

Business Sustainability Strategy: Systematic Literature Review

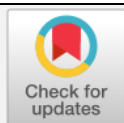
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ARTICLE INFO

Publication Info:
Research Article



How to cite:

Muhammad, N. I., Sirat, A. H.,
Ahmad, A. C., & Jabid, A. W.
(2025). Business Sustainability
Strategy: Systematic Literature
Review. Society, 13(1), 705–727.

DOI: [10.33019/society.v13i1.784](https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v13i1.784)

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Received: January 24, 2025;
Accepted: March 28, 2025;
Published: April 3, 2025;

ABSTRACT

The current systematic literature review is intended to capture the extent of research on business sustainability strategy. Using PRISMA, a systematic search was conducted on Scopus and WoS databases published between January 2010 and October 2024, resulting in 3 articles that met the inclusion criteria. The synthesis results of these articles indicate that business sustainability strategy has been carried out in the kibbutz industry, human resources, and sector specialization based on mergers and acquisitions. In addition, research results were also collected in the agriculture and military, manufacturing, and services industries. Furthermore, contingency theory is one of the theories used to explain this relationship. This study provides theoretical and practical contributions as well as directions for future research.

Keywords: Business Sustainability; Contingency Theory; Strategy; Sustainability Strategy; Systematic Literature Review

1. Introduction

Sustainability issues have grown rapidly thanks to public awareness and have attracted the attention of academics and political considerations (Basit et al., 2024). Concern for sustainable development has also changed the business landscape (Martins et al., 2022). Currently, many companies, especially industry leaders, have begun to view business as an important component of strategic sustainability (Ademi et al., 2025). Strategic sustainability itself has received increasing attention in the literature (Kinnunen et al., 2022). Strategic sustainability is a strategic approach that considers the needs and interests of various stakeholders, including the environment, society, and economy, in achieving long-term goals (Annesi et al., 2025). Companies will invest in sustainability to minimize business barriers, create new business opportunities, and convince new customers about the company's sustainable offerings (Mocanu et al., 2024), which will ultimately form a sustainable business strategy as a competitive advantage (Mushi, 2025).

The results of the study revealed that research on business sustainability strategy remains limited. The search results indicate a division between business sustainability and sustainability strategy. Several recent studies reflect this distinction (Annesi et al., 2025; Chungyalpa & von Rosing, 2024; Hassan & Fernando, 2025; Roche & Baumgartner, 2025).

Similar to the research results explained previously, the research results using the systematic literature review method were also studied separately for the business sustainability and sustainability strategy variables (Basit et al., 2024; Alabi et al., 2024; Peçanha & Ferreira, 2025; Setiawati & Mastarida, 2024). Based on this, this study aims to see and photograph the extent to which business sustainability strategy research has been carried out based on country, number, year, and sector using the systematic literature review method.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Contingency Theory

Contingency theory was introduced in several influential works (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Chandler, 1962; Cui et al., 2014; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1984). In contingency theory, factors that clarify or predict anticipated phenomena are analyzed (Gacenga et al., 2011; Umanath, 2003). Similarly, the development of various theories has been based on contingency analysis (Jayaram et al., 2014). Contingency theory allows for the reduction of assumptions regarding theoretical propositions (Gacenga et al., 2011). Contingency theory also refers to concepts and theories included in 'contingency theory' that have the potential to extend existing theories or develop new theories (Banga & Gobind, 2025).

2.2. Contingency Theory based on Human Resources

Human Resource Management (HRM) approaches provide general direction for managing human resources and reflect the overall values and goals of an organization (Guest, 2011). In another narrative, an HRM approach is a broad framework that guides the design and implementation of HRM policies and practices within an organization (Iqbal, 2019). In contrast, an HRM strategy reflects the overall business strategy and competitive position of an organization (Stavrou & Brewster, 2005). HRM strategies are the plans and actions that organizations use to achieve their HRM goals (Gratton & Truss, 2003). On the other hand, HRM theories are detailed explanations of the underlying principles and mechanisms that govern HRM practices. HRM theories provide a theoretical foundation for understanding how and why certain HRM practices are effective or not (Boxall & Purcell, 2022).

Some scholars define normative HRM concepts as the ethical and moral principles that guide HRM practices and decision-making (Van Buren et al., 2011). Normative HRM concepts reflect the values and beliefs of an organization and help ensure that HRM practices are aligned with broader societal expectations. Essentially, HRM practices are the specific activities and policies that organizations use to manage human resources (Lepak et al., 2006). HRM practices can include recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, compensation and benefits, and employee relations. In summary, HRM approaches, theories, normative concepts, strategies, and practices are all important components of managing human resources. HRM approaches provide general direction, sustainable HRM theories provide guidance on how and why practices are effective, normative HRM concepts provide ethical guidance, HRM strategies reflect overall business strategy, and HRM practices are the specific activities and policies used to manage human resources.

