to mature markets of developed and emerging economies (see Chakrabarti et al., 2013; Di Benedetto & Lindgreen, 2018), what we do know so far about business network evolution and power relationships in developing contexts. Besides, a call for further research in the IMP field to deepen knowledge from a broader institutional and macro-environmental setting raised by Håkansson & Snehota (2000) has recently been elevated by Nyström et al. (2017) and Massey et al. (2019). Regarding these motives, this study bridges the two interconnected theories, namely business network management and co-evolution.

Seen through the co-evolutionary theory (Lewin et al., 1999; Lewin & Volberda, 1999), power has been researched by the forms of actors, sources, mechanisms, dynamics, strategies (managerial intents) and interactions (see Child et al., 2012; Dieleman & Sachs, 2008; Rodrigues & Child, 2003). Regarding these studies, power is transformed into the influence that shapes the

evolutions of corporate entities over time within institution-business networks. According to them, the co-evolutionary theory explicitly addresses a wider range of business-environment interactions in multi-directional and iterative patterns. Within inter-organisational relationships stream, furthermore, there has hardly ever been looked into the individual level with some exceptions (see Gonçalves et al., 2019; Massey et al., 2019), although individuals especially top managers (upper echelons) represent firms (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Hence, to shed light on upper echelons' capability as a source of power to be used in developing political/social capital and their roles in business network evolution we integrate upper echelons perspectives (Hambrick, 2007) into the theoretical setting of this study. With the intents to fill theoretical gaps and to fuller understand the dynamics of business network emergence and evolution and power relationships among network-actors within a broader business environment across a longitudinal time horizon, this study uses a combination of theoretical lenses comprising business networking and upper echelons perspectives within a co-evolutionary umbrella.

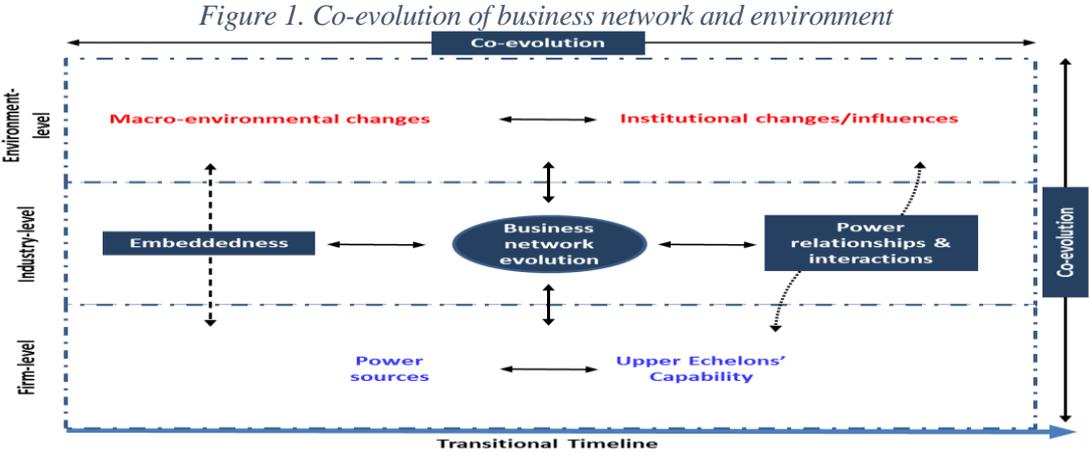
The main purpose of this study is to examine the dynamics of network evolution and power relationships in public-private partnerships that take place in an SDB environment. We use a single but information-rich case study from the port industry of a marginalised context, Myanmar, a developing and transitional economy. We depict why and how a business network emerges and evolves, and how public and private actors advance power and employ in inter-organisational interactions within an SDB environment. The two external driving factors, institutional changes/influences and macro-environmental changes, which influence the development paths of the entire network and competitiveness of its actors are identified. The importance of having interpersonal relationships especially ex-military ties with state-actors is highlighted. This study argues that asymmetric interactions are dominant within the SDB environment in which state-actors' involvement in businesses is significant. Managerial implications are also discussed. Apart from these, this paper fortifies the number of contribution from Asia and Pacific, which is still less in percentage according to Di Benedetto & Lindgreen (2018), to the IMP literature in terms of case context and authors.

