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How do Organizations Leverage their Internal Resources for Sustained Strategic Advantage? A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This systematic literature review examines how organizations utilize their internal resources to attain sustained strategic advantage in a dynamic and competitive environment. The review emphasizes understanding the strategic mechanisms through which resources, including human capital, knowledge, routines, and digital infrastructure, are implemented over the long term to sustain competitiveness. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate mechanisms through which firms transform resources into long-term competitive advantages, analyze methodological approaches in existing research, and highlight promising directions for future inquiry. The PRISMA 2020 and Population-Concept-Context (PCC) guidelines are utilized to yield 3702 records from a comprehensive search of five scholarly databases. By applying stringent inclusion criteria, 43 peer-reviewed articles, published between 2017 and 2025, were included for review. The results highlight five significant themes: the move from resource ownership to orchestration, the integration of leadership cognition and knowledge, the development of hybrid resource strategies, sustainability as a strategic resource, and the contextual factors in emerging markets. The findings suggest that sustained strategic advantage (SSA) relies on flexible positioning and the adjustment of internal resources rather than fixed possession. Future research should address longitudinal, cross-regional studies and discover the roles of digital technologies, soft assets, and hybrid strategies to expand the consideration of internal resource leveraging.

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1. Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business environment, organizations must maintain their competitive advantage over time. Globalization, technological progress, and resource shortages have shifted strategic priorities towards achieving sustained strategic advantage, defined as the ability of a company to consistently outperform its competitors (Peteraf & Tsoukas, 2017; Teece, 2025). Maintaining this long-term strategic advantage depends on effectively leveraging internal resources in response to evolving environmental conditions rather than merely owning them. An organization's strategic sustainability is therefore determined not only by what resources it owns but by how it utilizes them.

The theoretical foundation of the argument, the Resource-Based View (RBV), suggests that competitive advantage arises from resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (J. B. Barney, 2018). However, critics argue that RBV does not adequately explain how resources remain relevant in uncertain conditions (Peteraf & Tsoukas, 2017). In response, several complementary theories have emerged, including Microfoundations Theory (Felin et al., 2020), the Knowledge-Based View (Grant, 2021), and the Dynamic Capabilities View (Teece, 2025). These frameworks emphasize a firm's capacity to sense, seize, and recognize resources through agility, learning, and innovation to gain sustained competitive advantage(McGrath & Euchner, 2020, Seo et al., 2021)

In spite of these conceptual developments, there is a significant gap in the empirical evidence on how internal resources are organized to achieve sustained strategic advantage. The literature on RBV has thus far been examined from either a bibliometric perspective (Correggi et al., 2024) or a theoretical one (D'Oria et al., 2021); nothing much is gained on its actual application and the inter-industry and geographic dependence of resource concentration. For example, empirical research by Protogerou et al. (2022) on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Asa et al. (2024) on African firms demonstrates how internal capabilities, such as talent, knowledge, or innovation systems, must be carefully aligned with strategies and environmental changes. However, none of the current reviews provides a synthesis of how these internal resources translate into long-term organizational benefits.

To fill this gap, this SLR analyzes 43 empirical and conceptual articles published between 2017 and 2025. It provides a unified perspective on how internal resources, such as human capital, knowledge, digital infrastructure, and organizational practices, can be strategically integrated to generate sustained strategic advantage. This contrasts with earlier meta-analyses, which separate their theoretical premises and base their conclusions on a variety of empirical research drawn from different industries, multinational contexts, and emerging economies.

This review follows the Population-Concept-Context (PCC) framework developed by Page et al. (2021), which is commonly used in management and social science review work. It is developed using the following parameters: Population: The organizations and sectors it represents, spanning from small to large organizations across various industries and geographical regions; Concept: The coordination and utilization of internal resources for long-term strategy; Context: Peer-reviewed studies published between 2017 and 2025, whether empirical or conceptual, that explicitly examine sustained competitive advantage. To this end, the present SLR is guided by the following three research questions:

1. How do organizations leverage their internal resources for sustained strategic advantage?
2. Which methodological designs and theories were used in the study?
3. What are the openings and opportunities for future research on leveraging internal resources for sustained strategic advantage?

By bringing together evidence from different industries, resource types, and theoretical perspectives, this review helps unify and expand the current body of knowledge. As a result, it provides a clearer understanding of how any internal resource can be effectively managed. It addresses a key challenge for managers: developing dynamic and resilient strategies in uncertain settings. Additionally, it offers a roadmap for future scholarly work, both theoretical and empirical. Accordingly, Section 2 of this review outlines the Methods section following this introduction. The review then proceeds to discuss the results, implications—both theoretical and practical—limitations, conclusions, and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2-1. Theoretical Development of Resource Leverage

The analysis of how organizations achieve and maintain a competitive advantage has expanded significantly since the development of the RBV. Initially introduced byBarney (1991), RBV suggests that companies gain an advantage if they possess resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN). Subsequent empirical research has shown that internal sources of competitiveness include human, knowledge, and technological assets (Protogerou et al., 2022). However, critics argue that RBV offers a one-dimensional perspective that cannot adequately explain how companies remain relevant amid technological turbulence and global shocks (Peteraf & Tsoukas, 2017). This limitation has driven a shift toward dynamic, knowledge-based, and behaviorally informed models.

RBV is complemented by the DCV (Teece, 2025), which focuses on the firm's ability to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources in volatile environments. Unlike RBV, which concentrates on ownership, DCV emphasizes continuous renewal as the key to SSA. Similarly, KBV sees knowledge not as something to possess but as a process to generate, disseminate, and embed into routines(Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021) . Building on Microfoundations Theory, recent research links macro-level strategic performance to micro-level cognition, autonomy, and team behavior (Felin et al., 2020; Ringvold et al., 2023). Collectively, these theories highlight that maintaining a competitive advantage depends on the ongoing orchestration of internal resources, not just their ownership.

The above perspectives are combined into a meta-framework offered by the new Strategy-Creation View (SCV) (Furr & Eisenhardt, 2021). It suggests that organizations should be dynamically stable (exploit the available resources) and flexible (explore the new opportunities). This conceptual intersection is an indicator of a transition from resource possession to resource orchestration, or the process of organizing, conglomerating, and mobilizing internal resources to suit external opportunities(Tikas, 2023). Sustained advantage is therefore increasingly regarded as the result of adaptive orchestration, which is the premise of the current review.

2-2. Empirical Evidence

The empirical research during the last decade has broadened the scope of knowledge on internal resource leverage in any industry and situation. The results have always shown that it is the integration and coordination processes, rather than the personal resources, that lead to high performance. To elaborate, Protogerou et al. (2022) revealed that SMEs gain agility through human capital alignment and learning systems, andLee & Trimi (2021) discovered that innovation capabilities mediate linkages between internal competencies and firm performance. Recent studies in the digitalized industries highlight the importance of strategic data decision-making and digital infrastructure. These results support the fact that digital and informational capabilities have become strategic enablers, and the traditional concept of RBV, defining tangible assets, has been shifted to one where the main focus is on data agility and technological learning.

This evolution is also supported by parallel evidence that is provided by sustainability literature. As depicted byKhan, Yu, & Farooq (2023) and Correggi et al. (2024), the green and circular capabilities are seen to be both economic and reputational resources, providing two-fold performance advantages. Equally, Sharma & Modgil (2020) have established that synergistic operational excellence, as a result of the integration of total quality management and supply chain management, expresses how sustainability can be integrated as an internal ability as opposed to an external constraint. This accumulating literature is consistent with the perception that environmental and ethical practices have become strategic resources that help in achieving long-term competitiveness.

2-3. Gaps in Existing Knowledge

Notwithstanding this highly theoretical and empirical development, there are still several constraints in the existing body of literature:

Fragmentation within theoretical perspectives: In earlier studies, the reviews are very specific, e.g., RBV or DCV, without the combination of micro- and macro-levels. This generates a conceptual silo that prevents the comprehension of the relationship between cognitive, structural, and technological factors to maintain an advantage (Gavetti & Lecuona, 2021).

