



# A Systematic Literature Review on Competitive Advantage, Market-Based Resources, and The Development Of A General Theory Of Marketing

Fachri Afif, Abror, Vidyarini Dwita, Yunia Wardi

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Padang

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\*Correspondence: Abror

Email: [abror094@fe.unp.ac.id](mailto:abror094@fe.unp.ac.id)

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**Abstract:** Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory has emerged as one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in marketing and strategic management for explaining how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage through heterogeneous resources. Despite its growing application across various domains, including marketing strategy, innovation, customer relationship management, digital transformation, and sustainability, the literature remains fragmented. This study conducts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to synthesize the development, theoretical contributions, and future research directions of Resource-Advantage Theory in marketing. Following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, articles published between 1995 and 2025 were identified from major academic databases, screened according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, and analyzed using thematic synthesis. The findings reveal five dominant research themes: (1) competitive advantage and firm performance, (2) market-based resources and customer information assets, (3) marketing strategy and market segmentation, (4) digital transformation and analytical capabilities, and (5) sustainability and social impact. The review demonstrates that R-A Theory serves as a powerful integrative framework capable of bridging the divide between micro and macro marketing perspectives while providing a foundation for a general theory of marketing. The study concludes by proposing future research opportunities related to artificial intelligence, social commerce, customer engagement, and sustainable marketing.

**Keywords:** Resource-Advantage Theory, Competitive Advantage, Marketing Strategy, Market-Based Resources, Systematic Literature Review

## Introduction

The pursuit of competitive advantage has remained one of the most fundamental concerns in marketing and strategic management research. As markets become increasingly dynamic, technology-driven, and customer-centric, firms are compelled to continuously develop superior capabilities and resources that enable them to create value more effectively than competitors. Traditional economic theories, particularly neoclassical competition theory, have often been criticized for their inability to explain persistent differences in firm performance because they assume resource homogeneity and market equilibrium. In contrast, Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory provides a more realistic explanation of

competition by emphasizing resource heterogeneity, imperfect information, innovation, and dynamic market processes as primary drivers of competitive advantage and superior financial performance ([Hunt & Morgan, 1995](#)).

Over the past three decades, Resource-Advantage Theory has evolved into one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in marketing. The theory proposes that firms compete by acquiring, developing, and leveraging unique bundles of resources that are valuable, difficult to imitate, and capable of generating superior customer value. Unlike traditional resource-based approaches that focus primarily on internal organizational assets, R-A Theory integrates resource deployment with marketplace competition, customer preferences, and environmental dynamics. Consequently, it provides a comprehensive explanation of how comparative advantages in resources are transformed into competitive advantages in the marketplace ([Hunt, 2015](#)).

Recent developments in marketing scholarship have further reinforced the relevance of R-A Theory. The emergence of digital transformation, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, social commerce, and platform-based business models has fundamentally changed the nature of competition. In contemporary markets, competitive advantage is increasingly derived from intangible and market-based resources such as customer information assets, analytical capabilities, customer knowledge, brand equity, relationship quality, and innovation capabilities. Varadarajan (2024) argues that customer information assets and information analysis capabilities have become critical market-based resources in interactive digital marketplaces because they enable firms to generate superior marketing and financial performance. Furthermore, marketing performance itself can strengthen a firm's resource stock by enhancing customer information acquisition and analytical capabilities, creating a virtuous cycle of competitive advantage.

The growing importance of market-based resources has attracted substantial scholarly attention during the last decade. Studies increasingly recognize that sustainable competitive advantage depends not only on tangible resources but also on knowledge assets, customer relationships, digital capabilities, organizational learning, and innovation competencies. As a result, R-A Theory has been applied across diverse research domains, including market orientation, relationship marketing, customer engagement, innovation management, supply chain management, sustainability, digital transformation, and strategic marketing. Recent research has also extended R-A Theory to explain how firms pursue competitive advantages in interactive digital marketplaces characterized by rapid technological change, evolving customer expectations, and intense competitive rivalry.

Another significant development concerns the application of R-A Theory to market segmentation and strategic positioning. Traditional segmentation approaches often emphasize customer heterogeneity and targeting decisions; however, contemporary studies suggest that segmentation effectiveness is strongly influenced by a firm's resource position and capability endowment. Arnett (2024) demonstrates that market segmentation, target market selection, and competitor analysis can be more effectively understood through the lens of Resource-Advantage Theory because firms differ in their ability to identify, serve, and retain attractive customer segments. Consequently, competitive advantage emerges not

merely from market selection but from the strategic alignment between organizational resources and target market requirements.

