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# Disentangling complexity of supply relationship formations: Firms' portfolio diversification, products' ubiquity in the Japanese car industry

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## Abstract

Inter-firm supply relationships are complexly formed, reflecting varying strategies for product portfolio building of various firms. This study aims to disentangle such complexity with a specific focus on firms' product diversification and interdependencies, as well as product rarity/ubiquity. The empirical data, which captures the supply relationship formation between carmakers and their suppliers for 200 products, was analyzed via application of methods developed in complexity science. The results provided profound insights into how firms' portfolios vary and interdepend, how firms diversify their portfolios, and how the effect of these may be reflected in the inter-firm relationship formations.

## Keywords:

Supply relationships, Complexity, Network analysis, Product portfolio, Diversification

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