Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capability with Contextual Factors for Organizational Survival

Daniel Ong Kim Kui[1*], Yohana F. Cahya Palupi[2]
[1,2]*Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pelita Harapan; Tangerang, Indonesia*

*Corresponding Author E-Mail: daniel.ong@uph.edu

ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the increasing environmental turbulence and uncertainty that have contributed to the declining lifespan of firms and the growing need for organizational survival capabilities. The aim of this research is to integrate the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) perspectives to provide a more comprehensive explanation of organizational survival. The study employs a qualitative design using an interpretive meta-synthesis approach of 80 selected scholarly sources, analyzed through thematic analysis and meta-ethnography techniques. The findings reveal that organizational survival is determined by the configuration of tangible and intangible resources, dynamic capabilities in sensing, seizing, and transforming, and the synergistic integration of RBV and DC through processes of resource orchestration, bundling, and reconfiguration. In addition, contextual factors such as industry dynamics, institutional environments, and culture significantly influence survival strategies. The study implies that managers need to balance resource exploitation with adaptive flexibility by strengthening resource orchestration, dynamic capabilities, and contextual sensitivity to sustain long-term competitive advantage. In conclusion, organizational survival is the outcome of the integrated interaction between RBV, DC, and external contextual factors that jointly shape sustained organizational competitiveness in turbulent and uncertain environments.

Keywords*: Dynamic Capabilities, Organizational Survival, Qualitative Meta-synthesis, Resource-Based View, Strategic Management.*

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations today operate in environments characterized by increasing complexity, uncertainty, and turbulence. Rapid technological advancements, globalization, shifting consumer preferences, and the growing influence of digital transformation have created unprecedented challenges for firms across industries (Teece et al., 2016). In addition, unforeseen disruptions such as economic crises, pandemics, and climate change further intensify environmental volatility, compelling organizations to continuously adapt in order to sustain their existence (Wenzel et al., 2020). This phenomenon has had a significant impact on firm longevity, as evidenced by the decline in the average lifespan of companies listed in the S&P 500 from 61 years in 1958 to less than 20 years today, largely driven by disruptive changes in the business environment (Foster & Kaplan, 2001; Aithal, 2017). These conditions indicate that organizational survival can no longer be taken for granted but must be treated as a central strategic concern.

Within this context, organizational survival has emerged as a core issue in strategic management research. Survival is widely regarded as the most fundamental performance outcome, as profitability, growth, and competitive advantage become irrelevant if an organization fails to sustain its existence over time (Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Meyer & Zucker, 1989). Both scholars and practitioners have increasingly focused on understanding the mechanisms that enable organizations to survive in turbulent environments, emphasizing the roles of resources, capabilities, and adaptive strategies

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(Barney, 1991; Teece, 2007). This shift also reflects changing managerial priorities, where organizations are required to develop strategies that are not only efficient but also resilient and adaptive in the face of rapid environmental change (Doz & Kosonen, 2010).

From a theoretical perspective, the Resource-Based View (RBV) has long been recognized as a dominant framework in explaining organizational survival. RBV posits that sustained competitive advantage is achieved through the possession and effective utilization of Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-Substitutable (VRIN) resources (Barney, 1991). Within this framework, organizational survival depends on a firm's ability to manage and leverage these strategic resources as a foundation for long-term performance (Peteraf, 1993). However, RBV has been criticized for its relatively static nature, as it places greater emphasis on resource possession rather than on the dynamic processes required for adaptation in rapidly changing environments (Priem & Butler, 2001).

The Dynamic Capabilities (DC) perspective complements the Resource-Based View (RBV) by emphasizing that organizations must not only possess strategic resources but also develop the ability to sense opportunities and threats, seize them through strategic actions, and continuously reconfigure their resource base to remain competitive in dynamic environments (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2007). This highlights adaptability, renewal, and transformation as key drivers of organizational survival under uncertainty (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). Although RBV and DC are widely recognized as complementary, a significant research gap remains, as most studies still examine them separately, RBV focusing on resource advantages and DC on capability development without integrating both into a unified framework for explaining long-term organizational survival (Kraaijenbrink et al., 2010). While empirical evidence supports the relevance of each perspective for firm performance, limited research has combined them into an integrated model, despite the growing importance of such synthesis in highly uncertain and disruptive environments (Arend & Bromiley, 2009).