The contingency approach emphasizes that organizations should focus primarily on HR plans and activities that contribute to the achievement of business strategy (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2009). The contingency approach assumes that organizations that closely coordinate their business strategy and HRM activities will achieve better performance than those that do not (Clinton & Guest, 2013). The underlying assumption of the contingency approach is that the strategic-performance relationship holds under conditions of high horizontal fit between organizational strategy and HR strategy, known as “best fit” (Clinton & Guest, 2013). Despite its advantages, the contingency approach has been criticized for its lack of consideration of other organizational systems and environmental characteristics that may hinder the adoption of “best fit” HRM in an organization (Iqbal, 2019). For example, organizations need a long-term HRM strategy to develop their employees to achieve their business goals. However, in many organizations (e.g., call centers), employees tend to leave within a short period of time, making it challenging to implement a long-term HRM strategy. Given these constraints, strategy alone may not be enough to ensure the competitive advantage an organization needs, given that there are other contingencies to consider that may influence HRM adoption and practices (Intindola et al., 2017). Attempts to link organizational strategy (e.g. competing on innovation, quality, or cost) to HR strategy (e.g. job design, lean management, performance-based pay) are not linear and unproblematic relationships (Clinton & Guest, 2013).

Contingency theory emphasizes that the direct relationship between the strategy adopted by a company and its HRM practices is examined through the strategic human resource management (SHRM) contingency perspective (Arcand, 2004; Youndt et al., 1996). This perspective is further supported by findings that organizational performance can be enhanced through the alignment of HRM practices with the adopted business strategy, which acts as a contingency variable guiding the company's strategic direction (Jery & Souai, 2014). Based on contingency theory, HRM strategies will be more effective, when HRM strategies are properly integrated with the context of the organization and the specific environment. Thus, organizations that closely coordinate business strategies and HRM strategies achieve better performance results compared to organizations that do not (Stankeviciute & Savaneviciene, 2013). The resource-based view provides an “inside-out” perspective to gain competitive advantage through human resources that have a significant influence on the strategic goals of the organization.

2.3. Strategy

Strategy is “the long-term direction of an organization” (Johnson et al., 2017) and can be “defined as a pattern in a series of decisions” (Mintzberg, 1978). Research on strategic management science began in the 1960s (Ansoff, 1965; Martinet, 2010). It has been argued that

one “cannot rely on a single definition of strategy” (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). Strategy research tends to focus on either the content or the process of strategy (Rajagopalan et al., 1993), both of which are part of an ongoing process of change (Hendry, 2000; Regnér, 2003). Although the “planning school” suggests that strategy is developed through a formal, structured, top-down process (Mintzberg et al., 2005), others argue that strategy is often unplanned and emerges from practice (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). Several contingency factors explain the conditions under which one of the two approaches to strategy development is more likely (Elbanna, 2011; Hart, 1992; Rajagopalan et al., 1993). Today, most research agrees that strategy consists of both planned and emergent elements (Burgelman, 1991; Chaffee, 1985; Lowe & Jones, 2004).

From a hierarchical perspective, strategies can be classified into three types within an organization: corporate, business, and functional strategies (David, 2011; Hunger & Wheelen, 2012). Corporate strategy encompasses the company's financial stability, growth, and roadmap. In contrast, business strategy focuses on the company's competitive positioning of its products or services, while functional strategy refers to the approach taken within the company's functional areas or divisions to achieve corporate and business strategies. From a “planning school” perspective (Mintzberg et al., 2005), most academics describe the formal strategy development process in a similar manner. In general, this process consists of (1) analysis of the company's internal and external environments, (2) strategy formulation, (3) strategy implementation, and (4) strategy evaluation (David, 2011; Hunger & Wheelen, 2012). Since this systematic process implies that strategies are carefully planned and executed in a top-down manner, the right leadership style of top management is critical to their success (Hart, 1992), which also depends on an adequate organizational structure (Chandler, 1962). Organizational structure also plays a role as strategy evolves from the bottom up and gradually matures toward the top. Because emergent strategies develop incrementally, are path-dependent, and are continually modified during their evolution (Jarzabkowski, 2004; Whittington, 1996), organizational structure needs to enable this iterative and evolving process.

Summarizing our understanding of conventional strategy, strategy is about the long-term direction of a company about where to conduct business and how to compete in that business to gain competitive advantage and ensure future success (Lainawa et al., 2022). This direction is shaped by consciously planned decisions and unconsciously emergent decisions made at various levels in an organization (Dewanto et al., 2023; Nandya et al., 2024).

2.4. Sustainability

Although there is no universally accepted definition of sustainability (Dimitrov, 2010; Ridsdale & Noble, 2016), the term ‘sustainable’ has led to the understanding that sustainability involves managing the continued existence of something over a long period of time (Burger & Middelberg, 2018; Dignan, 2004). Thus, it has been stated that ‘sustainability is the ability to meet the social, environmental and economic needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, environmental and economic needs’ (Gachie, 2019; Joy & Peña, 2017; Niehaus et al., 2018). In addition, sustainability has been recognized as the amount of money involved in ecological and social causes (Boso et al., 2017). Sustainability is the new standard of contemporary organizations in developed countries (Ahmad et al., 2021). Of course, considering sustainability as a new principle for modern organizations can motivate organizations to adopt the idea (Banga & Gobind, 2025).

