Title: External knowledge sourcing, organizational ambidexterity and manufacturing performance: a new insight for dynamic operation management

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Abstract: This study intends to examine the relationships between external knowledge sourcing (EKS), organizational ambidexterity (OA), and manufacturing performance (MP) in the context of large manufacturing firms within a dynamic environment setting. The research framework and derived hypotheses are grounded in the knowledge-based view (KBV) and dynamic capability (DC) theories. A self-administered online survey was used in this study to gather data. Respondents were the operation leaders representing large manufacturing firms. The collected data were screened for invalid responses, and hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling. The study reveals that OA and EKS play key roles in achieving a better MP. Likewise, OA also mediates the relationship between EKS and MP. Cross-sectional data were collected from large manufacturing firms within five focus sectors in Malaysia. A similar study can be conducted with more sectors of different contexts to confirm the findings. Knowledge is critical for the firm to react to environmental dynamism, and the ability to manage it ambidextrously will enable the firm to enhance its performance. This study offers empirical insights from the perspective of the large manufacturing firms in Malaysia, which are undergoing an Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR4.0) transformation. This study bridges the knowledge gap by revealing the value that EKS can facilitate MP, exploring OA as the prevalent factor and demonstrating how KBV and DC can be applied in this study.

Keywords: External knowledge sourcing, Organizational ambidexterity, Manufacturing performance, Large manufacturing firm, Industry 4.0

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