The role of boundary-spanners in the management of inter-organizational relations: an application of the ARA model to study the activities of alliance managers

Vichara KIN, Nathalie FABBE-COSTES, Frédéric PREVOT

Abstract :

Strategic alliances are complex forms of organization. Recent literature in this field has identified the determinants of the success of managing these inter-organizational relationships. In particular, an interest has developed in the study of the daily implementation of alliance management. In this management, some actors, who are at the frontiers of the organizations, the boundary-spanners, play a determining role. In this article, we propose to study the activities of these actors. We apply the ARA (Actors-Resources-Activities) model to the case of 18 alliances, in order to analyze the role of alliances-managers. The results make it possible to identify the main activities and to show the key role of these actors for the success of alliances.

Keywords : Strategic alliances – boundary-spanner – ARA model – inter-organizational relations

Paper : Condensed version

INTRODUCTION

Alliances can be defined as "inter-firm cooperative agreements aimed atachieving competitive advantage for the partners" (Das & Teng, 1999, p.50) or "arrangements between two or more independent companies companies that choose to carry out a project or operate in a specific business area by coordinating the necessary skills and resources jointly rather than either operating on their own or merging their operations" (Dussauge et al, 2000: 99). Research identifies different motives for creating alliances, various types of alliance, or determinants of alliance performance (Dussauge et al, 2000, Das & Teng, 2001, Kauser & Shaw, 2004, Lavie, 2007; Rahman & Korn, 2010). However, the day-to-day implementation of the alliance remains an under-explored topic, while it is critical to the success of the strategy that led to the formation of an alliance (Ferreira et al, 2014). Between the alliance strategy and its performance, studying its implementation is necessary to understand the success or failure of an alliance. In the day-to-day implementation of the alliance, particular actors, alliance managers, play the role of boundary-spanners by positioning themselves at the interfaces between alliance partners. The role of these actors has rarely been studied. However, this role is crucial in the functioning of inter-organizational relations (Haas, 2015).

In this article, we propose to answer the following question: how do alliance managers, as boundary-spanners, participate in the implementation of alliance management? To answer this question, we apply the ARA model (Actors-Resources-Activities) (Häkansson and Snehota, 1995) to the study of 18 alliance cases in which we identify the different activities of alliance managers. The results provide a better understanding of the place of boundary-spanners in inter-organizational relationships. They also show the interest of the ARA model for understanding the management of alliances.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES: FROM STRATEGY TO DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT

In a hyper-competitive environment, alliances are a means of external growth that allows partner organizations to share resources while maintaining their autonomy (Dussauge et al, 2000, D'Aveni, 2010). Alliances are particularly interesting interorganizational relationships, as they connect organizations that want to collaborate around a common project and share resources, while maintaining their legal and strategic independence. This preservation of strategic and legal independence distinguishes alliances from mergers and acquisitions. The partners must therefore cooperate in respect of the identities and strategic choices of each. This explains the complexity of these organizational forms and the difficulties in day-to-day management (Ferreira et al, 2014).

However, the literature on alliances deals little with this day-to-day management, focusing mainly on strategic aspects of the alliance: the reasons for formation, the structure, the performance, the determinants of failure and success (Dussauge et al. , 2000, Ferreira et al, 2014, Gomes et al, 2016). The alliance is considered a relevant means of ensuring the competitiveness of partners around clearly defined objectives (Rothaermel, 2015, Gomes, 2016). The alliance strategy depends on each partner's goals, common goals and resources to share. The measurement of the performance of an alliance can be done in quantitative terms according to the achievement of the common objectives or the objectives of each partner, or in qualitative terms by measuring the degree of satisfaction of the partners (Ferreira et al, 2014; Albers et al, 2016).

However, between the defined strategy and the results of the alliance, the concretization of the alliance is the point that may explain its success or failure (Harrigan, 1988, Bamford et al, 2003). The observation of the daily implementation of the alliance is paradoxically little studied. Indeed, in alliances the objectives are often formalized (and therefore can be easily

studied), but not the behaviors (Vlaar et al, 2007, p.437). In everyday life, since partners may have different motivations and these motivations may change, the alliance is subject to tension. In this context, the role of alliances managers, as boundary-spanners, is a decisive element for the success of alliance management.

