
Review article

Systematic Literature Review: Exploring the Influence of Innovation on Competitive Advantage in Entrepreneurial Ventures

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Abstract

This systematic literature review (SLR) critically examines the intersection of innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage, analysing 251 peer-reviewed articles published between 2014 and 2024. The study aims to uncover prevailing themes, identify research gaps, and provide actionable insights for scholars and practitioners. Descriptive analysis reveals a marked increase in scholarly output on this topic. However, thematic analysis highlights core concepts such as entrepreneurial orientation, dynamic capabilities, and sustainability as key drivers of competitive advantage. Despite the robust work, the review identifies significant research gaps, particularly in emerging markets and interdisciplinary approaches. Additionally, the study underscores the need for longitudinal research to track the evolving relationship between innovation and competitive advantage in different contexts. This review advances theoretical understanding and offers practical implications for policymakers and business leaders, particularly in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in today's rapidly changing global market. Future research should address the identified gaps by embracing more diverse methodologies and expanding the geographic and interdisciplinary scope of the analysis. By focusing on underexplored areas and calling for further investigation into digital transformation, sustainability, and emerging market dynamics, this SLR positions itself as an essential resource for academics, practitioners, and policymakers looking to enhance their understanding of innovation-driven competitive advantage.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Innovation, Competitive Advantage, Dynamic Capabilities, Systematic Literature Review

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1. Introduction:

Entrepreneurship is widely recognised as a critical driver of innovation, economic growth, and societal development (Kumar et al., 2023). In an increasingly competitive global market, entrepreneurial ventures face unique challenges that require constant adaptation and innovation to secure and maintain a competitive edge (Ismail & Alam, 2019; Abeysekera, 2023). Among the various strategies that entrepreneurs employ to achieve this, the ability to innovate stands out as one of the most important factors for sustained success (Timotius, 2023). Innovation enables entrepreneurial ventures to differentiate themselves, respond to changing market demands, and create new value propositions that drive long-term growth (Hwang et al., 2020).

Despite the importance of innovation in entrepreneurship, there remains a need for a deeper understanding of how different forms of innovation, such as product, process, and business model innovation, contribute to the competitive advantage of entrepreneurial ventures (Ferreira & Coelho, 2020; Timotius, 2023). This systematic literature review seeks to address this gap by synthesising findings from recent research on the role of innovation in driving the success of entrepreneurial ventures. By examining various studies, this review aims to identify key trends, challenges, and opportunities for entrepreneurs to leverage innovation as a strategic tool for sustainable growth.

The scope of this review includes peer-reviewed studies of a decade of research in innovation and entrepreneurship from 2014 to 2024. By including this timeframe, the review captures pivotal theories and foundational research, reflecting the rapid advancements and paradigm shifts that have defined this era, especially as startups have navigated through accelerating technological changes and evolving global market dynamics (Kumar et al., 2023). Analysing these studies provides a critical historical context, enabling a deeper understanding of the developmental trajectory of innovation strategies within entrepreneurial ventures (Wei et al., 2023). This analysis elucidates the progression of conceptual and methodological evolutions, and pinpoints how early adaptations have influenced modern business practices and theoretical discussions (Leal et al., 2023). The insights garnered from this review are poised to benefit both the academic community and industry practitioners, offering guidance for future research directions that will continue to push the boundaries of knowledge in the vital field of entrepreneurship.

This paper is structured as follows: It begins by outlining the key concepts of innovation, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurship, providing a framework for the systematic literature review (SLR). After filtering through, 251 articles were selected for review based on inclusion criteria related to time frame, subject area, document type, and language. The review provides an overview of the relevant sources, the themes emerging from the analysis, and the implications for future research. The findings are presented along four key dimensions: examining how various types of innovation and entrepreneurship contribute to competitive advantage; discussing how these factors need to be considered in future studies; emphasising the need for robust theoretical frameworks to enhance understanding in the field; and highlighting the importance of applying updated methodologies in this

area of research. The paper concludes that innovation, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurship should not be examined in isolation but considering their broader contextual factors, advocating for a more integrated approach in future studies.

2. Methodology

The method adopted for this SLR is structured to fulfil the objectives of the study through a comprehensive examination of how innovation contributes to competitive advantage in entrepreneurial ventures. This section outlines the SLR process utilised to gather, analyse, and synthesise relevant literature within the field of entrepreneurship, focusing specifically on innovation-related aspects. This methodology will develop a pattern effectively to gain results, effectively report research, and implement the planning phase at the appropriate time.

2.1 The Planning Phase:

2.1.1 Initial Literary Analysis:

The planning phase commenced with analysis of the existing literature related to innovation in entrepreneurship. This preliminary review helped shape the scope of the research and refine the study's primary research question: "How does innovation influence competitive advantage in entrepreneurial ventures?" This question aims to capture the breadth of innovation's impact, from product and process innovations to innovative business models that redefine market engagement for new and growing firms. During this stage, theoretical frameworks and previous empirical studies were examined to ensure the research question's relevance and comprehensiveness. Key frameworks such as open innovation, the lean startup methodology, and the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm were considered for their insights into how entrepreneurial ventures leverage internal and external resources to innovate effectively (Alsafadi & Aljuhmani, 2023; Prijadi et al., 2022; McGrath, 2023).

Innovation is the cornerstone of modern business strategy and is the primary mechanism through which new ventures disrupt existing markets and create value. Innovation is not merely the introduction of new products or services but also includes novel processes, adoption, technologies, and business practices that enhance efficiency and customer satisfaction (Yun et al., 2019; Dinu et al., 2023). In the entrepreneurial context, innovation enables startups to differentiate themselves from competitors, cater to niche markets, and respond swiftly to changing consumer preferences and technological advancements (Uygun & Gujrati, 2020). By fostering a culture of innovation, entrepreneurs can sustain growth and adaptability, making their ventures resilient to market fluctuations and capable of capitalising on emergent opportunities (Piñeiro-Chousa et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurial innovation refers to creative ideas, their application, and inventive solutions within the framework of new and growing businesses. This form of innovation is crucial for entrepreneurs who must overcome resource constraints and competitive pressures (Hajar et al., 2022). Entrepreneurial innovation often involves a high degree of risk-taking but offers substantial market differentiation and leadership rewards (Karimi & Walter, 2021). It includes pioneering new business models, exploiting untapped market segments, and leveraging technology in unique ways that redefine

how customer value is delivered (Li & Yao, 2021). Entrepreneurial innovators are adept at recognising unfulfilled customer needs and rapidly developing solutions that meet these needs effectively (Peralta et al., 2020).