Lack of the synthesis of empirical mechanisms: Although most studies define valuable resources, few of them describe how the transformation of these resources into dynamic capabilities is possible in orchestration. There is also a lack of empirical evidence indicating that resource bundling is related to reconfiguration and strategic renewal(Tikas, 2023) . The current reviews tend to terminate at enumerating types of resources rather than examining transformation processes.

Contextual and regional imbalance: The majority of the research is focused on the Western economies or technologically-intensive industries, with little reflection of the emerging markets where improvisational resource consumption, bricolage, and informal knowledge systems prevail (Asa et al., 2024) . Therefore, there is a doubt about the universal applicability of existing frameworks.

Failure to focus on hybrid strategies and cross-theoretical integration: Not many research works examine how companies can integrate the stability of RBV and the flexibility of DCV to develop hybrid orchestration models (Furr & Eisenhardt, 2021). This loophole constrains the knowledge of how organizations become ambidexter in disruption, scarcity, and uncertainty environments.

Absence of longitudinal and cross-disciplinary research: The Majority of the evidence is based on cross-sectional data; therefore, the causal and temporal dynamics of resource transformation have not been well explored. Furthermore, the literature is scant in relating the strategic management knowledge to its related fields such as behavioral science, digital transformation, and sustainability governance.

All these constraints emphasize the necessity of a more detailed synthesis that goes beyond theoretical silos, situational bias, and methodological fragmentation. The current review closes this gap by systematically synthesizing multi-theoretical evidence to explain how internal resources can be used to achieve a long-term strategic advantage in a variety of organizational environments.

2-4. Conceptual Directions

The latest tendencies lead to an integrative paradigm, which is a combination of tangible and intangible resources of the firm, organized dynamically. Three conceptual directions prevail:

Resource possession to orchestration: It is now claimed by scholars that the success is not determined by the possession of resources by firms but rather by strategically setting them up. Resource orchestration theory (Sirmon et al., 2007; Tikas, 2023), is a mechanism-based perspective that describes how leaders plan and package, as well as make use of internal resources in the context of innovation and sustainability. This opinion transforms RBV into a dynamic process of constant recombination.

Strategic agility microfoundations: The research on the integration of leadership cognition and employee autonomy (Felin et al., 2020; Gavetti & Lecuona, 2021) shows that the individual-level behavior contributes to macro-level strategic renewal. The microfoundations approach builds on the dynamic capability theory by enabling the connection between managerial foresight, collective learning, and team behavior with resilience at the firm level.

Hybrid and sustainable strategies: The integration of RBV, DCV, and sustainability views introduces the hybrid orchestration models that are a blend between efficiency and adaptability. Hybridization allows companies to use their current competencies in the process of experimenting with new forms of response to environmental and ethical requirements (Correggi et al., 2024; Furr & Eisenhardt, 2021). Sustainability is therefore developed as an asset and an ability necessary to ensure legitimacy and long-term performance.

2-5. Rationale behind the Review

In light of these developments, a systematic, integrative review that will bring together the disparate pieces of information to create a unified insight into internal resource leverage is still needed. Earlier reviews were either bibliometric or conceptual without presenting an empirically based synthesis to unite various frameworks in different industries and regions.

The study fills this gap by mapping how organizations organize internal resources to generate sustained strategic advantage (2017–2025) through the synthesis of 43 peer-reviewed articles; the combination of five theoretical streams of RBV, KBV, DCV, Microfoundations, and SCV into a single conceptual framework of resource orchestration; and the identification of strategies such as hybrid

strategies, digital orchestration, and sustainability integration as future directions of strategic management research.

This review contributes to the field of knowledge by systematically relating theoretical evolution to empirical material on how organizations can convert internal resources into long-lasting strategic resourcefulness in complex, technology-driven, and sustainability-seeking environments.

3. Methods

3-1. Study Design

This study adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) to integrate empirical evidence on how organizations utilize internal resources to achieve sustained strategic advantage. The SLR was conducted in line with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021), which aids in the adequacy and replicability of methodologies in management and social science studies.

It was a purposeful decision to draw the boundaries of the review as far as research studies published from 2017 to 2025. This choice expresses not only the fast development of the strategic management paradigm over the past nine years but also an increased focus on the coordination of resources in the context of digitally disrupted markets, sustainable business, and the aftermath of the pandemic (Grant, 2021; Teece, 2025). Previous studies, as decisive as they may be, do not consider new changes, including hybridized workforces, AI-powered decision-making, circular resource systems, and strategic agility in the face of uncertainty (Gavetti & Lecuona, 2021). Thus, all publications before 2017 were removed due to the exclusion of conceptual relevance, methodological uniformity, and topicality of the findings in the rapidly developing field.

The review combined four large theoretical lenses, including RBV, KBV, dynamic capabilities, and microfoundations, to determine how various streams conceptualize and empirically research the idea of internal resource leverage. Both the thematic range and the conceptual cross-cultural, industry, and firm types were integrated as parameters of emphasis in the design.

3-2. Search Strategy

To search the literature, a broad, iterative approach was assumed in academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insights, and Google Scholar. To develop the initial list of search terms, a brief expert meeting and brainstorming session on keywords was held among the members of the review team, who are not only professionals in the field of strategic management but also researchers in organizational studies. Using this process of collaboration—a sort of expert focus group—an initial set of primary and secondary keywords was developed. The search terms were then narrowed down during various test searches to maximize the sensitivity and specificity of results. The final Boolean search strings used terms along with the combining terms: “internal resources” AND “strategic advantage” OR “sustained competitive advantage” OR “resource-based view” OR “dynamic capabilities” OR “knowledge-based view” OR “microfoundations” AND (“leverage” OR “utilization” OR “management”).

A series of steps was taken to maintain relevance, intellectual rigor, and pertinence, including the use of peer-reviewed journal publications published in English between 2017 and 2025. Duplicate records, conference abstracts, and dissertations that were not peer-reviewed were excluded.

3-3. Selection Criteria

The studies were selected through a systematic procedure involving three phases: title screening, abstract screening, and full-text review, followed by the application of specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria required studies that were written in English, published between 2017 and 2025, and either empirical or conceptual. They also needed to address at least one of the specified theoretical frameworks (RBV, KBV, dynamic capabilities, and microfoundations). Furthermore, research had to demonstrate how internal resources (knowledge, human capital, digital infrastructure, or routines) were used to achieve long-term strategic or competitive advantage.

Conversely, studies were excluded if they did not address organization-level external environmental factors or market forces, lacked methodological details or theoretical frameworks, examined resources in isolation without considering strategic implications, or were not at the

organizational or firm level (such as policy analyses or macro-economic studies). Two reviewers independently screened all titles and abstracts, with any disagreements resolved through discussion or by a third reviewer if necessary. The full-text screening employed the same dual-review process. Cohen's kappa coefficient of inter-rater reliability was applied, and only those studies in which there was a strong agreement among reviewers were included in the synthesis. This multi-reviewer cast helped reduce selection bias and increase consistency in determining the eligibility of research studies.

3-4. Quality Assessment

The selected studies were evaluated using an elaborate and structured evaluation framework that was specifically designed in the context of management research. All 43 articles incorporated in the study were critically evaluated along four critical domains to ascertain academic rigor and relevance. First, methodological rigor evaluated the understandability of the research design, the correctness of the data collection procedures, and analytical procedure clarity. Second, the theoretical contribution evaluated the soundness of the theoretical model, the soundness of conceptualization, and whether or not the research brought new knowledge. Third, by analyzing empirical validity, we questioned the depth of the contextual analysis, the availability of triangulation, and the richness of the data. Finally, the strategic relevance domain was requested with the clear expression of the connection between internal resources, which may include knowledge, human capital, or digital infrastructure, and the long-lasting strategic or competitive advantage.

To reduce bias in the process of selection and evaluation of the papers, two different researchers independently read and ranked each paper. When differences ensued, consensus meetings were held, and evaluators reexamined disputed works using a common rubric to facilitate objective and consistent decision-making. Such a two-reviewer system ensured not only increased reliability to the assessment but also minimized the subjectivity in the appraisal system. Furthermore, to enhance a more discriminating and encompassing synthesis, the papers that offered insights about underrepresented contexts, including emerging economies or SMEs, were allocated extra weight in the appraisal, and care was taken to ensure that the results were inclusive of a wider variety of organizational contexts. This methodological and explicit process to determine quality supported the validity and legitimacy of the entire research synthesis.

