Research Trends in Sustainable Competitive Advantage Management Over the Last Decade

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to systematically examine research reference trends in sustainable competitive advantage management from 2012 to 2022. This research will focus on the development trends of sustainable competitive advantage management research on data-driven Scopus. A mixed method approach was used in this study, combining bibliometric methods and a literature review. This research utilized 62 data points gathered via web scraping and sourced from the Scopus database from international publications with the keywords sustainable competitive advantage management from 2012 to 2022. According to the findings of this study, several fields of study dominate studies on sustainable competitive advantage management, including management, human capital, business, economics, finance, the environment, infrastructure, food security, the public sector, and technology. According to the study's findings, at least four major perspectives are dominantly used in discussing this issue. Furthermore, this analysis reveals that the most frequently discussed contexts are interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary issues. This means that when discussing an issue, a study will usually use more than one point of view. The research's limitation is the scope of the articles used, which were sourced from the SCOPUS database. It is strongly advised to conduct future research using a broader literature source. Furthermore, the study's findings can be used to generate hypotheses, and extensive and systematic follow-up research is being conducted. The study's findings are expected to be useful to academics interested in studying sustainable competitive advantage management.

Keywords: Sustainable competitive advantage, management, bibliometric analysis, systematic review

1. Introduction

The concept of sustainable competitive advantage was introduced in 1984 when it was explained how to maintain competitive advantage; however, Porter did not create an official definition of sustainable competitive advantage until 1985 (Hakkak & Ghodsi, 2015). Barney (1991) defined sustainable competitive advantage as the sustainability of benefits and the application of a unique strategic value to compete with that unique value is difficult to imitate. The company's efforts to maintain competition over the long term are referred to as sustainable competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage is a firm's ability to do business by intelligently using its resources in a meaningful way that maximizes value creation and cannot be replicated by competitors (Barney & Hesterly, 2012). A unique combination of organizational resources and skills creates a sustainable competitive advantage in an organization (Mao & Deng, 2016). Three factors influence long-term competitive advantage: the size of the target market, easy access to resources and consumers, and limitations on competitors' strengths.

The ability of the company to use various resources and capabilities as strategic assets can generate an advantage. The success of this strategic asset management will determine the company's unique advantages, which can create a competitive advantage. If a company's competitive advantage is based on structural characteristics such as market power, economies of scale, or product lines, then today's emphasis on a company's ability to consistently deliver superior value becomes the focus of its customers. To accomplish this, competitive advantage is determined not only by the company's role, but also by the company's ability to change dramatically. As a result,

there are at least four basic resource needs that must be met in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, namely value, uniqueness, non-perfection, and different strategies.

According to Bennett (2010), consumers and organizations serve distinct functions, with consumer demand serving as the demand side and the organization serving as the provider of goods and services. The organization's mission is to provide the best goods and services possible, as well as to provide employment and benefits to stakeholders and shareholders. Furthermore, according to Kontoghiorghes (2003), the competitiveness of service business institutions in measuring organizational competitiveness includes aspects of the work environment, job design, innovation, technology management, quality management, and quality indicators.

Competitive advantage, according to Porter (2004), is at the heart of a company's performance in a competitive market, but after decades of great expansion and prosperity, many companies have lost sight of competitive advantage in their struggle for further development in pursuit of diversification.

A firm's competitive advantage is due to a comparative advantage in resources, which results in superior value at lower costs. Understanding competitive advantage requires looking at the company as a whole. Competitive advantage is derived from the numerous activities that a company engages into design, manufacture, market, deliver, and support its products. Competitiveness is defined as efficiency and effectiveness in determining the direction and outcomes of goals to be achieved, which include the final goal and the final achievement process in facing competition. Competitiveness is defined as the ability to strengthen its market position, relate to its environment, continuously improve performance, and establish a favorable position.

From the perspective of industrialists, management as an organization or company that produces and sells goods or services must pay attention to company management principles and professionalism in order to survive and develop (Kartono, 1997). Many research experts have demonstrated that superior abilities or skills result in superior performance (superior performance). Superior skills are distinct competencies that help organizations gain a competitive advantage. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are examples of performance outcomes that demonstrate the company's competitive advantage (Cravens, 1996). Rue and Byard (1997) define company performance as the level of achievement of the company's achievements as measured in the form of work results in this case.

