



The Interactive Mechanism between Social Embeddedness and Resource Orchestration: A Case Study of Logistic Company in Thailand

Zhang Yanhua*

Shu Shih-Tung**

Received: January 21, 2026, Revised: March 12, 2026, Accepted: March 12, 2026

Abstract

This paper examines the outsider disadvantage faced by cross-border logistics enterprises in emerging markets against the backdrop of global value chain restructuring and digital trade development. Through a case study of logistic company in the Thai market employing grounded theory methodology, it reveals how enterprises achieve sustainable growth through the interplay of social embedding and resource orchestration. The research proposes a ‘dual-drive mechanism for cross-market embedding and integration’: Social embedding provides the legitimacy foundation and initial capital for resource orchestration, while effective resource orchestration, through value creation, reinforces and deepens social embedding. Together, these two drivers propel the enterprise from market entry to strategic leapfrogging into ecosystem leadership. The primary contribution lies in integrating social embeddedness and resource orchestration theories, revealing their synergistic dynamics. This offers a dynamic, integrated analytical framework for understanding complex corporate adaptation in emerging markets, providing systematic insights for practice.

Keywords: Social embeddedness; Resource orchestration; Dual-engine drive; Emerging markets

* Ph.D. Student in Business Administration, Interdisciplinary Studies College, Payap University

** Ph.D., Interdisciplinary Studies College, Payap University



กลไกเชิงปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการฝังตัวทางสังคมและ การจัดการทรัพยากร: กรณีศึกษา บริษัทโลจิสติกส์ในประเทศไทย

จาง เยี่ยนหัว*
ชู ชี้อตุง**

รับบทความ: 21 มกราคม 2569, แก้ไขบทความ: 12 มีนาคม 2569, ตอรับบทความ: 12 มีนาคม 2569

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มุ่งศึกษาความเสียเปรียบของผู้ประกอบการโลจิสติกส์ข้ามพรมแดนในฐานะ “คนนอกตลาด” (Outsider Disadvantage) ในตลาดเกิดใหม่ ภายใต้บริบทของการปรับโครงสร้างห่วงโซ่มูลค่าโลกและการพัฒนาการค้าในยุคดิจิทัล โดยใช้กรณีศึกษาบริษัทโลจิสติกส์ในตลาดประเทศไทย และประยุกต์ใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงทฤษฎีพื้นฐาน (Grounded Theory) ผลการศึกษาชี้ให้เห็นว่า องค์กรสามารถบรรลุการเติบโตอย่างยั่งยืนได้ผ่านปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการฝังตัวทางสังคมและการจัดการทรัพยากร งานวิจัยนี้เสนอ “กลไกขับเคลื่อนคู่สำหรับการฝังตัวและการบูรณาการข้ามตลาด” (Dual-Drive Mechanism for Cross-Market Embedding and Integration) โดยการฝังตัวทางสังคมทำหน้าที่เป็นฐานความชอบธรรมและแหล่งทุนเริ่มต้นสำหรับการจัดการทรัพยากร ขณะที่การจัดการทรัพยากรอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพผ่านการสร้างคุณค่าจะช่วยเสริมสร้างและทำให้การฝังตัวทางสังคมมีความลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้น กลไกขับเคลื่อนทั้ง 2 ประการร่วมกันผลักดันให้องค์กรพัฒนาจากระยะเริ่มต้นของการเข้าสู่ตลาด ไปสู่การก้าวกระโดดเชิงกลยุทธ์และการเป็นผู้นำในระบบนิเวศทางธุรกิจ คุณูปการหลักของงานวิจัยนี้อยู่ที่การบูรณาการทฤษฎีการฝังตัวทางสังคมและทฤษฎีการจัดการทรัพยากรเข้าด้วยกัน โดยเปิดเผยพลวัตเชิงเสริมพลังระหว่างทั้ง 2 แนวคิด ซึ่งนำไปสู่กรอบการวิเคราะห์เชิงพลวัตและเชิงบูรณาการในการทำความเข้าใจการปรับตัวที่ซับซ้อนขององค์กรในตลาดเกิดใหม่ และให้ข้อค้นพบเชิงระบบที่เป็นประโยชน์ต่อการนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในทางปฏิบัติ

คำสำคัญ: การฝังตัวทางสังคม; การจัดการทรัพยากร; กลไกขับเคลื่อนคู่; ตลาดเกิดใหม่

* นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก วิทยาลัยสหวิทยาการ มหาวิทยาลัยพายัพ

** อาจารย์ วิทยาลัยสหวิทยาการ มหาวิทยาลัยพายัพ



Introduction

Against the backdrop of global value chain restructuring and digital trade development, cross-border logistics has emerged as strategic infrastructure (Tian, 2025). To overcome the outsider disadvantage encountered when entering emerging markets, logistics enterprises must undertake comprehensive adaptation and adjustment to local socio-economic structures. This process not only requires firms to secure external legitimacy ensuring their actions are accepted by local institutions, norms, and cognitive frameworks (Suchman, 1995; Huang et al., 2025), but also demands dynamic capabilities to effectively allocate and activate internal and external resources for competitive advantage (Teece et al., 1997).