This study addresses the gap between the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) by proposing an integrative approach to explain organizational survival. It conceptualizes resources not only as strategic assets but also emphasizes the organization's ability to dynamically reconfigure and renew these resources in response to environmental change, thereby bridging resource-based and capability-based perspectives. The objective is to synthesize and integrate existing research on organizational survival using a qualitative meta-synthesis approach, which enables reinterpretation and integration of findings across studies to generate deeper conceptual insights. Through this approach, the study seeks to identify intersections between RBV and DC and explain how their integration enhances understanding of survival in turbulent environments. The study is expected to contribute theoretically by developing an integrated framework combining RBV and DC, and practically by offering insights for managers in designing strategies that balance resource ownership with adaptive and transformational capabilities in complex and dynamic business contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Survival

Organizational survival refers to a firm's ability to sustain its existence despite internal challenges and external turbulence, and it is considered a fundamental measure of organizational effectiveness because outcomes such as profitability, growth, and innovation become irrelevant if the organization fails to endure (Hannan & Freeman, 1989; Meyer & Zucker, 1989). Survival reflects an organization's ability to maintain structural integrity, adapt to environmental change, and preserve stakeholder reliability (Scott, 2014). In organizational studies, survival is viewed not merely as the absence of failure but as a dynamic condition involving resilience, adaptability, and continuous competency renewal to meet evolving institutional and competitive demands (Baum & Shipilov, 2006; Gupta et al., 2024). Its relevance has increased amid growing disruption

and crises, making survival theory an important foundation for research on strategy, capabilities, performance, and sustainability (Wenzel et al., 2020).

Organizational survival is commonly assessed using a range of indicators that capture both persistence and adaptability. At the most basic level, survival is measured through firm longevity or continued operation over a specified period (Carroll & Hannan, 2000). However, more comprehensive approaches also incorporate organizational resilience, market share stability, financial viability, and the ability to maintain legitimacy within institutional environments (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). The determinants of survival are inherently multidimensional, encompassing both internal and external factors. Internally, survival is influenced by the acquisition and effective utilization of resources (Barney, 1991). The development of dynamic capabilities by Teece (2007), strategic leadership by Doz and Kosonen (2010), and organizational learning processes. It is shaped by environmental conditions such as market instability, competitive dynamics, regulatory frameworks, and institutional legitimacy pressures (Delacroix & Swaminathan, 1991; Crossan et al., 1999; Scott, 2014). Organizational survival represents a multidimensional construction formed through the interaction of resource endowments, adaptive capabilities, strategic choices, and environmental contexts.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s as a major framework in strategic management, building on the works of Penrose (1959), Wernerfelt (1984), and Barney (1991). RBV argues that firms achieve sustained competitive advantage through the possession and effective use of strategic resources, including tangible assets such as physical and financial capital and intangible assets such as reputation, expertise, and organizational culture. A central concept of RBV is the VRIN framework, which states that resources must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable to generate sustained advantage. These characteristics explain performance differences among firms by enabling opportunity exploitation, limiting competition, resisting imitation, and preventing substitution. By emphasizing firm-specific heterogeneity rather than industry structure, RBV provides a strong basis for explaining competitive advantage and firm performance (Peteraf, 1993).

Despite its strengths, RBV has been subject to several critiques, particularly regarding its static orientation and limited ability to explain adaptation in dynamic environments (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). The VRIN framework has also been criticized for lacking operational clarity, making empirical measurement challenging, and for its tautological reasoning, where resources are used to explain performance without clearly specifying causal mechanisms (Priem & Butler, 2001; Kraaijenbrink et al., 2010). In the context of organizational survival, RBV offers valuable insights into how resources support resilience, as firms with strong intangible assets such as culture, reputation, and social capital are better able to withstand environmental shocks (Hall, 1992; Deephouse, 2000). Intangible assets play a critical role in enhancing firm performance and collaborative capabilities, while financial slack and technological resources provide buffers for adaptation (Miller & Shamsie, 1996; George, 2005; Kamasak, 2017; Gupta et al., 2024). However, survival in turbulent environments also requires the continuous reconfiguration of resources, highlighting the need to complement RBV with Dynamic Capabilities (Teece, 2007).

Dynamic Capabilities

The Dynamic Capabilities (DC) concept was introduced by Teece et al. (1997) to address the static orientation of the RBV. DC refers to a firm's ability to coordinate and reconfigure internal and external competencies in response to changing market conditions. Teece (2007) further developed this framework through three core components: sensing, seizing, and transforming. Sensing involves identifying external changes such as technological shifts and evolving customer preferences; seizing refers to mobilizing resources and making strategic investments to capture opportunities; and

transforming emphasizes the continuous renewal and realignment of organizational resources and structures to sustain competitiveness. These processes enable firms not only to adapt but also to shape their environments, making DC an important framework for understanding survival in turbulent contexts. Subsequent studies expanded DC by emphasizing its microfoundations, including managerial cognition, organizational learning, leadership processes, and ambidexterity between exploration and exploitation (Adner & Helfat, 2003; Teece, 2014; Frogeri et al., 2022).