According to Porter (1994), a company's success or failure is determined by its competitive advantage. If a company is to survive and, if necessary, grow, it must be able to create and maintain a competitive advantage in its industry. This concept is applicable to all organizations or businesses. As a result, competitive advantage refers to the manner in which a company selects and implements a generic strategy (Porter, 1994). Furthermore, according to Porter (1994), competitive advantage stems from the value that a company can create for its buyers that exceeds the company's costs in creating it. Buyers' willingness to pay for what the company provides is referred to as value. Superior value can be achieved by charging less than competitors for a comparable benefit or by providing a unique benefit that goes beyond simply offsetting the higher price.

This superior value can be realized in a broad or narrow target market (focus). In other words, regardless of the size or scope of the target market, there are two basic types of competitive advantage: cost advantage and differentiation (Porter, 1994; Hunger & Wheelen, 2001).

In light of the foregoing, theoretically and practically, sustainable competitive advantage is critical to the success or failure of a management or organization, in this case the company. As a result, the researcher believes that a thorough and systematic understanding of the current issue of sustainable competitive advantage can provide insight into how an organization can manage its success by implementing the concept. Based on this phenomenon, the purpose of this study is to systematically examine research references related to sustainable competitive advantage from 2012 to 2022. This study will look specifically at the development trend of sustainable competitive advantage research on data-driven scopes.

2. Literature review

Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage is an organization's or company's advantage, which is used to compete and compete with other organizations or companies in order to obtain something. When a factor has something that competitors do not have, does something better than other factors, or is able to do something that other factors are unable to do, the factor is said to have a competitive advantage (Kuncoro. 2006). Meanwhile, Porter (1993) claims that the terms competitiveness and competitiveness are interchangeable. While the terms competitive advantage and

competitive advantage are interchangeable (Porter, 1993). Competitiveness is the ability of a person/organization/institution to demonstrate superiority in certain areas, such as having the most favorable situations and conditions, producing better work results faster or more meaningfully than another person/organization/institution. in an industry, an organization, a portion of an organization, or the entire organization.

Literature review and bibliometric analysis

The literature used in this study is based on data from Scopus publications, which are then critically analyzed using a literature review approach. This method of research is a critical analysis method that is used to conduct research on specific topics, in this case sustainable competitive advantage, using various literature sources (Knopf, J. W., 2006; Randolph, J., 2009; Booth, A., Sutton, A., & Papaioannou, D., 2016). This method is widely used in fields ranging from economics to management to information technology. Bibliometric analysis, on the other hand, is a quantitative method for analyzing bibliographic data in articles/journals. This analysis is typically used to investigate references to scientific articles cited in a journal, to map a journal's scientific field, and to categorize scientific articles according to a research field. The citation analysis approach is used in bibliometric analysis to find one article cited by another, and the co-citation analysis approach is used to find two or more articles cited by one. The words (co-words) used in a document can reveal the concept of science contained within it. Co-word analysis is based on the co-occurrence of words or keywords in two or more documents that are used to index documents (Effendy et al., 2021).

3. Method

This study used a mix method approach, combining bibliometric methods and a literature review (see Figure 1). This study makes use of data from international publications with the keyword sustainable competitive advantage management from 2012 to 2022 (see Figure 2), which were gathered via web scraping and sourced from the Scopus database (www.scopus.com).

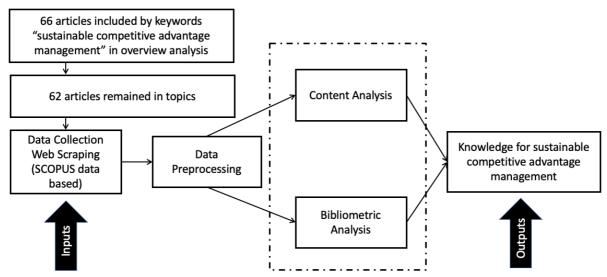


Figure 1. Literature review and bibliometric flow chart

Source: Primary data, 2022

Litmaps was also used to investigate data on the number of publications per year, journals containing articles, authors, and topics. Furthermore, VOS viewer software is used to analyze the development trend of international publications, which is then followed by qualitative content analysis. VOS viewer is bibliometric network creation and visualization software. Individual journals, researchers, or publications can be included in these networks, which can be constructed using citations, bibliographic aggregations, co-citing, or co-authoring relationships. VOSviewer also includes text mining functionality for creating and visualizing co-occurring networks of key terms from scientific literature.