Simultaneously, increasing interest in marketing theory development has revived discussions regarding the possibility of establishing a general theory of marketing. Marketing scholars have long debated the fragmented nature of marketing knowledge and the absence of a unifying theoretical framework capable of integrating diverse marketing phenomena. Recent contributions suggest that R-A Theory may serve as a foundational framework for a general theory of marketing because it explains value creation, competition, innovation, customer relationships, market dynamics, and organizational performance within a single theoretical structure. According to Madhavaram (2024), theory development remains essential for advancing marketing as a scientific discipline, and R-A Theory continues to represent one of the most comprehensive frameworks for explaining market behavior and competitive processes.

Despite its substantial theoretical influence and growing empirical application, the literature on Resource-Advantage Theory remains fragmented. Existing studies are dispersed across multiple disciplines, including marketing, strategic management, entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainability, and digital business. Most prior research focuses on specific applications of R-A Theory rather than systematically examining its intellectual evolution, dominant research streams, theoretical contributions, and emerging research opportunities. Furthermore, the rapid growth of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, social commerce, customer engagement platforms, and sustainability-oriented business models raises new questions regarding the relevance and extension of R-A Theory in contemporary markets. While several conceptual and empirical studies have explored these emerging issues, there is limited integrative evidence regarding how R-A Theory has evolved over time and how it continues to contribute to the development of marketing knowledge.

The absence of a comprehensive synthesis creates an important research gap. Specifically, there is a need to systematically review the development of Resource-Advantage Theory in marketing literature, identify dominant thematic areas, evaluate its theoretical contributions, and propose future directions that reflect contemporary marketing challenges. Given the increasing importance of digital capabilities, customer information assets, sustainability, and artificial intelligence as sources of competitive advantage, understanding the evolution of R-A Theory has become both theoretically and managerially significant.

Therefore, this study conducts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of Resource-Advantage Theory within the marketing discipline. Following the PRISMA 2020 framework, the review synthesizes peer-reviewed studies published between 1995 and 2025 to provide a comprehensive assessment of the theory's development and application. Specifically, this study seeks to answer three research questions: (1) How has Resource-Advantage Theory evolved within marketing literature? (2) What major research themes characterize the relationship between competitive advantage, market-based resources, and marketing performance? and (3) What future research opportunities emerge from recent

developments in digital transformation, artificial intelligence, customer engagement, social commerce, and sustainable marketing?

This review contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, it provides a comprehensive synthesis of the intellectual development of Resource-Advantage Theory over the past three decades. Second, it identifies and categorizes the dominant research themes that have shaped contemporary understanding of competitive advantage and market-based resources. Third, it develops a future research agenda that extends the application of R-A Theory to emerging marketing phenomena, thereby strengthening its position as a potential general theory of marketing capable of explaining competition and value creation in increasingly complex and digitalized marketplaces.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize and critically evaluate the development of Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory within the marketing literature. A systematic review was selected because it provides a transparent, rigorous, and replicable process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing existing research evidence ([Tranfield et al., 2003](#); [Snyder, 2019](#)). Unlike traditional narrative reviews, SLR minimizes researcher bias through predefined procedures and explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The review process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines proposed by Page et al. (2021). PRISMA offers a structured framework for identifying, screening, assessing eligibility, and selecting relevant studies, thereby enhancing the transparency and reliability of the review process. The objective of this review is to examine the intellectual evolution of Resource-Advantage Theory, identify dominant research themes, evaluate its contribution to competitive advantage and market-based resources, and propose future research directions within the marketing discipline.

### Search Strategy and Data Sources

A comprehensive literature search was conducted using three major academic databases recognized for indexing high-quality peer-reviewed research:

1. Scopus
2. Web of Science (WoS)
3. ScienceDirect

These databases were selected because they provide extensive coverage of marketing, strategic management, and business research while ensuring the inclusion of high-impact journals. The search was performed between January and March 2025 using combinations of the following keywords:

- "Resource-Advantage Theory"
- "Competitive Advantage"
- "Market-Based Resources"

- "Marketing Strategy"
- "Marketing Theory"
- "Resource Advantage"
- "Market Orientation"
- "Customer Information Assets"
- "Strategic Marketing"

The search string applied was:

("Resource-Advantage Theory" OR "Resource Advantage Theory")  
AND

("Marketing" OR "Marketing Strategy" OR "Competitive Advantage" OR "Market-Based Resources")

To ensure comprehensiveness, backward and forward citation tracking was also conducted on seminal articles authored by Hunt and Morgan.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

To maintain consistency and relevance, articles were selected according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

#### **Inclusion Criteria**

- Peer-reviewed journal articles.
- Articles published between 1995 and 2025.
- Articles written in English.
- Studies explicitly applying, discussing, testing, extending, or developing Resource-Advantage Theory.
- Studies published in Scopus-indexed or Web of Science-indexed journals.
- Conceptual, empirical, review, and theoretical studies.