Existing theories provide a foundational perspective. Social embeddedness theory emphasizes that firms' economic actions are deeply embedded within specific social relationships and network structures, with successful embeddedness dependent upon building extensive social connections and trust (Granovetter, 1985). Resource orchestration theory, originating from internal management perspectives, posits that competitive advantage stems from the dynamic management of resources (Sirmon et al., 2007; Zhang & Hua, 2020). However, existing research largely treats these as relatively independent analytical dimensions. Systematic theoretical explanations and in-depth case evidence remain scarce regarding how they intertwine and mutually reinforce each other within the dynamic process of multinational expansion, collectively driving enterprises' evolution from market entry to ecosystem leadership (Zhao & Cheng, 2022). In practice, logistics firms entering the Thai market often encounter managerial challenges such as regulatory adaptation, localization of operations, and coordination with local partners, which further highlights the need to understand how social embeddedness and resource orchestration interact in international expansion.

Based on the aforementioned dialogue between theory and practice, this study focuses on the case of logistic company in the Thai market to explore how cross-border logistics enterprises achieve a strategic leap from market entry to ecosystem integration in emerging markets through the interactive mechanism of social embedding and resource orchestration. To address this question, this research employs grounded theory methodology to conduct systematic coding analysis of multi-source qualitative data, identifying its evolutionary trajectory and ultimately constructing an integrated theoretical model of 'dual-wheel drive'. Theoretically, this study aims to further elucidate the intrinsic mechanisms of synergistic co-evolution between 'social embeddedness' and 'resource orchestration'. Practically, it provides enterprises entering multicultural markets with an integrated action framework that is both systematic and operationally applicable.



Research Objectives

1. To conduct an in-depth exploration of the dynamic evolution of cross-border logistics enterprises in emerging market economies, from initial entry and network establishment to deep integration.
2. To examine how the interaction between social embeddedness and resource orchestration enables internationalizing firms to acquire legitimacy-based resources and transform them into sustainable capabilities and competitive advantages.
3. To develop an integrated framework explaining how social embeddedness and resource orchestration jointly enable firms to progress from market entry to ecosystem leadership.

Literature Review and Analytical Framework

This section systematically outlines the core tenets and developmental trajectory of social embeddedness theory and resource orchestration theory. By evaluating their theoretical contributions and inherent limitations, it constructs an integrative analytical framework, thereby laying the theoretical groundwork for the subsequent case study of logistic company.

1. Social Embeddedness Theory and Its Limitations

Social embeddedness theory, as the core of new economic sociology, offers a profound critique of the isolated “economic man” hypothesis in economics, asserting that all economic behavior is embedded within specific social relations and institutional structures. From Granovetter (1985) concept of embeddedness to systematic categorization into structural, cognitive, cultural, and political embeddedness, when entering new markets, enterprises must engage in relationship building, cognitive adaptation, cultural understanding, and institutional alignment to effectively secure external resources and social legitimacy (Suchman, 1995), thereby overcoming the ‘outsider disadvantage’ (Zaheer, 1995). This theory elucidates the social foundations enterprises must establish during economic activities and details specific mechanisms. However, its analytical focus primarily centers on firms’ adaptation to external social structures and resource acquisition processes. Conversely, it does not constitute the primary research focus of this theory how enterprises, after acquiring these resources, effectively allocate, integrate, and transform them into sustainable competitive advantages through internal strategic decision-making and management actions. Therefore, to comprehensively explain the entire process from resource acquisition to advantage establishment for new entrants, it is necessary to combine this externally oriented theoretical perspective with management theories that place greater emphasis on internal strategic agency.



2. Resource Orchestration Theory and Its Limitations

To address the limitations of the resource endowment perspective in dynamic management contexts, resource orchestration theory emerged. This theory posits that resources require systematic, dynamic construction, integration, and leveraging by managers to maximize competitive advantage (Sirmon et al., 2007). Sirmon et al. (2011) established a comprehensive framework for resource orchestration theory, delineating the complete process from resource combination to capability building, ultimately realizing market value. Recent research has further deepened its micro-mechanisms, such as exploring the strategic alignment between resource orchestration and business models. Resource orchestration theory elucidates how firms proactively transform resources into distinctive capabilities and market value through managed practices. However, when explaining new entrants in transnational contexts, its analysis typically rests upon a crucial implicit assumption: that firms possess the fundamental resource endowments and market access conditions necessary for resource orchestration. Consequently, the theoretical focus remains predominantly on “how to manage existing resources”, while a more fundamental and upstream question remains under-explored: how new entrants initially acquire the foundational resources, critical channels, and social legitimacy required for effective resource orchestration when competing against local incumbents. Without this initial resource and legitimacy base, the subsequent systematic resource management process becomes difficult to initiate.

3. Preliminary Analysis Framework Construction

This study integrates social embeddedness theory with resource orchestration theory to construct a dynamic analytical framework of ‘social embeddedness-resource orchestration’. The two theories complement each other: social embeddedness theory explains how new entrants establish local networks and institutional connections to acquire critical resources and legitimacy, thereby laying the groundwork for market access (Lee, 2017); whilst resource orchestration theory focuses on how firms systematically manage, integrate, and utilize acquired resources to build core competencies and create value. Deep social embeddedness provides the resource foundation and behavioral license for effective resource orchestration (Vestrum & Rasmussen, 2013); conversely, successful resource orchestration enhances firm capabilities and market reputation, thereby reinforcing and deepening social embeddedness. Based on this, this study posits that new entrants’ market growth constitutes a continuous, cyclical process of interaction between social embeddedness and resource orchestration. Guided by this framework, the case analysis will explore how these two dimensions synergistically evolved and mutually reinforced each other across different stages of company’s Thai market entry, and how strategic adaptations enabled positive interactions and sustainable advantage under specific circumstances.