3-5. Data Extraction

The systematic review employed a methodological, interpretative data extraction process designed to be as consistent, analytically significant, and relevant as possible to the 43 peer-reviewed articles chosen and used as the basis for analysis. To effectively record the main aspects of each article, a targeted coding structure was developed. These included the author and publication date, country of the study, purpose of the study, study design, and the type of internal resource covered (such as human capital, information resources, digital infrastructure, or business routines), the theory used (RBV, dynamic capabilities, KBV, and microfoundations theory), the course of resource utilization (bundling, orchestration, alignment, or transformation), competitive advantage gained, and the key findings.

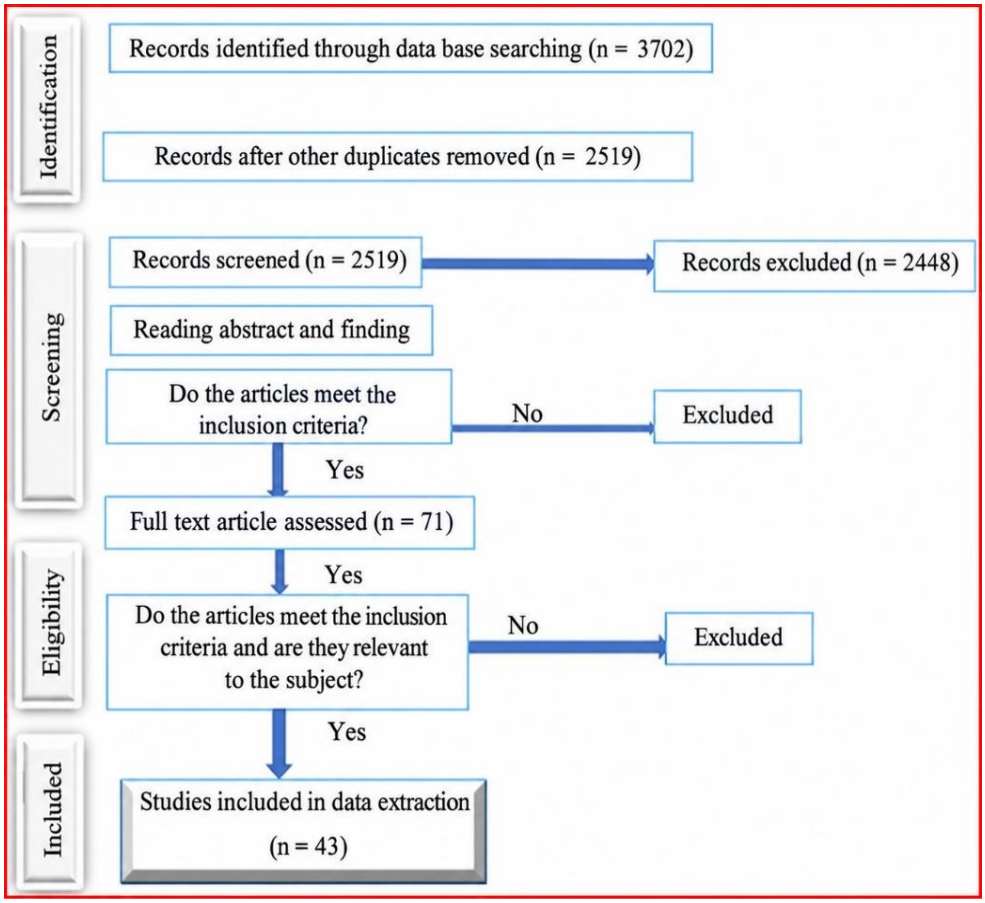


Fig. 1. Article Selection Process

4. Results

4-1. Description of the Studies

The selected studies, the review of which is based on this SLR, are manifold in their areas of focus, approaches, theoretical perspectives, and empirical bases. This review provides both theoretical and practical insights on leveraging internal resources to achieve a sustainable strategic advantage. In theory, they examine the combination of RBV and other viewpoints known as dynamic capabilities, knowledge-based view, and microfoundations theory (Felin et al., 2020; Grant, 2021). Empirically, the study takes up a broad view of the different organizations, including start-ups, SMEs, large multinationals, and government organizations.

Some of the internal resources that are accessible are covered in the literature, including: human capital (Protogerou et al., 2022; Tsou & Chen, 2020), knowledge systems (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021), digital infrastructure (Nambisan et al., 2019), and relational capabilities (Dyer & Singh, 2021).

They also addressed strategic points through which resources are deployed, including AI-based decision-making, cross-functional cooperation, ecosystem orchestration, and open innovation (Helfat et al., 2018; Jacobides et al., 2023). The studies not only enumerate the resource categories but also elucidate the mechanisms and rationale behind resource orchestration, linking it to the establishment of sustainable competitive advantage through innovation, responsiveness, flexibility, and strategic renewal. This synthesis, therefore, not only establishes a list of knowledge but also discloses emerging themes and theoretical tensions in the area.

Table 1. List of Articles Included in the Systematic Literature Review in the Period of 2017-2025

No.	Author(s) & Year	Country	Study Type	Theory Used	Methods	Key Findings
1	Barney (2018)	USA	Conceptual	Resource-Based View	Literature review	SMEs need tailored resource strategies.
2	Helfat et al. (2018)	USA	Empirical	KBV	Case study	AI augments human knowledge for strategic decisions.
3	Peteraf & Tsoukas (2017)	USA	Empirical	RBV, DCT	Survey	Routines enhance efficiency.
4	Eisenhardt & Bingham (2017)	USA	Theoretical	DCT	Conceptual	Cognitive adaptability drives strategic shifts.
5	Protogerou et al. (2022)	Greece	Empirical	DCT	Mixed-methods	SMEs leverage learning for agility.
6	Priem et al. (2018)	USA	Conceptual	RBV, Market Orientation	Literature review	Market sensing complements RBV.
7	McGrath & Euchner (2020)	USA	Empirical	DCT	Case studies	Temporary advantages require continuous renewal.
8	Nambisan et al. (2019)	USA	Empirical	Digital Transformation Theory	Mixed-methods	Digital platforms enable rapid scaling.
9	Hitt et al. (2021)	USA	Empirical	RBV	Panel data	Cultural intelligence enhances global strategy.
10	Chesbrough (2020)	USA	Empirical	Open Innovation Theory	Case studies	Innovation balances internal/external resources.
11	Alvarez & Barney (2020)	USA	Empirical	Effectuation Theory	Ethnography	Resourcefulness compensates for scarcity.
12	Felin et al. (2020)	USA	Theoretical	Microfoundations	Conceptual	Employee agency shapes resource use.
13	Dyer & Singh (2021)	USA	Empirical	Relational View	Network analysis	Trust reduces transaction costs.
14	Nonaka & Takeuchi (2021)	Japan	Empirical	Knowledge Creation	Case study	Tacit knowledge drives R&D.
15	Grant (2021)	UK	Empirical	Knowledge-Based View	Survey	Integrated knowledge fosters innovation.
16	Argyres & Zenger (2022)	USA	Empirical	Transaction Cost Economics	Case study	Hybrid structures optimize resource use.
17	Amit & Zott (2020)	USA	Empirical	Business Model Theory	Archival data	Innovative models disrupt markets.
18	Gavetti & Lecuona (2021)	USA	Empirical	Cognitive Strategy Theory	Experiments	Cognitive diversity improves decisions.
19	Teece (2025)	South Korea	Retrospective essay	DCT	Case study	Dynamic capabilities and capability orchestration were critical to success.
20	Jacobides et al. (2023)	UK	Empirical	Ecosystem Theory	Econometrics	Ecosystem control trumps ownership.
21	Egwakhe et al. (2023)	Nigeria	Empirical study	(RBV)	Survey research	Workplace culture moderates the talent-advantage relationship.
22	Kucharska & Karwowska (2025)	Poland	Empirical study	(KBV)	Survey research	Culture fosters innovation and sustainability through learning mechanisms.
23	Pereira & Bamel (2021)	India	Critical analysis	RBV, KBV	Literature review	A synthesized theoretical framework by merging RBV and KBV.