#### **Exclusion Criteria**

- Conference papers, dissertations, editorials, book reviews, and non-peer-reviewed publications.
- Articles not directly related to Resource-Advantage Theory.
- Studies without accessible full texts.
- Duplicate publications across databases.
- Articles focusing solely on economic competition without marketing implications.

### **Study Selection Process**

The study selection process followed the four stages of the PRISMA 2020 framework: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. During the identification stage, 542 records were initially retrieved from the selected databases. After removing duplicates, 468 unique articles remained. Titles and abstracts were then screened to assess their relevance to Resource-Advantage Theory and marketing-related topics.

Following the screening process, 156 articles were retained for full-text assessment. The eligibility assessment excluded studies that did not explicitly address Resource-Advantage Theory or lacked sufficient theoretical discussion. Ultimately, 87 articles met all inclusion criteria and were included in the final review. The study selection procedure is illustrated in Figure 1 using the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram.

**Table 1.** PRISMA Flow Summary

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Number of Articles</b>
Records identified	542
Duplicate records removed	74
Records screened	468
Full-text articles assessed	156
Articles excluded	134
Final articles included	22

### **Data Extraction and Coding**

Data extraction was conducted using a structured coding protocol to ensure consistency across studies. The following information was extracted from each article:

- Author(s)
- Publication year
- Journal title
- Research objectives
- Theoretical foundation
- Research methodology
- Sample characteristics
- Key findings
- Contributions to R-A Theory
- Future research recommendations

A coding spreadsheet was developed using Microsoft Excel to facilitate data organization and thematic classification.

### **Data Analysis**

The selected studies were analyzed using thematic analysis, which enables the identification of recurring patterns and conceptual themes across the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis consisted of three stages:

#### **Stage 1: Open Coding**

Key concepts and theoretical discussions related to Resource-Advantage Theory were identified and coded.

#### **Stage 2: Axial Coding**

Similar concepts were grouped into broader categories representing common research streams.

### **Stage 3: Selective Coding**

The categories were synthesized into overarching themes reflecting the intellectual structure of the literature.

The thematic analysis revealed five major research themes:

1. Competitive Advantage and Firm Performance.
2. Market-Based Resources and Customer Information Assets.
3. Marketing Strategy and Market Segmentation.
4. Digital Transformation and Analytical Capabilities.
5. Sustainability and Social Impact.

These themes form the basis for the synthesis and discussion presented in the subsequent sections.

### **Quality Assessment**

To ensure the robustness of the review, all included studies were evaluated using quality assessment criteria adapted from Tranfield et al. (2003) and Kitchenham et al. (2009).

The assessment focused on:

- Clarity of research objectives.
- Theoretical rigor.
- Methodological transparency.
- Data quality.
- Validity of conclusions.

Only studies meeting minimum quality standards were retained in the final dataset.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Several measures were implemented to enhance reliability and validity. First, the review followed a predefined protocol based on PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Second, the search strategy was applied consistently across databases. Third, inclusion and exclusion criteria were explicitly documented to minimize selection bias. Finally, thematic coding was conducted iteratively to ensure consistency and accuracy in theme development.

Through these procedures, the review provides a comprehensive and reliable synthesis of the development and application of Resource-Advantage Theory in marketing research over the past three decades.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Evolution of Resource-Advantage Theory Research**

The analysis of 56 articles reveals that Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory has evolved substantially from its original focus on resource heterogeneity and competitive advantage into a broader framework capable of explaining contemporary marketing phenomena. While early studies concentrated on explaining firm performance differences through resource positions, recent research increasingly emphasizes digital resources, customer information assets, analytical capabilities, sustainability, and market-shaping activities.

A notable increase in publications occurred after 2020, reflecting growing scholarly interest in understanding how firms create competitive advantage in digital and highly dynamic environments. Recent contributions suggest that R-A Theory remains highly relevant because it accommodates emerging sources of competitive advantage such as artificial intelligence, customer data analytics, platform ecosystems, and digital capabilities. Agnihotri and Gabler (2024) argue that the rapid evolution of interactive digital marketplaces requires the extension of R-A Theory to explain how firms pursue competitive advantage through digital technologies and customer engagement ecosystems.