The DC framework has also evolved to address concerns regarding conceptual ambiguity and measurement. Scholars have increasingly operationalized DC through observable routines such as R&D investment, alliance formation, and strategic decision-making (Zahra et al., 2006). DC has been applied in areas such as digital transformation, sustainability, crisis management, and education, demonstrating its relevance in adapting to emerging challenges (Takahashi et al., 2017; Warner & Wäger, 2019; Guerrero & Menter, 2024). In the context of organizational survival, DC acts as a critical mechanism enabling firms to reconfigure resources and processes to withstand disruptions and exploit opportunities. Firms with strong DC exhibit greater resilience and faster recovery from external shocks (Wenzel et al., 2020). By fostering continuous learning and adaptation, DC extends RBV by emphasizing that competitive advantage depends not only on resource possession but also on the flexible and timely deployment of those resources (Rashid & Ratten, 2020; Elistia et al., 2024).

Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities Integration

The Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) frameworks are often treated as distinct perspectives in strategic management; however, increasing scholarly attention highlights their complementarity in explaining organizational survival under conditions of environmental turbulence. RBV emphasizes the importance of Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-Substitutable (VRIN) resources as the foundation of sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). In contrast, DC provides the adaptive dimension by focusing on a firm's ability to sense emerging trends and threats, seize opportunities, and reconfigure resources to maintain relevance (Teece et al., 1997). Resources alone may become obsolete in dynamic environments, thus requiring integration and orchestration to create value, where capabilities play a crucial role in combining and managing resource bundles strategically (Barney, 2001; Teece, 2007; Maritan & Peteraf, 2011; Freeman et al., 2021). In this regard, RBV explains what resources matter, while DC explains how those resources are leveraged and renewed for long-term survival.

From a contrasting perspective, RBV has been criticized for assuming relatively stable environments in which resources retain their value over time (Priem & Butler, 2001), whereas DC explicitly addresses uncertainty and change. This has led to debates on whether RBV remains sufficient in turbulent contexts or whether DC represents its evolution rather than a separate framework (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Helfat & Peteraf, 2009). Despite these differences, recent literature increasingly supports their integration to provide a more comprehensive explanation of survival (Chen et al., 2021; Nayak et al., 2022). Organizational survival can be understood as the outcome of both resource exploitation and capability renewal, as firms with strong resources but weak adaptability risk rigidity, while those with high adaptability but weak resources lack endurance (Kero & Bogale, 2023). An integrative framework thus conceptualizes survival as a dual process of leveraging unique resources while continuously transforming them, offering a richer understanding of sustained competitiveness.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design using an interpretive meta-synthesis approach to integrate and reinterpret findings from prior studies on organizational survival. This approach is selected because it enables the development of deeper conceptual insights through cross-study synthesis, particularly in integrating the

perspectives of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007; Hoon, 2013; Tatar, 2023). The population of this study consists of all scholarly literature relevant to organizational survival, RBV, and DC, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and conference proceedings. The sample is determined using a purposive sampling technique based on specific inclusion criteria, studies explicitly addressing organizational survival, RBV, or DC, studies providing conceptual or empirical contributions to long-term competitiveness and survival, and publications written in English between 1990 and 2025. Studies are excluded if they focus solely on operational efficiency without linking to survival, are purely descriptive without theoretical grounding, or lack peer-review status.

Data collection is conducted through a systematic document analysis by searching reputable academic databases and scholarly sources, particularly leading international journals in strategic management and organizational studies. Relevant literature is identified using appropriate keywords and subsequently screened based on the established criteria. There are 80 scientific sources classified into four main topics, namely Organizational Survival as the most dominant topic (33%), followed by DC (29%), RBV (20%), and integration between RBV and DC (19%). In addition to the quantity of data, this table details the publication time trend that shows the shift in research focus, where the topic of organizational survival has strong historical roots with many publications before 2000, while the topics on the integration of RBV and DC and dynamic capabilities show significant growth in the most recent period (2021 and beyond), indicating the relevance of these topics in current academic discussions.

Literature was collected from major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, using keywords such as "organizational survival," "resource-based view," "dynamic capabilities," "competitive advantage," and "strategic adaptation." The screening process involved title and abstract review followed by full-text evaluation to ensure relevance to the study objectives. Duplicate and non-peer-reviewed sources were excluded during the selection process, resulting in 80 publications that met the inclusion criteria.