Gaining a competitive advantage in entrepreneurship necessitates the development and execution of strategies that grant firms an edge over their competitors. Startups can derive this advantage from several sources, such as proprietary technology, which allows them to offer distinctive, hard-to-replicate products or services (Chebo & Wubatie, 2020); superior customer service that builds strong relationships and enhances retention (Maulini et al., 2022); and efficient operational models that minimise costs while maximising output through streamlined processes and automation (Grimaldi et al., 2021). A culture that emphasises continuous innovation and agility enables startups to swiftly adapt to market changes, leveraging data-driven decision-making to refine products, marketing, and customer engagement to be more effective (Timotius, 2023). Specialising in market niches with tailored solutions also helps protect against broader competition and secures dedicated customer bases (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Furthermore, building a strong, relatable brand enhances visibility and market differentiation, while strategic alliances and partnerships can extend a startup's reach and resources, facilitating scale and access to new markets (Skordoulis et al., 2022). Protecting innovations through intellectual property rights creates legal barriers for competitors, securing the startup's unique propositions (Grimaldi et al., 2021). The dynamic integration of these elements—continual innovation, niche specialisation, robust branding, strategic collaborations, and intellectual property protection—not only helps in achieving but also in sustaining competitive advantage, ensuring long-term success, market resilience, and scalability for entrepreneurial ventures (Chen, 2022).

Startup innovation is critically focused on the early stages of business development, where agility and the ability to quickly respond to market feedback are paramount. This form of innovation is essential for startups as it not only lays the groundwork for defining their business models and strategic approaches but also adapts to the volatile nature of highly competitive markets (Ghezzi & Cavallo, 2020). It often requires entrepreneurs to maintain a high degree of flexibility, allowing them to experiment with various approaches, iterate rapidly, and pivot as necessary based on real-time market feedback and emerging trends (Leatherbee & Katila, 2020). Such innovation encompasses developing new products or services, pioneering novel business practices, or utilising cutting-edge technologies that disrupt traditional market dynamics (Gupta et al., 2021). A strong emphasis on startup innovation enables these fledgling companies to outpace established competitors by capitalising on new opportunities and addressing customer needs more effectively and promptly (Sońta-Drączkowska & Mrożewski, 2020). Moreover, startup innovation is closely linked to the concept of 'lean startup' methodologies, where the focus is on minimising waste through incremental development and continuous learning cycles (Bocken & Yuliya, 2019; Zhuge et al., 2023). This approach helps in optimising resources and efforts, ensuring that the startup remains lean and adaptable while pursuing growth (Zhuge et al., 2023). Effective startup innovation is not just about introducing new ideas; it also involves building a culture that supports dynamic growth, encourages risk-taking, and fosters an

entrepreneurial mindset among all team members (Ghezzi & Cavallo, 2020). Successfully managing this innovative thrust can lead to rapid scaling and growth, enabling startups to carve out significant market shares early in their lifecycle and establish a durable presence in their respective industries (McGrath, 2023).

Business model innovation involves rethinking the fundamental ways in which an organisation creates, delivers, and captures value. For entrepreneurs, this means designing business models that are not only economically viable but also aligned with changing technological industry and consumer expectations (Ghezzi & Cavallo, 2020). Business model innovation can provide a substantial competitive advantage by differentiating a startup's approach to revenue generation, cost structure, and customer engagement from more traditional competitors (Bresciani et al., 2021). Examples include subscription-based models, freemium models, and platform-based ecosystems that leverage network effects for growth and profitability (Li, 2020). These models enable firms to scale quickly by targeting large consumer bases while offering low-cost or free services to drive initial user adoption, followed by premium offerings to monetise loyal customers (Chen, 2023). Additionally, using platform-based ecosystems allows businesses to benefit from network effects, where increased user engagement leads to higher value for all participants on the platform (Park et al., 2020). This continuous iteration and adaptability of the business model ensure that startups can remain competitive in dynamic markets while addressing emerging customer needs and preferences.

New trends in innovation have significantly shaped the landscape across industries. One prominent trend is the rise of digital transformation, driven by advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and blockchain technology (Aldoseri et al., 2024). Companies are leveraging AI for predictive analytics, personalised customer experiences, and operational efficiency, as seen in adopting chatbots by platforms like e-commerce sites (Aldoseri et al., 2024). Another trend is the increasing emphasis on sustainability-driven innovation, with businesses adopting green technologies to align with environmental goals (Sun & He, 2023). Open innovation has gained traction, as companies collaborate with external partners, including startups, academic institutions, and competitors, to co-create value (Del Vecchio et al., 2024). The healthcare sector, for instance, has seen collaborative efforts in drug development and telemedicine technologies (Stoumpos et al., 2023). These trends reflect a shift towards integrating innovation as a core component of business strategy, ensuring relevance and competitiveness in rapidly evolving markets (Espina-Romero et al., 2024).

Global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have reshaped innovation strategies across entrepreneurial ventures, compelling firms to adapt to unprecedented challenges with agility and creativity (Elgammal et al., 2022). Similarly, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) pivoted to e-commerce platforms, which enabled countless businesses to transition to online retail amid physical lockdowns (Gao et al., 2023). Additionally, the crisis exposed vulnerabilities in traditional supply chains, pushing organizations to innovate in areas like local sourcing and decentralized production (Dovbischuk, 2022). These shifts reinforced the role of innovation as a key driver of competitive advantage and highlighted its critical function as a survival mechanism during periods of uncertainty (Caballero-Morales, 2021). By fostering dynamic capabilities, firms demonstrated their ability to

reconfigure resources and maintain operations (Huang & Ichikohji, 2024). This emerging trend underscores businesses' need to integrate innovation into their core strategy, ensuring adaptability and long-term sustainability in a volatile global landscape (López & Oliver, 2023). Such discussions deepen the understanding of how crises catalyse transformative changes in entrepreneurship, offering valuable insights for scholars and practitioners alike (Martins, 2022).

2.1.2 Research Question Formation:

RQ; How does innovation within entrepreneurial ventures contribute to sustainable competitive advantage, and what are the mechanisms through which innovation impacts the growth and long-term success of these businesses?

2.2 Implementation Phase

2.2.1 Data Search Strategy

A systematic search was conducted through established academic databases named Scopus. The search focused on articles published from 2014 to 2024 to ensure that the most current research was reviewed. Keywords used included "innovation," "entrepreneurship," "entrepreneurial," "competitive advantage" The search was designed to retrieve studies that specifically address the impact of innovation on competitive advantage within startups and small enterprises.

2.2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria were defined to select studies that directly discuss the role of innovation in enhancing competitive advantage for entrepreneurial ventures. To be included, studies had to:

- Focus on entrepreneurial firms.
- Investigate the impact of various types of innovation.
- Provide empirical data supporting the analysis.
- Be published in peer-reviewed academic journals.

