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## **Strategic resource management in private, public, and mixed-owned organisations in cities: the power of strategic urban networks**

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**Abstract:** This study mapped the seminal intellectual structure, the recent mainstream research, and discussed the evolution from seminal intellectual structure to mainstream research on resource-based View (RBV) for strategic resource management (SRM) in the urban context. We performed bibliometrics through co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling. Findings: 1) RBV has not been enough for the public, private or mixed organisations to set their SRM; 2) RBV, relational view, industry-structure view, and stakeholder theory are critical for SRM in cities; 3) we conceptualised the term 'strategic urban network' for SRM, which mainly concerns with the dynamic of resources and

stakeholders within the urban context. Social capital, dynamic capabilities, human resources, non-human resources, marketing, knowledge-based view, and global and diverse stakeholders are vital aspects for efficient exploration and exploitation in strategic urban networks. In turn, it can result in the better socioeconomic development of cities and performance of public, private, and mixed-owned organisations.

**Keywords:** resource-based view; RBV; relational view; industry-structure view; stakeholder theory; urban studies; public administration; organisational studies; strategic management; strategic urban networks; strategic networks; urban development; socioeconomic development; social capital; dynamic capability; urban branding.

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## 1 Introduction

Nowadays, the world has become even more urban. As a result, cities are becoming protagonists of socioeconomic development. Then cities are basic units of analysis for organisational strategists at all levels, such as international organisations, multinational enterprises, national governments, states, provinces, actors responsible for regional

development, municipal government, and local and regional firms. Furthermore, cities are heterogeneous because they are located in their specific region and country with their characteristics, such as cultural, social, political, and economic ones (Ridder et al., 2005). So, resources and capabilities also vary if these characteristics differ among cities.

Resources have been an organisational cornerstone to gain or maintain competitive advantage, and the resource-based view (RBV) has emphasised an internal analysis of resources within the firms (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1986a; among others). The literature has dealt with many RBV constructs, such as dynamic capabilities in changing environments (Teece et al., 1997; Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Helfat and Peteraf, 2003; Cappellari et al., 2022), absorptive capacity (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Zahra and George, 2002), organisational learning (Crossan et al., 1999; Sun and Anderson, 2010), organisational routines (Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Lewin et al., 2011; Felin et al., 2012), among others.

According to Porter (1991), cities are competitive places among themselves because they try to be more attractive to their stakeholders (such as citizens, industries, investors, and tourists) and to be known as socioeconomic developed places. In this way, resources such as social capital, capabilities, and other assets play a critical role in a successful urban and regional development (Carmeli and Cohen, 2001; Carmeli and Tishler, 2004; Pihkala et al., 2007; Bruns, 2014).

Although the literature has pointed out the importance of resources in urban development (Pihkala et al., 2007), there is a lack of integration and a solid organised theoretical foundation for public and private organisations. In order to fill this gap, this paper aims to synthesise and map the RBV in the urban context as a strategy for public organisations (as municipalities) and private organisations (as firms and industries). Thus, the research question is, ‘what is the intellectual structure and mainstream research of resource-based view in the urban context for public, private, and mixed-owned organisations?’.

We performed bibliometrics through co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling, an instrument for a detailed literature review (Zupic and Čater, 2014; Linnenluecke et al., 2020). The first resulted in intellectual structure and the last in mainstream research on RBV in the context of cities for public and private organisations. The intellectual structure is the theoretical background that sustains the pillars of a research topic, and mainstream research comprises the most recent and relevant studies (Vogel and Güttel, 2013; Zupic and Čater, 2014). Moreover, we used principal component analysis (PCA) to reduce data in dimensions, in which similar elements in a dataset create the components.

Our results reveal how the intellectual structure has evolved to mainstream research: From three dimensions of the intellectual structure (‘resource-based view’; ‘power of networks’; and ‘human resources’) to two main dimensions of the mainstream research (‘power of networks and resources’; and ‘human resources’). In short, an RBV approach has not been enough for public and private organisations to create a strategy to gain or maintain a competitive advantage. Instead, RBV was summed up to a network perspective (i.e., relational view and industry-structure view) as shown in the mainstream research and became an indivisible dimension. In the urban context, resources such as social capital, investments, commodities, and products are interchangeable and relational among organisations.

After this introduction, the second section explains RBV and its primary constructs. The third section details the method we used. In the fourth section, we presented and

discussed the results and findings. And then, we concluded with our main contributions, implications for theory and practitioners, suggestions for future studies, and limitations.