2.5. Business Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the balance between profit, people, and planet, known as the triple bottom line (Elkington, 1994). Several studies have emphasized the importance of business sustainability (Dey et al., 2020; Henderson, 2021) and it has become a strategic issue for businesses of all sizes. Various approaches to business sustainability (BS) are presented in the literature and management practice, which makes it impossible to formulate a single, unambiguous BS concept. On the one hand, BS is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, integrating several often-contradictory aspects (Hahn et al., 2018). However, on the other hand, the BS concept is rooted in different sustainability paradigms (Gibbons, 2020).

Some researchers recognize the creation of long-term shareholder value as the essence of BS, where social and environmental issues are central in the context of opportunities and risks, benefits and costs, which are essential to building this value. This is an instrumental approach (Gao & Bansal, 2013). BS here refers to the survival and development of the organization as a system (Ihlen, 2015), and is rooted in the conventional sustainability paradigm (Gibbons, 2020). A very different perspective is presented by those who see organizations as “mesoscale social artifacts that need to be considered as a potentially powerful way to approach sustainable development” (Parrish, 2007). A truly sustainable organization creates significant positive impacts in areas that are critical and relevant to society and the planet (Dyllick & Muff, 2016). In this context, although the organization must generate the profits necessary for its functioning and development, its primary purpose is a commitment to developing the broader socio-ecological system.

This holistic and integrative approach is rooted in the regenerative paradigm (Gao & Bansal, 2013; Gibbons, 2020). There are also intermediate approaches between the instrumental and holistic extremes. The prevailing approach is the win-win approach, the essence of which is the simultaneous, synergistic, and systematic provision of economic, social, and environmental benefits (Sekerka & Stimel, 2011). The win-win approach focuses on finding cost-effective areas for the organization that are, at the same time, socially and/or environmentally beneficial (Porter & Kramer, 2011). This approach avoids deeper reflection on the systematic responsibilities of the organization and is based on the prevailing assumption of self-interest. It is rooted in the contemporary paradigm (Gibbons, 2020). In the paper, it is assumed that BS refers to business participation in sustainable development; this approach is defined as “the commitment and activities of business to provide benefits in contributing to sustainable development” (Zgrzywa-Ziemak, 2019). This holistic approach to BS is embedded in the regenerative paradigm (Dyllick & Muff, 2016; Gibbons, 2020).

Business sustainability has emerged as a prominent topic of debate among researchers and practitioners (Zgrzywa-Ziemak et al., 2025). Traditionally, sustainability encompasses three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. Researchers argue that a comprehensive definition of business sustainability remains elusive unless it encompasses all three dimensions (Nascimento et al., 2024; Ukko et al., 2022). Business sustainability should refer to managing and contributing to environmental, social, and financial demands, with the term “triple bottom line” introduced to expand the traditional reporting framework to include ecological and social performance alongside financial performance (Elkington, 1994). Consequently, business sustainability requires companies to manage the TBL, the process by which companies manage financial, social, and environmental risks, liabilities, and opportunities (Bado & Vione, 2022). These three impacts are sometimes referred to as profit, people, and planet (Giran et al., 2025).

The economic dimension at the heart of business sustainability underlines a company's ability to maintain long-term financial health. Economic sustainability involves implementing

strategies that increase efficiency, maximize profitability, and ensure market viability (Abdelrahman et al., 2021; Abdullah & Ampauleng, 2024; Bugwandin & Bayat, 2022; Maslennikov et al., 2021; Stanković et al., 2023). This dimension is critical to maintaining competitive advantage and enhancing shareholder value (Sharma et al., 2022). This idea is further expanded by emphasizing the essential role of sustainable economic practices in ensuring business success and resilience amid market fluctuations (Nascimento et al., 2024). Complementing economic considerations, social sustainability focuses on the impact of a business on its human capital, such as employees, customers, and the wider community (VK et al., 2025). This dimension involves developing corporate social responsibility, ensuring ethical employment practices, and contributing positively to the welfare of society (Abdullah & Ampauleng, 2024; Sarango-Lalangui et al., 2023).

2.6. Business Sustainability Strategy

A company's business strategy is its master plan for commercial activities. It consists of its objectives and the procedures and guidelines for achieving these objectives (Moskovich, 2020). Business strategy provides a theoretical scheme for understanding the company's activities and its responses to external factors and internal operations, which can ensure its sustainability. The primary concern of every board of directors is to reflect on its company's business strategy and oversee management's compliance with the strategic plan (Evans et al., 2024). It presents managers with the options for participating in relevant markets (local, national, or international) and the beliefs underlying these choices. For academics, studying business strategy reveals typologies and behaviors that provide useful, specific, and comparative research (Ghaemi-Zadeh & Eghbali-Zarch, 2024).

It should also be emphasized that the concept of sustainability and the concept of sustainable development are interrelated in three different disciplines, specifically: economics, sociology, and ecology (Lukin et al., 2022). Economics views sustainability as a limiting factor in achieving economic goals such as focusing on profitability, growth, and efficiency. Sociology views sustainability in terms of achieving the goals of equitable resource allocation and poverty reduction, while ecology focuses on achieving sustainability through natural resource management. Since the goals and requirements of these disciplines are different, sustainability and sustainable growth can only be achieved if close cooperation is achieved where the diversity of each discipline is respected (Biuk, 2012).