4. Result and discussion

Corpus profile

According to the context of this research, the number of articles used can reach 62, as shown in Figure 1. According to the review, research on sustainable competitive advantage increased steadily from 2012 to 2022. Despite the fact that it has not gained as much popularity as other topics. However, the distribution trend suggests that this topic is beginning to pique the interest of academics and researchers from a variety of disciplines. Although there was a decrease of around 30% from 2012 to 2013, or from three articles in 2012 to only two in 2013, it remained static or decreased in 2014. This trend, however, increased by 150 percent in 2014, when 5 articles were published. Meanwhile, there was a 50% decrease in 2016 and 2017 to a total of 3 articles per year. The following year, the increase was 200 percent, or a total of 9 articles. In 2019, the number of articles increased slightly to ten. Meanwhile, 2020 has the most articles published, with 13 publications. This trend will continue to decline until it reaches 5 articles in 2021. In 2022, however, given that this data collection is in the middle of the year, the 7 articles of reference are considered a significant increase. Even though it appears to be fluctuating, research trends in this field are generally stable. The figure below depicts the distribution of literature on the topic of sustainable competitive advantage.

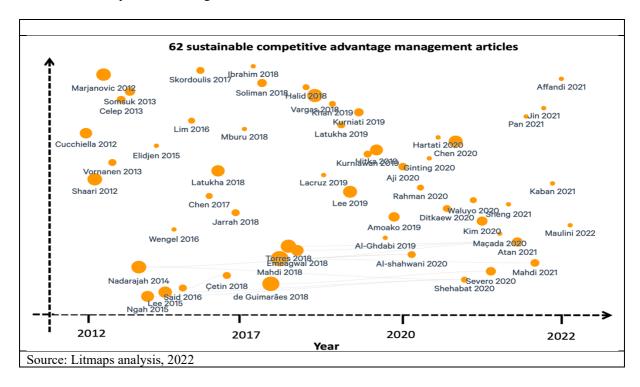


Figure 2. Distribution trend of scientific literature sustainable competitive advantage period 2012-2022

Figure 2 shows that research on sustainable competitive advantage continues to be a popular topic among academics. At least as evidenced by a consistent distribution year after year. However, based on the network of articles, the picture shows that no researchers or articles dominate the scope of research on sustainable competitive advantage. Although several articles appear to be the main references, in general, these articles have had no impact on subsequent research on the same topic. The lack of continuity between previous studies and several follow-up studies exemplifies this phenomenon. Nodes or circle illustrations in each article are fairly uniform in size, though some appear larger than others but are not significant. Some references have a relationship or cite each other, demonstrating the relationship between the articles. This relationship demonstrates that this scope is discussed on a regular basis. This correlation is critical for an issue in order for it to be studied thoroughly and integrated from various perspectives or fields of science.

The current research trend in sustainable competitive advantage management

In addition, the content of the articles or references used will be scrutinized, especially in terms of title and context. During this phase, the entire literature will be analyzed and classified as a text or corpus based on topic and context. This review uses DTM as the text mining process's output, which is visualized and analyzed qualitatively with VOS viewer.

The most recent journal in the field of sustainable competitive advantage management

According to Scopus data, from 2012 to 2022, there were 66 publications with the keyword sustainable competitive advantage in the categories of article title, abstract, and keywords, which were reduced to 62 publications based on several criteria. The journal Sustainability (Switzerland) has the most publications, with a total of seven, according to this figure. With three publications, the International Journal of Supply Chain Management ranks second. With two articles each, several journals ranked third to fifth, including the International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research, ACM International Conference Proceedings Series, and Advanced Science Letters. As shown in Table 1, research on the development of sustainable competitive advantage management has been published in the five most prestigious journals.