## 2 Resource-based view: an internal perspective for organisations

The main *RBV* concern is managing valuable organisation-specific assets, which are responsible for the organisation's survival in a competitive environment, for higher returns than the competitors, and then assuring its competitive advantages. Seminal literature on RBV has shown that: inimitability strengthens competitive advantage through asset stock accumulation (Dierickx and Cool, 1989); embedded and interfirm *resources and routines* are critical for spanning the organisational boundaries (Barney, 1991); to have a competitive advantage, organisations should have heterogeneous, imperfect mobility, ex-post and ex-ante limits to competition (Peteraf, 1993); *organisational culture* can be a source of sustained competitive advantage and improve financial performance (Barney, 1986a); better performance and organisational strategy can be achieved by having unique resources, skills, and capabilities (Barney, 1986b); the value creation is related to competitive advantage (Peteraf and Barney, 2003), and so further. Therefore, RBV seeks to explain how resources could and should be managed to create a competitive advantage for organisations and their survival within the competitive environment.

Internal organisational elements matter in ways deferring from organisation to organisation, and these *resources should be valuable, rare, inimitable, well-deployed and allocated* by organisations. The origins of RBV come from Edith Penrose's studies on how firms have grown over their lives: she emphasised the role of resources within the development process and growth of the firms, so resource and administrative constraints, restraints, and even opportunities explain the extent of how fast an organisation has been developed over time, that is, internal organisational elements and resources are essential to the organisational dynamics (Penrose, 1959). However, according to Wernerfelt (1984), strategists should not only analyse the product side but also go beyond analysing the resource side due to the *heterogeneity* of organisational resources and characteristics. In this way, the higher the *resource capacity*, the higher the organisational competitive advantage because there will be a spillover effect on resource creation. However, RBV was only popularised by Barney (1986a, 1986b, 1991, 1997, 2001) because of his framework known as VRIO, in which resources should be Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and well-deployed and allocated by organisations in order to promote their sustained competitive advantage.

Even more, RBV has highlighted the importance of sustainable economic rentability and organisational financial *performance*, in which the organisational assets should be strategically allocated considering the *environmental factors* and the organisational ability to create and maintain *isolating mechanisms*. According to Amit and Schoemaker (1993), how a resource is allocated and how capabilities are managed impact rentability, which is influenced by managerial bounded rationality and the organisational degree of uncertainty, complexity, and existing conflicts. 'Isolating mechanisms' refers to both phenomena of organisations protecting themselves from being imitated by other ones and their attempt to protect their flow of rentability (Rumelt, 1984). In other words, heterogeneous resources can become homogeneous, but these isolating mechanisms also make resources-different-depending on how they are allocated and due to the increase of

unsuccessful competitors' attempts to imitate them. Therefore, organisational-specific factors and characteristics are more important to organisational rentability than those related to the industry and environment. The sector effects do not determine firms' rentability (Rumelt, 1991).

In the 1990s, Porter (1991, 1996) criticised the RBV theoretic assumptions. Porter (1991, 1996) perceived the absence of explanations on how competitive advantage is created. After that, in the transition from the twentieth century to the 21st century, addressing this gap in the context of globalisation and the information revolution, some scholars have built the construct of *dynamic capabilities* in RBV (Teece et al., 1997, Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000; Helfat and Peteraf, 2003). Hence, RBV began to investigate organisational processes and then better understand the resource-based reconfiguration of these *processes*. Therefore, RBV studies started to explain how to create/maintain a competitive advantage over time. Simultaneously, a *knowledge-based view* emerged to scrutinise how to administer appropriate knowledge and how the knowledge could be applicable (Grant, 1996; McEvily and Chakravarthy, 2002; Liu et al., 2021).

Further RBV research has studied the construct of *absorptive capacities* (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Zahra and George, 2002), which is understood as the potential and the actual dynamic capabilities subsets in which knowledge is explored and exploited to make a firm able to get and maintain a sustained competitive advantage. The construct of absorptive capacity has two nuclei: first, *organisational learning* enables an organisation to create and share knowledge to renew its strategy and promote innovation (Crossan et al., 1999; Sun and Anderson, 2010); and second, *organisational routines* compose the micro foundations of absorptive capabilities, which acknowledge practice and organisational capabilities (Feldman and Pentland, 2003; Felin et al., 2012; Lewin et al., 2011).

### 3 Method

We performed a bibliometric study through co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling, an optimal tool for literature reviews (Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Zupic and Čater, 2014), allowing scholars to conduct replicable, systematic and rigorous reviews. Furthermore, bibliometric studies have helped review the literature and provide new paradigms in social sciences (Ferasso et al., 2020; Beliaeva et al., 2022; Rovelli et al., 2022). Co-citation analysis reveals the intellectual structure, the seminal literature, the most impactful publications, and the origins of a research field. The bibliographic coupling will show the publication activity, the theoretical implications, and the mainstream research of RBV. *R* programming language version 4.0 (R Core Team, 2020) and the *bibliometrix* package developed (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017) were used to analyse the data.