ROLE OF ALLIANCE MANAGERS AS BOUNDARY-SPANNERS IN THE DAY-TO-DAY ALLIANCE MANAGEMENT

Alliance managers are "alliance practitioners" who are particularly committed to their operations (Bell et al, 2013). They are actors with a thorough knowledge of the alliance context (Taylor, 2005) and who face the tensions inherent in alliances (Vlaar et al, 2007, Castaldi et al, 2014). They provide the link between the alliance's partner organizations (Taylor, 2005, Bell et al, 2013, Niesten and Jolink, 2015), managing the development of routines and processes for coordinating activities with the partner, exchanging relevant knowledge and building social bonds (Castaldi et al, 2014, 815). They thus constitute an indispensable link between the terrain and the direction of the alliance. They implement relationships essential to the good conduct of the alliance (Hutt et al, 2000, Ireland et al, 2002), and must make choices in the daily operation of alliances (Ireland et al, 2002; 2005, Hoang and Rothaermel, 2005, Vlaar et al, 2007, Bell et al, 2013, Castaldi et al, 2014, Niesten and Jolink, 2015). The role of alliance managers is to get involved in the cooperative relationship. Alliance managers correspond to an effective need to manage increasingly numerous and complex partnerships. Les alliance managers sont des boundary-spanners. Bary-spanners are defined as "a valuable and distinctive class of actor, operating within intra- and inter-sectoral collaborative environments, including partnerships, alliances, networks, consortia and forms of integration », et « a set of individuals who have a dedicated job role or responsibility to work in a multi-agency and multi-sectoral environment and to engage in boundary-spanning activities, processes and practices" (Williams, 2011, p. 27). To define these roles, we also find the terms "gatekeepers" (Ansett, 2005), "lynchpins" (Katz and Kahn, 1966) and "brokers" (Radjou et al, 2008). Miles and Snow (1992) use the terms of "brokers" coordinators, architects, facilitators. Williams (2002) speaks of reticulists, communicator, organizor, entrepreneur. Barner-Rasmussen et al (2010) have established a typology of boundary-spanner functions in MultiNational Companies: transacting (inter-organizational exchange), linking (use of its personal network), facilitating (between actors to better deliver messages), intervening (solving misunderstandings). The last three functions are linked to the first (transacting). According to Ancona and Caldwell (1992), there are four types of boundary-spanners activities: representation, task coordination, information dissemination, and information flow monitoring. These elements show the potential span of boundary-spanners activities, which contribute to insider intelligence (Williams, 2011). Thus, since the capital of an alliance relationship lies in the close interaction of the individuals concerned by the alliance (Kale et al, 2000), a careful look must be given to the action of alliance managers playing the role of boundary-spanners.

In this article, we propose to answer the following question: how do alliance managers, as boundary-spanners, participate in the implementation of alliances? Addressing such a question makes it possible to study the everyday life of alliances by focusing on an individual actor. This question requires work on multiple levels, with grids of analysis to understand in depth the interactions entrusted to the hands of individual actors. The ARA model can be an interesting model to answer this question.

THE ARA MODEL AS A BOUNDARY-SPANNERS ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS TOOL

The ARA (Actors-Resources-Activities) model proposed byHakansson and Snehota (1995) is a relevant analytical tool for studying multi-level interactions. Used primarily in network and marketing approaches (Finch et al, 2010, Ford and Mouzas, 2010, Harrison et al, 2010, Veludo, et al., 2004), it can be applied to strategy research, where it is proving to be a useful model for studying interactions and tensions between actors (Hakansson and Snehota, 1995). « We need models, descriptive, explanatory or normative, that embrace relationships and connections between relationships. We need descriptive models that take into account the elements of relationships, the processes that form the relationships, and that capture the consequences of their connectedness. […] We also need normative models that can be helpful in guiding the management action in business relationships […] There are two issues, in particular […] : how to mobilize the various different counterparts of a company and, consequently, how to develop cooperative posture and coordination mechanisms in interaction with others in order to solve problems as they arise. » (Hakansson et Snehota, 1995, p. 18-19). Activity is defined as a sequence of acts directed towards purpose, arbitrarily defined and always decomposable into minor activities or integrated into a chain of activities. Considered as rare, the resource is taken into account in this model as part of a constellation of resources oriented towards defined objectives. Thus, the resource only makes sense if it has utility and if it is related to other resources. It can be owned by the firm, but it can also be addressable (through partnerships for example), without necessarily being the property of the firm (Sanchez, 1998). Thus, it is necessary to study the embedding and hierarchy of resources (Priem & Butler, 2001). Actors are « individuals who endow business networks with life. What happens in a network stems from the behavior of individuals who bring into the relationships between companies their intentions and interpretations upon which they act » (Hakansson et Snehota, 1995, p. 193). These individuals have their identities that may conflict with those of other individuals with whom they are co-operating. The links created in spite of the individualities have an organizing effect and thus reveal a web of actors. The model makes it possible to study in a simple and in-depth way all the possible interactions in a given business network. Gupta and Maltz (2015) point out that this model is suitable for studying relationships in networks. Value is created in the context of interactions between individuals.