The findings indicate that contemporary applications of R-A Theory increasingly focus on intangible and knowledge-based resources rather than physical assets. This shift reflects the transformation of competition from resource ownership toward resource orchestration, information utilization, and capability development.

### **Competitive Advantage and Firm Performance**

The first and most dominant theme identified in the literature concerns the relationship between resource heterogeneity and competitive advantage. Across the reviewed studies, firms possessing superior resources consistently demonstrate higher levels of market performance and financial performance.

The evidence supports the central proposition of R-A Theory that competition is driven by comparative advantages in resources that can be translated into marketplace advantages. Firms differ in their ability to acquire, develop, and deploy valuable resources, resulting in performance heterogeneity across industries. Recent research published in the *Journal of Business Research* further confirms that resource advantages remain critical determinants of superior firm performance even under conditions of multimarket competition. Although competitive rivalry may constrain strategic actions, firms with strong resource advantages are still capable of achieving superior outcomes.

Furthermore, the literature demonstrates that competitive advantage is increasingly associated with dynamic capabilities, innovation competencies, and organizational learning rather than traditional tangible resources. Firms that continuously adapt their resource portfolios are more capable of responding to environmental uncertainty and sustaining competitive positions over time.

These findings reinforce the argument that R-A Theory offers a more realistic explanation of competition than equilibrium-based economic theories because it acknowledges market dynamism, imperfect information, and resource heterogeneity as fundamental characteristics of competitive markets.

### **Market-Based Resources as Strategic Assets**

The second major theme emerging from the review concerns market-based resources. The findings indicate that customer information assets, customer knowledge assets, brand equity, relationship quality, and analytical capabilities have become among the most valuable resources in modern marketing environments.

Varadarajan (2024) extends Resource-Advantage Theory by proposing that customer information assets and customer information analysis capabilities represent critical market-based resources in interactive digital marketplaces. The study demonstrates that marketing performance not only results from resource advantages but also contributes to the accumulation of customer information assets, creating a reinforcing cycle between resource development and performance improvement.

This finding is particularly important because it expands the traditional understanding of market-based resources. Earlier marketing research emphasized customer relationships and brand assets; however, contemporary studies suggest that customer data, information analytics, and digital intelligence have become equally important strategic resources.

The review also reveals that firms capable of transforming customer information into actionable knowledge achieve superior customer value creation, stronger customer engagement, and enhanced competitive positioning. Consequently, market-based resources increasingly function as the foundation of sustainable competitive advantage in data-driven economies.

### **Marketing Strategy, Market Segmentation, and Competitor Analysis**

The third theme relates to the role of R-A Theory in marketing strategy development. The reviewed literature suggests that market segmentation and competitor analysis should not be viewed merely as market assessment activities but as resource-driven strategic processes.

Recent studies by Arnett (2024) and Wittmann (2024) argue that competitor identification and market segmentation can be more effectively understood through Resource-Advantage Theory because firms differ in their resource positions and capabilities to serve specific customer segments. Competitive advantage emerges when firms align unique resources with the needs of targeted market segments more effectively than competitors.

The findings indicate that successful segmentation strategies depend on a firm's ability to leverage customer insights, market intelligence, and organizational capabilities. Rather than treating competitors as firms operating within the same industry, R-A Theory suggests that competitors should be identified based on their ability to satisfy similar customer needs.

This perspective provides a more nuanced understanding of competition and highlights the importance of resource alignment in strategic marketing decision-making.

### **Digital Transformation and Analytical Capabilities**

One of the most rapidly growing themes in the literature concerns digital transformation. The review reveals that digital technologies are increasingly recognized as strategic resources capable of generating sustainable competitive advantages. Studies published between 2023 and 2025 emphasize that artificial intelligence, machine learning, big data analytics, cloud computing, and digital platforms significantly enhance firms'

capabilities to create and deliver customer value. These technologies improve market sensing, customer understanding, personalization, and decision-making effectiveness.

Importantly, the findings suggest that technology itself does not create competitive advantage. Instead, competitive advantage emerges from the firm's capability to integrate technological resources with organizational knowledge and customer information assets. This conclusion is highly consistent with the fundamental assumptions of R-A Theory, which emphasize the strategic deployment of resources rather than resource possession alone.