Conversely, studies were excluded if they focused on non-entrepreneurial corporations, were not related to the direct impacts of innovation. This process ensured that the literature review was targeted and relevant to the research question.

This SLR was conducted using the Scopus database to identify academic articles related to innovation, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurship. The search began with an initial keyword filter, utilising the terms "innovation AND competitive AND advantage AND entrepreneurship OR entrepreneurship OR entrepreneurial," which yielded 911 records.

To refine the results, several inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied as shown in Figure 1 below. First, the timeframe was limited to publications between 2014 and 2024, reducing the number of records to 679. The subject area was restricted to 'Business, Management and Accounting', resulting in 451 records. Further refinement was made by limiting the document type to articles, which reduced the total to 302. The search was then limited to articles published in English, bringing the number of records to 294. Keywords associated with specific countries and topics, including 'Egypt, China,

University Integrated Circuits, Jordan, India, Indonesia, and Ambidexterity’, were excluded, leaving 271 records. The source type was restricted to journal articles, further reducing the number to 270. Finally, only articles at the final publication stage were included, resulting in a total of 251 records.

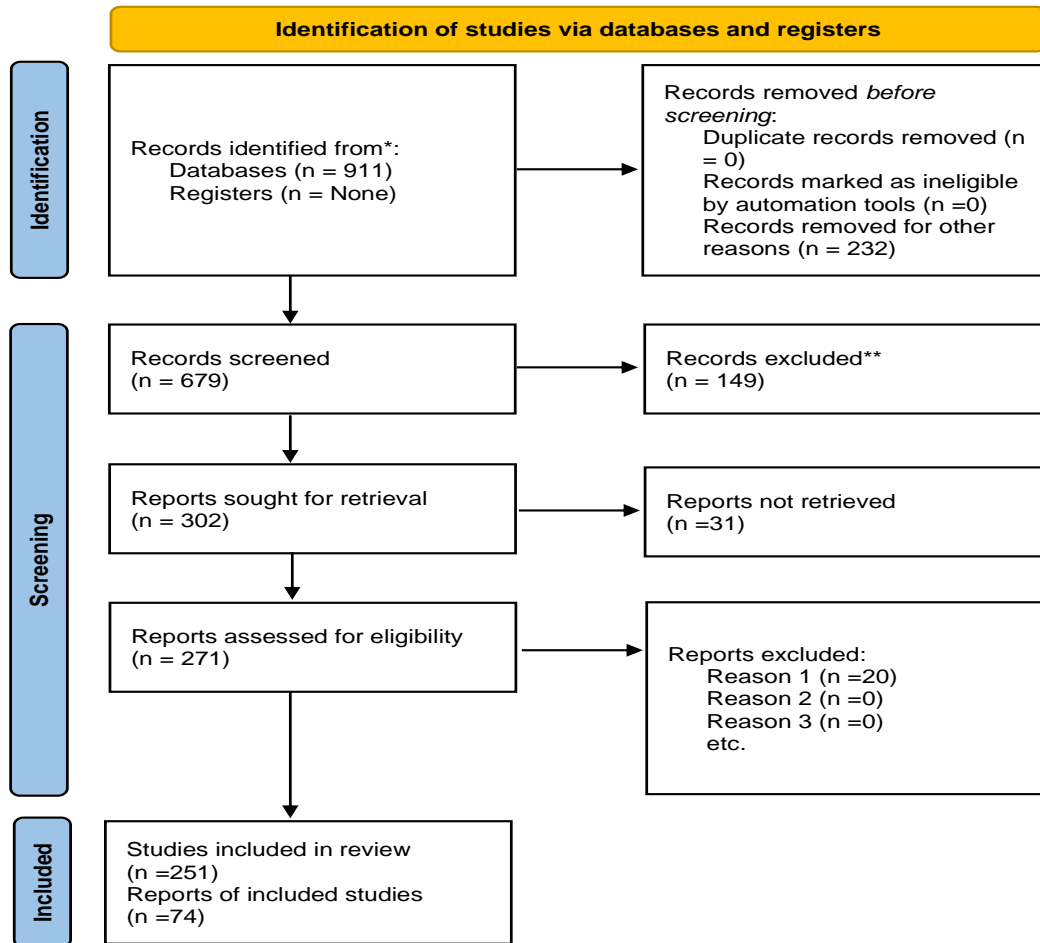


Figure 1: PRISMA Protocol

This phase involved a systematic process of data extraction and analysis. After defining the inclusion and exclusion criteria, relevant studies were screened from the Scopus database. The analysis was conducted using the bibliometrix R package, which facilitated comprehensive bibliometric analysis and science mapping, providing an organised and structured approach to the research (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). A combination of descriptive, thematic, and Quality analyses was conducted. The descriptive analysis provided a detailed overview of the article's characteristics, including publication years, top authors, and sources (Tranfield et al., 2003). The thematic analysis focused on identifying recurring themes, such as innovation capability, entrepreneurial orientation, and sustainability, and it involves recognising and presenting patterns within a dataset, which are then analysed to understand their underlying significance (Flick, 2022; Liebenberg et al., 2020). Finally, quality assessment measures were employed to ensure that only high-quality studies were included in the final review (Cumming et al., 2023).

3. Findings

3.1 Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis involves summarizing and interpreting data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships within a dataset, providing an overview of its key characteristics (Flick, 2022). The dataset spans articles published from 2014 to 2024, as depicted in Table 1 with the number of articles increasing steadily over the years. In 2014, 12 articles were published, with this number increasing to 35 articles in 2023. The year 2020 marked a slight increase in publication activity, reflecting growing interest in the field. With 26 articles published, likely indicating growing interest in topics such as innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage. By 2024, the number of articles slightly decreased to 29, suggesting a peak in interest or available publications in the previous year, see Table 2 for more information about annual production of articles.

Table 1 Main information (2014-2024)

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2014:2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	161
Documents	251
Average years from publication	3.96
Average citations per documents	20.37
Average citations per year per doc	3.811
References	1
DOCUMENT TYPES	
Article	251
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	248
Author's Keywords (DE)	872
AUTHORS	
Authors	692
Author Appearances	721
Authors of single-authored documents	34
Authors of multi-authored documents	658
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored documents	35
Documents per Author	0.363
Authors per Document	2.76
Co-Authors per Documents	2.87
Collaboration Index	3.05

Table 2 Annual production of articles (2014-2024)

Year	Articles
2014	12
2015	9
2016	9
2017	21
2018	24
2019	24
2020	36
2021	26
2022	26
2023	35
2024	29

Citation trends over this period show significant variance. The Mean Total Citations per Article (Mean TC per Art) peaked in 2019, with an average of 44.29 citations per article, while other years like 2023 had a much lower mean at 5.69 citations based on Table 3. These variations highlight the differences in impact across articles published in different years, suggesting certain topics or research in specific years gained more traction and scholarly attention.

