

Dynamic Capabilities for Sustainability A review and research agenda

Daniela Ortiz - University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication Vienna

Neli Ovcharova - University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication Vienna

University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication Vienna
The increasing societal, political and economic pressure to stop the climate change crisis has made the transformation towards environmental sustainability a central topic for both academia and practice (Strauss et al., 2017). The ongoing global and regional legislative changes (eg. Paris Agreement, EU Taxonomy, EU Climate Law) are creating additional pressure for organizations to shift towards stakeholder-oriented view and to integrate the sustainability factor into their business models (Zollo et al., 2016). To adapt to the new business reality, companies may develop specific dynamic capabilities that allow them to “to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments” (Teece et al., 1997). The interest in dynamic capabilities for sustainability has significantly grown in the last 5 years, which has led to the generation of substantial but fragmented body of literature. The purpose of this paper is to perform a systematic literature review (Schilke et al., 2018) to examine the current state of knowledge on the topic, and to establish a future research agenda. By doing this, we intend to shed light on the nature of these capabilities, and how they are acquired and effectively implemented by companies in the process of transformation towards sustainability. We review articles that apply the dynamic capabilities framework (e.g. Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Helfat et al., 2007; Schilke et al., 2018; Teece et al., 1997) in the context of sustainability and analyze them by using the fundamental building blocks classification system developed by Schilke et al., 2018. According to it, building blocks include the nature and properties of dynamic capabilities, the antecedents and consequences, the correlation to other variables, and the boundary conditions (Schilke et al., 2018). As an outcome, we expect to develop a new classification system for dynamic capabilities for sustainability that could consolidate the existing literature and could serve as a theoretical base for future empirical research. In addition, we also expect to determine if dynamic capabilities for sustainability is in itself a unique research field.