THEORETICAL SETTING

The importance of the broader environmental setting that enables or restricts the entire network and its actors' development was acknowledged by organisation and management science (e.g. Halinen & Törnroos, 1998; Rodrigues & Child, 2003; Van der Lugt et al., 2013), and by the co-evolutionary theory (e.g. Koza & Lewin, 1998; Van Der Lugt et al., 2014). This theory is a good approach to study power interactions among network-actors because it allows an understanding of the roles of interpersonal and inter-organisational relationships as a source of power (see Child et al., 2012; Dieleman & Sachs, 2008). Pursuing our interest on the co-evolutionary paths of business networks and their broader environments, we bridge two interrelated literature streams, namely the business network management and co-evolution theory, as in their work of Van der Lugt et al. (2013). When network-actors develop and implement their business operations, they are engaged with other network-actors, both individuals and firms, within social structures through activities/processes (Cook, 1977). Business networking, by definition, is an interactive and iterative process through which business activities and inter-firm relationships are developed, and resources are exchanged and advanced for the benefit of actors (Cantù et al., 2013; Ford & Mouzas, 2013). Network-actors increase their power by strengthening interrelationships (Provan et al., 1980) and mobilising resources (Cook, 1977). Powerful actors have priority access to resources. Asymmetries of power in business relationships have traditionally attracted the attention of management and IMP scholars (Cowan et al., 2015; Lindgreen et al., 2008). The interactions of actors and business networks are embedded in the organisational and institutional environments or societal sector (Halinen & Törnroos, 1998) in which firms operate. According to Halinen & Törnroos (1998), firms are embedded in and continuously challenged by ongoing environmental changes, for example, by changes in the

regulatory framework or changes in competitive dynamics. By responding to these challenges, firms advance their capabilities, update their resource bases, improve their market positioning, and thus, co-evolve within their environments. Furthermore, the co-evolution theory allows an understanding of the sources of power in business networks by assessing network dynamics through political, institutional, and historical lenses (Lewin et al., 1999; Lewin & Volberda, 1999). This study aims to advance business networking perspectives that focus on the roles of interpersonal and inter-organisational relations as sources of power and power interactions among network-actors towards co-evolution. Moreover, it also develops a co-evolutionary perspective focusing on the institutional and macro-environmental dynamics that influence the evolution of the business network and its actors.

In order to address our research objectives using a case study on the evolution of a port business network, we use a theoretical framework as shown in Figure 1. Purposely, using this two-dimensional framework, we intend to investigate the central phenomenon across three analytical levels in the context of Myanmar’s socio-economic transitions. In particular, the motive is to explore the dynamics of power relationships among actors and the evolution of their participating business network over time across the boundaries of an SDB environment through multiple lenses - historical, political, and institutional.



EMPIRICAL CONTEXT: BUSINESS NETWORKING IN THE MYANMAR PORT INDUSTRY

A qualitative study was deemed to be appropriate as it allows for a holistic understanding of the complex phenomena under investigation (Saunders et al., 2012). The chosen single-longitudinal case study as recommended by Lewin et al. (1999) will ensure a gathering of rich information and an in-depth understanding of the unique case in less studied environments (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Yin, 2018). Business networks with the Myanmar Port Authority (MPA) in the form of public-private (government-business) partnerships developed during the 30-year timespan, 1988-2017, represent an appropriate context for the current study. These networks have unique characteristics of the contemporary organisational, industry, and state regulations. The observed period demonstrates four distinctive transitional phases and changes (two military, quasi-civilian, and democratic regimes). The case represents the transition from a state-monopolised industry to an industry with emergent competition. The business network includes multiple players, such as institutional/state-actors, the public port authority, local and international invested terminals, shipping lines, domestic and international port users, and international development partners such as Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) of Japan and GIZ of Germany. Competitive dynamics are influenced by state reforms, international regulatory settings (economic sanctions), the emergence of new business players including international companies such as Hutchison of Hong Kong, the evolution of the global market, and the emergence of sustainability issues. However, competition in the business network is limited due to the domination of the state and militarised structures in managing the focal network player, the Port

Authority. This limited competition and a dominated network-actor make the chosen case a unique environment for understanding the sources of power and the power interactions of network-actors. In accord with its uniqueness, this case study was set out to make an immediate contribution by examining the hereto understudied context of Myanmar (e.g., Bae, 2018; Meyer & Thein, 2014).