Table 3 Annual total citation per year (2014-2024)

Year	N	MeanTCperArt	MeanTCperYear	CitableYears
2014	12	26.25	2.625	10
2015	9	10.33333333	1.148148148	9
2016	9	36.77777778	4.597222222	8
2017	21	35.28571429	5.040816327	7
2018	24	31.29166667	5.215277778	6
2019	24	44.29166667	8.858333333	5
2020	36	26.91666667	6.729166667	4
2021	26	12.57692308	4.192307692	3
2022	26	11.15384615	5.576923077	2
2023	35	5.685714286	5.685714286	1
2024	29	1.137931034		0

The dataset includes highly cited authors like FERREIRA FAF, who has 463 total citations across multiple papers published from 2019 to 2021 (see Table 4). Other notable authors, such as JAVALGI RG and GAMAGE TC, also made significant contributions with total citations of 118 and 16, respectively. Articles in this dataset are frequently published in high-impact journals, including the Journal of Business Research, which has the highest local impact based on the H-index, followed by the International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal (see Figure 2)

Table 4 Author production over the time (2014-2024)

Author	year	freq	TC	TCpY
FERREIRA FAF	2019	2	454	75.667
FERREIRA FAF	2021	1	9	2.25
FERREIRA JJ	2019	2	454	75.667
FERREIRA JJ	2020	1	22	4.4
FERREIRA JJ	2021	1	9	2.25
FERREIRA JJ	2022	1	2	0.667
FERREIRA JJM	2019	2	454	75.667
FERREIRA JJM	2021	1	9	2.25
GAMAGE TC	2023	1	16	8
GAMAGE TC	2024	1	2	2
GARCÍA-SÁNCHEZ E	2017	1	37	4.625
GARCÍA-SÁNCHEZ E	2018	1	76	10.857
JAVALGI RG	2016	1	91	10.111
JAVALGI RG	2017	1	118	14.75
KARAGOUNI G	2014	1	29	2.636
KARAGOUNI G	2015	1	3	0.3
KARAGOUNI G	2018	1	45	6.429
KITSIOS F	2023	2	10	5
KUMAR A	2015	1	1	0.1
KUMAR A	2023	1	0	0

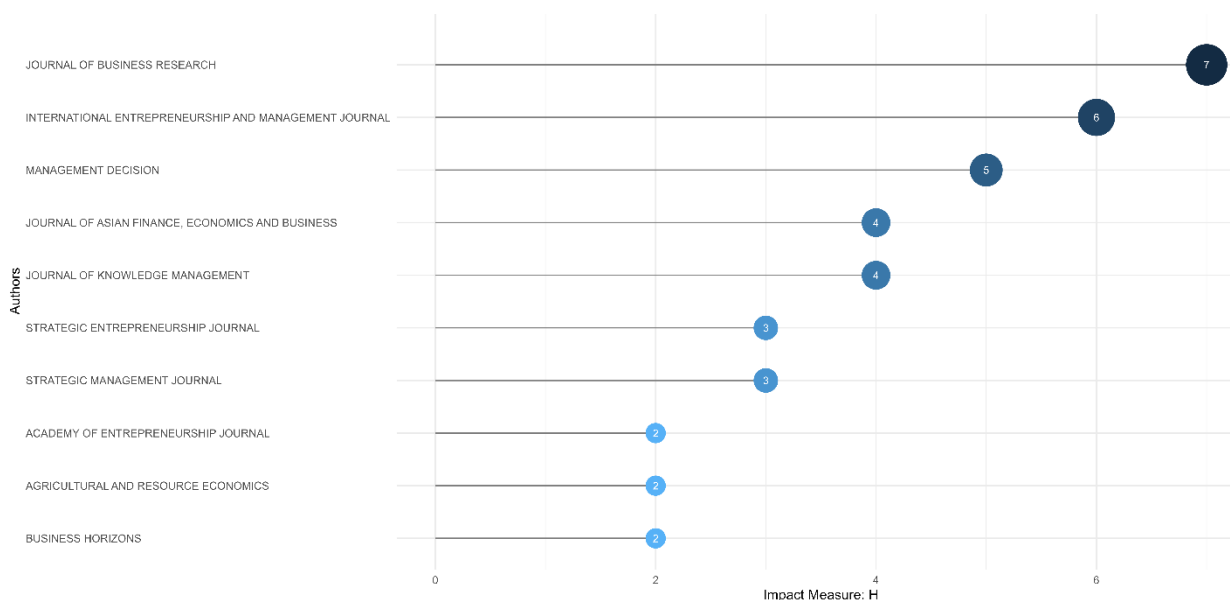


Figure 2 Source local impact by H index

The most frequent keywords that appear across these articles include innovation, entrepreneurship, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurial orientation, signifying the central themes of the research landscape during this period. Based on Figure 3, innovation was a focus in 63 articles, followed by entrepreneurship in 52 articles, and competitive advantage in 41 articles.



Figure 3 Tree map of Keywords

3.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis focuses on identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Liebenberg et al., 2020). Based on the datasets provided, central themes were observed in the literature related to **innovation, entrepreneurship, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurial orientation**. These themes can be grouped into distinct categories according to their relevance and development within the literature:

1. Core Themes (Basic Themes)

- **Innovation:** Appearing as the most frequent keyword across the dataset 63 articles (see Figure 3), innovation is consistently explored in relation to entrepreneurship and competitive advantage. It serves as a fundamental concept, often linked to business model innovation, performance, and sustainability. Key studies delve into the role of innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and its impact on firm competitiveness.
- **Entrepreneurship:** This theme, highlighted in 52 articles, closely ties to innovation and competitive advantage (see Figure 3). Entrepreneurship research often investigates entrepreneurial strategies, entrepreneurial orientation, and their effect on business

success. The term is broadly used, addressing both individual entrepreneurship and corporate entrepreneurship, emphasising the dynamic processes within organisations.

- **Competitive Advantage** With 41 mentions, this theme examines how firms can differentiate themselves and sustain growth in competitive markets. The literature in this theme frequently overlaps with studies on **innovation** and **entrepreneurial orientation**, focusing on leveraging innovation for sustained market leadership (see Figure 3).

2. Emerging or Declining Themes

- **Human Capital and Innovation Performance** Positioned in Figure 4 these topics are relatively underdeveloped but still relevant. They appear less frequently in the literature but are integral to discussions on how workforce skills and capabilities impact organisational innovation and performance. This may represent an area where more research is required.