Table 1. Top 5 latest journals in the scope of sustainable competitive advantage management for the period 2012-2022

No.	Name of Journal	Number of articles
1	Sustainability (Switzerland)	7
2	International Journal of Supply Chain Management	3
3	International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research	2
4	ACM International Conference Proceeding Series	2
5	Advanced Science Letters	2

Source: Data analysis, 2022

According to Table 1, the majority of journals that address the issue of sustainable competitive advantage management have backgrounds or scope areas in sustainability, management, or business. Despite the fact that sustainability journals appear to be dominant due to their similar scope, this data shows that there is no dominant journal or publisher discussing the issue of sustainable competitive advantage management. In comparison to the distribution of 62 other articles, research in this field is still spread across multiple journals or publishers. The findings of this review are intriguing in that sustainable competitive advantage management, whether in theory or in practice, is frequently discussed across multiple disciplines.

Comprehensive network analysis of research on sustainable competitive advantage management Throughout this session, all articles will be bibliographically analyzed using the VOS viewer tool. The network and density of articles will be visualized in this analysis. According to Figure 3, the development map of the sustainable competitive advantage management topic area from 2012 to 2022 can be divided into 23 clusters based on co-word analysis.

Cluster 1 is colored red and contains 21 topic items such as business process management, business strategy, Colombian context, company performance mediated, competitive advantage, enabler, green entrepreneurship, human capital, human resource management, importance, knowledge, knowledge intensive business process, knowledge management integration, Malaysian plcs, proposed model, relation, review, sustainable environment management, sustainable management activity, sustainable supply chain management, and technology commercialization capability. While cluster 2 is illustrated in green, consisting of 11 topic items including agribusiness, building sustainable competitive advantage, collaboration model, concept, construction, economy, food security, method, SEM, structural equation modeling, and supply chain management. The blue cluster 3 consists of 9 topic items including international business, coffee production, confirmatory factor analysis, development, global growth, ibima, innovation management, Jember Indonesia, and sustainable economic competitive advantage. Cluster 4 is yellow, consisting of 6 topic items including facilities services unit, management system, methodology, preparedness, public sector, and sense.

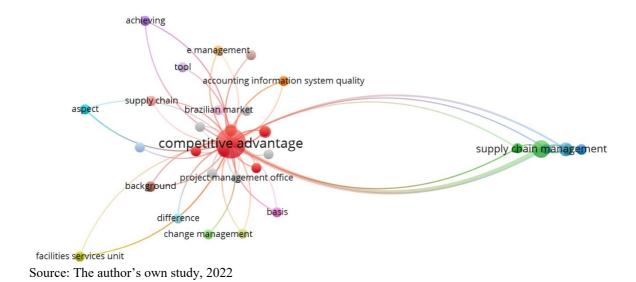


Figure 3. Text network analysis of sustainable competitive advantage management research

Cluster 5 is purple, consisting of five topic items including achieving, mediation role, organizational culture, strategic human resource, and strategic leadership. While cluster 6 is light blue, consisting of eight topic items including aspects, medium sized enterprises, pro ecological activity, small, sustainable energy management. Cluster 7 is orange, consisting of four topic items including accounting information system quality, causal structural relations, maize, and supply chain management. Cluster 8 is light purple in color, consisting of four topic items including background, innovation practice, project management, and southern Brazil enterprises. Cluster 9 is purple, consisting of six topic items including base, market firm, Russia, and talent management practice. Cluster 10 is pink, consisting of four topic items including carbon management, green supply chain, supply chain, and sustainable development.

Cluster 11 is green, consisting of four topic items including change management, Chinese construction firm, employee, and organizational culture. Meanwhile, Cluster 12 is light blue in color, consisting of four topic items including corporate environmental, discussion, green innovation, and relationship. Cluster 13 is light green, consisting of four topic items including creative industry, intellectual capital investigation, knowledge management system, and mediation. Meanwhile, Cluster 14 is light purple in color, consisting of five topic items including customer relationship management, company exemplars, tools, and worldwide success.