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, AND APPROACH

A social constructivism research paradigm (Flick, 2014) was chosen to undertake a multi-method qualitative inquiry that examines ‘social processes and interaction’ (Schwandt, 2007: p. 40). For further theoretical development, as suggested by prior works in IMP field (Cook, 1977; Welch & Wilkinson, 2004) and in line with the nature of co-evolutionary studies (Dieleman & Sachs, 2008; Koza & Lewin, 1999), we investigated the researching case thru a *historical/longitudinal lens*. This method allowed a flexible approach to the data interpretation and understanding the socially constructed and subjective meanings of the complex research setting. Thirty-six interviews and four focus group discussions were conducted in March 2017 and January 2018, and a systematic thematic analysis was conducted (Schwandt, 2007). All interview and focus group data were initially coded, categorised and aggregated into both predefined and emerging themes (Guest et al., 2012). These initial themes were reviewed and refined to generate thematic maps in order to address research objectives. These results were then triangulated with the complementary secondary data, such as the country’s annual trade and GDP growth, FDI inflow, and annual port performance, and document analysis.

EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Refraining from making context-free sweeping claims, first, this study unfolds a) the sources (*what*) that network-actors/groups utilise in power interactions, and b) the patterns (*how*) of power relationships and interactions among them in pursuance of their strategic intents within their involving networks and broader business environment. Second, the study discloses the external contextual factors (*what*) that influence the development trajectories of business networks and participating actors/groups. The findings show that private actors (i.e. private firms and international development partners) advance their power by developing social capital (interpersonal relationships) between their top managers and the upper echelons of both public authority and government institutions, e.g. government ministers. Since personal relationships and trust play a vital role in Myanmar business culture, collectivism and high context (see Rudkin & Erba, 2018), key person approach (third-party introduction) is almost a necessity for private actors in building relationships with both state- and public-actors. Firms strengthen their power by recruiting ex-executives of the public authority, forming sub-networks, e.g. vertical integration (contracting between terminals and shipping lines) and horizontal integration (forming associations), and keeping standard terms and procedures (this is evident in the practices of international development partners). The public port authority mobilises state-actors to strengthen their legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959) and trust through relationship channels, especially ex-military ties that remain influential until the previous government, ex-military personnel-led quasi-civilian government. Under the control of the military regime, military inductions into civil services became common. Military induction includes the allocation of ex-military personnel to both public agencies and state-level institutions while allowing them to exercise common military practices and behaviour (e.g. discouraging complaints and emboldening a “just do it for the accomplishment” culture). These accepted behaviours and practices resulted in the intermittent bypassing of the standard operating procedures of the civil services. Interestingly, both local and international informants in this study reported that a better harmonisation between state-actors and heads of public agencies incurred under the military and ex-military-led governments (until the third phase) than present democratic government (phase 4). In such leader-centric and SDB environment, state-actors’ (politicians) unawareness of relevant industry and heads of agencies’ risk-aversion to working without given policies and