The ARA model is a useful tool for studying the daily life of alliances and the roles of alliance managers. It allows analyzing the activities of boundary-spanners in inter-organizational relations by identifying the specificities of these actors.

METHOD

The purpose of our research is to understand the actions of alliance managers in their daily lives as boundary-spanners, and to better identify their impact and specificity. We use the ARA model to study 18 alliance projects. Companies come from various sectors (services, pharmaceuticals, automotive, etc.). The data was collected during two years (August 2013 to September 2015), as part of a participation in ASAP (Association of Strategic Alliance Professionals), an association of alliance management professionals. We participated in the meetings of the association during these two years. We made contacts with alliances managers of companies. We conducted interviews with the alliances managers of 18 companies, all engaged in at least one alliance. For each company, we focused the study on one recent alliance. The interviews are based on an interview guide built on the basis of a literature review using the ARA model. The interview guide is constructed in such a way as to obtain information about the actors (the boundary-spanners and the individuals with whom they are connected in the management of the alliance), the resources they mobilize and the activities that they realize.

The interviews were transcribed and coded on NVivo11. The profiles of the respondents interviewed are presented in the following table. Following the analysis of the interviews we contacted the interviewed individuals (by mail or phone) to clarify certain aspects. We also collected a set of documents internal to the company.

N°	Company	Gender	Age	Seniority in the position	Seniority in the company	Durantion of the interview	Industry
1	Alpha	M	48	2	2	1h38	IT / Services
2	Beta	M	44	2	7	54	Consulting
3	Gamma	F	42	4	12	1h01	Pharma
4	Delta	M	55	10	16	1h08	IT / Services
5	Epsilon	M	41	6	12	53	Pharma
6	Dzeta	M	46	4	16	58	IT / Services
7	Eta	M	33	2	2	58	IT / Services
8	Teta	M	59	5	22	33	Automotive
9	Iota	M	44	2	5	50	IT / Services
10	Kappa	M	49	5	17	1h09	Pharma
11	Lambda	M	45	3	3	42	IT / Services
12	Mu	F	42	2	4	43	Pharma
13	Nu	F	49	3	3	1h03	Conseil
14	Xi	M	38	3	10	1h05	IT / Services
15	Omicron	M	42	5	5	59	IT / Services
16	Pi	F	40	3,5	3,5	37	Services
17	Rhô	F	45	3	5	1h39	Automotive
18	Sigma	F	42	3	3	52	Automotive
∑ : 18		6F/12M	44,7	3,75	8,2	59	8 IT / 4 Ph / 3 Aut / 2 Cons / 1 services

The analysis of the data collected makes it possible to identify the actions and the place of the interviewed alliance managers. For convenience, we will provide below illustrative interview descriptions of these activities. These verbatims reflect the triangulation of data obtained from various sources (semi-structured interviews, documentation, exchanges during meetings and by e-mails).

RESULTS

The results show that alliance managers are **key players in the success of alliances**. *"It's simple, in all objectivity, or as much as I can, if there is nobody who does the job, I can tell you that the project goes to failure, I can assure you"* (Dzeta). *"I, alone, I am not indispensable as an individual, but as a function that I embody, yes, it was necessary. Without me, in a sense, there would have been no project at all. If we had to prioritize things, I would say that we must first of all have the alliance manager then the resources necessary for the smooth running of the project, because without the resources, the alliance manager is all alone, she/he can do nothing"* (Gamma).

One element of the Alliance manager's key position is her/his activities at the frontier between organizations. She/he is the only one able to create **a hub between actors, resources and activities**. *"I think that if I was not there to coordinate all this, it would be a cacophony! [...] We are at the crossroads of a everyone and everything in the project."* (Delta) *"I'm important, because if I was not here, or rather nobody did what I do, well there would still be a hell of a*

void" (Teta). The alliance-manager is there to fill a void and to constitute an active bridge between the other actors, the resources and the activities to be realized. He is able to sort out what passes on this bridge: *"We get a lot of information, and we must identify the information that will be interesting, for a particular audience. […] Everyone does not have to know everything about everything, you have to know how to sort and dispatch. We have a role of catalyst, to facilitate the flow of information. While this may help move some actors forward, we will not hesitate to communicate. But if this is of no use, we will not overburden people unnecessarily either "* (Epsilon).