We applied *PCA* and *parallel analysis* (PA) in the co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling. First, PCA is a dimension reduction technique that reveals the principal components (i.e., linear combinations created through variable standardisation, variable covariance matrix computation, eigenvector computation, and eigenvalue computation) that better explain the elements of an underlying structure inserted in a dataset, which is also recommended for bibliometric studies (Zupic and Čater, 2014). Bibliometric studies revolve around co-occurrence matrices, such as co-citation and

bibliographic coupling. Due to the high multidimensionality arising, we need to reduce the dimensions somehow to extract information from data. Hence, the reason why we apply dimension reduction techniques such as PCA. Second, PA compares the eigenvalues of the original matrix to a random matrix of equivalent proportions to reveal how many components should be retained (Horn, 1965). Thus, we generated 10,000 random matrices and retained only the components in the original matrix of which the eigenvalues are higher than the 2.5% percentile and lower than the 97.5% percentile concerning the simulated eigenvalues. This cutoff criterion assures that the number of components chosen is not arbitrary (Hayton et al., 2004). In other words, the number of components was decided by how many components explain more variance (higher eigenvalues) than those from a collection of simulated matrices.

We collected our sample on *Scopus* database using with the following search expression: TITLE-ABS-KEY ('resource') AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ('municip\*') OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ('urban') OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ('cities') OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ('city') AND REFAUTH ('Barney') OR REFAUTH ('Wernerfelt') AND DOCTYPE (ar OR re) AND PUBYEAR < 2020 AND (LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, 'busi') OR LIMIT-TO(SUBJAREA, 'soci')). Thus, we gathered only articles and reviews published before 2020 in which their titles, abstracts and keywords contain words that reach any variation of the prefix 'municip' (for municipalities and municipality), and the words 'cities', 'city', 'resource', and 'urban'. Also, we restricted the search to gather only documents citing either Barney or Wernerfelt (the foremost RBV scholars) to guarantee theoretical rigour and relation to the RBV Theory of the sample. Finally, the sample has 139 documents. As many sample documents have incorrectly referenced other sources, we corrected all citations within the dataset to conduct an accurate co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling. Also, we removed all methodological references from our sample (a total of 50 references and 196 citations, of which were inserted in them), remaining only the theoretical ones regarding RBV in cities.

As for the co-citation analysis, we utilised Lotka's law (most of a particular scientific field is represented by few publications most cited). Thus, to apply Lotka's law, we considered 5% of the most cited documents within the list of references of the documents in our dataset. Our sample has 9,105 citations, so 5% of the total citations is 455.25 citations. The sample has a total of 9,105 citations, then 5% of the total citations reduces to 455.25 citations. We select only the top-cited documents with at least five citations. With this selection, the threshold reaches 431 cumulated citations, very close to 455, thus, comprising a replicable approach to this data. In other words, it reduces our co-citation matrix to only using the top-41 most cited documents used for a PCA decomposition using varimax rotation. PA revealed that 3 was the ideal number of components to be retained. Cross-loadings, whenever presented, were analysed in a case-by-case manner.

Finally, 45 articles with six or more common citations were considered regarding bibliographic coupling. We arbitrarily selected the threshold of six to make this research replicable. PA revealed that two should be the component numbers to be retained. Also, PCA through varimax rotation was performed for the analysis.

## 4 Results

In this section, we present our results. For this, we divided this section into two subsections:

- 1 co-citation analysis
- 2 bibliographic coupling.

### 4.1 Co-citation analysis

The intellectual structure comprises the seminal theoretical background on RBV in the urban context because this subsection deals with seminal literature. Moreover, the publication date of most of them is older than those found in the next section of mainstream research. We identified three principal components of the intellectual structure of studies on resource-based view in cities, which are the resource-based view (CC1), human resources (CC2), and power of networks (CC3), as shown in Table 1. The term ‘resource-based view’ was chosen for CC1 due to the higher loadings of the elements in this component being the seminal publications of the RBV theory. We designated CC2 as ‘human resources’ because its elements are publications on human resource management. Moreover, we call CC3 the ‘power of networks’ because its literature is based mainly on how relational and industrial views are essential to urban socioeconomic development. Table 1 shows the references and their loadings for each component.

The *resource-based view component* (CC1) composes the seminal scholars and literature on RBV, mainly on the role of resources in sustaining or creating organisational competitive advantage, as well as financial performance, core capabilities, dynamic capabilities, all sorts of capabilities, social capital, and value creation. The main element of this component is the idea that RBV is an organisational strategy tool that firms can use to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. It was already expected because we forced our search expression to collect only papers that cited Barney and Wernerfelt on RBV in the urban context, so it explains why studies related to competitive advantage appear on the top of this component (Barney, 1986a; Dierickx and Cool, 1989; Barney, 1991; Grant, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Barney, 1997; Barney, 2001; Barney et al., 2001).