Table 1.

No.	Author(s) & Year	Country	Study Type	Theory Used	Methods	Key Findings
24	Bamel et al. (2021)	India	Empirical study	KBV	Survey + SEM	KM practices positively impact innovation in IT firms.
25	Singh et al. (2020)	Italy	Empirical study	KBV	Survey + SEM	KM promotes open innovation in SMEs.
26	Jantunen et al. (2021)	Finland	Empirical study	DCT	Survey research	Confirms a positive link between dynamic capabilities and innovation.
27	Lee & Trimi (2021)	USA	Empirical study	RBV	Survey research	Innovation capabilities drive competitive advantage.
28	Obeidat et al. (2020)	Jordan	Empirical study	RBV	Survey research	HR alignment supports performance gains.
29	Ritala et al. (2021)	Finland	Empirical study	KBV	Survey research	Knowledge sharing facilitates innovation.
30	Mailani et al. (2024)	Indonesia	Systematic review	RBV	Literature review	VRIN resources and SCM practices enhance loyalty and advantage.
31	Khan,Yu, & Farooq (2023)	Pakistan	Empirical study	RBV	Survey research	Green capabilities support sustainable competitive advantage.
32	Sharma & Modgil (2020)	India	Empirical study	RBV	Survey research	TQM and SCM synergy improves operations.
33	Ringvold et al. (2023)	Not specified (Conceptual/Theoretical)	Theoretical/conceptual study	Microfoundations theory, DCT	Literature review, conceptual framework development	Microfoundations play a critical role in shaping SBMs; sustainability requires alignment of individual actions with organizational strategy.
34	Furr & Eisenhardt (2021)	(Theoretical/Empirical cases referenced)	Theoretical with illustrative case examples	(RBV), (SCV)	Conceptual framework, case examples	A hybrid approach outperforms pure strategies in uncertainty.
35	Steffens et al. (2023)	(Conceptual)	Conceptual/Theoretical	(RBV), DCT	Literature review, theoretical framework	Overcome resource constraints through resourcefulness; RBV should integrate dynamic resource management strategies for sustained advantage.
36	Tsou & Chen (2020)	Taiwan	Empirical	DCT	Survey-based quantitative study using SEM	Human capital boosts dynamic capabilities, which mediate the effect of service innovation and performance.
37	Hunt & Madhavaram (2020)	USA	Conceptual/Theoretical	RAT; DCT	Conceptual analysis; literature synthesis	Adaptive marketing capabilities are foundational to dynamic capabilities; renewal competencies help firms sustain advantage in turbulent environments.

Table 1.

No.	Author(s) & Year	Country	Study Type	Theory Used	Methods	Key Findings
38	Seo et al. (2021)	South Korea	Empirical	DCT	Quantitative study using panel data and regression analysis	Asset-light models supported by dynamic capabilities improve firm performance in uncertain environments; agility and strategic focus are key mediators.
39	Asa et al. (2024)	Namibia	Empirical Study	RBV and DCT	Mixed methods	Effective integration of internal resources leads to long-term competitive success.
40	Gueler & Schneider (2021)	Germany	Conceptual/Theoretical	RBV	Conceptual synthesis	Resources' value is contingent upon ecosystem positioning, relational embeddedness, and context.
41	Tikas (2023)	Greece	Empirical/Quantitative	Resource Orchestration Theory	Survey and statistical validation	Validated a robust framework for measuring resource orchestration that supports innovation and strategy execution.
42	Bernardo et al. (2018)	Brazil	Theoretical Essay	RBV, Open Source, Transaction Cost Theory	Theoretical discussion and qualitative case context	Open sharing of resources, when managed via joint ventures, can enable MSEs to enter high-barrier markets and gain an advantage.
43	Shin et al. (2023)	South Korea	Empirical/Quantitative	DCT	Survey with 99 firms, SEM (PLS-SEM)	Learning and HR flexibility help entrepreneurial firms build routines as dynamic capabilities, leading to superior performance.

4-2. Number of Publications

The publication dates between 2017 and 2025 suggest that academia is becoming increasingly interested in the strategic use of internal resources. In 2017 and 2018, the contribution remained modest, with 2 and 3 publications, respectively, reflecting the early stages of the integration between traditional RBV and emerging dynamic views. Beginning in 2019, we can see a substantial increase: there were six studies in 2020, and they peaked in 2021 with nine articles published. This trend can be traced to an increase in the awareness of agility, innovation, and knowledge sharing as a competitive force in a post-COVID world of digital disruption (Hitt et al., 2021; Lee & Trimi, 2021).

Although the number varies slightly in 2022-2023, the area does have a high level of momentum, with 4 and 7 papers published, respectively. The fact that five of the studies appeared in 2024 and early 2025 demonstrates that resource leverage for achieving long-term advantage is not only an interesting research field but also a constantly evolving one. The consistent academic interest implies the gradual process of moving towards investigating the abilities that continue to last over the fluctuation of the market in the short term.

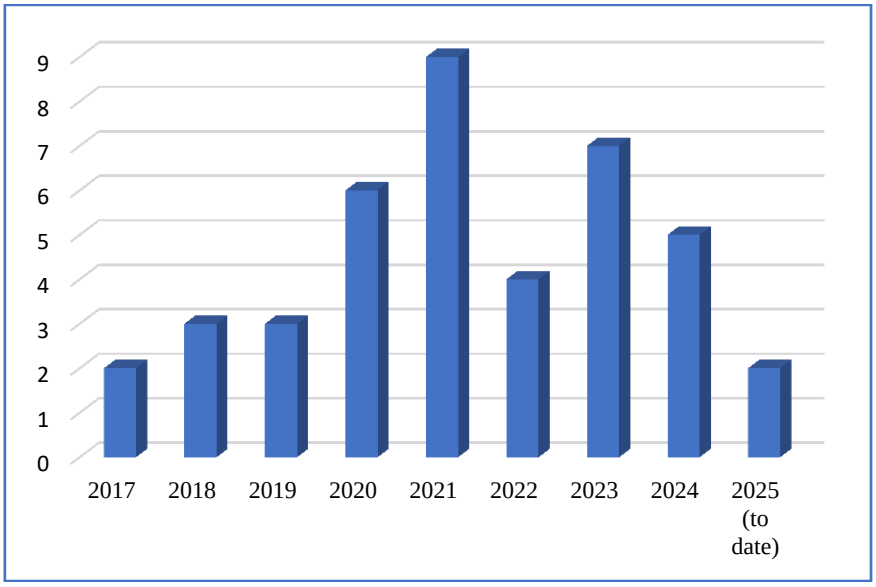


Fig. 2. Number of Publications per Year

4-3. Research Types

The reviewed literature comprises a balanced yet dynamic methodological composition. Most of the methods (which constitute 61% and include both qualitative and quantitative approaches) are empirical, representing a high percentage of the sample. In particular, 34% are qualitative empirical research (e.g., case studies, interviews) and 27% are quantitative empirical studies (e.g., surveys, SEM, panel data). Such studies can result in a profound contextual understanding of how companies utilize the resources within a company in real-life conditions, whether innovative SMEs or multinational corporations, with the challenges of geopolitical turmoil (Asa et al., 2024; Teece, 2025).

A 25% parts of the sample consists of theoretical and conceptual writings, pointing to the intellectual rigidity of the field. Such articles tend to generate new frames or improve on available theories by combining RBV with dynamic capabilities, SCV, or ecosystem reference points (Furr & Eisenhardt, 2021; Gavetti & Lecuona, 2021). There is a smaller proportion (12%) of mixed-methods employed and even stronger rarities of experimental designs (2%), indicating a significant methodological limitation. This dominance of cross-sectional and non-experimental work justifies a future where longitudinal and causally oriented studies become the norm.