instructions from their bosses led to disharmonisation among them, and thus caused stalled reform and development. Besides, the professionalism of the authority's managing directors (MDs) was found to be vital in developing a sense of trust in relationships with state-actors. As such, within a leader-centric environment, the MDs (representing public authority) exploited ex-military ties and professionalism in developing trust with state-actors to gain their commitments. Moreover, the findings show that public actors asymmetrically influence on private actors. The study depicts that, within such an SDB environment, the business network is extended by the expansion of bureaucratic mechanisms, and active involvement of state-actors. Furthermore, institutional logics (Haveman & Rao, 1997) and institutional arrangements (North, 1990) at the state-level such as the country's economic liberalisation and international regulatory setting (e.g. economic sanctions), and macro-environmental changes such as country trade growth, regional crisis (e.g., Asian Financial Crisis 1997), and global trends (e.g., effects of Container Shipping Crisis emerged since 2008) promote and limit business networking and network-actors' competitiveness.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Theoretically, this study contributes to the IMP and international business and management literature in that it analyses external driving factors and actors impacting on a business network evolution, how (and why) a business network emerges and evolves, and how different actors/groups develop power, their power creation mechanisms, and patterns of interactions. Specifically, this study provides clarity on how power asymmetry influences network evolution. The findings from this study help enlighten a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of power relationships and business network evolution that manifests in an SDB environment of a developing and transitional economy. The study markedly develops both diverged and converged perspectives from those surfaced in developed and emerging contexts. This study sheds light on the country-specific and historical-specific dynamics, actors, activities, resources, mechanisms, and patterns of business network evolutions streamed in both international business and management studies (e.g. Makino, 2014; Makino et al., 2004; Mazzarol et al., 1999) and IMP field (e.g. Ekström & Danermark, 1991; Håkansson & Snehota, 1995; Nyström et al., 2017). The study provides significant unique insights due to the distinct contextual setting of an SDB environment such as Myanmar. In an SDB environment, institutional and macro-environmental changes are key influencing factors rather than mediating factors, contrasting to the prior works in western contexts (Lewin et al., 1999). Changes in the institutional system such as governing and economic systems, and international regulatory settings, shape the emergence and evolution of a business network, and development of its actors. Moreover, macro-environmental changes such as country's trade growth, global, regional, and network factors influence on the entire business network and its actors. This point contrasts to the findings from the context such as banking sector in the US, Germany, and Japan in which those are indirect factors (Dijksterhuis et al., 1999) while supporting to those from France and Italy in which state-actors' policy and direct involvement are significant (Butzbach, 2016). As a focal and leading actor in the port industry, in this case, the changes made by the public port authority could not be decoupled from changes in institutional logics and arrangements at the state-level. Hence, we support the contribution of the country- and industry-specific matter. The findings portray network extension across the boundary, beyond the industry due to state-actors' active involvement, and a micro-macro relationship in which the mediating role of state-actors, the degree of commitment and support that enable and limit firm ability and strategic intents, and political/social capital employed by firms' MDs in mobilising state-actors. In this context, an obvious resource developed in raising political/social capital is ex-military ties between firms' MDs and state-actors. Another resource used in creating political/social capital (trust) is MDs' professionalism. Focusing on the political/social capital developed among individual actors from both institution and firm level, this study adds a key mediating variable (Morgan & Hunt, 1994),

the degree of state-actors' commitments and supports that restrict or enable a focal actors' (public authority) strategic intents that shape networked industry and its actors development. Within an SDB environment, as it is difficult to predict the attitudes and behaviours of the state-actors (both institutions and individuals), having commitment and trust from them improves firms' competence. This point aligns with the commitment-trust theory of Morgan & Hunt (1994) in which commitment-trust as a key moderating variable in exchange of relationships. We posit that having higher authorities' commitments is crucial and reflects their acquiescence on managerial intentionality of the focal firm. Additionally, firms' responses, in such context of a highly state-dominant business network in a transitional economy, are varied from passive, reactive/adaptive, to proactive depending on the degree of favour they receive from changes in the institutional logic/arrangement and state-actors.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The phenomenon of military ties and their influence on the power relationships in the business network provides a unique research field in the investigation of power asymmetries in business relationships. The scope of the current study allowed up to only get a snapshot into this complex concept. Future studies should extend the chosen topic and bring the investigation of the influence of industry characteristics, the level of internationalisation and international institutions. The study provides managers with the knowledge of the processes used by private firms to influence the decision makers in the asymmetric power relationships where a large publicly owned entity is the most powerful players in the business network. It suggests policymakers and especially international ones, e.g. EU or WTO, with the information on how the regulatory framework should be developed to limit the power of natural monopolies in order to encourage private investments and market-driven competition.