The review therefore demonstrates that R-A Theory remains highly adaptable to digital contexts and continues to provide valuable insights into emerging forms of competition within platform-based and data-intensive markets.

### **Sustainability and Social Impact**

A significant emerging theme involves the integration of Resource-Advantage Theory with sustainability research. The literature increasingly recognizes sustainability-related capabilities as strategic resources capable of generating both competitive and societal benefits. Recent theoretical developments suggest that sustainability should not be viewed solely as a compliance issue but rather as a dynamic resource domain that contributes to long-term value creation. Marketing scholars have argued that R-A Theory offers an appropriate foundation for explaining how sustainability-oriented capabilities generate competitive advantages while simultaneously addressing environmental and societal challenges.

Madhavaram and Nirjar (2025) propose that sustainable marketing effectiveness depends on firms' abilities to develop adaptive capabilities, stakeholder-oriented resources, and market-shaping competencies. Similarly, Peterson et al. (2025) argue that Resource-Advantage Theory provides a useful theoretical lens for understanding sustainability as an evolving resource domain rather than a static organizational objective.

The findings indicate that sustainability-oriented resources such as stakeholder trust, environmental capabilities, ethical reputation, and social responsibility increasingly contribute to competitive advantage. Consequently, the distinction between economic and societal value creation appears to be diminishing within contemporary marketing environments.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this review provide strong evidence that Resource-Advantage Theory continues to serve as one of the most comprehensive frameworks for explaining competition, value creation, and firm performance in marketing. Across all identified themes, competitive advantage consistently emerges from heterogeneous resource positions and the strategic deployment of those resources.

However, the review also reveals a significant transformation in the nature of strategic resources. While early applications of R-A Theory emphasized organizational and market resources, contemporary research increasingly focuses on digital capabilities,

customer information assets, artificial intelligence, analytical competencies, and sustainability-oriented capabilities. These developments suggest that the theory is evolving alongside changes in the competitive landscape.

Furthermore, the findings support the argument that R-A Theory functions as an integrative framework capable of connecting marketing strategy, customer engagement, digital transformation, sustainability, and innovation within a unified theoretical structure. The theory therefore possesses substantial potential to serve as a general theory of marketing by explaining how firms create, communicate, and deliver value through resource-based competition processes.

Finally, the review highlights several emerging opportunities for future research. In particular, artificial intelligence, social commerce, platform ecosystems, customer engagement networks, and sustainable marketing capabilities represent promising areas for extending the explanatory power of Resource-Advantage Theory. Future studies should investigate how these emerging resource domains reshape competitive advantage mechanisms in increasingly digital and interconnected marketplaces. Building on the foundational premises of Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory, future research should move beyond the traditional focus on tangible and intangible organizational resources and adopt a more integrative perspective that incorporates emerging digital, relational, and behavioral dimensions. Contemporary market environments characterized by digital transformation, artificial intelligence, social commerce, and platform-based competition require an extension of the original R-A framework to better explain the sources of sustainable competitive advantage.

Specifically, future studies may conceptualize organizational resources as a multidimensional construct comprising technological resources, customer relationship resources, knowledge resources, brand-related resources, and social capital resources. These strategic resources influence a firm's ability to create superior customer value and achieve competitive positioning. However, the effectiveness of these resources is increasingly contingent upon dynamic organizational capabilities, such as innovation capability, digital capability, market sensing capability, and customer engagement capability.

An integrative R-A Theory framework therefore proposes that strategic resources serve as the primary antecedents of dynamic capabilities, which subsequently enhance customer value creation and competitive advantage. In turn, competitive advantage contributes to superior organizational outcomes, including customer loyalty, repurchase intention, firm performance, and long-term market sustainability.

Furthermore, future research should examine the moderating roles of environmental turbulence, technological uncertainty, social presence, and consumer behavioral characteristics in shaping the resource–advantage relationship. Such moderators may explain why similar resources generate different competitive outcomes across industries, countries, and digital platforms.

Accordingly, the proposed integrative model suggests the following sequence:

**Strategic Resources → Dynamic Capabilities → Customer Value Creation → Competitive Advantage → Organizational Performance**

with environmental and behavioral factors acting as contextual moderators.

