



Call for Papers for a Special Issue

POLITICAL CONNECTIONS IN GLOBAL COMPETITION

Submission Deadline: April 1, 2016

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Business-government interaction has become an important issue in strategic management, both practically and theoretically. With the increasing integration of the global economy, multinational corporations (MNCs) are exposed to dynamic political environments in their domestic and international operations where they interact with diverse political actors across geographical locations, industry sectors, and levels of government (Choi, Jia, and Lu, 2012). The economic incentive for MNCs to build and leverage connections with political actors also evolves over time, from obtaining regulatory legitimacy for overcoming liabilities of foreignness, to accessing government-controlled resources for competitiveness building and profit maximization (Hillman and Hitt, 1999), and more recently to forming public-private partnerships (PPP) for value co-creation (Luo, 2001; Porter and Kramer, 2011). Moreover, the wider social and ethical implications of the political strategies of MNCs also vary substantially with institutional context. For instance, while political lobbies are common and legitimate practices in many developed countries, political connections in emerging economies can take on other forms such as state ownership as well as personal and family ties with government officials, which may create negative publicity.

Research aiming to explain MNEs' political strategies ranges from early work focusing on political activities from a market transaction view (e.g., Boddewyn and Brewer, 1994; Hillman, Keim, and Schuler, 2004) to the more recent studies employing social exchange perspectives to investigate political ties or connections (e.g., Peng and Luo, 2000). Researchers have adopted different perspectives in examining the strategic role of business-government interaction. For instance, from the resource-based view, political connections can be considered network resources (Hillman and Hitt, 1999; Peng and Luo, 2000); while from the institutional perspective, political connections may incur legitimacy liabilities that hinder firms internationalization strategy (Cui and Jiang, 2012; Meyer

et al., 2014).

The resources and liabilities arising from ties to government are highly contingent on the context in which a company is operating (e.g., Wu, Li, and Li, 2013; Sun, Melhahi, and Thun, 2011). In particular, governments operate differently in different political systems, and therefore interact with businesses in different ways, with different objectives and through different channels. MNCs operating in a wide range of geographic locations and industry sectors face multi-level and multifaceted political actors in their home and host countries. Moreover, political connections can have different business implications across subnational locales and industries. The value of political capital and the associated costs of creating such capital can be contingent on levels of institutions and industry characteristics. However, a significant gap exists in the current understanding of the acquisition, development, exploitation, and contingencies of such political connections, particularly in the international context.

Research on business-government interaction in the global context also presents opportunities for cross-disciplinary synergies in theory development and research method advancement. For instance, political science offers deeper understanding of the varieties of political systems, their subtle variation across levels of government (Oi, 1992), and their dynamic change and global diffusion over time (Levi-Faur, 2005). Similarly, sociology, anthropology, and history research can contribute valuable insights towards a comprehensive and holistic apprehension of the antecedents, processes, context, and consequences of the interaction between businesses and governments. This special issue aims to bring the voices of those neighboring disciplines into business research. Such a cross-disciplinary approach holds promise not only for advancing novel theoretical approaches, but for research relevant to policy and business practices.

This special issue welcomes research that (a) broadens our understanding of political connections by examining their relevance in the global business context, their variations across national context, or their contingencies across types of firms and industries, or (b) deepens theoretical insights into how political connections are developed and exploited by different constituents through a wide range of forms, including personal, organizational, equity-based, as well as network-based ties, transactions and social exchanges.

We are not interested in studies that test for direct effects of political variables (state-ownership, government ties) on an aspect of firm strategy or performance. Rather, we are seeking studies that explore the 'how' and 'why' of the interaction between political and business actors. This includes, for example, quantitative studies differentiating different types of government actors or identifying contingent effects of their influence. We are also especially interested in in-depth qualitative studies that go inside of organizations to investigate the interfaces between specific businesses and specific government agencies. In line with the mission of the *Global Strategy Journal*, we are particularly

interested in questions of a global nature, i.e. cross-border activities that take place in multiple countries and/or are integrated across borders. We expect submissions to be cutting-edge research, to break new conceptual ground and to address real-world phenomena regarding business-government interaction. Examples of topics that fall under the domain of this call, which are illustrative at best and are not intended to define the boundaries of this special issue, include:

- What are the incentives for political actors and MNCs to engage in business-government interaction, and what are the implications of the alignment (or misalignment) of such incentives on business strategic decision making and public policy making?
- Who are the key actors in the business and government spheres that build political connections? How do these key actors create relationships beneficial to the involved partners?
- How do firms acquire and develop political connections overseas, and what are the situations under which political connections at home help or hinder interactions with political actors abroad?
- How and why does the importance of different types of political connections vary in different institutional contexts and at different levels of the political hierarchy?
- How can firms transfer political connections across institutional contexts? Will political connections at home become assets or liabilities abroad?
- What are the roles and motivations of individuals within the government sector, including politicians and bureaucrats that engage with MNEs?
- What is the role of public-private partnerships (PPP) in creating competitive advantage for MNCs, especially in unfamiliar overseas locations?
- How do MNEs engage with political actors when they face multiple layers of government at regional, national, provincial and local levels?
- How do political elites use their ties to global business to advance their own political objectives?

We welcome submissions of conceptual/theoretical papers, qualitatively oriented empirical papers, quantitatively oriented empirical papers, as well as papers employing mixed methods.

Deadlines and Submission Instructions

The deadline for submissions is April 1, 2016. All submissions will be subject to the regular double-blind peer review process at GSJ. To learn more about Global Strategy Journal, including additional information on the submission process, please visit the Global Strategy Journal website at: <http://gsj.strategicmanagement.net/>. Cover letters should indicate that the submission is for this special issue. Manuscripts that are accepted or invited to be revised and resubmitted for the SI after

the first round of reviews will be invited to take part in a paper development workshop to be held in conjunction with the SMS Annual Conference in Berlin, 17-20 September 2016.

More Information:

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