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From Competencies to Transformation: An Integrated Model of a Transformational Capability of a Firm

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Abstract

The purpose of this conceptual article is to develop the construct of transformational capability of firms and explain how heterogeneous organizational competencies are converted into a repeatable capacity for system-level change. The study applies a conceptual theory-building approach based on an integrative synthesis of research on dynamic capabilities, organizational competencies, digital transformation, internationalisation, organizational learning and resource orchestration. The analytical material consists of secondary data drawn from theoretical and empirical studies representing these research streams.

Based on this synthesis, the article develops a process-configurational model in which four competence domains, namely: digital transformation, internationalisation, technology-enabled market capabilities and organizational agility, form the firm's transformation potential. The model distinguishes competence possession from competence activation and introduces readiness as a context-specific mechanism determining whether relevant competencies are mobilized in response to a particular discontinuity. Internationalisation capability is further specified through three complementary components: absorption and use of international knowledge, relational capability and organizational cultural intelligence.

The main theoretical result is a model explaining transformational capability as an emergent higher-order capability rather than an additive effect of individual competence domains. Organizational unlearning, selective resource reallocation, cross-domain orchestration and leadership are identified as mechanisms that convert activated competencies into coordinated reconfiguration of resources, routines, structures, relationships and business models. The framework integrates research streams and provides a basis for future configurational and process research.

Keywords: Dynamic Capabilities; Internationalisation; Organizational Unlearning; Resource Orchestration; Transformational Capability