3. Niche Themes

4. **Business Model Innovation and Sustainable Entrepreneurship:** Although these themes on Figure 4 are not as central or widely discussed as innovation or entrepreneurship, they are emerging as specialised areas within the broader domain. Business model innovation is receiving attention for transforming traditional business processes in response to technological advancements or market disruptions.

5. Motor Themes (Driving the Field Forward)

- **Corporate Entrepreneurship and Dynamic Capabilities:** Based on Figure 4, these are dynamic, high-density themes that play a crucial role in the literature. **Corporate entrepreneurship** is associated with internal innovation processes in large organizations, while **dynamic capabilities** refer to the firm's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal competencies to address rapidly changing environments. Both themes are essential in understanding how firms maintain competitiveness through internal innovations.
- **Entrepreneurial Orientation:** This theme is central to understanding the behaviour of firms that are geared toward innovation, risk-taking, and proactivity. Studies on entrepreneurial orientation often intersect with research on **competitive advantage** and **innovation**, exploring how firms can strategically position themselves in competitive environments (see Figure 4)

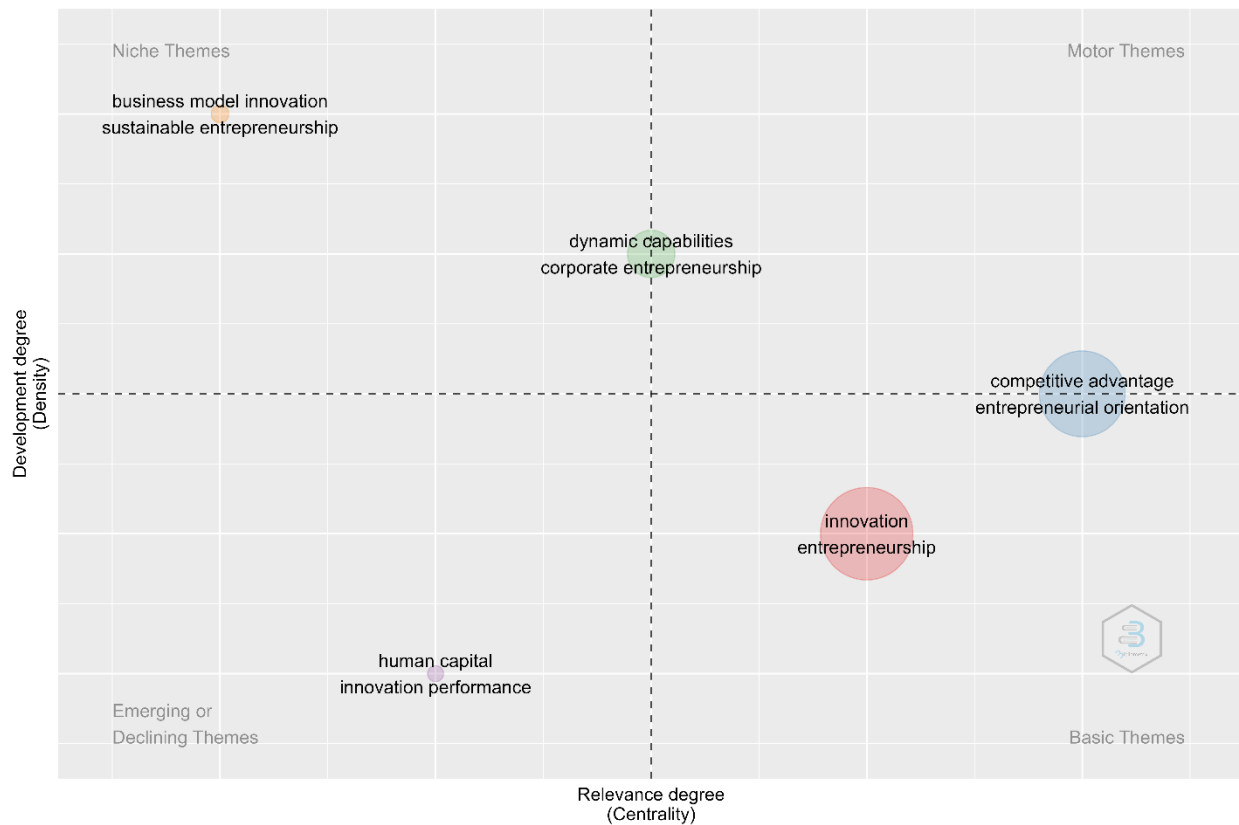


Figure 4 lower quadrant of the thematic map

6. Thematic Overlap

- There is significant overlap between **innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage** in Figure 5, indicating that these themes are interrelated and are often studied together. The strong connection between **entrepreneurial orientation** and **competitive advantage** further suggests that firms seeking to achieve a competitive edge must focus on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset.

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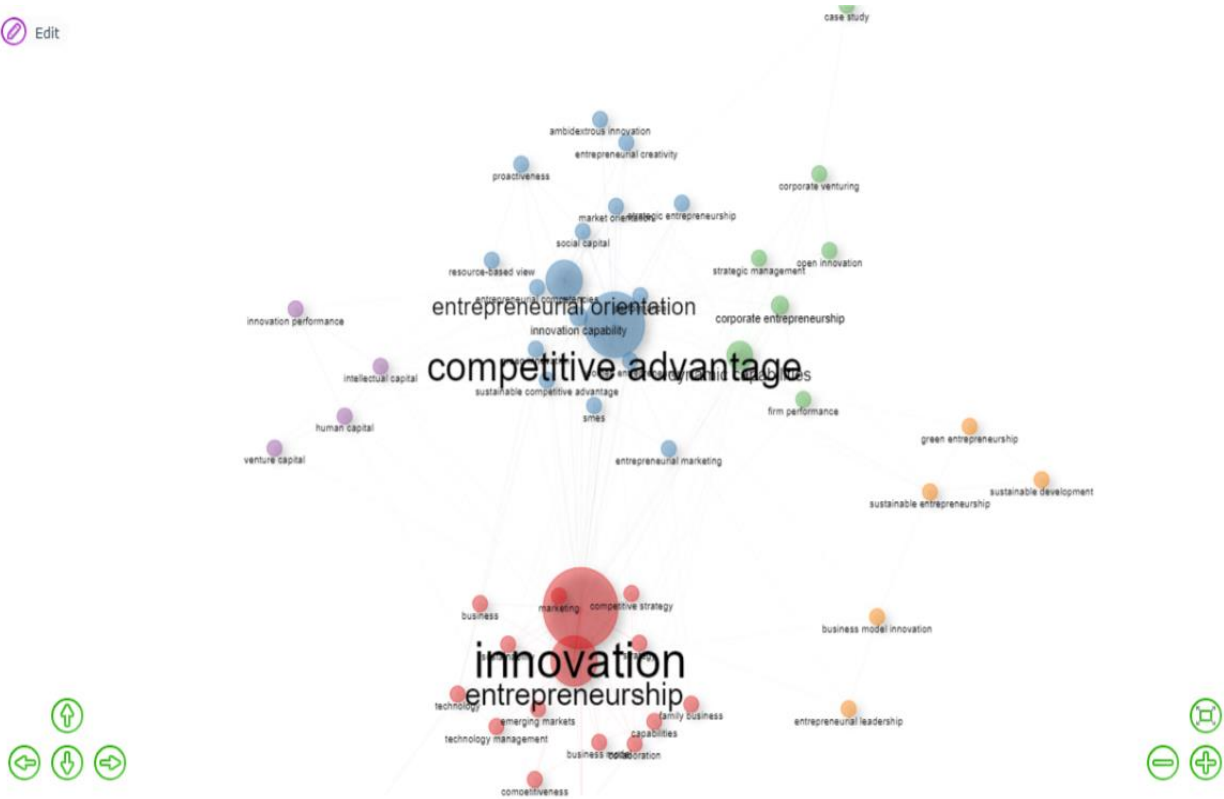