Other elements that are the corner-stone of CC1 are related to the economic performance and strategic assets (Rumelt, 1984; Rumelt, 1991; Amit and Schoemaker, 1993), the construct of core capabilities (Leonard-Barton, 1992), the relation between resources and capabilities to strategy (Grant, 1991), the construct of dynamic capabilities (Teece et al., 1997; Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000), the construct of social capital (Adler and Kwon, 2002), and also the importance of value creation in strategic management in the public sector (Moore, 1995; Moore, 2000). Several papers on RBV cite Penrose (1959) to explain her initial contribution to RBV, and the same with Wernerfelt (1984), focusing mainly on the internal resource analysis of the firm.

The *human resources component* (CC2) is made by literature on human resource management (HRM), which interrelates important elements of the RBV approach to HRM, e.g., capabilities to enhance organisational competitive advantage. Among several themes: HRM has been interrelated to the study of financial performance (Huselid, 1995; Delery and Doty, 1996; Huselid et al., 1997); HRM has been understood as a requirement

to achieve sustained competitive advantage, such as using the VRIO framework of RBV (Wright et al., 1994; Barney and Wright, 1998); HRM systems and perceptions of organisational performance have been bound (Delaney and Huselid, 1996); the role of managerial capabilities in HRM (Huselid et al., 1997); and understanding of what makes organisations so similar, that is, the question of isomorphic processes between organisations. The role of professionalisation in such similarity of characteristics and the degree to which such similarity supports resource dependency and resource centralisation of resources (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

**Table 1** The three principal components of the intellectual structure

<i>CC1: resource-based view</i>	<i>CC3: power of networks</i>	<i>CC2: human resources</i>
<i>References (loadings)</i>	<i>References (loadings)</i>	<i>References (loadings)</i>
Barney (1997) (.904)	Delery and Doty (1996) (.865)	Teece (2007) (.880)
Barney (1986a) (.835)	Wright et al. (1994) (.863)	Granovetter (1977) (.837)
Rumelt (1991) (.828)	Huselid (1995) (.859)	Porter (1990) (.773)
Dierickx and Cool (1989) (.820)	Delaney and Huselid (1996) (.843)	Lavie (2006) (.765)
Barney (2001) (.815)	Huselid et al. (1997) (.831)	Williamson (1985) (.742)
Leonard-Barton (1992) (.796)	Barney and Wright (1998) (.827)	Burt (1992) (.680)
Grant (1991) (.784)	Porter (1985) (.774)	Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) (.667)
Penrose (1959) (.871)	DiMaggio and Powell (1983) (.739)	Dyer and Singh (1998) (.646)
Amit and Schoemaker (1993) (.770)	Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) (.451)	Hunt (2000) (.646)
Rumelt (1984) (.765)	Barney (1986b) (.448)	Bryson et al. (2007) (.635)
Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) (.699)		Teece et al. (1997) (.627)
Peteraf (1993) (.695)		Barney and Clark (2007) (.584)
Barney et al. (2001) (.690)		Peteraf (1993) (.530)
Dyer and Singh (1998) (.631)		Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) (.509)
Barney (1991) (.629)		Wernerfelt (1984) (.487)
Wernerfelt (1984) (.620)		Rumelt (1984) (.480)
Teece et al. (1997) (.610)		Adler and Kwon (2002) (.471)
Porter (1980) (.580)		Porter (1980) (.414)
Adler and Kwon (2002) (.511)		
Barney (1986b) (.492)		
Moore (1995) (.485)		
Moore (2000) (.446)		
Hunt (2000) (.430)		
Lavie (2006) (.425)		
Porter (1990) (.406)		

*Source:* Own elaboration



The *power of networks component* (CC3) is integrated primarily by seminal literature on the relational view (RV) and consecutively by the industry-structure view (ISV), and also by literature on dynamic capabilities, the importance of clusterisation, structural strategy, and social network of organisations, economic transaction costs, and resource dependency theory. Concerning the relational view, Lavie (2006) contributed with the idea that interconnected firms' networking resources enhance organisations' performance and that competitive advantage could be better achieved, and this idea was also proposed as an extension of RBV. Dyer and Singh (1998) also represented such a relational view and suggested that spanning firm boundaries could be reached by a critical amount of resources and routines embedded in the networks of organisations. Furthermore, Hunt (2000) proposed that organisational resources could also be relational among firms, i.e., relational means interchangeable in this context. Also, social capital matters to strengthen the power of networks (Adler and Kwon, 2002). In sum, the relational and industry-structure views extend RBV to a vision that embraces interfirm relations of their resources and social capital in the cities.