As organizations' sustainability strategies mature, they begin to change the business model that describes the basic logic of the organization's work. The business model helps define competitive strategy, influences product design, and thus the environmental and social impacts in the value chain on the value that the product brings, including environmental or social value, and how the company views some of these values. In essence, the business model will present the value proposition, value creation, and value perception aspects (Long, 2019). One of the most important reasons why companies choose to implement a sustainable strategy is that the demand in almost every industry for environmentally friendly products is increasing. The reason for this increasing demand is, among other things, that consumers want to feel better about everything they buy (Harker, 2022). Brand managers face a major challenge in brand management because they need to ensure a sustainable and environmentally friendly image, which is quite difficult in industries that do not have a good reputation for their environmental efforts (Iberg, 2015). A sustainable business strategy is based on evaluating the needs of all key stakeholders of a particular company, where the company is oriented towards achieving sustainable goals, namely the principles of sustainable development and environmental protection. By implementing a

sustainable strategy, companies promise to make plans and decisions in their business that will contribute to the well-being of society and the environment as a whole, respectively, taking not only the economic but also the social and environmental impacts of the company into consideration (Phuah & Fernando, 2015).

2.7. Internal Organizational Business Strategy

Managerial strategy defines the organization's learning arrangements, initiating and responding to innovation, that enable the adoption of technological improvements while conducting day-to-day business (Wang et al., 2025). Even small adaptations in organizational technology and procedures can lower operating costs and improve a company's ability to compete. Innovation can be achieved by adopting networked information-based technologies by building Internet-based artificial intelligence data systems, which will enhance information assimilation and enable big data analysis. This will provide an intelligent management system that enhances organizational innovation (Verdejo Espinosa et al., 2021), communication, and production procedures (Mokoena et al., 2023). Incremental innovation appears to be better than radical change. Successful companies gradually adopt innovations, training their employees to adapt to change (Kaplan & Norton, 2002).

Business strategy guides a multifaceted investigation of the company's value, including future development, profitability, and potential dangers. It details the need for appropriate relationships to carry out commercial procedures and how to obtain and maintain the approval of clients and other stakeholders (Martín-Tapia & Llamas-Sánchez, 2025). All these managerial strategies will improve the sustainability of the company and the cognitive skills among managers and their employees (Kochanek et al., 2022). In addition, business strategy includes criteria for planning, regulation, information transfer, employee preparation, communication style, and skills for dealing with people both inside and outside the organization (Aisyah et al., 2025). It can also guide administrators to solve problems, find imaginative solutions, understand complex systems, and develop competencies in quantitative analysis, logical thinking, and diagnostic design (Vu et al., 2025). Sustainability strategies can even create more honest and ethical behavior, as sustainability encourages corporate managers to act on their promises to shareholders and stakeholders, thus reassuring shareholders and stakeholders of the value of their investment in the company (Foroozanfar et al., 2025; Girma et al., 2025). Both shareholders and stakeholders expect management strategies to be transparent about profits and business performance (Oll et al., 2025).

2.8. External Business Sustainability Strategy

Managerial strategy seeks to build a friendly external environment for its business. This includes basic assumptions, market tactics, methods of external and internal information exchange, and its environmental legitimacy (Moskovich, 2023). Most research on business sustainability strategy focuses on the material perspective (Hristov & Searcy, 2025). Social and economic issues, networks with other global companies, and environmental interests complicate material sustainability, which in turn affects business flexibility and achievement. One aspect of this flexibility is building a dynamic organizational structure that can address customer and environmental demands (Adolph & Beckmann, 2024). Business sustainability strategy adopts a flatter structure in a dynamic and volatile environment, one that can respond quickly to environmental changes (Munonye, 2025). This is the case of a Brazilian community that built economic and environmental benefits for agricultural products. This increased the sustainability of the business and its environmental legitimacy in the eyes of the Brazilian public.

Managerial attitudes are critical to the business model, as they determine how the organization responds to environmental threats. Administrators must be flexible and respond to the dynamic commercial environment by assessing potential hazards and planning for an unpredictable future (Moskovich, 2023). Maintaining a long-term business model is an ongoing challenge that requires administrators to describe the organization's strategy, design, and evaluate the model, determine important achievement benchmarks, and respond to potential environmental threats (Chungyalpa & von Rosing, 2024). The desire for business sustainability shapes business strategies to improve the organization's competitiveness in the global market (Panghal et al., 2023). To achieve sustainability, organizational policies need to anticipate future developments to predict environmental changes, including global factors. This is possible by maintaining a clear vision of the organization's long-term adjustment (Kaplan & Norton, 2002), including consideration of business risks that management needs for better accommodate local and global demands (Castellani et al., 2024). The issue of business risk is very important for clients and other actors who must understand the company's business model in order to interact with it successfully (Moskovich, 2023).