Research Method

1. Research Design

Qualitative research emphasizes the systematic interpretation of the intrinsic logic and behavioral significance of social phenomena through data collection and in-depth analysis. The core question of this study centers on ‘how new entrants achieve embeddedness and integration in overseas markets by leveraging social embeddedness and resource orchestration’, constituting a typical ‘how’ process-oriented inquiry. Consequently, qualitative research was selected as the methodological foundation. Regarding specific methodology, case studies effectively reveal the dynamic mechanisms and contextual causality underlying complex phenomena, aligning particularly well with this study’s exploratory objectives. Consequently, a longitudinal embedded single-case study design is adopted. A single-case design enables an in-depth exploration of complex processes within their real-life context, allowing the study to capture the nuanced interactions between social embeddedness and resource orchestration.

2. Case Selection

This study selects a logistic company’s entry into the Thai market as its research case, primarily due to its exemplary and instructive nature in theoretical sampling.

As a rapidly emerging global logistics enterprise in recent years, company has not only secured a place among the world’s top 100 logistics firms by revenue but has also achieved significant success in multiple emerging markets through its distinctive ‘overseas-first, domestic-later’ development strategy. Notably, within the Southeast Asian market, it has maintained the leading position with the highest market share for six consecutive years, establishing itself as a prime case study for examining corporate transnational operations. Upon entering Thailand in 2019, company confronted a mature competitive market dominated by local giants and international corporations. Its position as a ‘new entrant’ challenging the established order vividly illustrates the core processes of gaining legitimacy through social embeddedness and building capabilities through resource orchestration, thereby rendering the relevant mechanisms amenable to study.

3. Data Analysis and Coding

This study conducted interviews with Thailand’s logistic company between June and December 2025. Data accessibility for this study ensured thorough case analysis. Triangulation was achieved through multi-source collection of internal corporate interviews, public reports, industry data, and archival materials. Case data and coding results were subsequently validated by interviewees to ensure accuracy. Peer review was incorporated to evaluate the research process and findings, guaranteeing data reliability and validity. Data collection sources are detailed in Table 1.



Firstly, open coding constitutes the initial coding of raw data. Through detailed interpretation of the acquired case materials and data, this paper employs the notation (ax), ultimately establishing 127 labels. Concepts with similar meanings (at the upper dimension of attributes) were analyzed and grouped, refining more standardized sub-categories denoted by the coding prefix (Ax). In total, 22 sub-categories were established. Secondly, axial coding involves establishing primary and sub-categories by forming effective connections between labels derived from open coding through causal, contextual, or semantic relationships. The 22 sub-categories were logically grouped into 8 primary categories. The coding structure is illustrated in Figure 1. Thirdly, selective coding involves further refinement and integration of general concepts extracted through open coding and axial coding to derive core categories. Simultaneously, incomplete categories are supplemented to establish a rigorous and comprehensive theoretical model. Throughout this process, researchers repeatedly returned to the primary data, conducting theoretical sampling and comparative analysis to progressively identify the dynamic pathway: ‘market embedding–relationship establishment–network collaboration–sustained interaction–ecological integration’.

Table 1 Sources of Case Data Collection

Data Type		Data Type
Primary Source Material	Respondents	Executive Assistant, Business Department, Public Relations Department, Human Resources Department
	Interview Process Volume of Data	Total of 12 Times Total of 5 People 29 Hours 105,133 Chinese Words
Secondary Sources	Source of Information	Official Website, News Reports Academic Journal Materials
	Volume of Data	268 Pages, 137,482 Chinese Words

To ensure the reliability and rigor of theoretical construction, this study conducted a saturation test following the coding phase. Specifically, after completing systematic coding of the initial sample and establishing a preliminary theoretical framework, one-third of the remaining interview data was reserved for saturation testing. Analysis of this reserved material revealed no emergence of new conceptual categories or relational frameworks, nor did existing frameworks yield novel theoretical attributes. This indicated conceptual saturation within the model. Consequently, we determined that the coding process and theoretical construction met the criteria for theoretical saturation. The core categories and narrative threads thus formed provide a comprehensive explanation for the phenomena under investigation.