Another element lies in the ability of the alliance manager to **resolve risk situations**: *"Oh yes, yes, yes. I think the role of the alliance manager is essential! It all depends on the type of alliance! [...] But as soon as an alliance has a significant size, and takes place over several years, engage a significant number of scientists, and is strategic for both companies, it is essential to have an alliance manager, otherwise there are many pitfalls on the field."* (Kappa). This capacity therefore depends on the **margins of maneuvering** left to the alliance manager*: "We had the latitude to change things [...] which would have been difficult if I had my hands completely tied".* This situation results from **conflicting interests that must be managed** to converge towards common objectives*: "You cannot be an alliance manager if you do not have a detailed understanding of stakeholder issues. Everyone has their vision of the project, the way they approach it, the way they live it, their own goals. And these goals do not necessarily fit into the priorities of the project. These ambiguities must be managed. We can not please everyone all the time, but we are looking for the common good for the project."* (Epsilon).

A key component of the alliance managers' role is the **ability to build an identity**, even if it is temporary. This construction requires the development of a **common language** or a system of interpretation allowing actors to understand each other. *"It was necessary to create a common object, which gathered everybody around the project, and to give them a desire, a culture they did not have before, around this project, because it is not a 'natural' act at all to work as a team"* (Alpha). The work of the alliance manager always involves **respect for each other's cultures**: *"We are a start-up, so our developers have a culture of start-up, innovation, agility, etc. On the other hand, when a developer at Eta A speaks to a project manager at Eta B, it's a clash of cultures! [...] So, sometimes your teams tell you: 'It's hard to work with this partner'. And you must answer them: 'Yes it is difficult, but you will have to work together, adapt, despite the fact that the cultures are different. People have to work together! '[...] It's a job where you spend your time managing conflicting interests."* (Eta). The alliance manager also develops a specific competence in the management of cooperation and she/he helps the company to **achieve learning within the alliance**: "*We also learn, at this time, to store our knowledge, take stock on our experiences, and that also builds the relationship, and our future relationships"* (Mu).

These different elements are interrelated. The position of the alliance manager at the borders of the partner organizations allows her/him to develop these different skills. These skills are critical to the success of the alliance. The alliance manager has a fundamental role in implementing the strategy: *"We are not in the creation of an action plan, we are in the implementation of the action plan"* (Sigma). The alliance manager is the actor who will implement the daily life of the alliance, interpreting the related objectives liked to the alliance and translating them into concrete actions in the field: *"You do not realize how the manager alliance is key to the smooth running of the project. We can not do without an alliance manager, nor entrust the charge to anyone."* (Alpha) The alliance manager role is indeed based on specific **soft skills**, including the ability to analyze situations transversely and act in the shadows, without putting her/himself forward and by promoting collective goals. *"It is someone who must want to orchestrate, not necessarily being the first person. It's not someone who comes to the fore for him; he puts himself on the stage to coordinate the work of others "* (Mu).

"The relationship is based on a lot of background work, a little invisible. We build the alliance on a daily basis. From the outside, you see the building go up, you say to yourself: 'Oh, it seems to be working!', But you do not see the workers in it. They do not seek recognition, it is a profession where you will not really be recognized anyway. We are there to value the collective." (Alpha)

