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Abstract
This paper shows the ways in which the interplay of structures and social interaction between actors can affect collaborative business model innovation. This is explored by employing a critical realist perspective through an engaged scholarship approach in order to follow a real-time longitudinal case study of collaboration established between two organizations in a port system. In doing so, the social structures and mechanisms that can affect processes of collaborative business model innovation between organizations in a value network are analyzed in depth by exploring the structural preconditions of social structures and the agency of actor behavior in social interaction. This is summarized as a discussion of how the interplay between social structures and actor agency, create causal mechanisms that in turn affect the overall process as morphogenetic and morphostatic forces.

The case study covers two projects in which collaborative business model innovation as a property of the same inter-organizational entity did and did not occur. The analysis reveals several mechanisms that affect the unfolding of the process in the specific context of study. The research findings indicate a need for managers and researchers alike to consider the following structures and mechanisms when embarking on a process of creating and exploring collaborative business model innovation: the dimensions of business model innovation in terms of the degree of material and cognitive innovation; the institutional environment in which the collaboration is embedded and the roles assumed in the organizational field; the resource dependence between the collaborators and in the value network as a whole; and finally, the current and future necessary relational structure of the value network in terms of trust, coordination, and communication.