Business sustainability strategies require the adoption of international quality standards (Hamed et al., 2025). Industries producing low-tech products, which wisely adopt American and European quality standards (Moskovich, 2023). This strategy allows these companies to enter new markets, increase their capacity to compete, and cope with environmental uncertainty. Improving organizational performance and striving for excellence facilitate the adoption of these international quality standards (Karipoglou et al., 2023). The usual way for organizations is to continuously strive for better relationships by fostering friendly relations with local groups. Wise policies and wise decision-making, which take into account social responsibility towards citizens, can achieve this goal. For example, offering fair prices and accepting moderate profits improves the company's public image (Bamberger et al., 2025). Another productive activity is responding to environmental and ecological conditions, which have become very important in recent years. Businesses need to combine commercial goals with clean and safe ecological principles. This has become a demand from government authorities as well as from citizens. "Green" policies can generate better business opportunities, find new markets, and expand product lines (Jain et al., 2025). This is identified as one of the many niches that can be successfully explored by entrepreneurial individuals and companies, including the development of new products and services as well as new marketing methods (Schaper, 2002).

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Several inclusion and exclusion criteria were set to obtain relevant literature, in line with the objectives of this study. First, the literature must come from peer-reviewed journals that focus on business sustainability strategies. Second, the publication period is from January 2010 to October 2024. Third, the literature must be published in English. On the other hand, literature that does not meet the three criteria will not be considered in the final review.

3.2. Data Sources and Search Strategy

To answer the research questions, the SLR process was carried out by conducting a comprehensive literature search on predetermined databases to ensure that as many relevant and high-quality studies as possible were collected. To ensure the accuracy and transparency of the literature review process, this study adopted the PRISMA approach. In this study, the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases were used to search for literature related to the focus of this

study. The search was completed in October 2024 and was carried out on the Scopus and Web of Science databases with a range of January 2010 to October 2024 using the keywords Business Sustainability Strategy. By using these keywords, 21 works of literature were obtained from the search process. After that, six articles had to be removed because duplicates were detected, and the rest were declared to be included in the title and abstract screening stage. After the title and abstract screening was carried out, eight studies were removed, and seven other studies were declared to meet the assessment stage based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. After carrying out a thorough and careful review process, three studies were obtained that met the inclusion criteria. A summary of the literature selection process is shown in **Figure 1**.

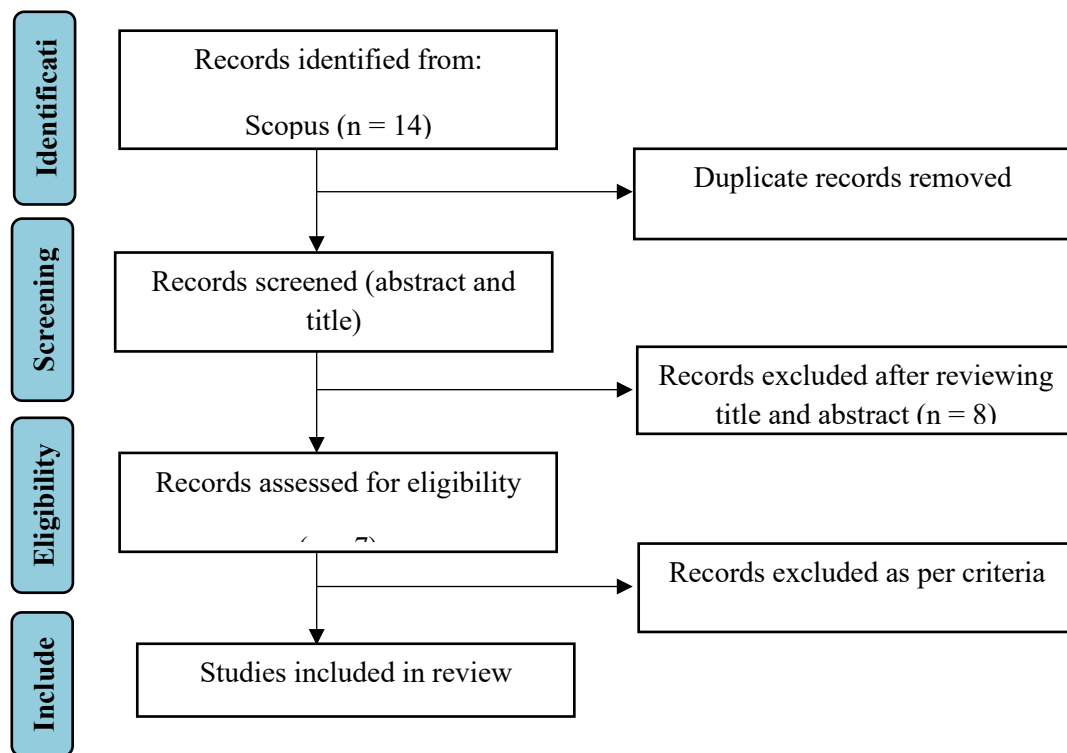


Figure 1. Article Selection Process

4. Results

To understand how sustainability strategies are defined and implemented across organizational contexts, a systematic literature review was conducted. This review identified three peer-reviewed studies that met the inclusion criteria. These studies differ in country of origin, industrial setting, methodological design, theoretical framing, and their key findings.

A summary of the selected literature is presented in **Table 1**, which outlines the authorship, geographic and industrial focus, research design, theoretical approach, and main contributions.