Data analysis follows the meta-ethnographic approach proposed by Noblit and Hare (1988), which involves several stages: in-depth reading, coding of key concepts, thematic categorization, and interpretive synthesis. Initially, each study is carefully examined to identify recurring concepts related to resources, capabilities, and organizational survival. These concepts are then grouped into broader themes, such as the role of VRIN resources, the dynamics of sensing–seizing–transforming, and the influence of environmental context. The final stage involves synthesizing these themes to generate integrative insights into the relationship between RBV and DC in explaining organizational survival. To ensure rigor and validity, this study applies principles of transparency, source triangulation, researcher reflexivity, and theoretical saturation (Tranfield et al., 2003; Hoon, 2013).

RESULTS

Resource Configuration in Organizational Survival

A main idea that comes out of the meta-synthesis plays a crucial role in resource configuration in ensuring organizational survival. Both tangible and intangible assets provide the foundation for firms to reach and sustain competitive advantage, which in turn affects their capacity to survive in competitive and turbulent environments. Tangible resources such as financial assets, physical infrastructure, and technological equipment offer immediate operational capacity that enables firms to withstand market shocks and competitive pressures (Grant, 1991). For example, studies in the manufacturing and hospitality industries highlight how investments in modern technology and efficient physical facilities improve resilience by enhancing productivity and reducing vulnerability to external disruptions, in the education sector recognized innovation to meet the challenges of survival, another study implied that combining resources provide synergetic effect and benefits to the survival of technology-based start-ups, and in family-owned

business revealed that digital mind-set and intellectual assets is needed to endure in the market (Bharadwaj, 2000; Otara, 2012; Yang et al., 2017; Rashid & Ratten, 2020).

Intangible resources, however, are often considered more critical for long-term survival. Knowledge, reputation, brand equity, and organizational culture are typically more VRIN than physical assets (Barney, 1991). Empirical evidence proposes that firms with robust intangible resources are better positioned to adjust to environmental shifts and maintain stakeholder trust (Hall, 1993). For instance, collaborative skills are most subject to uncertain imitability, knowledge-based assets of R&D capabilities shown to foster innovation and strategic renewal, which are essential for surviving industry disruptions and vice versa, strategic renewal positively influencing innovation capability (Miller & Shamsie, 1996; Zahra & George, 2002; Anwar et al., 2025). Similarly, reputational capital serves as a buffer against uncertainty, allowing firms to retain customer loyalty even under crisis conditions, and intangible assets include business approach, structured set of standards, system, and shared values that contribute to soundly build on the endurability of company results and profitability (Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Kero & Bogale, 2023).

The findings indicate that organizational survival depends not merely on possessing resources, but on how effectively they are configured and orchestrated. Firms that strategically align and integrate tangible and intangible resources are better able to sustain competitive advantage (Sirmon et al., 2007). What matters for market standing is the unique bundle of resources, their interrelationships, and managerial efforts to continuously adapt and update them as competition and environmental change erode their value (Barney, 1991; Hoopes & Madsen, 2022). This resource orchestration process enables complementarities, such as combining technological infrastructure with human capital, to build adaptive capacity. Longitudinal evidence from high-performing firms further shows that dynamic resource reconfiguration, including divesting underperforming assets and investing in new capabilities, enhances long-term survival (Karim & Capron, 2016). Overall, survival relies on how firms organize, combine, and utilize resources to respond to environmental demands and strategic opportunities.

Dynamic Capabilities as Adaptive Mechanisms

A second key theme emerging from the synthesis is the role of Dynamic Capabilities (DC) as an adaptive process that enables firms to survive and thrive in volatile environments. Unlike static resource allocation, dynamic capabilities emphasize the processes through which firms recognize opportunities and threats, respond through timely strategic decisions, and reconfigure their resource base to maintain strategic fit (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2007). In this regard, DC serves as a critical mechanism that links the need for continuous adaptation with the demands of rapidly changing and uncertain environments.

Dynamic capabilities operate through three interrelated processes: sensing, seizing, and transforming. Sensing reflects a firm's ability to scan and interpret market signals to identify emerging opportunities and risks (Teece, 2018). Seizing refers to the mobilization and allocation of resources to capture these opportunities, such as investing in new technologies or entering new markets. Transforming involves the continuous reconfiguration of resources and organizational routines to sustain long-term competitiveness. Together, these processes enable firms to continuously renew themselves in response to technological disruption, shifting customer preferences, and regulatory change (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). Therefore, DC is not merely a general ability to adapt but a set of specific processes that allow firms to deliberately create, extend, and modify their resource base to achieve new configurations as markets evolve (Keller et al., 2022).