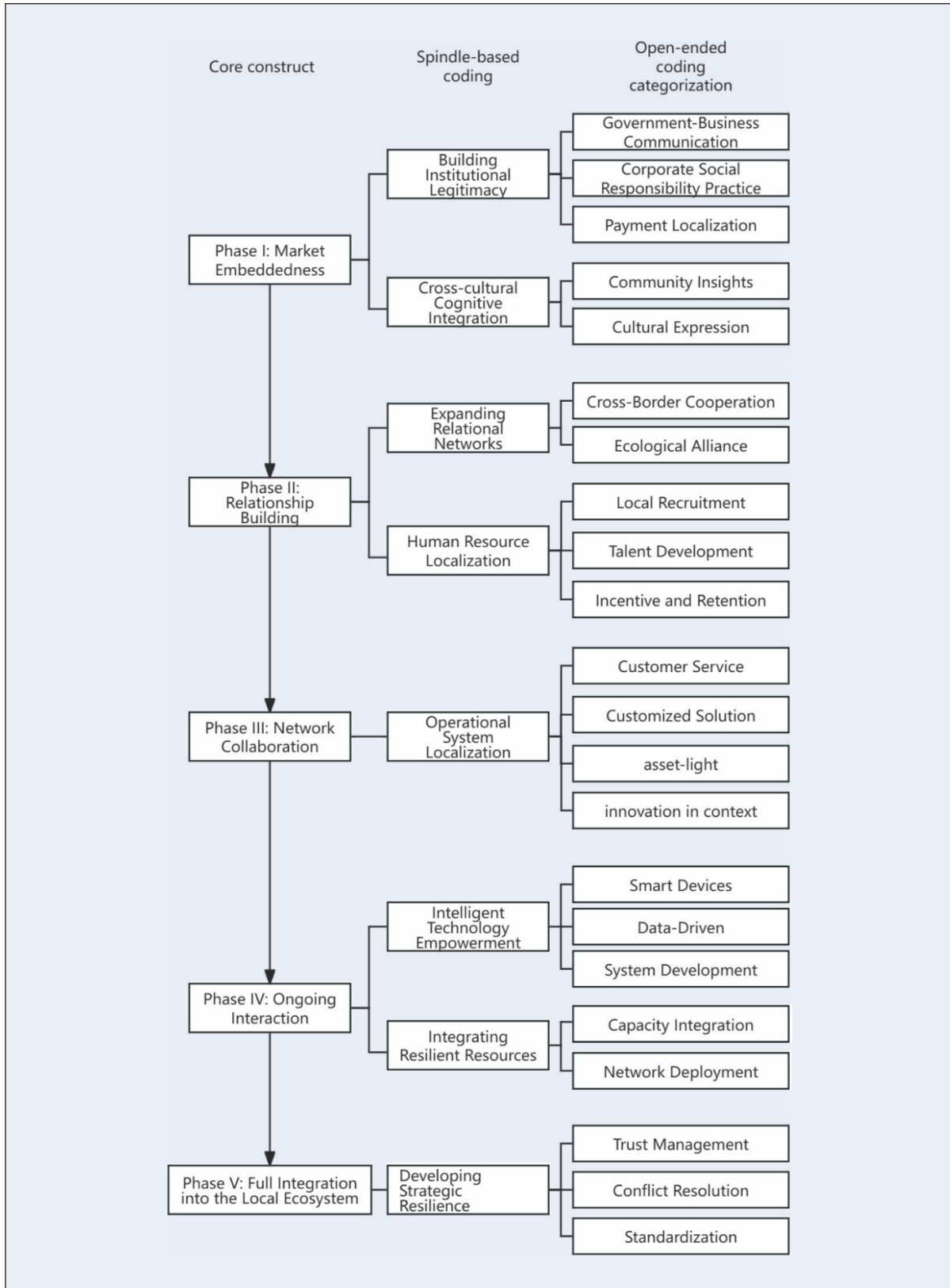


Figure 1 Stage Encoding Diagram



Case Study Findings: The Five-Stage Evolution of Market Entry

Based on systematic coding and analysis of interview data, logistic company's expansion journey in the Thai market encompasses five distinct phases: market embedding, relationship building, network collaboration, sustained interaction, and ecosystem integration. This progression demonstrates how the company accurately identified challenges at each stage, achieving a strategic leap from market entrant to ecosystem builder through the stepwise development of resources and capabilities.

1. Market Embeddedness: The Period of Dual Institutional and Cultural Embedding

The initial phase constitutes the market embedding stage, during which enterprises must primarily overcome legitimacy barriers. New institutional theory posits that organizations require recognition as legitimate and appropriate within specific institutional environments to secure the legitimacy essential for survival and development. Upon entering Thailand, company faced a dual 'outsider disadvantage' stemming from institutional barriers and cultural divides. In response, logistic company implemented a dual strategy of institutional and cultural embedding. At the institutional level, company actively participated in government forums and policy seminars, proactively engaging in dialogue and investing in facilities aligned with Thailand 4.0, such as automated distribution centers (PR Department)'. This approach secured operational permits and policy support, establishing regulatory legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). Regarding cultural cognition, logistic company 'conducted in-depth research into local religious taboos, festival customs, and consumption habits, fully reflecting cultural respect and integration in packaging design and service processes (PR Department)'. This approach secured cultural-cognitive legitimacy within society (Kostova & Zaheer, 1999). At this stage, company successfully navigated survival and development in the host country by transforming policy challenges into communication opportunities and cultural differences into integration opportunity.