Figure 5 The Thematic Network Map

7. Collaboration Trends

- Geographically, Figure 6 shows the **USA**, **China**, and Indonesia are a key player in research on entrepreneurship and innovation. This indicates a global interest in the topics with research partnerships spanning regions.

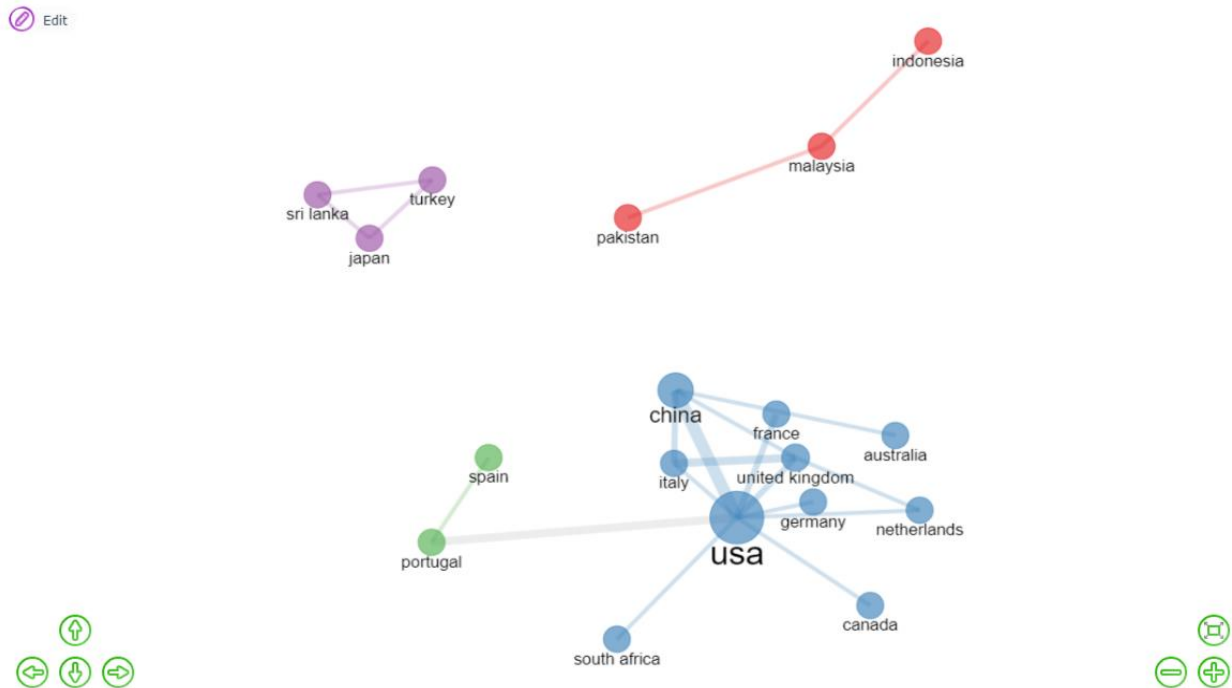


Figure 6 The collaboration map

3.3 Quality Assessment

The quality assessment is essential in determining the rigor and reliability of the studies included in the review (Cumming et al., 2023). For this SLR, several criteria are used to evaluate the quality of the 251 articles analysed:

1. **Peer-reviewed Sources** A key quality criterion is that all articles should be published in peer-reviewed journals, ensuring that the content has undergone rigorous academic scrutiny. Based on the data provided, the articles predominantly come from reputable sources such as the *Journal of Business Research*, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, and *Management Decision*, among others. These journals are known for their high impact factors and standards of publication, indicating that the studies reviewed are of high academic quality (see figure 2)
2. **Impact Factor of Journals** Another indicator of quality is the impact factor (or H-index) of the sources. The journal impact analysis reveals that the top journals in this dataset include the *Journal of Business Research* and *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal* (see Figure 2). These journals have a high local impact, as measured by their H-index, signifying that the articles published within them are frequently cited and influential in their respective fields.
3. **Citation Analysis** The frequency of citations for individual articles also serves as a measure of quality. Articles that have been cited frequently, such as those authored by **Ferreira FAF** and **Ferreira JJ**, have gained significant traction within the research community, highlighting their

relevance and contribution to the field. For example, Ferreira's article on firm innovation and performance published in *Journal of Business Research* in 2019 has been cited 408 times, emphasising its impact (see Table 5).

4. **Theoretical and Methodological Rigor** The articles under review primarily explore empirical research, which provides data-driven insights into innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage. Articles with sound theoretical frameworks, comprehensive data analysis, and strong methodological approaches are valued more in the quality assessment process. The presence of a significant number of empirical studies in the dataset, supported by quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, indicates the robustness of the literature included in the review.
5. **Relevance to Research Questions** During the screening process, irrelevant articles were excluded based on their lack of alignment with the research focus. Only articles directly related to innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage in business contexts were retained. This additional filter ensured that only high-quality and relevant articles remained, which enhanced the overall credibility of the findings.
6. **Study Period (2014-2024)** The review is limited to articles published between 2014 and 2024, a period in which the themes of innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage have been particularly prominent in the literature. This focus on recent publications ensures that the review reflects the current state of research, considering the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities in the field.