Empirical evidence highlights the significant contribution of dynamic capabilities to organizational survival. Studies of high-technology firms show that the ability to sense and invest in emerging technologies, such as digital platforms, is a critical factor in sustaining competitive advantage under rapid change (Pavlou & El Sawy, 2011). Similarly, case studies of global firms such as IBM demonstrate that strategic resource

reconfiguration, shifting from hardware manufacturing to services and cloud computing, supports long-term survival amid industry disruption (Harreld et al., 2007). Small and medium-sized enterprises, including franchising businesses, also demonstrate that adaptive capacity enables them to shift from reliance on outdated resources toward developing innovative capabilities aligned with external conditions (Weaven et al., 2021).

In emerging economies, dynamic capabilities play an essential role in addressing institutional constraints and resource limitations. Evidence from firms in China and India indicates that adaptive strategies, such as forming alliances and leveraging improvisation, support survival under conditions of uncertainty and institutional underdevelopment (Luo, 2000; Zhou & Wu, 2010). At a macro level, the DC framework also helps explain how firms respond to policy changes and contribute to economic growth, as illustrated by the success of the Asian "tigers" compared to weaker performance in some developing economies (Teece, 2016). These findings confirm that dynamic capabilities are not merely abstract constructs but practical mechanisms of adaptation and renewal that enhance organizational survival by aligning internal resources with external demands (Teece, 2007).

Integration of RBV and DC in Survival Strategies

A third theme emerging from the meta-synthesis is the integration of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) as complementary perspectives in explaining organizational survival. RBV emphasizes the importance of possessing and exploiting VRIN resources as the foundation of sustained competitive advantage, while DC focuses on the renewal, reconfiguration, and deployment of these resources in response to environmental changes (Barney, 1991; Teece et al., 1997). Organizational survival is more likely when firms maintain an adequate and continuous resource base while remaining flexible enough to respond effectively to increasing environmental turbulence (Dick, 2011). Together, these perspectives provide a more comprehensive understanding of how firms develop survival strategies in dynamic contexts.

Survival depends not only on efficiently exploiting existing resources but also on continuously renewing and reconfiguring them to maintain relevance. Empirical studies by Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) show that firms with strong VRIN resources but weak dynamic capabilities may achieve initial success yet become vulnerable when environments shift. Firms with strong dynamic capabilities but weak resource endowments may adapt flexibly but lack the foundation for long-term survival (Zahra et al., 2006). The integration of RBV and DC highlights the importance of synergy, where resources represent the "what" of survival and dynamic capabilities explain the "how." This synergy enhances competitive advantage, improves adaptability to market and technological changes, and fosters innovation through the development of new products and strategies (Rashid & Ratten, 2020; Mong et al., 2021; Hossain et al., 2022; Elistia et al., 2024).

Several conceptual models further demonstrate the complementarities of RBV and DC. The resource management model by Sirmon et al. (2007) links resource acquisition, bundling, and leveraging with dynamic reconfiguration processes, while the capability lifecycle model by Helfat and Peteraf (2003) explains how resources evolve into capabilities that are continuously renewed. Teece (2018) further argues that survival strategies must align resource positions with the sensing, seizing, and transforming processes of dynamic capabilities. Therefore, effective survival strategies require firms to exploit unique resources, renew them through dynamic capabilities, and align both processes with environmental conditions, offering a more comprehensive explanation of organizational survival.

Table 1. Integration Themes of Survival Strategies

Integration Theme	RBV Concept	DC Concept	Interpretative Integration
Exploit unique and inimitable resource position	VRIN Resources	Dynamic Capabilities	Identify and leverage valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable resources and capabilities to achieve competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Teece et al., 1997; Madhok et al., 2010).
	Resource Bundling	Orchestration	Bundle and orchestrate resources to achieve competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Teece, 2007; Sirmon et al., 2007; Zhou & Wu, 2010; Maritan & Peteraf, 2011).
Renew and transform resources	Resource Heterogeneity	Reconfiguration	Reconfigure firm resources to achieve sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Costa et al., 2013; Daspit et al., 2019; Rashid & Ratten, 2020; Kero & Bogale, 2023; Elistia et al., 2024).
	Resource-Based View	Dynamic Capability Lifecycle	Dynamic capabilities evolve over time to promote constant change and how to manage resources to achieve sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Helfat & Peteraf, 2003).
Align process with environmental contingencies	Resource Allocation	Sensing, Seizing, Reconfigure	Allocate resources to sense, seize opportunities, and reconfigure them to respond to changing environments and new contexts (Peteraf, 1993; Teece et al., 1997; Helfat et al., 2023).