Table 2 Case Analysis of the Market Embeddedness Phase

Spindle-Based Coding	Open-Ended Coding Categories	Exemplary Evidence Examples
Building Institutional Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government-Business Communication - Corporate Special Responsibility Practice - Payment Localization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We actively foster sound communication and cooperative relationships with local government agencies, business organizations and media outlets in Thailand. (a01) - We actively participate in local social welfare initiatives, such as environmental protection campaigns, educational support programs and charitable donations. (a02) - In response to Thailand’s payment habits where cash-on-delivery (COD) accounts for 60% of transactions, J&T Express has partnered with the GCash digital wallet to launch a promotional campaign for ‘COD digitalization’. (a06)
Cross-Cultural Cognitive Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Insights - Cultural Expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extending service points into everyday settings such as underground stations, parcel lockers outside 7-Eleven convenience stores, petrol stations and shopping centers, with a focus on providing cash-on-delivery (COD) services, collaborating with local governments to support agricultural product distribution, and launching specialized services like fruit delivery. (a03) - Theme-based delivery services are launched during Thai festivals such as Songkran and Loy Krathong, including the ‘Loy Krathong Wish Package’ campaign where customers may enclose prayer lanterns with parcels. (a05)

2. Relationship Building: The Period of Network Construction and Resource Mobilization

The second phase marked the relationship-building stage, with a focus on resource mobilization and activation. Social network theory emphasizes that enterprises can acquire critical information and resources while reducing transaction costs by constructing relational networks (Gulati, 1998). Having secured initial legitimacy, company embarked on building diversified social networks to mobilize critical resources. Externally, it collaborated with 7-Eleven convenience stores to launch the “Station + Convenience Service” model and partnered with Apple distributor SPVI to introduce the iPhone Express Delivery service (PR Department). Internally, it vigorously pursued human resource localization, implementing ‘a three-tier cross-cultural training system encompassing cultural awareness, skill alignment, and emotional identification



(HR Department)’. During this phase, company transformed static social capital into dynamic collaborative intent and operational momentum by expanding its relational networks, thereby laying the groundwork for large-scale market operations.

Table 3 Case Analysis of the Relationship Building Phase

Spindle-Based Coding	Open-Ended Coding Categories	Exemplary Evidence Examples
Expand Relationships Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross-Border Cooperation - Ecological Alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborating with 7-Eleven convenience stores to launch a ‘post station + convenience services’ model, attracting younger users through cross-industry marketing initiatives such as parcel lockers + ice cream vouchers. (a04) - Integrating resources from local logistics enterprises (e.g., Flash, Kerry Logistics) to share last-mile delivery networks, reducing ‘last-mile’ costs by 30%. (a18)
Human Resources Localization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Recruitment - Talent Development - Incentive and Retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Among a total workforce of 40,000 employees, only approximately 60 are non-Thai nationals, with the vast majority of middle and senior management positions held by Thai nationals. (a36) - The “Company Cross-Border Scholarship” has been established at Chiang Mai University and Prince of Songkla University, annually cultivating 50 bilingual graduates specializing in logistics and e-commerce. (a22)

3. Network Collaboration: Network Collaboration and Resource Deployment Phase

The third phase constitutes the network collaboration period, where the focus shifts towards localized deployment of operational systems and value creation. Resource orchestration theory posits that competitive advantage stems from the effective structuring and deployment of resources (Sirmon et al., 2007). Company adopts a core hub plus regional network layout, innovating a community agency model to form an integrated express delivery, retail, and lifestyle services model (PR Department)’. During this phase, through meticulous resource orchestration, company transforms the relationships and human capital acquired in earlier stages into sustainable operational capabilities and market competitive advantages that combine efficiency with flexibility.



Table 4 Case Analysis of the Network Collaboration Phase

Spindle-Based Coding	Open-Ended Coding Categories	Exemplary Evidence Examples
Operational System Localization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customer Service - Customized Solution - Asset-Light - Innovation in Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established a 24-hour Thai-language customer service center to swiftly address consumer complaints (such as refusal of delivery or damaged goods), while publicly disclosing resolution progress via social media to mitigate the risk of negative sentiment spreading. (a07) - Simultaneously, provided Temu with bespoke ‘domestic consolidation and Thai distribution’ services, with orders processed through this model accounting for 18% of total volume in 2024. (a10) - We have established nine automated transshipment centers in Thailand, equipped with DWS (automated volume measurement, weighing, and barcode scanning) systems and cross-belt sorting equipment. This has increased peak processing capacity by 25% while reducing per-order costs by 18.7%. (a119) - We have launched a ‘logistics + live streaming’ composite talent development program to cultivate specialized operational personnel. (a96)

4. Ongoing Interaction: Sustained Engagement and Capability Release Period

Entering the fourth phase, the sustained interaction period, the enterprise focuses on dynamic operational optimization and resilience building. The dynamic capability perspective indicates that enterprises must integrate, construct, and reconfigure internal and external resources to respond to rapidly changing environments (Teece et al., 1997). Facing intense market competition, company continuously unlocks resource efficiency through intelligent technology empowerment and resilient resource integration. Company introduced intelligent scheduling systems and big data analytics platforms while establishing a flexible operational capacity pool to manage business peaks. This phase demonstrates the organization’s capacity for refined management and dynamic adjustment of deployed resources within deep societal embeddedness, thereby sustaining organizational agility and operational resilience.