Table 1. Summary of Systematic Literature Review

No	Author(s)	Country	Industry	Method/Design	Theory	Findings
1	(Moskovich, 2020)	Israel	Agriculture and Military	Qualitative	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal: Stability and Continuity • Hiring internal members rather than outsiders for organizational positions • Supplying work for internal members as a

No	Author(s)	Country	Industry	Method/Design	Theory	Findings
						form of social responsibility • Internal Factors: Production Planning • New Product Manufacturing • Organizational Learning, Growth and Expansion • Structural Design Change, Changes in Managerial Positions • External Factors: Partnership Relationship • Alliances with Other Organizations • Going Global
2	(Lakshmi & Kennedy, 2017)	India	Manufacturing	Quantitative	None	There is a significant relationship between strategic integration of HR in the formulation and implementation of sustainability strategies. The HR Integration Model includes integration, change management, creativity, collaboration, and communication.
3	(Hečková et al., 2021)	Europe	Manufacturing and Services	Quantitative	Contingency Theory	The integration of organizational performance management and business sustainability strategy facilitates sector specialization, particularly during mergers and acquisitions.

These three studies illustrate the emerging but still limited academic engagement with sustainability strategy from diverse perspectives. In the following subsections, the distribution of studies by country, industry, and methodology is analyzed to identify thematic patterns and gaps in the literature.

4.1. Distribution of Literature by Country

Distribution of literature by country as shown in **Figure 2**. The results show that research on business sustainability strategies is still very limited. This can be seen from only 3 countries that conducted this research, namely Israel (N=1), India (N=1), and Europe (N=1).

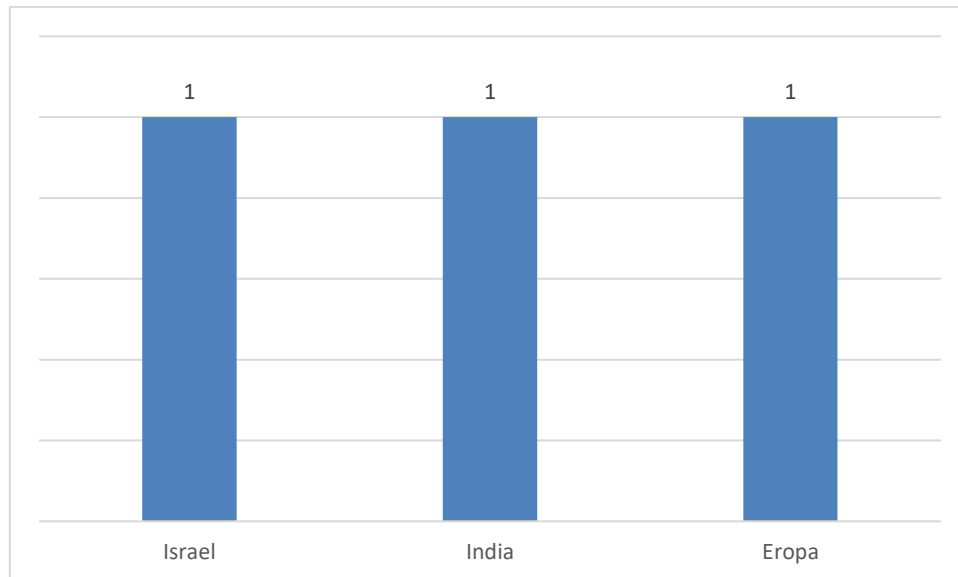


Figure 2. Distribution of Articles by Country

4.2. Distribution of Literature by Industry

Figure 3 also shows the distribution of articles by industry. The findings reveal that, specifically, from the three studies, only two industries were studied, namely manufacturing and services, and agriculture and military. These results indicate that research on sustainable business strategies is only conducted in these two sectors.

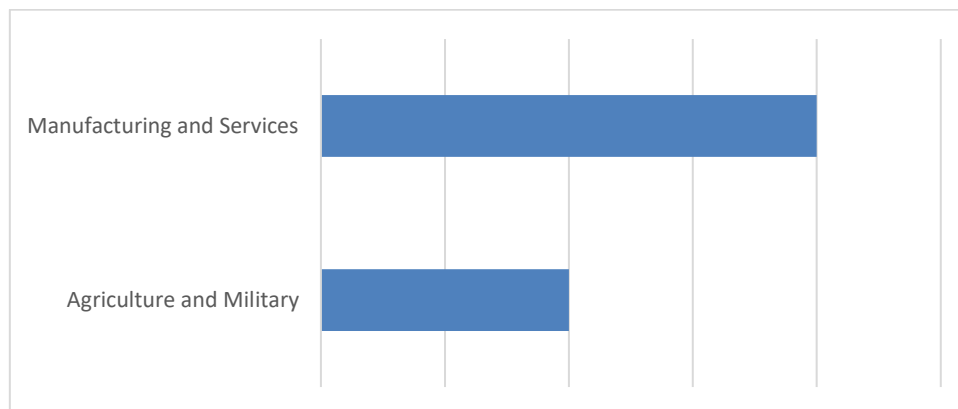


Figure 3. Distribution of articles by Industry

4.3. Distribution of Literature by Year

Distribution of literature in the period from January 2010 to October 2024 as shown in **Figure 4**. It is known that research related to business sustainability strategies is still very limited. Therefore, research with this theme that was successfully conducted and published was in 2010, 2017 and 2021.