As in CC1, Teece et al. (1997) and Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) also represent dynamic capabilities in CC3. However, CC3 has another important reference on dynamic capabilities, which does not share with CC1: Teece (2007) on the nature and the micro-foundations of dynamic capabilities. So, the reason that Teece (2007) only appears within the CC3 component is that the element of an open economy emerged, taking into account that firms have been adapted to their business ecosystems - in cities and beyond them - and even more the power of collaboration towards building dynamic capabilities within a relational view. In social network theory, we found the contribution of Granovetter (1977) on *The Strength of Weak Ties* because these last ones are responsible for accessibility, opportunities, and even integration of individuals who are embedded in a peripheral position within a social network. In other words, the relational view or even an ISV could enable organisations and people in the urban context to more outstanding performance, opportunities, access to critical resources and other kinds of benefits.

Furthermore, based on the ISV and economic transaction costs, Porter (1990) contributes to how clusterisation matters to innovation, productivity, sustained prosperity, and competitiveness within cities, regions, and nations, considering the phenomenon of globalisation. According to Porter (1990), these clusters could reduce transaction costs, boost efficiency, and create collective and shareable assets. Furthermore, Williamson (1985) plays a considerable role in economic transaction costs on CC3, in the economising efforts of relational contracting, whether for private or public institutions. Even more, linking economic transaction costs and resource dependency, Burt (1992) raises the paradigm that the position of the player within a social network matters – there are structural holes – so the relations which intersect a player with other nodes enable competitive advantage and opportunities for players and also create inequality between organisations and people.

Also, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) explain that environmental forces on resource management constrain organisational control due to external resource dependency. In sum, social networks are important in analysing resources dynamic within the urban context, and the power of connection among organisations and people are associated with higher opportunities, efficiency, and success (as seen in clustering and social relations). However, external resource dependence could be a limiting factor for organisational control.

#### 4.2 Bibliographic coupling

New and emerging relevant publications are the basis of mainstream research, not seminal ones, as in the intellectual structure. Bibliographic coupling is the tool for identifying the elements of mainstream research. In this section, we reveal two principal components of mainstream research on resource-based view in cities: the power of networks and resources (BC1) and human resources (BC2). Table 2 presents the references and the loadings of each respective component.

**Table 2** The two principal components of mainstream research

<i>BC1: power of networks and resources</i>	<i>BC2: human resources</i>
<i>References (loadings)</i>	<i>References (loadings)</i>
Pihkala et al. (2007) (.876)	Law et al. (2003) (.788)
Massukado-Nakatani and Teixeira (2009) (.791)	Wang and Wang (2008) (.768)
Bruns (2014) (.774)	Zhu et al. (2005) (.757)
Siebers et al. (2013) (.757)	Ngo et al. (2014) (.746)
Runyan and Huddleston (2006) (.743)	Zhang et al. (2019) (.740)
Liu and Ko (2014) (.728)	Ding and Akhtar (2001) (.728)
Eng (2016) (.714)	Aragón and Segura (2015) (.557)
Cook et al. (2012) (.678)	Segura and Aragón (2012) (.513)
Iqbal and Malik (2019) (.667)	Sánchez and Zuntini (2019) (-0.405)
Carmeli and Cohen (2001) (.660)	
Carmeli and Tishler (2004) (.651)	
Ridder et al. (2006) (.589)	
Deakins and Bensemann (2019) (.563)	
Ridder et al. (2005) (.529)	
Tho (2019) (.493)	
Gjelsvik and Haus-Reve (2016) (.467)	
Sánchez and Zuntini (2019) (.443)	
Battisti et al. (2013) (.405)	
Nguyen and Nguyen (2011) (.410)	

*Source:* Own elaboration

*The power of networks and resources component (BC1)* is an intersection among RBV, RV, and ISV as strategic approaches applied to the urban context and beyond its boundaries, such as the global, national, or regional context. The paper of Pihkala et al. (2007) has the highest loading of all the items in BC1 (.876). First, they emphasised the role of social capital and dynamic capabilities in breaking regional development inertia. Then they found that regional development depends on regional social networks for bonding social capital, creative social capital, intra and inter-regional social capital, and bottom-up governance.

The literature has shown many units of analysis, from a global to a local perspective, which could be complementary among themselves. In a globalised context, cities have been even closest to others, and a municipal external perspective (i.e., global, national,

and regional) is complementary to the internal perspective of their networks and resources if needed. In this way, there are six levels of analysis for the analysis of BC1:

- at the global level
- at the national level
- at the regional level
- at the city/municipality/local government level
- and at the firm level.

