

Predicting Organizational Ambidexterity from Knowledge Management Capability and Strategic Flexibility: The Mediating Role of Organizational Learning

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph discussing strategic flexibility and stating that it “refers to the organization's ability to recognize environmental changes, revise strategic priorities, reallocate resources, and adopt alternative courses of action,” the conceptual boundary between strategic flexibility, strategic agility, and dynamic capability remains somewhat blurred. Several cited studies concern strategic agility or dynamic capabilities rather than strategic flexibility specifically. The authors should explicitly distinguish these constructs and justify why evidence from adjacent concepts is theoretically transferable to strategic flexibility. This distinction is particularly important because construct overlap could otherwise weaken the discriminant validity of the theoretical model.

In the subsequent “Data Collection Tools” paragraphs, the knowledge management capability, strategic flexibility, and organizational learning instruments are presented descriptively but without sufficient psychometric provenance. Statements such as “knowledge management capability was measured through a multidimensional questionnaire” and “organizational learning was assessed using a multidimensional self-report instrument” are not adequate for reproducibility. The authors should

identify the original developers of each instrument, number of items and subscales, response range, scoring method, prior reliability and validity evidence, and any modifications made for the Canadian context. If scales were adapted, the adaptation and pilot-testing procedures should also be documented.

In the Data Analysis section, the manuscript indicates that “potential multivariate outliers were evaluated, and assumptions relevant to multivariate analysis were assessed,” but it does not identify the procedures or decision criteria used. The authors should report how missing data were handled, what threshold defined excessive missingness, whether Mahalanobis distance was used for multivariate outliers, how multivariate normality was evaluated, and whether influential cases were removed. Likewise, the manuscript mentions tolerance and VIF but does not report their actual values. These diagnostic procedures should be specified sufficiently to allow replication.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the Introduction paragraph stating that “the existence of knowledge management capability and strategic flexibility may not be sufficient to guarantee ambidextrous outcomes,” the proposed mediation mechanism is introduced convincingly but remains primarily descriptive. The manuscript would benefit from a more formal explanation of why organizational learning is expected to mediate both antecedent relationships. For knowledge management capability, the mechanism might involve acquisition–interpretation–institutionalization, whereas for strategic flexibility it might involve experimentation–feedback–adaptation. Distinguishing these two mediation mechanisms would provide a stronger theoretical basis for testing two indirect effects rather than treating learning as a generic intervening variable.

In the final paragraphs of the Introduction, the research gap should be stated more precisely. The sentence noting that “these constructs have often been examined separately or in models emphasizing different mediators and outcomes” is plausible but insufficiently specific. The authors should indicate whether prior studies have failed to test knowledge management capability and strategic flexibility simultaneously, whether organizational learning has not previously been examined as a mediator between these variables and ambidexterity, or whether the novelty lies in testing this configuration in Canadian organizations. The contribution should be expressed as a clearly identifiable theoretical gap rather than simply as an integrative extension of previous research.

In the “Study Design and Participants” paragraph, the manuscript reports that “the final sample consisted of 312 participants,” but no formal sample-size justification is provided. The statement that the sample was “adequate for the proposed structural equation modeling procedure” is too general for a rigorous empirical article. The authors should provide an a priori power analysis, Monte Carlo power analysis, or a defensible SEM-based sample-size calculation based on model complexity, anticipated effect sizes, statistical power, number of latent variables, and number of observed indicators. This is particularly important because the adequacy of $N = 312$ cannot be judged independently of the measurement-model specification.

In the same “Study Design and Participants” paragraph, the sampling procedure is described as “a convenience sampling procedure combined with organizational and professional network recruitment.” This recruitment strategy creates potential self-selection and organizational-access biases that require more transparent reporting. The manuscript should specify how many organizations were approached, how many agreed to participate, how participants were contacted, how many questionnaires were distributed, how many were returned, and how many cases were removed before reaching the final $N = 312$. A participant-flow description would make the recruitment and exclusion process reproducible and permit readers to assess possible nonresponse bias.

In the “Study Design and Participants” paragraph, the manuscript states that participants came from “service, manufacturing, financial, technology, and professional sectors,” yet the organizational level of the analysis remains ambiguous. Organizational ambidexterity, strategic flexibility, knowledge management capability, and organizational learning are fundamentally organizational constructs, but the data were collected from individual respondents. The authors need to explain whether

multiple respondents represented the same organizations, whether observations were nested within organizations, and whether aggregation to the organizational level was considered. If several participants belonged to the same firm, independence of observations cannot be assumed and multilevel modeling or cluster-adjusted standard errors may be necessary.

In the “Data Collection Tools” paragraph describing organizational ambidexterity, the measure is characterized only as “a self-report measure designed to capture the two complementary dimensions of exploration and exploitation.” The exact source, number of items, response anchors, scoring procedure, and example items are missing. This information should be reported for every scale used in the study. More importantly, the manuscript should explain how exploration and exploitation were combined into organizational ambidexterity because ambidexterity has been operationalized in previous research using additive, multiplicative, balance, and higher-order approaches, each of which carries different theoretical implications.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.