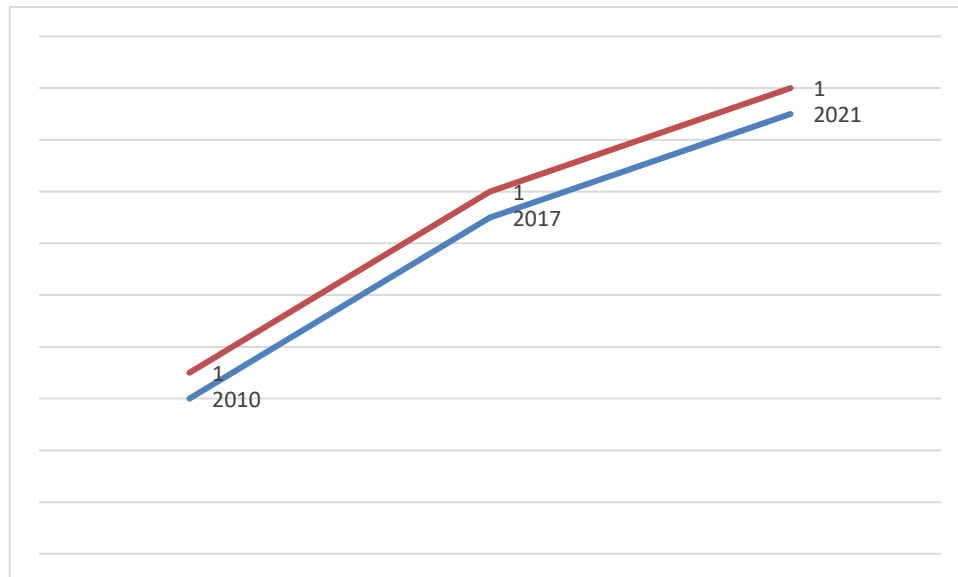


Figure 4. Distribution of Articles by Year

4.4. Methods Used

The results of the analysis in **Figure 5** reveal the methods used in the study. Based on three research results, it is explained that the study is concentrated on two methods used. The methods used in each study are qualitative methods ($N = 2$) and quantitative methods ($N = 1$).

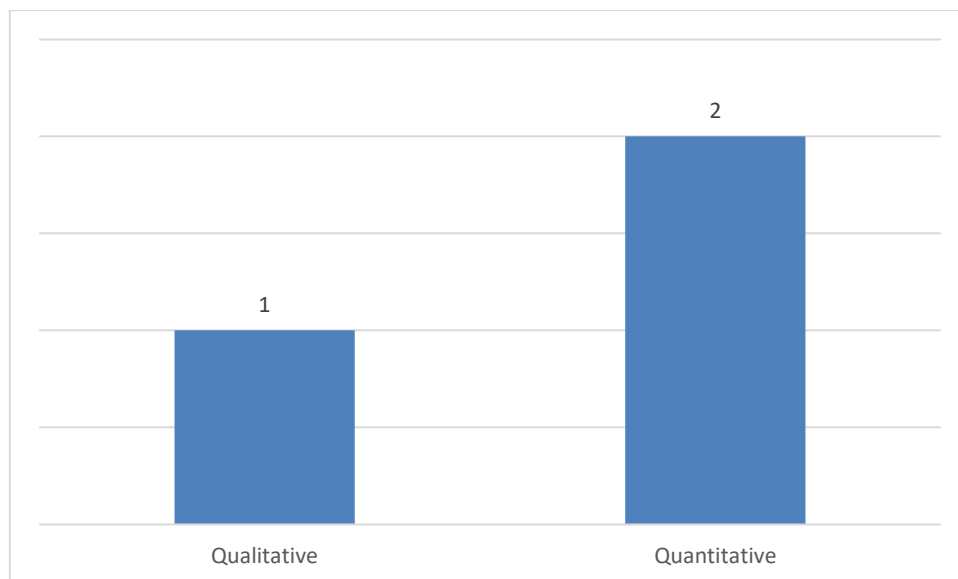


Figure 5. Distribution of Articles Based on the Method Used

4.5. Theories Used

Table 1 shows the theories used as a basis for analyzing business sustainability strategies. The results show that of the three research studies, only one study uses theory to support its research. The theory used is contingency theory.

5. Discussion

The issue of business sustainability has changed significantly in recent years. The economic, social, and environmental challenges facing businesses today are very different from those of the past, when businesses attempted to adopt positions that focused exclusively on environmentally friendly behavior. However, such behavior did not change the nature of their business and was therefore not strategic. Today, many companies, especially industry leaders, have begun to view business sustainability as a critical component of business strategy that can reduce costs, capitalize on revenue-enhancing opportunities, increase margins, enhance brand value, and accelerate performance across the organization (Healy & Jennifer, 2013).