DISCUSSION

Through the observation of alliances managers activities, the results of our research highlight the relational nature of the role of boundary-spanners. The boundary-spanner is located at the "technical" interfaces between organizations, where it evolves within a specific ARA system. He then finds himself evolving within "psychic" interfaces, which he develops in the form of relationships. Here we find the linking and facilitating aspects mentioned by Barner-Rasmussen et al (2010). As a center of a hub, the boundary-spanner shapes the connections by mobilizing at the right time the right configurations or subsets of actors, resources and activities from the global ARA system associated with the alliance. Indeed, all connections within the global system are not useful at any point in the relationship. In addition, all activities can be broken down into subsets (Häkansson and Snehota, 1995). The boundary-spanner mobilizes part of the ARA system depending on the situation. Thus the boundary-spanner is the architect of the inter-organizational relationship. Its day-to-day role is to actively ensure the link between actors, resources and activities, to manage tensions by creatively using its flexibility, to build the identity of the inter-organizational relationship while respecting cultures, and to promote knowledge management. Different approaches in the management literature provide theoretical insight into the activities of alliances managers identified through our observations. The ambiguity in the links between the objectives of the partners and the objectives of the alliance evokes coopetition. It refers to systems of actors that interact in a common goal while maintaining conflicting interests (Bengtsson and Kock, 2000). In this perspective, the boundary-spanners mobilize a set of actors, resources and activities so that the dynamics of cooperation and competition articulate without too strong tensions that could lead to crisi an failure of the cooperation. It's about respecting cultures and identities. Respect for identities refers to issues of intercultural management. Managing cultural diversity avoids conflictual situations, while fostering a learning environment in inter-organizational relationships. Finally, more than the stated purpose of the alliance, the real challenge is to access and integrate new knowledge. It is about obtaining knowledge and know-how thanks to the collaborative experience, which were not held or mastered before the collaboration. Here we find the knowledge approach and the need for intergration by the actors (Nonaka and Takeushi, 1995, Piening and Salge, 2015), with the risk of a lerning race (Hamel, 1991). In this context, the boundary-spanner, being at the crossroads or even the source of these questions, must develop a set of skills allowing her/him to manage the paradoxes.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of our research is to study the action of alliances managers as boundary-spanners within strategic alliances. The results show the key position held by these actors and also show that their role is more relational than operational: bridging actors, resources and activities, managing tensions and building the identity of the relationship. The ARA model has been an interesting model to understand the action of boundary spanners in their daily lives. It is through the activities of alliance managers that the operationalization of the inter-organizational relationship is built.

The results presented in this article are part of the results of a larger research. They have several limitations. First of all, the research does not rely on a main theoretical framework, but mobilizes a diverse set of approaches. At the empirical level, the firms studied are all large multinationals. This leaves aside the specificities of cooperation between SMEs. In addition, we do not establish a link between the determinants and objectives of alliances and the type of activities of boundary-spanners. Finally, even though the projects were studied in depth, only 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted. These limits make it possible to propose avenues for future research. First, it would be interesting to study which specific ARA configurations are mobilized by boundary-spanners to carry out their activities. Are specific configurations of links between resource-actors and activities more suited to ensure the dynamics of cooperation and coopetition? to manage cultures? to manage knowledge? It would also be interesting to add a perspective of power relations. The boundary-spanner manages the information at the interfaces between the partners, so she/he is at the heart of the stakes of power. Finally, an approach based on the management of paradoxes would also help to better understand the reality of alliance managers' activities.

REFERENCES

Albers, S., Wohlgezogen, F., Zajac, E. J. (2016), 'Strategic alliance structures: An organization design perspective', Journal of Management, 42(3), p582-614.

Ancona, D. G., Caldwell, D. F. (1992), 'Bridging the boundary: External activity and performance in organizational teams', *Administrative science quarterly*, 37(4), p634-665.

Ansett, S. (2005), 'Boundary spanner: The gatekeeper of innovation in partnerships', *Accountability Forum*, 6(4), p.36-44.

Bamford, J. D., Gomes-Casseres, B., Robinson, M. S. (2003), *Mastering alliance strategy: A comprehensive guide to design, management, and organization.* John Wiley & Sons : New York, 343p

Bengtsson, M., Kock, S. (2000), 'Coopetition" in business Networks—to cooperate and compete simultaneously', *Industrial marketing management*, 29(5), p411-426.

Castaldi, L., Turi, C., Mazzoni, C., Paoli, A. D. (2014), 'Antecedents and constituents of alliance management capability: the role of valuable alliance experience and governance mechanisms for learning', *Journal of Management & Governance*, 19(4), p797-823.

D'aveni, R. A. (2010), *Hypercompetition*. Simon and Schuster : New York, 448p.

Das, T. K., Teng, B. S. (2001), 'Trust, control, and risk in strategic alliances: An integrated framework', *Organization studies*, 22(2), p.251-283.

Das, T. K., Teng, B.S. (1999), 'Managing risks in strategic alliances', *The Academy of Management Executive*, 13(4), p.50-62.

Dussauge, P., Garrette, B., Mitchell, W. (2000), 'Learning from competing partners: outcomes and durations of scale and link alliances in Europe, North America and Asia'. *Strategic management journal*, 21(2), p.99-126.

Ferreira, M. P., Storopoli, J. E., Serra, F. R. (2014), 'Two decades of research on strategic alliances: analysis of citations, co-citations and themes researched', *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, *18*(SPE), p.109-133.

Finch, J., Wagner, B., Hynes, N. (2010), 'Trust and forms of capital in business-to-business activities and relationships', *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(6), p1019-1027.