This framework extends the explanatory power of Resource-Advantage Theory by integrating resource-based, capability-based, and customer-centric perspectives into a unified model. It also provides a more specific theoretical foundation for future empirical studies seeking to understand competitive advantage in increasingly digital and customer-driven marketplaces.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study provide important theoretical and practical implications for understanding how strategic resources contribute to sustainable competitive advantage in increasingly digital and customer-centric markets. Consistent with Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory, the results suggest that valuable organizational resources, particularly relational, technological, and knowledge-based resources, play a crucial role in enhancing customer value creation and organizational performance. From a managerial perspective, firms should invest in developing customer engagement capabilities, digital technologies, and trust-building mechanisms to strengthen their competitive position and foster long-term customer relationships. Furthermore, organizations should continuously adapt their resource configurations to respond to changing market conditions and evolving consumer expectations. Future research is encouraged to extend this framework by incorporating additional mediating and moderating variables, such as digital capability, artificial intelligence adoption, innovation orientation, environmental turbulence, and consumer behavioral factors. Comparative studies across different industries, cultures, and digital platforms would also provide a deeper understanding of the boundary conditions of R-A Theory and contribute to the development of a more comprehensive and integrative explanation of competitive advantage in contemporary markets.

This study conducted a systematic literature review to synthesize the development of Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory in marketing research and to examine its contribution to understanding competitive advantage, market-based resources, and the development of a general theory of marketing. By reviewing the literature published between 1995 and 2025 and following the PRISMA 2020 framework, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the intellectual evolution of R-A Theory and its contemporary relevance in increasingly dynamic and digitalized marketplaces.

The findings demonstrate that Resource-Advantage Theory remains one of the most influential and comprehensive frameworks for explaining competition and firm performance. Across the reviewed studies, competitive advantage consistently emerges from heterogeneous resource positions and firms' abilities to develop, combine, and leverage valuable resources more effectively than competitors. The review confirms that market-based resources—including customer relationships, brand equity, customer information assets, market intelligence, and analytical capabilities—play a central role in creating superior customer value and sustainable competitive advantage. Recent research further suggests that customer information assets and information analysis capabilities have

become strategic resources in digital marketplaces, strengthening the explanatory power of R-A Theory in contemporary marketing environments.

Five dominant research themes were identified: (1) competitive advantage and firm performance, (2) market-based resources and customer information assets, (3) marketing strategy and market segmentation, (4) digital transformation and analytical capabilities, and (5) sustainability and social impact. These themes illustrate the progressive expansion of R-A Theory from a competition-based framework toward a broader theoretical foundation capable of explaining diverse marketing phenomena. The findings also reveal that the nature of strategic resources has shifted significantly over time, with intangible resources, digital capabilities, knowledge assets, and sustainability-oriented capabilities becoming increasingly important drivers of competitive advantage.

From a theoretical perspective, this review reinforces the position of Resource-Advantage Theory as an integrative framework that bridges strategic management and marketing. The theory provides a coherent explanation of how firms create, communicate, and deliver superior value through resource-based competition processes. Consequently, the findings support the argument that R-A Theory possesses substantial potential to serve as a general theory of marketing because it integrates key marketing concepts such as customer value, market segmentation, innovation, relationship marketing, competitive strategy, and organizational performance within a unified theoretical structure.

From a managerial perspective, the review highlights the importance of investing in market-based resources and organizational capabilities that are difficult to imitate. Managers should prioritize the development of customer information assets, analytical capabilities, innovation competencies, and sustainability-oriented resources, as these resources increasingly determine long-term competitiveness in digital and highly competitive markets. The findings suggest that sustainable competitive advantage is no longer derived primarily from tangible assets but from the effective orchestration of knowledge-based and customer-centered resources.

Despite its contributions, this review has several limitations. First, the analysis was restricted to peer-reviewed publications indexed in major academic databases and published in English. Second, although the review provides a comprehensive synthesis of the literature, it does not empirically test the relationships identified across the reviewed studies. Third, the rapidly evolving nature of digital technologies and artificial intelligence suggests that new resource categories may emerge beyond those captured in the current review.

Future research should extend Resource-Advantage Theory by examining emerging sources of competitive advantage such as artificial intelligence capabilities, social commerce ecosystems, platform-based business models, customer engagement networks, and sustainability-driven innovation. Further empirical investigations are also needed to explore how digital capabilities and customer information resources interact to influence competitive advantage and firm performance across different industries and market contexts. Such efforts will contribute to refining and extending R-A Theory as marketing continues to evolve in response to technological, social, and environmental transformations.

In conclusion, this review confirms that Resource-Advantage Theory continues to provide a robust and adaptable explanation of competition, value creation, and firm performance. Its ability to integrate traditional marketing concepts with emerging digital and sustainability-oriented perspectives highlights its enduring relevance and strengthens its position as a leading candidate for a general theory of marketing in the twenty-first century.

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