The findings indicate that the process of acquiring theoretical knowledge and implementing it in practice has led to several important conclusions (Hečková et al., 2021). Currently, it is difficult to compare the success of business sustainability across companies, as different methods of measuring efficiency at the level of economic, social, and environmental pillars, or certificates and standards that capture different issues of business sustainability measurement, are used (Hutchinson et al., 2025). The analysis shows the relationship between the impact of business sustainability strategy and organizational performance, which is also significant in the case of various forms of mergers or acquisitions, with an increasing correlation level when comparing the years 2011-2013. Furthermore, the number of cross-border M&A also increases as a result of the specialization of the respective sectors, which can be explained by the fact that sectoral specialization offers opportunities and capabilities for firms to increase resources through cross-border M&A. Acquiring an existing foreign business allows the acquiring firm to obtain its resources, such as its knowledge base, technology, and human resources, and to gain access to key markets and constituents at the local level. However, in the targeted sectors, specialization in our sample was not an obstacle to cross-border M&A, precisely because of the nature of cross-border M&A related to the search for new opportunities for the diversification strategies of both firms and the personal motives and top management of the firms. Therefore, it can be concluded that cross-border M&A is clearly related to business sustainability.

Manufacturing businesses generally start from the conceptual stage by combining science, technology, and social needs to create innovation or invention in the form of products (Lakshmi & Kennedy, 2017). The next stage is the compliance stage, which is the stage where the product is tested for feasibility and sustainability. After this test proves that the product is feasible, the commercial stage, with appropriate inputs, processing, outputs, and residues, produces the product. This product will enter the business environment and face market competition in the competitive stage. The success or failure of this business depends on how well the product responds to the dynamic, uncertain, complex, and unclear business environment and beats market competition. It is common knowledge that there is a limited set of financial and non-financial factors to consider the failure of a company. Regardless of these factors, businesses/companies are able to operate in this dynamic business environment because of the various combinations of strategies that companies usually adopt to overcome obstacles. The success of an organization depends not only on the creative strategies used by technology, media, and telecommunications, but also on how these strategies are translated into policies, practices, processes, and their actual implementation. Therefore, the role of HR in an organization is to manage the thinkers who are responsible for the creative strategy and also to facilitate and implement the strategy in collaboration with other functional areas, which leads the business towards sustainability.

In line with this explanation, a model has been proposed to represent the role of human resources (HR) in business sustainability, emphasizing the strategic integration of HR functions

within sustainability strategies (Lakshmi & Kennedy, 2017). HR strategic integration will be carried out through HR involvement in strategy formulation and aligning HR strategies with formulated business strategies. In this study, considering sustainability as a business strategy, HR strategic integration is tested for its level of formulation and implementation through HR functions. The level of implementation is revealed through the following HR functions: recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, compensation and rewards, employee engagement, and safety and welfare.

Furthermore, the positive impact of strategic integration on organizational performance in the three sustainability factors, namely, people, planet, and profit. This confirms that HRM in an organization has the potential to contribute important skills and support the business to transform itself for greater sustainability. HRM takes a leading partnership role in developing and implementing sustainable business strategies through skills in organizational processes and change management. The unique skills and knowledge of each employee are a source of competitive advantage. This competitive advantage can be leveraged to create sustainability-related targets for performance, compensation and rewards, training and development, and value-based recruitment using sustainability-based employer branding. The tangible results of strong, sustainable HR performance include support for achieving broad sustainability business goals, measurable contributions to HR performance, including lower employee turnover rates, lower absenteeism percentages, improved employee well-being, and increased motivation, employee engagement, and overall productivity. Other studies have also confirmed that, when corporate sustainability leadership considers HR as a critical contributor, HR can lead itself and the organization towards sustainability. The involvement of HR managers through collaboration, consultation, and demands for HR accountability combines sustainable HR practices. At the same time, HR professionals must update their approach from transactional or transformational HR to strategic and sustainable HR. It is also proven that there is a strong correlation between HR strategy and sustainability. HR strategy is the way and means of managing HR in a concrete roadmap for its implementation through agreed-upon targets. Thinking again, when integrating sustainability in the planning matrix, one can be sure that HR management can be implemented in the short, medium, and long term for the present and future generations in a continuously supportive and enriched operational environment (Wittenberg, 2023).

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented earlier, this study concludes that research on business sustainability strategies remains limited, with only three studies identified through the systematic review. Existing research has focused solely on the manufacturing, services, and agriculture-military sectors, indicating a gap in other potential areas such as the fisheries sector. This is particularly important given that each industry has distinct characteristics, and local cultural values, especially in a diverse country like Indonesia, should be considered when formulating sustainability strategies.

Geographically, the reviewed studies are confined to three regions: Israel, India, and Europe. This narrow geographical scope presents an opportunity for future research to expand into other countries and contexts. Additionally, the methodological approaches employed in the reviewed studies are limited to qualitative and quantitative designs. Future research could benefit from adopting a mixed-methods approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

This study also acknowledges several limitations. First, the review was limited to studies that explicitly addressed the theme of business sustainability strategy. Future research could broaden

this scope by examining related constructs, exploring both antecedents and outcomes of sustainability-oriented practices. Second, while this review utilized reputable databases such as Scopus and Web of Science, the number of relevant published studies remains limited. To enrich future analyses, researchers may consider incorporating additional databases to capture a broader and more diverse range of literature.

7. Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to all parties who contributed to the completion of this study. Special thanks are extended to the institutions that provided access to relevant databases and resources, as well as to colleagues and reviewers who offered valuable insights and constructive feedback throughout the research process. This research would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of our academic community.

8. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest regarding this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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