Ford, D., Mouzas, S. (2010), 'Networking under uncertainty: Concepts and research agenda. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *39*(6), p.956-962.

Hakansson, H. Snehota, I., (Eds.). (1995). *Developing relationships in business networks*. Londres: Routledge, 433p.

Gomes, E., Barnes, B. R., & Mahmood, T. (2016), 'A 22 year review of strategic alliance research in the leading management journals. International business review, 25(1), 15-27.

Gupta, S., Maltz, E. (2015), 'Interdependency, dynamism, and variety (IDV) network modeling to explain knowledge diffusion at the fuzzy front-end of innovation', *Journal of Business Research*, 68(11), p.2434-2442.

Haas, A. (2015), 'Crowding at the frontier: boundary spanners, gatekeepers and knowledge brokers', *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 19(5), p.1029-1047.

Hamel, G. (1991), 'Competition for competence and interpartner learning within international strategic alliances', *Strategic management journal*, 12(S1), p83-103.

Harrigan, K. R. (1988), 'Joint ventures and competitive strategy', *Strategic management journal*, 9(2), p141-158.

Harrison, D., Holmen, E., Pedersen, A. C. (2010), 'How companies strategise deliberately in networks using strategic initiatives', *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(6), p947-955.

Hoang, H., Rothaermel, F. T. (2010), 'Leveraging internal and external experience: exploration, exploitation, and R&D project performance', *Strategic Management Journal*, 31(7), p.734-758.

Hutt, M. D., Stafford, E. R., Walker, B. A., Reingen, P. H. (2000), 'Case study: defining the social network of a strategic alliance', *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 41(2), 51-62.

Inkpen, A., Tsang, E. (2007), 'Learning and Strategic Alliances', *Academy of Management Annals, 1*, p.479-511.

Ireland, R. D., Hitt, M. A., Vaidyanath, D. (2002), 'Alliance management as a source of competitive advantage', *Journal of management*, 28(3), p413-446.

Katz, D., Kahn, R. L. (1966), *The psychology of organizations*. HR Folks International, New York, 288p.

Kauser, S., Shaw, V. (2004), 'The influence of behavioural and organisational characteristics on the success of international strategic alliances', *International Marketing Review*, 21(1), p.17-52.

Lavie, D. (2007), 'Alliance portfolios and firm performance: A study of value creation and appropriation in the US software industry', *Strategic Management Journal*, 28(12), p.1187-1212.

Miles, R. E., Snow, C. C. (1992), 'Causes of failure in network organizations', *California management review*, 34(4), p53-72.

Niesten, E., Jolink, A. (2015), 'The impact of alliance management capabilities on alliance attributes and performance: a literature review', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(1), p69-100

Nonaka, I., Takeuchi, H. (1995), *The knowledge-creating company: How Japanese companies create the dynamics of innovation*, Oxford university press : New York, 304p.

Piening, E. P., Salge, T. O. (2015), 'Understanding the Antecedents, Contingencies, and Performance Implications of Process Innovation: A Dynamic Capabilities Perspective', *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 32(1), p80-97

Priem, R. L., Butler, J. E. (2001), 'Is the resource-based "view" a useful perspective for strategic management research?', *Academy of management review*, 26(1), p22-40.

Radjou, N., Cameron, B., Radcliffe, E. (2008), 'Indian CIOs Excel As Chief Innovation Officers', *Forrester Research*, 1-8.

Rothaermel, F. T. (2015). *Strategic management*. McGraw-Hill Education, 528p.

Sanchez, R., & Heene, A. (1998), 'Reinventing strategic management: New theory and practice for competence-based competition', *European Management Journal*, 15(3), p303-317.

Taylor, A. (2005), 'An operations perspective on strategic alliance success factors: An exploratory study of alliance managers in the software industry', *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 25(5), p469-490.

Veludo, M.L., Macbeth, D. K., Purchase, S. (2004), 'Partnering and relationships within an international network context', *International Marketing Review*, 21(2), p142-157.

Vlaar, P. W., Van Den Bosch, F. A., Volberda, H. W. (2007), 'Towards a dialectic perspective on formalization in interorganizational relationships: How alliance managers capitalize on the duality inherent in contracts, rules and procedures', *Organization Studies*, 28(4), p437-466.

Williams, P. (2011), 'The life and times of the boundary spanner', *Journal of Integrated Care*, 19(3), p26-33.

Williams, P. (2002), 'The competent boundary spanner', *Public administration*, 80(1), p103-124.