Table 5 Case Analysis of the Ongoing Interaction Phase

Spindle-Based Coding	Open-Ended Coding Categories	Exemplary Evidence Examples
Intelligent Technology Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smart Devices - Data-Driven - System Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nine automated transfer centers have been established in key cities such as Bangkok and Chiang Mai, equipped with DWS systems (integrated devices for volumetric measurement, weighing and barcode scanning) and cross-belt sorters. (a76) - We employ big data analytics to forecast operational volume fluctuations, rationally allocating transport and warehousing resources. (a99) - We have implemented an advanced logistics management system integrating functional modules including order management, warehouse management, and transport management, achieving comprehensive digital oversight across the entire logistics process. (a116)
Integrating Strategic Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity Integration - Network Deployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In partnership with Bangkok’s Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system, we have established 32 collection points handling an average of 3,000 parcels daily, catering to commuters’ shipping needs. (a72) - For major cities such as Bangkok, where logistics demand is substantial and concentrated, we have allocated greater warehousing and transport resources. For remote areas, we ensure service coverage through optimized delivery routes and partnerships with local small-scale logistics enterprises. (a112)

5. Ecological Integration: The Period of Ecological Integration and Value Reconstruction

Ultimately, the fifth stage marks the ecological integration phase, signifying the company’s strategic leap from rule follower to rule maker. At this pinnacle, company focuses on cultivating strategic resilience to achieve value reconstruction and ecological leadership. The enterprise no longer contented itself with adapting to the environment but proactively set industry standards, ‘releasing ESG white papers and green logistics solutions (PR Department)’ to participate in defining cross-border logistics protocols. This signified company’s attainment of the deepest level of social embeddedness—by co-creating institutions and reconstructing value, it reshaped the host country’s business environment (Granovetter, 1985), thereby securing enduring and difficult-to-imitate competitive advantages.



Table 6 Case Analysis of the Ecological Integration Phase

Spindle-Based Coding	Open-Ended Coding Categories	Exemplary Evidence Examples
Developing Strategic Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust Management - Conflict Resolution - Standardization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a ‘24-hour Public Sentiment Monitoring Team’ to respond swiftly to negative news (such as delivery delays) and restore trust through ‘compensation vouchers + apology videos’. (a08) - Implement a ‘Cultural Mediator’ system, with senior local staff serving as mediators to resolve cross-cultural disputes. In 2024, this mechanism resolved over 3,200 customer complaints with a 98% satisfaction rate. (a41) - Collaborate with Thailand Post, Lao Post, and Vietnam Post to establish the “Mekong Green Logistics Corridor”. The PR department will oversee unified messaging, aiming to make “cross-border parcel carbon labelling” an ASEAN standard. (a28)

Discussion

Building upon the grounded analysis of company’s market embedding and integration process in Thailand, this study systematically synthesizes findings from open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to identify a core mechanism: the ‘dual-drive cross-market embedding and integration mechanism’. This study constructs an integrated theoretical framework (as illustrated in Figure 2), aiming to systematically elucidate the intrinsic mechanisms through which express logistics enterprises achieve successful embedding and sustainable growth in emerging market economies.

1. Establishing a Cross-Market Embedding and Integration Mechanism Driven by Dual Engines

This study constructs a ‘dual-driven cross-market embedding and integration mechanism’. The core proposition of this mechanism is that a firm’s internationalization process constitutes a dynamically evolving journey driven by two mutually reinforcing forces: social embedding and resource orchestration. Social embedding serves as the prerequisite for firms to acquire external legitimacy and social capital, providing the essential context and foundation for resource orchestration (Granovetter, 1985); Resource orchestration, meanwhile, manifests as the enterprise’s capacity to activate, integrate, and utilize acquired resources to generate value (Sirmon et al., 2007), serving as the pivotal mechanism for transforming social embeddedness outcomes into sustainable competitive advantage. Through continuous interaction, these dual drivers collectively propel enterprises from market entry towards the construction of local ecosystems.

Within the social embeddedness dimension, this study identifies three core pillars. Firstly, establishing institutional legitimacy. Enterprises must proactively adapt to host country regulations and implicit institutional requirements through government-business communication and compliant operations to secure operating licenses (Suchman, 1995). Secondly, achieving cultural cognitive integration. Enterprises require deep community insights and cultural expression to respect and adapt to local social norms and consumption habits, thereby earning societal trust. Thirdly, expanding relational networks. Enterprises secure critical resources and information for development by constructing multi-layered, reciprocal relational networks with key local stakeholders (Gulati, 1998). Collectively, these three pillars form the foundational pathway for enterprises to overcome the ‘outsider disadvantage’ and attain external legitimacy (Zaheer, 1995).

In the resource orchestration dimension, this study identifies five key capabilities. Firstly, operational system localization entails adaptive innovation and deployment tailored to host market demands, essentially structuring acquired resources to build capability systems (Sirmon et al., 2007). Secondly, human resource localization transforms local talent into core corporate assets. Thirdly, intelligent technology empowerment establishes efficiency barriers through introducing technological advantages. Fourth is resilient resource integration, constructing flexible, scalable operational networks to withstand market fluctuations. Fifth is strategic resilience cultivation, the dynamic capability to integrate, construct, and reconfigure internal and external resources in response to rapid environmental shifts (Teece et al., 1997). These five capabilities elucidate how enterprises transform resources acquired through social embeddedness into tangible operational advantages and market value.