REFERENCES

- Bae, J. 2018. *Producing Garments for Global Markets: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Myanmar's Export Garment Industry 2011–2015*. Ph.D. Thesis, Copenhagen Business School.
- Butler, B. & Batt, P. J. 2014. Re-assessing value (co)-creation and cooperative advantage in international networks. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 43, 538-542.
- Butzbach, O. K. 2016. The Evolution of Organizational Diversity in Banking: Savings Banks' Consolidation and Sector Coordination in France and Italy, 1980–2012. *Organization Studies*, 37, 565-589.
- Cantù, C., Corsaro, D., Fiocca, R. & Tunisini, A. 2013. IMP studies: A bridge between tradition and innovation. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42, 1007-1016.
- Chakrabarti, R., Ramos, C. & Henneberg, S. 2013. Network dynamics in the UK pharmaceutical network — A network-as-practice perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42, 356-371.
- Child, J., Rodrigues, S. B. & Tse, K. K. T. 2012. The Dynamics of Influence in Corporate Co-Evolution. *Journal of Management Studies*, 49, 1246-1273.
- Cook, K. S. 1977. Exchange and Power in Networks of Interorganizational Relations. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 18, 62-82.
- Cook, K. S. & Emerson, R. M. 1978. Power, Equity and Commitment in Exchange Networks. *American Sociological Review*, 43, 721-739.
- Cowan, K., Paswan, A. K. & Van Steenburg, E. 2015. When inter-firm relationship benefits mitigate power asymmetry. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 48, 140-148.
- Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. 2016. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Thousand Oaks, California, SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Di Benedetto, C. A. & Lindgreen, A. 2018. The Emergence of Industrial Marketing Management as the Leading Academic Journal in Business-to-Business Marketing. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 69, 5-12.
- Dieleman, M. & Sachs, W. M. 2008. Coevolution of institutions and corporations in emerging economies: How the Salim group morphed into an institution of Suharto's crony regime. *Journal of Management Studies*, 45, 1274-1300.
- Dijksterhuis, M. S., Van den Bosch, F. A. J. & Volberda, H. W. 1999. Where Do New Organizational Forms Come From? Management Logics as a Source of Coevolution. *Organization Science*, 10, 569-582.
- Ekström, M. & Danermark, B. 1991. The study of power mechanisms—An interactive and generative approach to a case study of Swedish urban renewal. *Scandinavian Housing and Planning Research*, 8, 153-170.
- Flick, U. 2014. *An introduction to qualitative research*, California, SAGE Publications.
- Ford, D. & Mouzas, S. 2013. The theory and practice of business networking. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42, 433-442.
- French, J. R. & Raven, B. 1959. The bases of social power. In: Cartwright, D. (ed.) *Classics of organization theory*.
- Gonçalves, S. M., da Silva, R. V. & Teixeira, N. 2019. Individual actors and embeddedness in business-to-business interactions. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 76, 181-191.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M. & Namey, E. E. 2012. *Applied thematic analysis*, Thousand Oaks, California, SAGE Publications.
- Håkansson, H. & Snehota, I. 1995. *Developing relationships in business networks*, Routledge London.
- Håkansson, H. & Snehota, I. 2000. The IMP Perspective: Assets and Liabilities of Business Relationships. In: Sheth, J. N. & Parvatiya, A. (eds.) *Handbook of Relationship Marketing*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Håkansson, H. & Waluszewski, A. 2013. A never ending story — Interaction patterns and economic development. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42, 443-454.
- Halinen, A. & Törnroos, J.-Å. 1998. The role of embeddedness in the evolution of business networks. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 14, 187-205.
- Hambrick, D. C. 2007. Upper Echelons Theory: An Update. *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 334-343.
- Hambrick, D. C. & Mason, P. A. 1984. Upper Echelons: The Organization as a Reflection of Its Top Managers. *Academy of Management Review*, 9, 193-206.
- Haveman, H. A. & Rao, H. 1997. Structuring a Theory of Moral Sentiments; Institutional and Organizational Coevolution in the Early Thrift Industry. *American Journal of Sociology*, 102, 1606-1651.
- Koza, M. P. & Lewin, A. Y. 1998. The Co-evolution of Strategic Alliances. *Organization Science*, 9, 255-264.
- Koza, M. P. & Lewin, A. Y. 1999. The Coevolution of Network Alliances: A Longitudinal Analysis of an International Professional Service Network. *Organization Science*, 10, 638-653.
- Lewin, A. Y., Long, C. P. & Carroll, T. N. 1999. The coevolution of new organizational forms. *Organization Science*, 10, 535-550.
- Lewin, A. Y. & Volberda, H. W. 1999. Prolegomena on Coevolution: A Framework for Research on Strategy and New Organizational Forms. *Organization Science*, 10, 519-534.
- Lindgreen, A., Hingley, M. & Trienekens, J. 2008. Relationships, networks and interactions in food and agriculture business-to-business marketing and purchasing. *British Food Journal*, 110, null.