Meanwhile, Cluster 15 is blue, consisting of four topic items including difference, green innovation strategy, resource management, and traditional industry. Cluster 16 is orange, consisting of four topic items including e management, field study, Iraq, and zain telecom. The purple cluster 17 consists of four topic items including executive abilities, serial mediation, total quality management, and transformational leaders. Cluster 18 is light purple in color, consisting of three topic items including Brazilian market, information management, and multiple case studies.

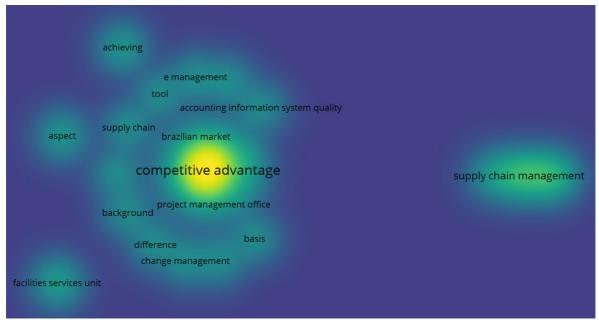
Cluster 19 is purple, consisting of three topic items including dynamic capabilities approach, non-governmental organization, and project management office. Cluster 20 is light purple in color, consisting of three topic items including empirical examination, knowledge management, and private university. Cluster 21 is purple, consisting of three topic items including cleaner production, knowledge management, and market. Cluster 22 is light purple in color, consisting of three topic items including green agriculture, green intellectual capital, and new environmental management approach. While Cluster 23 is purple, it consists of three topic items including corporate management, mediating effects, and sustainable management.

Figure 4 depicts the network analysis results, which revealed that the correlation between the network analysis results is depicted in Figure 4, which show that the correlation between nodes was divided into six network clusters. Inner cores are clusters with a high number of nodes and heavy edges. This cluster depicts the most frequently discussed issues in the field of sustainable competitive advantage management. An outer core, on the other hand, is a cluster with a low node occurrence frequency and a low edge weight. This cluster represents the issues that receive the least attention in the literature on sustainable competitive advantage management.

This review also shows that the weights of nodes and edges in the inner core network vary, as shown by the size scale of circles and connecting lines. The thicker the line connecting the two nodes and the larger the circle, the greater the weight or degree. Large-scale nodes and edges, it can be said, are frequently discussed issues at the heart of the topic of sustainable competitive advantage management. Labeling each node, as indicated by the identity token, emphasizes this visualization. These tokens or nodes represent topics that have received significant attention in the literature.

Consider the concept of sustainable competitive advantage as an elaboration of management reality (Figure 4), which is a process of identifying, developing, and implementing a true advantage. Companies gain a competitive advantage by focusing on their strengths rather than their performance in specific activities. As a result, the above network analysis visualization is contextually relevant to the application or implementation of sustainable competitive advantage management. As a result, some of the nodes that appear are terms that are commonly used in the context of managing long-term competitive advantage.

The VOS viewer application can also visualize density-based analysis. This means that, based on the color density in the visualization area, this illustration will make identifying the most frequently studied contexts easier.



Source: The author's own study, 2022

Figure 4. Density analysis of sustainable competitive advantage management research

The review provides some critical information that can be classified into at least four major issues. First, based on the research locations, it is worth noting that the majority of the countries that have been research locations in the last ten years are developing countries such as Colombia (Vargas et al., 2018), Malaysia (Said, 2016), Indonesia (Kurniati & Susilowati, 2019), Brazil (Severo et al., 2020), Russia (Latukha, 2018), and Iraq (Ibrahim et al., 2018). Although there are developed countries such as China (Lim et al., 2016). Second, when it comes to the type of research approach used, data analysis reveals that the majority of the research employs a multiple case study approach. This means that the study can employ one or more case studies. In this field, descriptive qualitative methods are still the most commonly used approach. Although quantitative methods, particularly SEM (Waluyo et al., 2020), PLCS (Halid et al., 2015), causal structural relations (Ditkaew et al., 2020), and confirmatory factor analysis (Putu et al., 2019), are still used.

Furthermore, as seen from the context or research scope, studies related to management, human capital, business, economics, finance, environment, infrastructure, food security, public sector, and technology predominate. Nonetheless, it can be stated that this topic is quite diverse and has been studied in a variety of disciplines. As a result, determining which scope is dominant enough to discuss this issue is extremely difficult.