Table 5 Author production over the time documents

Author	year	TI	SO	DOI	TC	TC pY
FERREIRA FAF	2019	A MULTIPLE CRITERIA GROUP DECISION-MAKING APPROACH FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS	MANAGEMENT DECISION	10.1108/MD-02-2018-0203	46	7.6 67
FERREIRA FAF	2019	TO BE OR NOT TO BE DIGITAL, THAT IS THE QUESTION: FIRM INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE	JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH	10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.11.013	408	68
FERREIRA FAF	2021	DEVELOPING A COMPOSITE INDEX FOR INTRAPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES: A COMPREHENSIVE DUAL METHODOLOGY	JOURNAL OF THE OPERATIONAL RESEARCH SOCIETY	10.1080/01605682.2020.1730715	9	2.2 5
FERREIRA JJM	2019	A MULTIPLE CRITERIA GROUP DECISION-MAKING APPROACH FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS	MANAGEMENT DECISION	10.1108/MD-02-2018-0203	46	7.6 67
FERREIRA JJM	2019	TO BE OR NOT TO BE DIGITAL, THAT IS THE QUESTION: FIRM INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE	JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH	10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.11.013	408	68
FERREIRA JJM	2021	DEVELOPING A COMPOSITE INDEX FOR INTRAPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES: A COMPREHENSIVE DUAL METHODOLOGY	JOURNAL OF THE OPERATIONAL RESEARCH SOCIETY	10.1080/01605682.2020.1730715	9	2.2 5
KARAGOU NI G	2018	PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES AND LOW-TECHNOLOGY KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE VENTURING	EUROMED JOURNAL OF BUSINESS	10.1108/EMJ-B-11-2016-0033	45	6.4 29
KARAGOU NI G	2014	MAINSTREAMING GREEN PRODUCT STRATEGIES WHY AND HOW FURNITURE COMPANIES INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?	EUROMED JOURNAL OF BUSINESS	10.1108/EMJ-B-12-2013-0058	29	2.6 36
KARAGOU NI G	2015	KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND PERFORMANCE DURING THE CRISIS: CASES OF THE GREEK WOOD INDUSTRY	WORLD REVIEW OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP , MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	10.1504/WR-EMSD.2015.068581	3	0.3
NIMRAN U	2021	THE EFFECT OF SPIRITUAL MARKETING AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ORIENTATION ON DETERMINING SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	JOURNAL OF ASIAN FINANCE, ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS	10.13106/jaf-eb.2021.vol8.no2.0231	7	1.7 5
NIMRAN U	2021	THE EFFECTS OF DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES, ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY AND AMBIDEXTROUS INNOVATION ON FIRM'S COMPETITIVENESS	JOURNAL OF ASIAN FINANCE, ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS	10.13106/jaf-eb.2021.vol8.no1.711	15	3.7 5
NIMRAN U	2020	AMBIDEXTROUS INNOVATION IN MEDIATING	JOURNAL OF ASIAN	10.13106/jaf	8	1.6

		ENTREPRENEURIAL CREATIVITY ON FIRM PERFORMANCE AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE	FINANCE, ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS	eb.2020.vol7 .no11.737		
FERREIRA JJ	2022	ORGANIZATIONAL ANTECEDENTS OF CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A QUANTITATIVE INVESTIGATION FROM PORTUGAL	JOURNAL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP	10.1177/09713557221136130	2	0.6 67
FERREIRA JJ	2019	A MULTIPLE CRITERIA GROUP DECISION-MAKING APPROACH FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS	MANAGEMENT DECISION	10.1108/MD-02-2018-0203	46	7.6 67
FERREIRA JJ	2020	KNOWLEDGE SPILLOVERS AND STRATEGIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP: WHAT RESEARCHES AND APPROACHES?	INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT JOURNAL	10.1007/s11365-018-0541-4	22	4.4
FERREIRA JJ	2019	TO BE OR NOT TO BE DIGITAL, THAT IS THE QUESTION: FIRM INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE	JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH	10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.11.013	408	68
FERREIRA JJ	2021	DEVELOPING A COMPOSITE INDEX FOR INTRAPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES: A COMPREHENSIVE DUAL METHODOLOGY	JOURNAL OF THE OPERATIONAL RESEARCH SOCIETY	10.1080/01605682.2020.1730715	9	2.2 5
GAMAGE TC	2023	ACHIEVING SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN RETAIL AND CONSUMER SERVICE FIRMS: THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL BRICOLAGE	JOURNAL OF RETAILING AND CONSUMER SERVICES	10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103495	16	8
GAMAGE TC	2024	EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF SERVICE INNOVATION AMBIDEXTERITY ON SERVICE DESIGN IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT	10.1016/j.ijhm.2024.103730	2	2
GARCÍA-SÁNCHEZ E	2018	ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT, STAKEHOLDER INTEGRATION CAPABILITY, ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY, AND TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE THROUGH CORPORATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP	INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT JOURNAL	10.1007/s11365-017-0436-9	76	10. 85 7

4. Discussion: Looking at the Gaps and New directions

This SLR aims to identify unexplored areas within the existing literature on innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage. Based on the reviewed articles and the thematic, descriptive, and quality assessments, several gaps in the research have emerged:

1. Geographical Bias

- The SLR is skewed towards certain regions, with countries like the USA, China, and Indonesia contributing significantly to the body of work. However, Africa, Latin

America, and the Middle East regions are notably underrepresented in the dataset. This geographical bias highlights an opportunity for future research to delve into how innovation and entrepreneurship manifest in these underrepresented areas. Exploring these regions, particularly in developing economies, could uncover unique challenges and opportunities within their entrepreneurial ecosystems, which may differ significantly from those in the developed world. For instance, studies could focus on the role of grassroots innovation, resource constraints, or the influence of socio-cultural dynamics in fostering entrepreneurship. Addressing this bias would enrich the global understanding of innovation and provide actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners in emerging markets.

2. Limited Focus on Emerging Markets

- Although some studies touch on emerging markets (such as Indonesia and Malaysia), the literature lacks in-depth exploration of innovation and competitive advantage specifically tailored to the unique challenges faced by emerging economies. There is potential to investigate how businesses in these markets can leverage limited resources for innovation and how entrepreneurial ventures can create sustainable competitive advantages in less developed infrastructure settings.

3. Sustainability and Innovation

- While there is some discussion of sustainability in the literature (e.g., sustainable entrepreneurship and sustainable competitive advantage), the intersection of sustainability and entrepreneurship remains underexplored. Specifically, studies that examine the long-term sustainability impacts of innovation, particularly in sectors such as energy, manufacturing, and agriculture, are scarce. Future research could address how entrepreneurs can balance innovation with environmental sustainability, contributing to the growing field of "green entrepreneurship."