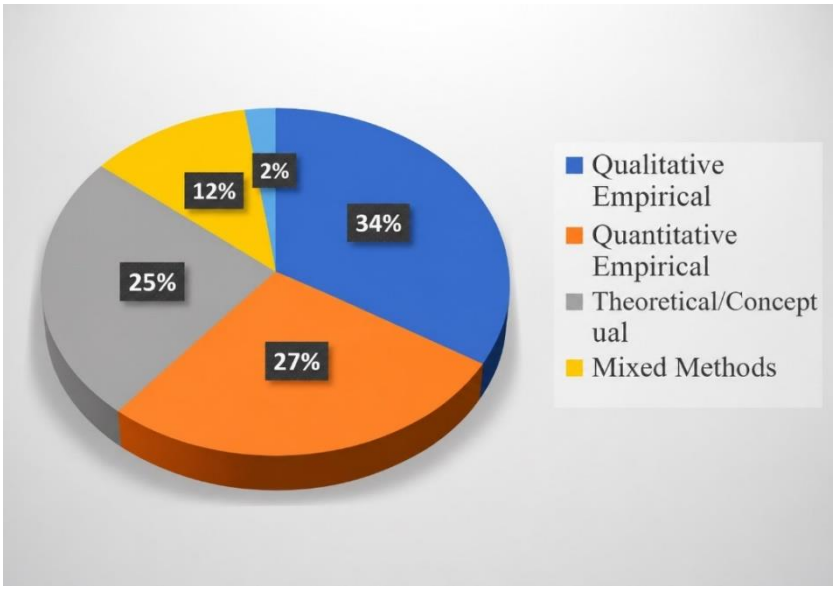


Fig. 3. Research Types

4-4. Country of Study

The geographic distribution of studies offers a view of both traditional regional research and the emerging diversification in strategic management research. The United States, with 18 studies, leads the field, emphasizing its central role in developing theory and testing empirical concepts related to the RBV and dynamic capabilities. However, other regions are also noteworthy. India comprises four studies, reflecting its growing involvement in knowledge-intensive industries and strategic HRM. Europe is represented by countries such as the UK, Finland, Greece, Italy, Germany, and Poland, which demonstrate significant academic activity focused on innovation and sustainability. Significantly, a range of studies is founded or centered on young economies, such as Nigeria (Egwakhe et al., 2023), Indonesia (Mailani et al., 2024), Pakistan (Khan et al., 2023), Jordan (Obeidat et al., 2020), Namibia (Asa et al., 2024), and Uganda (Komakech et al., 2024). The focus of these studies is the improvement of improvisational ability, bricolage, and intelligence in the specific environment: The strategic behaviors that cannot be considered in the model, most often designed in a Western-centric fashion (Alvarez & Barney, 2020). The geographic width of the expansion adds strength and meaningfulness to the empirical effect and applicability of the review, as it includes underrepresented voices and business ecosystems.

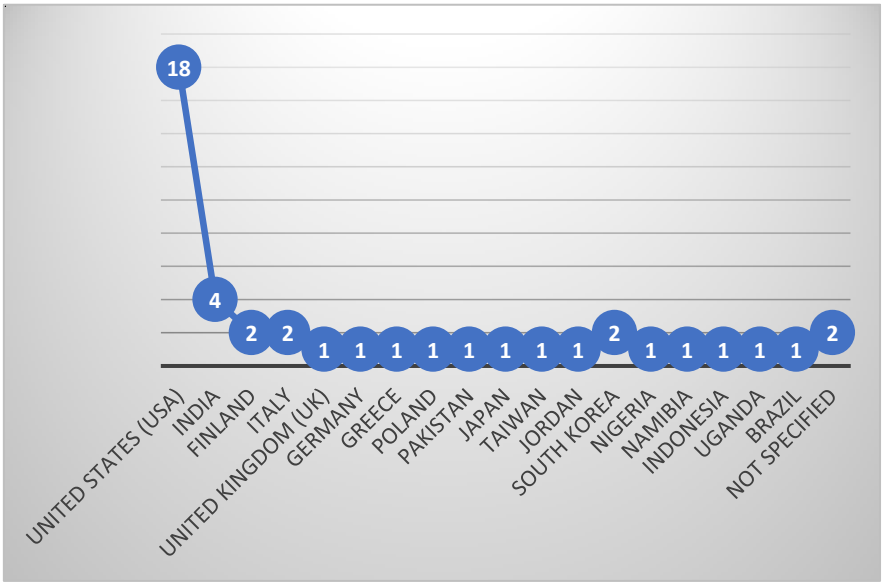


Fig. 4. Number of Studies

4-5. Fields of Publications

The reviewed literature displays the transdisciplinary nature of research on internal resources and strategic advantage raised due to its disciplinary dispersal. The most prominent area is strategic management, with 15 studies in top journals, including the *Journal of Management* and the *Strategic Management Journal*. These three areas of focus support the basic role played by RBV, dynamic capabilities, and strategic renewal in understanding firm-level outcomes.

General management covers eight articles, whereas the remaining are dedicated to more specific fields, such as human resources (e.g., *European Journal of HRM*), knowledge (e.g., *Journal of Knowledge Management*), innovation, entrepreneurship, and operations (e.g., *Business Process Management Journal*, *Technovation*). This heterogeneity shows the manner in which internal resource leverage is being examined through a number of prisms, such as culture, digitalization, supply chain design, and even sustainability.

It is worth marking out such areas as environmental strategy and open innovation that indicate a recent initiative toward hybrid strategies combining resource efficiency and environmental responsibility (Correggi et al., 2024; Khan, Yu, & Farooq, 2023). The cross-fertilization of disciplines provides more comprehensive theoretical explanations and balanced organizational models because the concept of sustainability, as a strategic necessity, permeates every department in an organization.

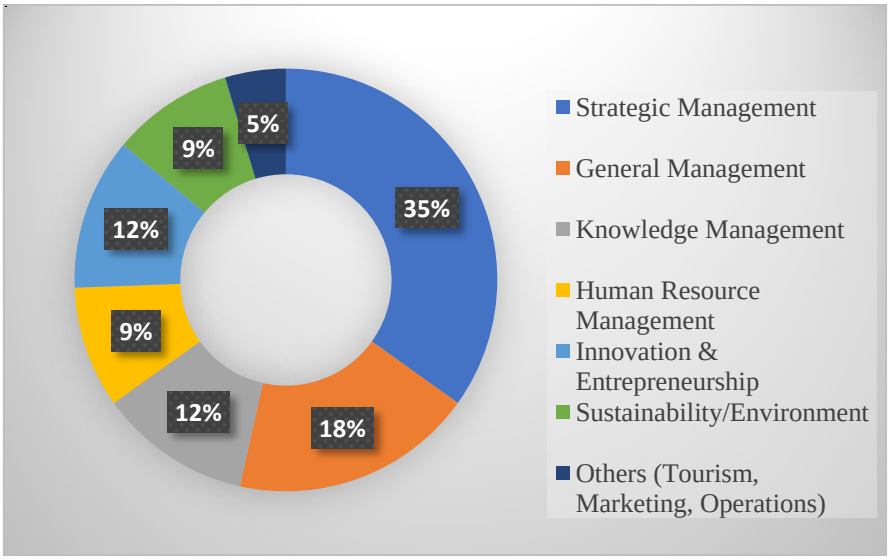


Fig. 5. Publication Fields

4-6. Thematic Analysis

This SLR employed thematic analysis to investigate how organizations leverage their internal resource for achieving enduring strategic benefits. The thematic analysis was chosen over content analysis, as it offers deeper interpretive richness, which helps identify hidden patterns, conceptual links, and meaningful themes in various contexts, theories, and approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Since sustainable advantage is a multi-layered and complex issue, thematic analysis was considered the best approach to determine advanced insights that move beyond the frequency counts and classification systems.

The analysis applied Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic approach to analyze the 43-article dataset for pattern identification. This begins with the familiarization of data by two independent researchers who thoroughly review all articles. Initial inductive coding was performed, which generated data-based codes. These codes were organized into candidate themes, which were repeatedly revisited and refined to ensure consistency and specificity to the overall data. The final six broad themes were identified and labeled to represent the main storylines. To ensure rigor, inter-rater reliability was formally assessed, with all disagreements settled by consensus or adjudicated by a third party. This systematic, team-based procedure ensures that the established themes represented strong, consensus-based findings rooted in solid data, with analytical credibility and transparency.