*At the global level*, Cook et al. (2012) researched how – *geographic clusters* – matter to attract outward foreign direct investment (ODI) based on the concept developed previously by Porter (1990) that clusters foster organisational competitive advantage. And then, Cook et al. (2012) suggested that organisations embedded within – *global nodes and cities* – have received higher ODI and better and more robust resources.

*At the national level*, Carmeli and Cohen (2001) adapted RBV theory to Public Administration to understand the performance variance among public organisations of central governments. Performance variance can be understood by analysing:

- 1 the relationship of the central government with local authorities
- 2 the size of the government.

For instance, performance in working together with local authorities is vital to overcome municipal budget limits and political orientation differences.

*At the regional level*, social capital and dynamic capabilities play a critical role in breaking regional development inertia, in which – social networks – are strengthened through bonding social capital, creative-social capital, intra and inter-regional social capital, and bottom-up governance (Pihkala et al., 2007).

*At the city/municipality/local government level:*

- 1 the RBV approach has been adapted to urban management and public administration (Carmeli and Cohen, 2001; Carmeli and Tishler, 2004)
- 2 the literature has shown that value creation can result from efficient management of resources, capabilities, and networks by urban managers, also exploiting the available knowledge stemmed from society for urban management improvement (Massukado-Nakatani and Teixeira, 2009; Bruns, 2014)
- 3 transnational cost economics, dynamic capabilities, resources, routines, and capabilities were themes explored in public finance and budget in municipal organisations (Ridder et al., 2005; Porcher, 2016)
- 4 the active-role of resources and capabilities of urban managers in their performance (Sánchez and Zuntini, 2019).

Carmeli and Cohen (2001) adapted RBV to public organisations of the municipalities in Israel, emphasising how public managers should respond to joint crises and then strategically making-decisions to increase efficiency and get better results. In doing so, Carmeli and Cohen (2001) stated that municipalities and public organisations should develop core resources to gain sustained competitive advantage. For instance, to

overcome a financial crisis and accomplish a sustained competitive advantage, municipal organisations should:

- 1 develop an organisational cultural system constituted by observable artefacts, values, and basic underlying assumptions
- 2 develop an efficient human resource system with human capital, capabilities, skills performance, in which people are appropriately allocated according to their better qualities
- 3 develop a customer-oriented system based on efficacy, effectiveness, quality, and socio-psychological processes, such that citizens would be seen as customers.

Moreover, intangible organisational elements ought to be considered by public organisations in terms of performance, such as internal auditing, managerial capabilities, labour relations, organisational culture, human capital, and perceived organisational reputation (Carmeli and Tishler, 2004).

Value creation is a concern for urban managers and municipalities, in which resources, capabilities, a relational context, internal and external networks, and organisational architecture are the main drivers in the value creation process. Public managers should consider the patterns of value creation at the street level to formulate and create urban policies because knowing these patterns provide them with an understanding of where and how resources and capabilities would be better exploited or allocated, increasing the quality and efficiency of public services (Bruns, 2014). In order to be aligned with the given importance to patterns of value creation, urban management should consider organisational architecture, internal and external relationships, and organisational culture in policy implementation (Massukado-Nakatani and Teixeira, 2009).

Transaction cost economics, capabilities, and resource management are relevant issues in municipal public finance. In the decision-making process of governmental agents, Porcher (2016) has shown that concurrence is positively impacted by low transactional risk, low production capabilities, and prior contracting experience. This fundament is based on the transaction cost economics theory and RBV, in which cities concur by resources (e.g., water) and try to minimise their costs and dependency on others (Porcher, 2016). Although municipalities can develop dynamic capabilities for urban managers, cities have different outcomes, cultures, and idiosyncratic adaptations, because their needs vary according to their stakeholders, which have many distinct interests (Ridder et al., 2005). In accounting reforms, for example, German cities have developed different patterns for their reforms (Ridder et al., 2005). Urban managers also play a critical role in developing new routines (Ridder et al., 2006).

Other studies have shown that resources and capabilities can enable urban managers to promote changes to improve public sector performance, such as in the case of e-government implementation (Sánchez and Zuntini, 2019). Although Sánchez and Zuntini (2019) have a negative loading concerning BC2, probably due to its e-government approach, they are also working with RBV theory.

Another area of study not profoundly studied in this paper is Public Administration. Some studies have suggested the adoption of the *new public management* perspective by municipalities (Bruns, 2014; Carmeli and Cohen, 2001). Such a perspective has tried to adapt business administration concepts to public administration, and further studies can explore this approach more in the urban context.

In sum, the literature at the city level has focused primarily on:

- 1 capabilities and dynamic capabilities
- 2 the importance of having more remarkable and better relations with a wide range of stakeholders between public and private organisations
- 3 efficiency on deploying resources and delivering better services to the citizens-customers.