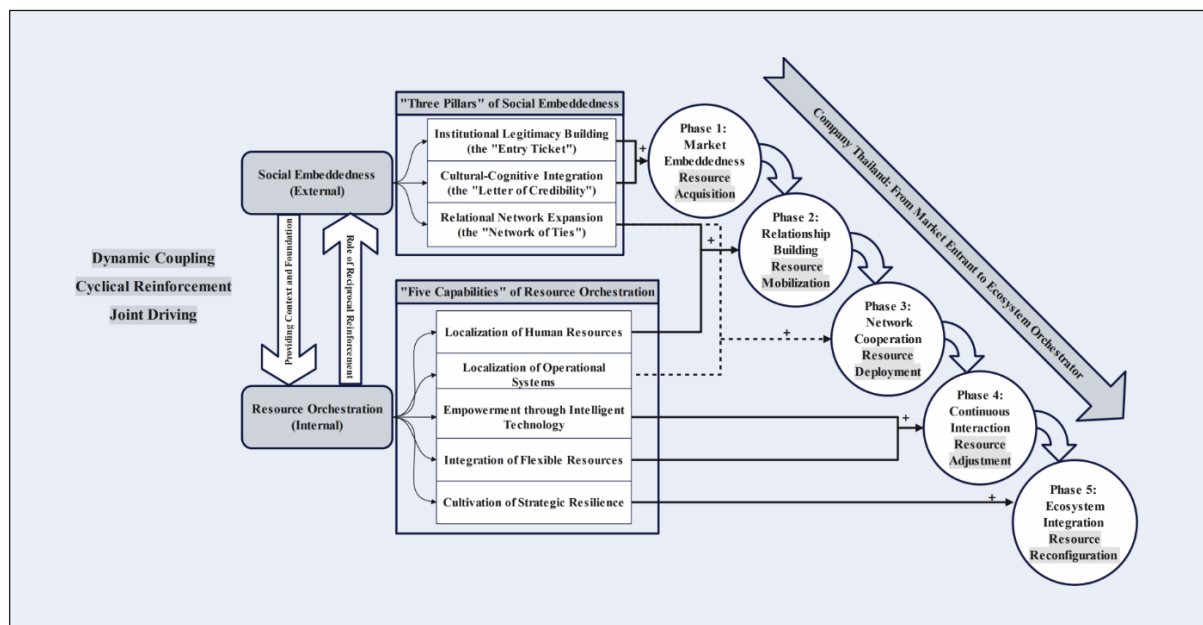


Figure 2 Theoretical Framework for Company’s Market Embedding and Integration in Thailand



2. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

Existing theories offer partial explanations but struggle to systematically address the practical challenge of “how to build alliance-based logistics networks under highly constrained resources.” For instance, the international market entry theory focuses solely on initial model selection, failing to guide ongoing operational optimization and resource integration. While the resource patchwork theory emphasizes flexibility, it often leads to fragmented operations, lacking strategic depth and contextual consideration. Therefore, addressing this systemic challenge urgently requires an integrated theoretical framework that can both discern macro-environmental trends and excel in micro-level resource management.

By integrating social embeddedness theory with resource orchestration theory, this paper examines the case of logistic company in the Thai market and clarifies the theoretical positioning of the proposed ‘dual-drive mechanism’ as a bridge linking external legitimacy acquisition and internal capability development during the internationalization of emerging market enterprises. The research posits that successful market entry requires meeting host country institutional requirements and cultural recognition to secure market embedding thresholds. After initial legitimacy is established, firms can accelerate market penetration and localization by building local relationship networks and effectively mobilizing social capital. As operations deepen, they strengthen organizational resilience to market fluctuations through intelligent technological empowerment and flexible resource integration. At a more advanced stage, firms cultivate strategic innovation capabilities. Through the creative re-orchestration of resources and, in some cases, participation in reshaping industry rules, they can gradually move toward a stronger position in the value chain.

In summary, social embedding provides the context and pathways for resource acquisition, while resource orchestration transforms social capital into sustainable competitive advantage. By conceptually linking these two perspectives, this study positions the proposed ‘dual-drive mechanism’ as an integrative framework that bridges sociological perspectives on embeddedness with strategic management perspectives on resource orchestration. These two processes are mutually reinforcing and cyclically strengthening, collectively constituting the intrinsic mechanism through which enterprises achieve deep integration in emerging markets.

These findings suggest that firms should simultaneously pursue operational localization and institutional embedding by developing local networks, human resources, and technological capabilities. During the market entry phase, companies must analyse local regulations, cultural norms, and societal conventions to secure operational licenses and gain socio-cultural acceptance. During the operational deepening phase, the focus shifts to transforming established local social relationships into stable partner networks and highly adapted localized operational processes. In the leadership phase, enterprises must commit to ecosystem-level innovation, reshaping market competition through business model innovation or participation in industry standard-setting. These practical principles and phased approaches provide enterprises with systematic and actionable guidance for achieving sustainable growth in emerging markets.



Research Summary

This paper analyses logistic company's entry into the Thai market to construct a dual-drive model of social embedding and resource orchestration. Research reveals that corporate entry into emerging markets constitutes a dynamic ascending process spanning five stages: market embedding, relationship building, network collaboration, sustained interaction, and ecological integration. External "social embedding" and internal "resource orchestration" continuously interact and mutually reinforce each other throughout these five phases. Social embedding provides direction for resource orchestration and lays the foundation for social capital, while effective resource orchestration transforms initial advantages into sustainable operational strengths. This, in turn, reinforces and deepens social embedding, jointly propelling the firm's evolution from market 'outsider' to ecosystem 'dominant player'.