4-6-1. Resource-Based View as the Dominant Theoretical Lens

Our thematic analysis not only confirms the ongoing applicability of RBV as a prevailing perspective but also demonstrates an important development in its application within the literature. The analyzed literature is consistent in showing that the presence of VRIN resources is a pre-determining factor in gaining benefit, especially among SMEs that need to address size-related limitations (Barney, 2018; Protogerou et al., 2022). Nevertheless, a synthesis of recent evidence transcends the notion of static ownership to focus on dynamic orchestration as the essential mediator of long-term competitiveness. To illustrate this point, an empirical study by Tikas (2023) provides substantial evidence that the processes of structuring, bundling, and leveraging resources are directly and positively correlated with the outcomes of innovation. Moreover, the RBV framework is also being applied successfully in new strategic areas. This is supported by the fact that intrinsic capabilities of green and sustainable HR practices can be considered VRIN resources, particularly in a new market, and can potentially lead to competitive and reputational advantage (Khan, Ajemel et al., 2023; Obeidat et al., 2020). Therefore, the synthesis derived is that modern RBV scholarship does not simply appreciate resource ownership; rather it appreciates the strategic and situational coordination of those resources—traditional, digital, or green—to create and sustain an advantage.

4-6-2. Dynamic Capabilities for Being Flexible

It is found that the capacity of a firm to dynamically sense, seize, and reconfigure resources is a key for maintaining advantage in dynamic environments. The literature demonstrates that temporary benefits necessitate constant renovation of resources, moving beyond the RBV's emphasis on fixed ownership. There is empirical evidence that flexibility is realized through specific organizational models. One of the interesting outcomes is the effectiveness of digitally-enabled, asset-light configurations. For instance, Seo et al. (2021) quantitatively revealed that companies that adopt digital platform models generate profoundly higher agility and performance in uncertain markets using only a small amount of physical resources and concentrating on their main competencies.

Moreover, the synthesis defines strategic ecosystem orchestration as one of the most critical resilience-building capabilities. It is not a matter of forming alliances but orchestrating them to benefit both sides. A classic example of how strategic collaboration within R&D enabled Hyundai to self-insure against geopolitical shocks affecting its supply chain while maintaining its competitiveness in the global market (Teece, 2025). Jacobides et al. (2023) confirm this observation, highlighting that sustainable benefits are reproduced by regulating network effects and ecosystem relationships that fundamentally redefine competitive advantage not as ownership, but as orchestration. Synthetically, the body of evidence presented by the DCV theme suggests that long-term competitiveness depends less on the resources a firm already possesses and more on its ability to learn, experiment, and restructure its resource base, both external and internal, in response to market change and in anticipation of future developments.

4-6-3. The Knowledge-Based View and Innovation

In our analysis, knowledge and its creation, sharing, and integration are not just a resource, but the direct moving engine of ongoing innovation and benefit. The literature reviewed makes a strong argument in favor of a paradigm shift from the static ownership of resources to the active processes of knowledge. One important synthesis is that tacit-explicit knowledge is a core process that can be used to generate innovation. The evidence indicates that the two types of knowledge are not independent, but when used together, they are most effective. In their case study of the Japanese setting, Nonaka and Takeuchi (2021) demonstrate how socialization and conscious togetherness can transform tacit knowledge into a strong engine of the breakthrough phase during R&D. On the other hand, the significance of knowledge systematization is supported by empirical research in a wide range of geographical settings. India and Italy have strong evidence of survey-based research to support this claim, as Bamel et al. (2021) and Singh et al. (2020) demonstrate that formal Knowledge Management (KM) practices have a substantial positive impact on innovation performance among IT companies and SMEs.

Moreover, the theme shows the crucial difficulty in coping with this kind of knowledge in working groups. This is directly addressed by Chesbrough (2020) and Ritala et al. (2021), who prove that open innovation cannot take place without hybrid forms of governance. These paradigms define how firms can navigate the inherent tension between protecting proprietary information and disclosing sufficient information to foster collaborative innovation.

Finally, the lesson learned in the synthesis of the KBV theme is that the long-term strategic benefit is realized by the ability of a firm to create an ongoing knowledge cycle: the transformation of tacit knowledge into explicit systems, the use of formal KM practices to make innovation scalable, and the use of advanced forms of governance to safely exploit the power of open collaboration. This presents knowledge as a process rather than as something that should be possessed.

4-6-4. Human Capital and Microfoundations

The analysis shows that the locus of long-term strategic advantage is progressively seen to be linked to its microfoundations, the individual actions, cognitive processes, and team-based behavior that cumulatively underpin resource leverage. The theme offers a critical sub-structural elaboration on the mode of implementation and actualization of macro-level strategies. The evidence highlights leadership cognition as a critical engine of strategic renewal. As demonstrated by Gavetti and Lecuona (2021), the existing cognitive diversity and similarity of the mental models of leaders can significantly

enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the process of strategic decision-making and enable an organization to evolve faster.

In addition, the synthesis shows employee autonomy and talent management as critical organizational practices that mobilize human capital. This is not a universalist strategy, but it is absolutely context-dependent. Using Taiwanese ICT firms as an example, Tsou and Chen (2020) provide empirical evidence that human capital reconfiguring and autonomy grant directly lead to service innovation. This observation can be explained by the fact that the effectiveness of talent management practices depends on workplace culture; therefore, their alignment must be context-specific.

All of these individual and team components can be combined to create an effective innovation mechanism. According to Felin et al. (2020), the decentralization of decision-making and worker agency maintain a vital bottom-up innovation potential, keeping the company responsive and reactive to frontline feedback. The microfoundations theme in synthesis defines that sustained benefit is not only judged by the resources a firm has, but in essence, by the mental, psychological, and interpersonal functions of its people and teams. It is these actions that, in fact, bundle, orchestrate, and exploit resources to achieve competitive differentiation.

4-6-5. Hybrid Strategies: Importance for Sustainability and Flexibility

In our analysis, we have found that the ultimate route to sustained advantage is the ability of a firm to hybridize its strategy, a dynamic combination of resource-based view (RBV) and dynamic capabilities view (DCV). This is not a simple theoretical business notion but an empirically witnessed strategic requirement as a reaction to environmental instability. The literature concludes that hybridity is a situational ability. Furr and Eisenhardt (2021) developed their theory around the premise that the key principles of high performance in uncertain environments are grounded in the strategic alternation between exploration and exploitation. This proposition is strongly supported by empirical evidence across diverse and unstable contexts. The research conducted by Asa et al. (2024) in Namibia is especially demonstrative and proves that companies, as part of their efforts to adapt to changing market conditions, engage in systematic consumption of resources and, at different periods, develop rather haphazardly and improvisational by focusing on demand. This implies that hybridity is a deliberate, reactionary ability and not an accidental performance.

The insight synthesized by this theme is that hybrid strategies are the solution to a significant tension in strategic theory. They represent the operational expression of organizational ambidexterity, demonstrating that SSA is not a choice between stability and flexibility but rather the outcome of a meta-capability to combine and quickly alternate between them in response to the demands of different situations. This dual ability to both utilize available resources effectively and be able to respond to changes in real-time is necessary to survive in a volatile industry. This makes hybrid orchestration the highest strategic capability that enables firms to move along the continuum between the highly structured strategies of RBV and the adaptive strategies of DCV.

4-6-6. Sustainability and Green Resource Leveraging

The analysis conclusively establishes sustainability not as a marginal concern or regulatory cost, but as a central strategic asset that directly contributes to sustained competitive advantage. The literature shows a definite shift in the perception of considering green initiatives as a cost center to using them as a source of efficiency, innovation, and strategic legitimacy. As empirical data shows, sustainability provides a two-fold payoff, improving economic and reputational performance. The study conducted by Correggi et al. (2024) and Khan, Ajmel et al. (2023) highlight that eco-efficient system improves the overall brand image of green supply chain management and the model of a circular economy, thereby reducing the cost of operation, which is a strong sales message.