*At the city-district level*, city-district is a specific part of a city, such as a neighbourhood, a condate, or a sector, among others. Runyan and Huddleston (2006) revealed that the downtown of the cities could have critical resources to boost the firms' competitive advantage. Therefore, the well-recognised brand identity downtown is mandatory for its success. In this way, taking downtown districts as 'firms' and managing their resources can be a competitive advantage for the city. Furthermore, *at the firms' level*, the literature has shown how firms can explore and exploit their resources and capabilities, taking the urban context and their networks into account (Ben-Ayed, 2012).

The literature has shown that socioeconomic, location characteristics and resources, clustering, resource planning, and firms' networks are related to the firms' performance. Battisti et al. (2013) found that geographical location matters in choosing some firm's strategic response based on the characteristics of the location, resources availability, economic factors, and general issues related to flexibility. Eng (2016) highlighted the role of firms' capabilities on product distribution within suppliers' networks, considering the firm's place, time, and uncertain environments, and more significant relationships are positively related to higher performance. Resource planning is critical for the industry (Zarafshan et al., 2021). Deakins and Bensemann (2019) examined the relationships among location, innovation, and dynamic capabilities, considering how strategies are adopted within rural or urban areas on agri-business, which vary on how resources are stretched, shared, developed, and how information of resources is obtained. Gjelsvik and Haus-Reve (2016) explored the impact of clustering on capabilities and innovation and found that although a higher number of firms are located in regional clusters, national or international clusters are considered better strategies to innovate.

Also, the literature has shown how managerial behaviours and attitudes, ethics, sustainability orientation, and social capital play a critical role in the firms' success. For example, Iqbal and Malik (2019) studied how entrepreneurial behaviour could be associated with engagement in sustainable development practices and found that those leading practices are related to the environment, HRM, and community and local development. Liu and Ko (2014) proposed that sector network contacts and extracting resources and information from this network strengthen the managerial social capital of the firm. Luo et al. (2004) discussed how customer relationships and social capital could improve firm performance. Moreover, Nguyen and Nguyen (2011) found that human capital and relational marketing capital are two features that impact job satisfaction and attractiveness. Siebers et al. (2013) found that homogeneity among retailers contributes to their success in their development and expansion. Moreover, Tho (2019) found that innovation is related to a learning orientation, proactiveness, responsiveness to customers, and responsiveness to competitors.

In sum, research has appointed a mixed approach and complementarity among RBV, RV, and ISV approaches at the firm level. In this way, clustering, location, developing

capabilities and deploying more resources efficiently, relating own resources with the environmental and geographical resources, investing in social networks and social capital, and considering homogeneity and not heterogeneity among firms are some of the main characteristics of this component at the firm level.

*The human resources component* (BC2) comprises literature on HRM in public and private organisations. Not only in public administration (Ding and Akhtar, 2001; Law et al., 2003; Zhu et al., 2005; Wang and Wang, 2008; Segura and Aragón, 2012; Aragón and Segura, 2015) and business administration (Ding and Akhtar, 2001; Law et al., 2003; Zhu et al., 2005; Wang and Wang, 2008; Ngo et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2019) but also in collectively owned and public-private mixed organisations: there are also Chinese studies which have analysed some collective organisations in which the ownership is based on collectively owned assets, such as the town, village or rural ones (Law et al., 2003; Zhu et al., 2005; Wang and Wang, 2008).

On *public-private mixed* or *collectively owned*, researchers have found in HRM that: top-level management's perceptions matter to firm performance (Law et al., 2003); adaptive capability matters to organisational performance (Wang and Wang, 2008); there is no consensus on the relationship between organisational strategy and ownership as predictors of HRM practices, whether as key and strong predictors (Ding and Akhtar, 2001) or as negative ones (Zhu et al., 2005).

Regarding research using only *firms* as a unit of analysis, Ngo et al. (2014) found that HRM competency positively impacts firm performance, and the achievement of external fit mediates this relationship. Zhang et al. (2019) found that high-commitment work systems are positively related to industry capital intensity, and the firm size moderates this relationship in large firms.

As for *public administration*, Aragón and Segura (2015) discussed the idea that HRM practices can positively affect local corporations' results. Decentralisation is another important aspect to be considered (Nguyen et al., 2019). Moreover, although public service regulations regulate some practices, it is still possible to manage more efficiently without colliding with the law. Segura and Aragón (2012) found that developing recruitment, selection, training, performance appraisal, and compensation practices by municipalities could improve results if job requirements and the potentiality and performance of employees are considered.

In sum, BC2 has shown how HRM in public, private, and mixed organisations plays a critical role in their performance. In such a way, organisations can develop the needed capabilities and practices for their specific purposes and manage an organisational culture based on high commitment.