- Makino, S. 2014. Three Important Perspectives for Understanding National Context. *Multidisciplinary Insights from New AIB Fellows*.
- Makino, S., Isobe, T. & Chan, C. M. 2004. Does country matter? *Strategic Management Journal*, 25, 1027-1043.
- Massey, G. R., Wang, P. Z. & Kyngdon, A. S. 2019. Conceptualizing and modeling interpersonal trust in exchange relationships: The effects of incomplete model specification. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 76, 60-71.
- Mazzarol, T., Volery, T., Doss, N. & Thein, V. 1999. Factors influencing small business start-ups: A comparison with previous research. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 5, 48-63.
- Meyer, K. E. & Thein, H. H. 2014. Business under adverse home country institutions: The case of international sanctions against Myanmar. *Journal of World Business*, 49, 156-171.
- Morgan, R. M. & Hunt, S. D. 1994. The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58, 20-38.
- North, D. C. 1990. *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.
- Nyström, A.-G., Ramstrom, J. & Törnroos, J.-Å. 2017. Conceptualizing mechanisms influencing strategizing in business networks. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 32, 777-785.
- Olsen, P. I., Prenkert, F., Hoholm, T. & Harrison, D. 2014. The dynamics of networked power in a concentrated business network. *Journal of Business Research*, 67, 2579-2589.
- Partanen, J. & Möller, K. 2012. How to build a strategic network: A practitioner-oriented process model for the ICT sector. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41, 481-494.
- Provan, K. G., Beyer, J. M. & Kruytbosch, C. 1980. Environmental Linkages and Power in Resource-Dependence Relations Between Organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 25, 200-225.
- Rodrigues, S. B. & Child, J. 2003. Co-evolution in an Institutionalized Environment. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40, 2137-2162.
- Rudkin, A. & Erba, J. 2018. Myanmar's cultural dimensions: Exploring the relationship among the social identity, attitudes towards globalisation and preferences of myanmar consumers in Yangon. *International Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies*, 14, 191-226.
- Salmi, A. 1995. *Institutionally Changing Business Networks. An Analysis of Finnish Company's Operations in Exporting to the Soviet Union, Russia and the Baltic States*. Helsinki School of Economics.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2012. *Research methods for business students*, Harlow, England, Pearson.
- Schwandt, T. A. 2007. Constructivism. In: Schwandt, T. A. (ed.) *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Van der Lugt, L., Dooms, M. & Parola, F. 2013. Strategy making by hybrid organizations: The case of the port authority. *Research in Transportation Business & Management*, 8, 103-113.
- Van Der Lugt, L. M., Rodrigues, S. B. & Van Den Berg, R. 2014. Co-evolution of the strategic reorientation of port actors: insights from the Port of Rotterdam and the Port of Barcelona. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 41, 197-209.
- Welch, C. & Wilkinson, I. 2004. The political embeddedness of international business networks. *International Marketing Review*, 21, 216-231.
- Welch, C. & Wilkinson, I. 2005. Network perspectives on interfirm conflict: reassessing a critical case in international business. *Journal of Business Research*, 58, 205-213.
- Yin, R. K. 2018. *Case study research and applications : design and methods*, Thousand Oaks, California : SAGE Publications, Inc.