Moreover, the synthesis states that the power of sustainability is enhanced by operational integration. Sharma and Modgil (2020) present a micro-level view, indicating that the joint synergy in the practice of Total Quality Management (TQM) and Supply Chain Management (SCM) in an organization not only results in the minimization of wastes in an organization but also contributes to the overall organizational performance. This alignment turns sustainability from an independent policy into a highly ingrained operational principle. In addition to efficiency, the analyzed literature defines

sustainability as an important source of strategic legitimacy. Companies that embrace genuine ethical and environmental accountability demonstrate a greater capacity to build trust among stakeholders, which, in turn, serves as a source of competitive insulation and a determinant of long-term competitiveness. Synthetically, this theme demonstrates that sustainability is a complex strategic resource by virtue of overlapping with other core strategic capabilities. It is operationalized by an integrated management system, used in its dual financial and reputational advantage, and exploited to gain strategic legitimacy. This brings it back to the core, not the periphery, of the contemporary resource portfolio, with a direct bearing on a firm's ability to achieve a sustained competitive advantage.

Table 2. Themes, Sub-Themes, and Evidence

Theme	Sub-Theme	Representative Studies	Evidence
RBV	Tangible/Intangible Assets	(Barney, 2018; Protogerou et al., 2022)	SMEs leverage VRIN resources for competitiveness.
	Green Capabilities	(Khan, Yu, & Farooq, 2023; Obeidat et al., 2020)	Green HR and SCM practices sustain an advantage.
	Resource Orchestration	Tikas (2023)	Resource bundling enhances innovation outcomes.
KBV	Tacit Knowledge	Nonaka & Takeuchi (2021)	Tacit learning drives R&D innovation.
	Explicit Knowledge	(Bamel et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2020)	KM practices foster innovation in IT/SMEs
	Hybrid Approaches	(Chesbrough, 2020; Ritala et al., 2021)	Open innovation balances secrecy and sharing.
DCV	Flexibility & Reconfiguration	(McGrath & Euchner, 2020; Seo et al., 2021)	Temporary advantages and asset-light models build agility.
	Alliances & Ecosystems	(Jacobides et al., 2023; Teece, 2025)	Alliances and platforms enhance resilience.
Micro foundations	Leadership Cognition	Gavetti & Lecuona (2021)	Cognitive diversity fosters strategic renewal.
	Employee Autonomy & Talent	(Egwakhe et al., 2023; Tsou & Chen, 2020)	Talent practices and autonomy improve agility.
Hybrid Strategies	RBV–DCV Integration	Furr & Eisenhardt (2021)	Balanced exploitation and exploration outperform single-theory models.
	Emerging Markets	Asa et al. (2024)	Firms alternate between RBV and improvisation for survival.
Sustainability	Circular Economy & Eco-Innovation	(Correggi et al., 2024; Khan, Yu, & Farooq et al., 2023)	Green logistics and circular design deliver dual benefits.
	Operational Integration	Sharma & Modgil (2020)	TQM and SCM reduce waste and improve efficiency.

4-7. Comparison of Findings with Previous Studies

The results of this review are broadly consistent with and contribute to the current literature on the role of internal-resource leverage in SSA. In line with RBV, according to Barney (2018) and Protogerou et al. (2022), firm competitiveness is still based on VRIN resources. This review has shown, though, that these resources are not enough to sustain long-term advantage in dynamic environments. Similar to the DCV proposed by Teece (2025), the findings highlight the need to sense, seize, and reconfigure capabilities that facilitate the constant adaptation and renewal of capabilities.

The review also validates Grant's (2021) KBV by demonstrating that knowledge creation and sharing processes are major facilitators of SSA. However, it extends the previous literature and frames knowledge as a dynamic process that is anchored in leadership cognition and organizational learning (Felin et al., 2020; Ringvold et al., 2023). This is in accordance with new microfoundation studies that associate individual behavior with firm-level renewal, which had not been fully explored in previous studies based on the RBV (D'Oria et al., 2021).

The recent empirical research in the literature on strategic management and organizational performance supports the primary role of internal resource coordination in the creation of sustained advantage. As an example, Zhang et al. (2024) discovered that companies that combine dynamic capabilities and knowledge-sharing practices achieve greater performance than their rivals by being faster at strategic renewal. In a similar vein, Chen and Zheng (2022) found that the relationship

between internal competencies and long-term performance is highly mediated by organizational learning orientation and resource reconfiguration capabilities. Regarding the digital transformation, Xu et al. (2024) proved that companies with access to data analytics tools and adaptive human capital achieve high-quality outcomes of innovation and sustainability in the face of market disruption. All these findings support the idea that long-term strategic value is created through the orchestration of using digital, human, and knowledge resources across industries rather than industry-specific strengths.

Likewise, the earlier sustainability-related research (Correggi et al., 2024; Khan, Yu, & Farooq, 2023) considered environmental and ethical practices as the abilities that increase legitimacy and performance. This review corroborates that position but moves it forward by suggesting sustainability as an integrative meta-resource, which reinforces dynamic capabilities as well as trust among the stakeholders. Therefore, synthesis is an extension of the concept of sustainability as compliance to sustainability as orchestration.

Altogether, the current review is an improvement of the previous frameworks because it incorporates RBV, DCV, KBV, and microfoundations into a hybrid orchestration model that explains how organizations create stability and adaptability. The method is in contrast to the earlier reviews that considered each perspective separately (e.g., Correggi et al., 2024; D'Oria et al., 2021). Also, it expands the existing literature on how firms in resource-constrained settings leverage improvisation and bricolage to support SSA, thereby contributing to a field of study that has been predominantly shaped by research conducted in Western countries (Asa et al., 2024).

5. Discussions

This systematic review will add value to the body of knowledge in strategic management by providing an in-depth, multi-theoretical review of the lessons about how organizations can utilize internal resources to attain SSA. Based on 43 peer-reviewed articles on firms in various organizational and geographic contexts, this review demonstrates a conceptualization that has undergone a paradigmatic shift; therefore, those treated as tools to provide a competitive advantage to organizations in constant environments have been transformed into the agents of change in turbulent markets. The analysis provides a theoretically integrated and empirically supported framework for explaining how resource leverage functions as a process of continuous adaptation, offering valuable insights from both scholarly and managerial perspectives.

One of the key insights from this review is that organizational advantage stems not merely from possessing valuable resources but from how these resources are coordinated, developed, and transformed over time. Traditional RBV focused on value, rarity, inimitability, and non-substitutability; however, as this review has shown, SSA in the present context relies more on dynamic deployment and alignment (Barney, 2018; Teece, 2025). The overall measurement of team resources does not determine an organization's performance, especially for those that continuously align their human capital, knowledge systems, and digital infrastructure while adapting to changing strategic requirements (Helfat et al., 2018; Protogerou et al., 2022). This supports the DCV perspective of dynamic capabilities, mainly the ability to sense, seize, and reconfigure assets in response to external change, which has become essential. Under these conditions, agile internal arrangements and digital tools enhance resilience and competitiveness (Peteraf & Tsoukas, 2017).

The review identifies how the knowledge, human capital, and strategic cognition are intertwined with one another. According to the KBV approach, innovation and learning are fueled by internal knowledge, like tacit and socially embedded knowledge (Bamel et al., 2021; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021). Developing a cross-functional learning, coupled with building absorptive capacity, enhances long-term benefits. Moreover, the microfoundations theory application indicates the fact that team behavior, leader cognition, and decision-making routine do not require a peripheral status but are pivotal to effective resource leveraging. The cognitive infrastructure underpinning SSA is shaped by managerial foresight, shared mental models, and employee autonomy (Felin et al., 2020; Gavetti & Lecuona Torras, 2021). That changes the level of analysis towards micro-mechanisms and actors of the firm.

One of the key insights emerging from this synthesis is the identification of a hybrid organizational orchestration model that integrates the stability of the Resource-Based View (RBV) with the

dynamism of the Strategy-Creation View (SCV). According to Furr and Eisenhardt (2021), companies need to find the balance between resource exploitation and experimentation, especially in industries that experience a high level of uncertainty or dynamic change rate (e.g., technological, healthcare, and post-COVID-related service industries). In this review, they go even further and prove that SSA is attained when the organization switches or intertwines both approaches dynamically based on the contextual cues. For example, it has been revealed that Namibian firms operating in emerging markets would change between improvisational strategies and the use of core resources to adapt properly (Asa et al., 2024). This contribution turns and advances theories on organizational ambidexterity in demonstrating that SSA is not a product and artifact of stable dualities but of dynamically context-sensitive resource-orchestration. Rather than viewing exploration and exploitation as opposing alternatives, this review conceptualizes them as points along a continuum of orchestration capabilities, in which cognitive, structural, and relational dynamics are simultaneously integrated into a coherent system of capability development.