Table 1 shows that the first integration theme helps companies initially identify and utilize Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-Substitutable (VRIN) resources to achieve competitive advantage, while simultaneously combining and coordinating these resources in the process, because resources themselves are not productive; rather, it is the capabilities that bring together, integrate, and manage the resource pool that make it productive. The second integration theme helps companies understand how to reconfigure resources and how their dynamic capabilities evolve over time in managing these resources due to continuous change to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage that determines the company's superior or inferior performance. The third integration theme helps companies allocate and reallocate resources, including resources such as data, through the process of sensing and seizing new opportunities, and reconfiguring these resources to respond to the increasing digitalization of goods and services and the business impacts of this shift, where the use of artificial intelligence and data can be a determinant of competitive advantage and sustainable competitive advantage (Helfat et al., 2023).

Contextual Factors Influencing Survival

This synthesis shows that organizational survival is not determined solely by internal resources and dynamic capabilities, but is also strongly influenced by external contextual factors. Industry dynamics, institutional environments, and cultural conditions significantly shape firms' ability to sustain competitiveness over time, meaning that success emerges from the continuous interaction between internal capabilities and external pressures. Industry structure is particularly important, as high-velocity sectors such as information technology and biotechnology involve rapid technological change, short product life cycles, and intense competition, requiring continuous resource renewal and capability adaptation (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). In contrast, stable industries like utilities and traditional manufacturing allow for more incremental adaptation based on existing resources. In the construction and infrastructure sector, firms often evolve from technical contractors into strategic partners, integrating innovation and regulatory

compliance, highlighting the importance of industry context in shaping survival strategies (Porter, 1980).

In addition, institutional environments significantly shape organizational survival. Effective institutions reduce uncertainty and transaction costs, thereby creating supportive conditions for firms (North, 1990). However, under institutional uncertainty, organizations often adopt cost-minimization strategies, including tax efficiency practices, despite their higher risk profile (Annida & Firmansyah, 2022). Weak institutional settings in emerging economies generate institutional voids that encourage firms to develop alternative survival strategies such as alliances, informal networks, and political approaches (Peng et al., 2009; Khanna & Palepu, 2010).

Organizational culture also influences how firms mobilize resources and develop dynamic capabilities. In collectivist cultures, survival strategies tend to emphasize collaboration, trust, and social capital, which enhance organizational resilience (Hofstede, 2001). In contrast, individualist cultures prioritize innovation, competition, and market-based adaptation. These differences are also reflected in the global context, where firms in developed economies benefit from stable institutions and strong infrastructure, enabling a focus on incremental innovation and long-term resource orchestration (Hoskisson et al., 2013). Meanwhile, firms in emerging economies face higher uncertainty and rely more on entrepreneurial agility and relational capabilities in their survival strategies (Luo & Tung, 2007). These variations underscore the importance of contextualizing RBV and DC perspectives as adaptive processes shaped by external environmental conditions.

The four themes organize the advancement of survival theory through concepts emerging from the analysis of existing literature, ranging from well-established notions such as competitive advantage, sustained competitive advantage, productivity enhancement, improved sustainability, surviving industry disruptions, opportunity identification and exploitation, emerging risk identification, resilience building, innovation fostering, vulnerability reduction, navigating volatile business environments, and new resource configurations. They also extend to newer conceptualizations of contextual sensitivity, including adaptive capacity, synergistic effects, the ability to thrive in volatile business environments, the orchestration of both tangible and intangible assets, and collaborative relationships that generate customer value and foster stakeholder trust (Teece et al., 2016). These concepts collectively contribute to the notion of strategic fit, which aligns an organization's tangible and intangible resources, as well as its capabilities, with its external environment in accordance with relevant market and industry contexts. A summary of the synthesized concepts, along with their new conceptual insights for survival theory, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Thematic Map of Synthesized Concepts for Organizational Survival

Category	Theme 1: Resource Orchestration	Theme 2: Dynamic Adaptation	Theme 3: Integration	Theme 4: Contextual Sensitivity
Main References	Barney (1991); Grant (1991); Hall (1993); Miller and Shamsie (1996); Bharadwaj (2000); Roberts and Dowling (2002); Zahra and George (2002); Sirmon et al. (2007); Karim and Capron (2016); Yang et al. (2017); Rashid and Ratten (2020); Hoopes and Madsen (2022); Kero and Bogale (2023)	Teece et al. (1997); Eisenhardt and Martin (2000); Luo (2000); Harreld et al. (2007); Teece (2007); Zhou and Wu (2010); Pavlou and El Sawy (2011); Teece (2016; 2018); Weaven et al. (2021); Keller et al. (2022)	Barney (1991); Peteraf (1993); Teece et al. (1997); Eisenhardt and Martin (2000); Helfat and Peteraf (2003); Teece (2007); Sirmon et al. (2007); Madhok et al. (2010); Wu (2010); Maritan and Peteraf (2011); Costa et al. (2013); Daspit et al. (2019); Rashid	Porter (1980); North (1990); Brown and Eisenhardt (1997); Hofstede (2001); Luo and Tung (2007); Peng et al. (2009); Khanna and Palepu (2010); Hoskisson et al. (2013); Durand (2017)