The primary theoretical contribution of this research lies in reframing corporate 'localization' not as mere technical replication, but as a complex adaptive process deeply integrating 'social construction' with 'strategic management'. This complements contemporary management theories by synthesizing external embedding with internal orchestration. Successful international enterprises must translate social understanding into systematic action, continuously and efficiently regulating resources to conduct management activities. In the context of firms entering the Thai market, this framework also provides practical insight into how foreign entrants can progressively build legitimacy, mobilize local networks, and transform limited initial resources into sustainable competitive capabilities.

Limitations and Future Study

While the findings provide in-depth insights into the interaction between social embeddedness and resource orchestration, future research across different firms, industries, and institutional environments would further enrich the understanding of the broader applicability of the proposed mechanism. The conclusions primarily stem from the successful case of logistic company in Thailand, and their generalizability to other emerging markets with significant cultural and institutional differences warrants further examination. Concurrently, the research perspective focuses predominantly on the corporate entity, and the exploration of interactive mechanisms involving multiple stakeholders in the host country could be further deepened. Future research may test and refine the boundary conditions of this theoretical framework through comparative case studies across different markets or industries. Employing longitudinal tracking methods could more precisely depict the dynamic process of the 'dual-wheel drive' mechanism. Alternatively, exploring the complex co-evolutionary relationships between multinational corporations and local actors from a network ecology perspective, or conducting large-sample empirical studies, could enhance the generalizability of the findings.



References

- Eisenhardt, K. M., & Schoonhoven, C. B. (1996). Resource-based view of strategic alliance formation: Strategic and social effects in entrepreneurial firms. *Organization Science*, 7(2), 136-150. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.7.2.136>
- Granovetter, M. (1985). Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(3), 481-510. <https://doi.org/10.1086/228311>
- Gulati, R. (1998). Alliances and networks. *Strategic Management Journal*, 19(4), 293-317. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(sici\)1097-0266\(199804\)19:4%3C293::aid-smj982%3E3.0.co;2-m](https://doi.org/10.1002/(sici)1097-0266(199804)19:4%3C293::aid-smj982%3E3.0.co;2-m)
- Huang, S., Liu, W., & Lin, Y. (2025). 新兴市场跨国公司获取国际化多重合法性的机理及策略研究 [Mechanisms and strategies for emerging-market multinationals to obtain multiple legitimacies in internationalization]. *研究与发展管理*, 37(2), 176-189. <https://doi.org/10.13581/j.cnki.rdm.20241117>
- Kostova, T., & Zaheer, S. (1999). Organizational legitimacy under conditions of complexity: The case of the multinational enterprise. *Academy of Management Review*, 24(1), 64-81. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259037>
- Lee, R. (2017). Entrepreneurial newcomers: Resources and social embeddedness. In *The Social Capital of Entrepreneurial Newcomers*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59820-2_2
- Li, L. (2024). 极兔的本地化策略及对对中国快递企业“出海”的经验借鉴 [J&T's localization strategy and lessons for Chinese express delivery firms' overseas expansion]. *邮政研究*, 40(5), 79-84. <https://doi.org/10.13955/j.zyj.2024.05.13.06>
- Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 217-226. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259271>
- Sirmon, D. G., Hitt, M. A., & Ireland, R. D. (2007). Managing firm resources in dynamic environments to create value: Looking inside the black box. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(1), 273-292. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.23466005>
- Sirmon, D. G., Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., & Gilbert, B. A. (2011). Resource orchestration to create competitive advantage: Breadth, depth, and life cycle effects. *Journal of Management*, 37(5), 1390-1412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310385695>
- Suchman, M. C. (1995). Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 571-610. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9508080331>
- Swedberg, R. (1991). Major traditions of economic sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 17(1), 251-276. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.17.080191.001343>
- Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18(7), 509-533. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-7506-7088-3.50009-7>



- Tian, L. (2025). 泰国快递物流产业：效率提升与价格竞争在平衡木上“共舞” [Thailand's express logistics industry: Efficiency improvement and price competition “dancing” on a balance beam]. *中国对外贸易*, (04), 64-65.
- Vestrum, I., & Rasmussen, E. (2013). How community ventures mobilise resources: Developing resource dependence and embeddedness. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 19(3), 283-302. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13552551311330183>
- Zaheer, S. (1995). Overcoming the liability of foreignness. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(2), 341-363. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256683>
- Zhang, Q., & Hua, Z. (2020). 资源编排理论及其研究进展述评 [Resource orchestration theory and its research progress: A review]. *经济管理*, 42(9), 193-208. <https://doi.org/10.19616/j.cnki.bmj.2020.09.012>
- Zhao, Y., & Cheng, Q. (2022). 创新生态系统中核心企业如何实现跨界资源整合？ [How do core firms in innovation ecosystems achieve cross-boundary resource integration?]. *科学学与科学技术管理*, 43(5), 100-116. <https://doi.org/10.20201/j.cnki.ssstm.2022.05.007>