4. Digital Entrepreneurship and Technological Disruption

- Despite the increasing relevance of digital entrepreneurship, technological innovation, and disruptions caused by digital transformation, the existing literature has not fully explored these trends. While some articles discuss digital platforms and the digital economy, there is a need for more comprehensive research on how digital innovation impacts competitive advantage, particularly in industries undergoing rapid technological change (e.g., fintech, healthcare, and education).

5. Focus on Large Corporations versus SMEs

- A significant portion of the literature focuses on large corporations and their innovation strategies. While small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are included, their unique

challenges and advantages in the context of innovation and entrepreneurship are less frequently discussed. Future research could further explore how SMEs develop competitive advantage through innovation, particularly in highly competitive or resource-constrained environments.

6. Interdisciplinary Approaches

- The current literature tends to focus on entrepreneurship, innovation, and competitive advantage within the confines of business and management studies. However, there is a gap in interdisciplinary approaches that integrate insights from fields such as psychology, sociology, and technology studies. Research that combines perspectives from multiple disciplines could provide a more holistic understanding of how innovation occurs in entrepreneurial ventures and how competitive advantage is sustained over time.

7. Longitudinal Studies

- Most studies included in the review are cross-sectional, providing a snapshot of innovation and entrepreneurship at a single point in time. There is a lack of longitudinal research that tracks innovation processes and competitive advantage over time. Future studies could adopt a longitudinal approach to understand how entrepreneurial firms evolve, sustain innovation, and maintain competitive advantage over extended periods, particularly in volatile markets.

8. Impact of Global Crises on Innovation

- The effects of global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on innovation and entrepreneurship have only recently begun to emerge in the literature. While there are some studies addressing this, future research should delve deeper into how crises reshape innovation strategies, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and competitive advantage. In particular, the role of resilience, adaptability, and crisis-induced innovation in entrepreneurial ventures presents a rich area for exploration.

5. Conclusion: Summary, Implications, and Limitations

summary

This SLR aimed to explore the intersection of innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage by analysing 251 studies published between 2014 and 2024. The descriptive analysis demonstrated a growing body of research, with a significant increase in publications during recent years, indicating heightened academic interest in this area. The thematic analysis identified core themes, including innovation, entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, and dynamic capabilities, that are crucial in understanding how businesses develop and sustain competitive advantage. The quality assessment of

these studies highlighted the diversity of methodological approaches and the general reliability of the research base.

The gap analysis revealed several underexplored areas, particularly the limited focus on emerging markets, the scarcity of interdisciplinary approaches, and the need for longitudinal studies that track innovation and competitive advantage over time. Additionally, topics such as the impact of digital transformation and sustainability in entrepreneurial ventures require further exploration to build a more holistic understanding of the evolving entrepreneurial landscape.

Implications

The findings of this SLR hold several important implications for both academia and practice. For researchers, the review provides a clear roadmap for future studies, highlighting the need for more diverse geographic focus, interdisciplinary approaches, and long-term studies on innovation and entrepreneurship. Additionally, the insights gained from this analysis can inform policymakers and business leaders looking to foster innovation and entrepreneurial activity. Policymakers can leverage the findings to tailor support programs for SMEs and entrepreneurs in emerging markets, while business leaders can use these insights to fine-tune their innovation strategies, ensuring sustainable competitive advantage in the ever-changing global market.

Moreover, the increasing importance of digital entrepreneurship and sustainability has practical implications for companies looking to innovate in sectors where technological disruption is prevalent. Understanding how to balance innovation with sustainability and long-term resilience will be key to navigating the future business environment.

Limitations

While this SLR offers valuable insights, it is not without limitations. First, the scope of this review was restricted to articles published in English and indexed within Scopus, which may have excluded relevant research published in other languages or databases. This could result in a bias towards Western-centric perspectives, leaving certain regional insights unexplored. Additionally, the exclusion of keywords related to certain countries, such as Egypt, China, and India, may have further limited the geographical scope of the review.

Another limitation is the focus on peer-reviewed journal articles, which might exclude valuable contributions from conference papers, books, and reports that provide practical or emerging perspectives on innovation and entrepreneurship. Lastly, while a variety of methods and approaches were considered, the review predominantly focused on studies within the subject area of business, management, and accounting, leaving out contributions from other fields that may offer useful interdisciplinary insights.

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مراجعة منهجية للأدبيات: استكشاف تأثير الابتكار على الميزة التنافسية في المشاريع الريادية

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الملخص

تتناول هذه المراجعة المنهجية للأدبيات بشكل نقدي تقاطع الابتكار وريادة الأعمال والميزة التنافسية، وتحليل 251 مقالة تمت مراجعتها من قبل الأقران ونشرت بين عامي 2014 و2024. تهدف الدراسة إلى الكشف عن الموضوعات السائدة وتحديد فجوات البحث وتقديم رؤى قابلة للتنفيذ للعلماء والممارسين. يكشف التحليل الوصفي عن زيادة ملحوظة في الناتج العلمي حول هذا الموضوع. ومع ذلك، يسلط التحليل الموضوعي الضوء على المفاهيم الأساسية مثل التوجه الريادي والقدرات الديناميكية والاستدامة كمحركات رئيسية للميزة التنافسية. وعلى الرغم من العمل القوي، فإن المراجعة تحدد فجوات بحثية كبيرة، وخاصة في الأسواق الناشئة والنهج متعددة التخصصات. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تؤكد الدراسة على الحاجة إلى البحث الطولي لتتبع العلاقة المتطورة بين الابتكار والميزة التنافسية في سياقات مختلفة. تعمل هذه المراجعة على تعزيز الفهم النظري وتقديم آثارًا عملية لصناع السياسات وقادة الأعمال، وخاصة في تعزيز الابتكار وريادة الأعمال في السوق العالمية المتغيرة بسرعة اليوم. يجب أن تعالج الأبحاث المستقبلية الفجوات المحددة من خلال تبني منهجيات أكثر تنوعًا وتوسيع النطاق الجغرافي ومتعدد التخصصات للتحليل. من خلال التركيز على المجالات غير المستكشفة والدعوة إلى مزيد من التحقيق في التحول الرقمي والاستدامة وديناميكيات السوق الناشئة، تضع هذه المراجعة نفسها كمورد أساسي للأكاديميين والممارسين وصناع السياسات الذين يتطلعون إلى تعزيز فهمهم للميزة التنافسية المدفوعة بالابتكار.

الكلمات الرئيسية: الابتكار الريادي، الميزة التنافسية، القدرات الديناميكية، مراجعة الأدبيات المنهجية