Category	Theme 1: Resource Orchestration	Theme 2: Dynamic Adaptation	Theme 3: Integration	Theme 4: Contextual Sensitivity
			and Ratten (2020); Helfat et al. (2023); Kero & Bogale (2023); Elistia et al. (2024)	
Main Concept and Focus	Tangible & Intangible Resources	Combining & Configuring Resources	Exploit Unique, Inimitable Resources:	Industry-Specific Dynamics & Structure
	Intellectual Assets	Strategic Renewal	Identify and Leverage VRIN Resources.	Company Efficiency in Exploitation
	Knowledge-Based Assets	Resource Orchestration	Bundle and Orchestrate Resources.	Institutional Environments
	Digital Mindset	Reconfiguring Resources	Renew and Transforming Resources:	Regulatory Regimes
	Collaborative Skills	Integrate And Renew Resources	Reconfigure Resources for Sustained Advantage.	Governance Mechanisms
	Sensing & Seizing Capability	Leverage Complementarities	Promote Continuous Change (Capability Lifecycle).	Policy Stability
	Transforming & Innovative Capability	Structuring & Bundling Resources	Align Processes With The Environment:	Culture (Collectivist Vs Individualist)
	Enterprise-Level Entrepreneurship	Scanning & Interpreting Signals	Allocate Resources to Sense, Seize, and Reconfigure Based on Contextual Conditions.	Internal and External Collaboration
	Navigating Capability	Capturing Opportunities		Trust-Based Networks
		Reconfiguring Organizational Structure		Social Capital
		Create, Extend & Modify Resources		Market-Driven Adaptation
		Invest In Emerging Technologies		Developed & Emerging Economic Structures
		Leveraging Improvisation		Industry-Specific Dynamics & Structure

This study illustrates a methodological pathway for bridging conceptual divides and generating theory-driven insights in strategic management, particularly in complex domains such as organizational survival. Based on this, the findings are presented in terms of emerging thematic relationships, interpretive integration, and the extension of the organizational survival concept, as illustrated in Figure 1, along with its operational definition.

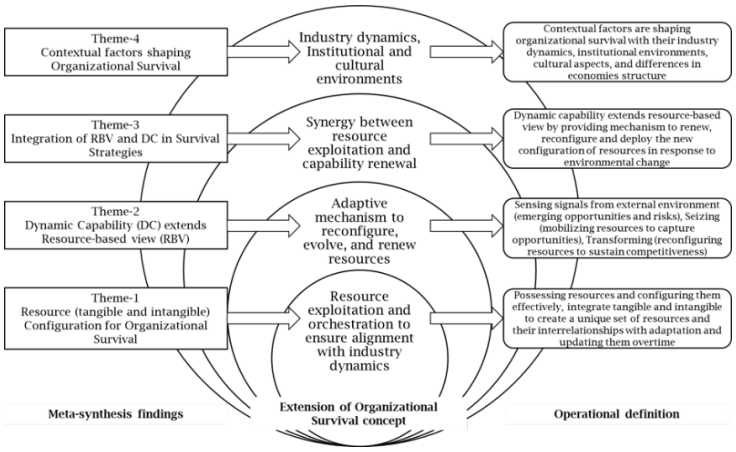

Figure 1. New Conceptual Insights Shaping Organizational Survival

Figure 1 illustrates the results of a meta-analytical synthesis that integrates four key themes in organizational sustainability theory, from the resource level, dynamic capabilities, the integration of RBV and DC, to external contextual factors. The left side shows the conceptual development of resource management (tangible and intangible), the evolution of dynamic capabilities for sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring, and the synergy between resource exploitation and capability renewal. The middle section emphasizes the connecting mechanisms of resource orchestration, dynamic adaptation, and the synergy between capability exploitation and renovation (Linde et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the right side explains contextual dimensions such as industry dynamics, institutional environment, and culture that influence sustainability strategy. The bottom of the figure summarizes how the combination of all these elements broadens the concept of organizational sustainability, which is then translated into an operational definition as a company's ability to manage, integrate, and adapt resources and capabilities adaptively according to changes in the external environment.