Fourth, according to the review's findings, frequently raised issues include business process management, business strategy, company performance, green entrepreneurship, human resource management, knowledge management

integration, sustainable environment management, sustainable supply chain management, technology commercialization capability, agribusiness, sustainable economic competitive advantage, organizational culture, medium sized enterprises, accounting information system quality, carbon management, construction firm, employee, creative industry, intellectual capital investigation, knowledge management system, traditional industry, transformational leaders, and dynamic capabilities approach.

This study confirms that the visualizations that appear in network analysis are representations of issues that are frequently discussed based on the topics that are frequently researched. However, this review does not argue that low frequency is a minor issue. On the other hand, perhaps these issues (the outer core) are under-researched areas of study or approaches that are rarely used. This cluster may require additional attention in future research. This research formulates comprehensively and systematically the cluster of knowledge that is frequently used to support studies related to sustainable competitive advantage management, based on the framing context of network analysis and supported by various sustainable competitive advantage management literatures. The results of the analysis can be seen in the following Table 2.

Table 2. Perspectives and variables on the concept of sustainable competitive advantage management

Main Concept	Sustainable competitive advantage management				
Perspective	Management, human capital, dan public sector	Business, economy, and finance	Environment and agriculture	Infrastructure and technology	
Variable	Human resource management, knowledge management integration, sustainable supply chain management, organizational culture, employee, intellectual capital investigation, knowledge management system, transformational leaders, dynamic capabilities approach	Business process management, business strategy, company performance, sustainable economic competitive advantage, medium sized enterprises, accounting information system quality, creative industry, traditional industry	Green entrepreneurship, sustainable environment management, agribusiness,	Technology commercialization capability, carbon management, construction firm,	

Source: Primary data, 2022

The review discovered at least four major perspectives that were commonly used in discussing sustainable competitive advantage management, as shown in Table 2. This is not to say that no other viewpoints are used in addition to these findings. Many unexplored perspectives, of course, remain unexplored because they are not dominant perspectives. Furthermore, this analysis reveals that the most frequently discussed contexts are interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary issues. This means that when discussing an issue, a study will usually use more than one point of view.

5. Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, the year with the highest growth development in the topic area of sustainable competitive advantage management from 2012 to 2022 was 2020, with a total of 13 articles. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that journals with backgrounds or scope areas in sustainability, management, and business discuss the issue of sustainable competitive advantage management extensively. This study, however, discovers that there is no dominant journal or publisher discussing the issue of sustainable competitive advantage management. This means that research in this area is still dispersed across different journals or publishers. Development maps based on co-occurrence and keywords, on the other hand, are divided into 23 clusters. This review also summarizes research trends in sustainable competitive advantage management into four major issues. First, based on the research location, it is interesting to note that the majority of the countries studied in the last ten years have been developing countries such as Colombia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, and Iraq. Although there are developed countries such as China. Second, when it comes to the type of research approach used, data analysis reveals that the majority of the research employs a multiple case study approach. This means that the study can employ one or more case studies. In this field, descriptive qualitative methods are still the most commonly used approach. Although quantitative methods, particularly SEM, causal structural relations, and confirmatory factor analysis methods, are still used. Third, in terms of context or research scope, studies related

to management, human capital, business, economics, finance, environment, infrastructure, food security, public sector, and technology predominate. Finally, this research concludes that there are at least four major perspectives that are commonly used when discussing sustainable competitive advantage management. However, this does not imply that no other perspectives are used in addition to these findings. Of course, many unexplored perspectives remain unexplored because they are not dominant perspectives. Furthermore, this analysis discovers that the contexts that are frequently discussed are interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary issues. This means that when discussing an issue, a study will usually use more than one point of view. The research's limitation is the scope of the articles used, which were sourced from the SCOPUS database. It is strongly advised to conduct future research using a broader literature source. Furthermore, the study's findings can be used to generate hypotheses, and extensive and systematic follow-up research is being conducted. The study's findings are expected to be useful to academics interested in studying sustainable competitive advantage management.

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