The overview also reveals a shift towards the perception of sustainability not as being an occasional issue but as a major resource within an organization. Such economic and non-economic versions of strategic advantage are now predicated on green capabilities, ethical governance, and circular economy practices (Correggi et al., 2024; Khan, Yu, & Farooq, 2023). In industries such as manufacturing and logistics, sustainability practices increase innovation, decrease costs, and establish a relationship of confidence with stakeholders. The review suggests that sustainability could be a dynamic and cross-cutting ability that concurs with knowledge systems and leadership. It can be used as a continuous source of competitive and organizational strength when incorporated into strategy.

5-1. Practical Implications

This review provides valuable practical insights for managers, executives, and policymakers to improve their organizations' strategic resilience in a world marked by complexity, volatility, and scarce resources. First, the findings address the importance of achieving long-term strategic advantage through dynamic orchestration, renewal, and alignment with evolving strategic needs, rather than just leveraging internal resources. Managers are expected to move beyond the status quo from resource accumulation to building flexible capabilities that support continuous learning, experimentation, and adaptation of internal resources. Integrating cross-functional knowledge-sharing, employee autonomy, and teamwork practices can strengthen organizational agility and innovation.

Moreover, sustainability, ethical considerations, and cultural intelligence should be integrated into strategic decision-making, as these factors are becoming increasingly vital for maintaining competitive legitimacy and stakeholder trust. Specifically, human resource practices have shifted toward a strategic model focused on efficiency and performance, aligning talent development with the organization’s shifting goals, values, and markets. The review provides policymakers and institutional designers with lessons on how to foster capabilities for small and medium-sized enterprises and organizations in resource-limited settings, particularly in developing countries. Policies promoting digital readiness, inclusive innovation, and leadership development can help businesses optimize their internal resources. Policymakers can also support long-term competitiveness and economic resilience by creating institutional mechanisms that facilitate knowledge transfer, sustainability, and entrepreneurial resourcefulness.

5-2. Theoretical Implications

Scientifically, The review contributes to the development of new theorization in strategic management by integrating five major theoretical perspectives—RBV, KBV, DCV, microfoundations theory, and SCV—into the study of SSA. It is not only the acquired resources that are important in this integrative framework but also the recombinant and changing of the resources by technological, environmental, and organizational change. The reinterpretation of RBV to be dynamic, as opposed to static, is one of the new contributions. Although the traditional RBV was mainly focused on VRIN resources, The newer perspective integrates the RBV and DCV to demonstrate how firms sense opportunities, seize them, and reconfigure their resources to ensure continued relevance in a competitive business environment (Felin et al., 2020; Peteraf & Tsoukas, 2017).

The review also refigures knowledge not as an unchanging resource but as a dynamic system. It is generated with the use of teamwork, digital and leadership cognition, and knowledge-based capabilities that are the necessity of strategic adjustment (Bamel et al., 2021; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2021).

Additionally, the hybrid orchestration model, based on SCV, is useful to understand how firms succeed in alternating between well-structured resource exploitation and opportunistic experimentation. This framework explains the adaptation of strategies by companies in line with environmental volatility (Furr & Eisenhardt, 2021).

The inclusion of microfoundations in the analysis, which involves leadership values, team autonomy, and cognitive routines, introduces a more behaviorally based impression of SSA in the review. Such insights are particularly valuable in contexts characterized by uncertainty, resource constraints, or weak institutional environments (Gavetti & Lecuona, 2021; Ringvold et al., 2023).

5-3. Limitations and Future Research Agenda

While this review provides valuable insight, some shortcomings exist. Its focus was restricted to peer-reviewed publications published in English between 2017 and 2025, which might have excluded publications from earlier years. Additionally, most cross-sectional research designs do not allow for cause-and-effect conclusions, and the narrow geographic focus, mainly on North America and Western Europe, overlooks regions such as Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. There is a strong need for more inclusive, multilingual research that is sensitive to diverse socio-cultural contexts and employs ethnographic, longitudinal, or other mixed methodologies.

Future research should give strong emphasis on the essential aspects of intangible and soft assets, such as trust, emotional capital, cultural intelligence, and ethical congruence, in relation to organizational legitimacy and resilience. Attention should be given to the increasing integration of artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and algorithmic design tools to assess how these technologies improve or hinder human decision-making and strategic agility. The academic community needs to explore combining hybrid strategic models with the resource-based view to include more dynamic and emergent perspectives. Cross-cultural, interdisciplinary study involving organizational, team, and individual levels will be essential to advance more comprehensive and realistic models of strategic resource management.

In summary, these limitations do not reduce the status of the current synthesis; instead, they emphasize the need for a multifaceted, comprehensive, and more advanced synthesis. Scholars should explore areas with insufficient research, develop strategies using various frameworks, and examine emerging issues, such as managing orchestration by artificial intelligence and understanding the microfoundations of ethical resource alignment, to advance the field of strategic management.

6. Conclusion

This SLR aimed to explore how organizations utilize their internal resources to achieve a sustainable strategic advantage in a highly complex, rapidly changing, and competitive world. Using the experience offered in 43 peer-reviewed articles published between 2017 and 2025, this review considered the knowledge presented by multiple theoretical perspectives, such as RBV, KBV, dynamic capabilities, microfoundations, and strategy-creation view, to develop a unified picture of how internal resources are used and how they can ensure strategic endurance.

The core message of this review is that owning valuable resources is no longer enough to ensure long-term success. The key difference between successful and unsuccessful companies is that successful firms can coordinate, adapt, and realign their internal assets—such as human capital, knowledge, digital infrastructure, and organizational routines—in response to external changes and strategic challenges. This highlights that the field of strategic management has shifted emphasis toward resource transformation, situation alignment, and capability development. The review also reveals that long-term success increasingly relies on hybrid orchestration strategies, where companies capitalize on resources while exploring new directions based on environmental uncertainty, organizational maturity, and competitive forces.

Moreover, the findings propose that the key drivers of strategic success include knowledge sharing, employee agency, leadership understanding, and sustainability integration. Organizations with a learning culture, empowered teams, and strategies that address ethical and environmental concerns are

more likely to sustain resilience. This approach views resources not as fixed, external inputs but as dynamic, collaborative systems shaped by individuals, processes, and values.

Regarding the theoretical contribution, this review will provide an original contribution by synthesizing the scattered frameworks into a unified model that considers the multilevel, contextual, and temporal nature of resources to leverage them. It provides a basis for a future theory that will be more relational, emergent, and cross-disciplinary, evolving into a structure that is more discordant and co-evolutionary than linear in its cause-and-effect assumptions about modern organizational strategy.

The review is of practical value as it gives recommendations that managers, leaders, or policymakers can implement. Besides the trust of stakeholders, it also focuses on the necessity to create a cross-functional cooperation, human and digital capital investment, development of flexible skills, and impose a resource policy with a long-term perspective. The insights are valuable, particularly to a company that has to live in unstable or constrained conditions in which innovation and flexibility are essential factors to survival and growth.

However, the review does not ignore its limitations, such as language inclusions and overrepresentation of Western research, and a lack of longitudinal or experimental data, which opens room for future research to find answers to these questions. Researchers are invited to explore unexploited areas, use more diverse research strategies, and explore new emerging topics like AI-driven orchestration, emotional capital, and ethical resource alignment.

Finally, this review presents a relevant and theoretically integrated approach to the issue of internal resource leverage and long-term strategic competitiveness. It not only strengthens the theoretical framework of the debate but also supports practical strategies for how organizations can remain resilient, competitive, and strategically agile during times of disruption, complexity, and change. The review provides a pathway for future research and strategic decision-making across different fields and regions, as it links internal strengths with dynamic capabilities, cognitive depth, and sustainability.

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