DISCUSSION

This study advances survival theory by integrating insights from the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC) perspectives. The RBV emphasizes the importance of VRIN resources in generating competitive advantage by Barney (1991), whereas the DC framework highlights a firm's ability to sense opportunities and threats, seize them effectively, and reconfigure resources in response to changing environmental conditions (Teece et al., 1997). The thematic synthesis suggests that organizational survival does not depend solely on static resource endowments but requires a continuous and context-sensitive renewal process. In this regard, survival can be understood as a dynamic process in which firms continuously align and renew their resources and capabilities to sustain competitive advantage under changing environmental conditions.

By conceptualizing survival as the joint outcome of resource exploitation, RBV, and capability renewal, DC, this study proposes a more comprehensive framework. It extends survival theory by emphasizing the synergistic relationship between resource configuration and adaptive mechanisms. RBV clarifies which assets are critical for competitive advantage, while DC explains how these resources are mobilized under uncertainty. The findings also indicate that sustainable survival depends not only on possessing valuable resources but also on achieving strategic fit between internal resources, organizational capabilities, and external environmental demands. This integration addresses prior criticisms that each framework alone is insufficient to explain survival in turbulent environments (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Helfat & Peteraf, 2009).

For practitioners, the findings underscore the importance of balancing stability and flexibility. Managers should not only focus on developing and protecting unique resources but also establish routines and processes that enable rapid reconfiguration in response to

environmental shocks. The synthesis further highlights that intangible resources, such as knowledge, organizational culture, reputation, and collaborative capabilities, often play a more significant role in long-term survival because they are more difficult for competitors to imitate. In this regard, three key implications are highlighted. First, resource orchestration suggests that managers should regularly audit both tangible and intangible assets to ensure alignment with evolving industry dynamics, including leveraging expertise, corporate reputation, and networks that enhance organizational resilience. Second, dynamic adaptation requires firms to institutionalize mechanisms for continuous environmental sensing, such as market intelligence systems and horizon scanning, enabling early anticipation of disruptions and opportunities. Third, contextual sensitivity indicates that survival strategies must be tailored to institutional and cultural environments; firms in emerging economies may rely more on relational networks and improvisation, while firms in developed economies benefit from systematic innovation and long-term strategic planning (Coleman et al., 2013).

Furthermore, managers should view survival not as a defensive posture but as a strategic capability encompassing resource leveraging, capability building, and environmental alignment. Managers play an integrative economic role by coordinating assets and capabilities through resource orchestration that is strategically significant for the firm and influences survival outcomes as well as exit routes, including closure or mergers and acquisitions (Barney et al., 2001; Freeman et al., 2021). This perspective reinforces the idea that competitive advantage and organizational survival are interconnected outcomes achieved through the continuous orchestration, renewal, and transformation of organizational resources and capabilities.

This study demonstrates the value of qualitative meta-synthesis in advancing strategic management research. Unlike traditional systematic reviews that prioritize breadth, meta-synthesis emphasizes depth, enabling the identification of underlying themes, patterns, and conceptual linkages across diverse studies (Hoon, 2013). This approach is particularly effective in integrating fragmented insights from RBV and DC literature, facilitating the development of integrative frameworks for survival strategies. The conceptual synthesis presented contributes to survival theory by illustrating how resource orchestration, dynamic adaptation, integrative capability development, and contextual sensitivity collectively shape organizational survival in volatile environments.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that organizational sustainability is the result of the integration of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities (DC), reinforced by external contextual factors. Key findings indicate that sustainability is determined not only by the possession of VRIN resources but also by a company's ability to orchestrate, reconfigure, and continuously update resources according to environmental dynamics. Furthermore, dynamic capabilities such as sensing, seizing, and transforming play a crucial role in creating organizational adaptability. Contextual factors such as industry structure, institutions, and culture have also been shown to influence sustainability strategies. Implications: This study emphasizes the importance of balancing resource exploitation and adaptive flexibility, requiring managers to develop resource orchestration, dynamic adaptation, and sensitivity to the external context to maintain long-term advantage.

However, this study has several limitations. First, it is based on a qualitative meta-synthesis and therefore does not empirically test causal relationships. Second, the scope of the literature used is limited to research available in specific databases, potentially introducing selection bias. Third, differences in industry and country contexts have not been analyzed quantitatively in depth. Therefore, future research is recommended to conduct empirical testing using a quantitative or mixed-methods approach to validate the resulting conceptual model. Furthermore, further research could more specifically explore the role of digital technology, artificial intelligence, and differences in industry sectors in influencing organizational sustainability mechanisms.

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