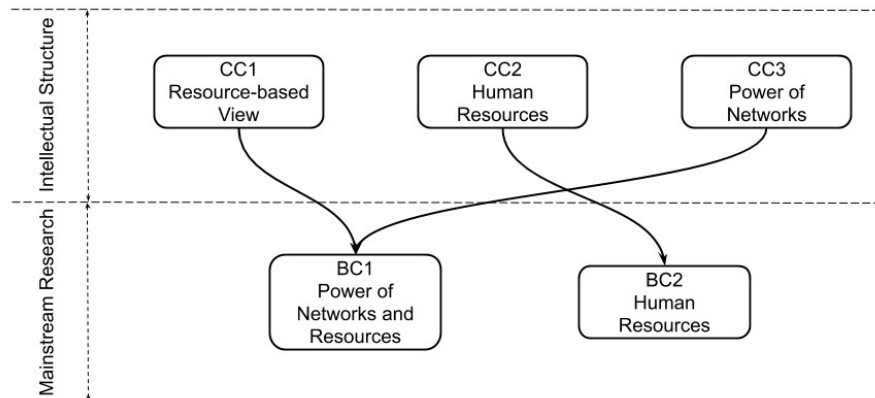
## 5 Discussion

This section is divided into two subsections: First, a synthesis of the research development of how the intellectual structure (resulting from the co-citation analysis) evolved to the mainstream research (resulting from the bibliographic coupling); second, a set of propositions about RBV in cities.

### 5.1 A synthesis of the research development

Our analysis suggests that two principal components of the intellectual structure of RBV in cities have evolved into three principal components of the mainstream, see Figure 1. BC1 has incorporated two components of the intellectual structure, which are CC1 and CC3. In other words, CC1 and CC3 became solely one component of mainstream research that we designated ‘power of networks and resources’ (BC1). Concerning the literature on HRM (CC2), HRM stands as only one component (BC2). The HRM literature (CC2 and BC2) has demonstrated how the RBV constructs – such as capabilities, routines and practices – can be exploited in the context of HRM of organisations located in cities, disregarding whether they are private, public, or mixed organisations. HRM has shown how these organisations can exploit and allocate well their human resources to achieve their competitive advantage.

**Figure 1** Summary of how the intellectual structure has evolved into the mainstream research on RBV within urban context



In summary, our results reveal that: First, by taking an RBV approach into account, urban managers would be able to gain or maintain a competitive advantage because organisations will have a better economic performance, develop dynamic capabilities and social capital, and create value for their stakeholders. Second, seminal literature from RBV have been adapted and applied to HRM research, such as isomorphism on professionalism among organisations. Third, networks have been a powerful tool to integrate organisations and their resources concerning other ones; in other words, RBV approach has been summed up to RV and ISV by highlighting the role of strategic urban networks. Furthermore, these networks have highlighted the importance of developing dynamic capabilities and clusters, considering economic transaction costs and resource dependence theory. Therefore, networks and resources have been complementary among themselves. As for HRM, it is vital to develop organisational capabilities, and human capital is crucial to creating value for stakeholders of public, private, and mixed-owned organisations.

## 5.2 *A framework of theoretical propositions: resource strategic management in cities*

This section provides a set of propositions about strategic resource management of public and private organisations within the urban context. For this, we analysed the constructs of RBV in light of the mainstream research resulting from the bibliographic coupling.

As previously mentioned, RBV, RV, and ISV are the strategic approaches of the *power of networks and resources component* aggregated so that networks and resources are explored within and beyond cities but focused on enhancing the local and city economic and institutional dynamics. Additionally, the first set of three propositions was about the power of networks and resources component, in which the RBV approach has been summed up to RV and ISV by highlighting the role of *strategic urban networks* in strategic resource management (as seen in Figure 1).

In allusion to Barney (1986a, 1986b, 1991, 1997, 2001), Porter (1990) and Beck and Storopoli (2021), each strategic urban network has unique characteristics and resources that can be analysed under the VRIO framework. Strategic urban networks are formed of many urban stakeholder types [e.g., government (municipal/regional/national), citizens (residents/people/workforce), industry (commerces/offices/sectors), academy (universities/research centres), tourists, civil society (ideological movements/non-governmental organisations), among others).

In democratic environments, urban stakeholders are free to move from cities and regions as they want (Beck and Storopoli, 2021), which is why cities are competitive. It implies that urban stakeholders can decide to be established in a city or to be engaged in a strategic urban network by considering their will and goals. In other words, strategic urban networks are shaped by volatile stakeholders, who could decide to stay and leave the network and attract or repel other stakeholders. Thus, we propose a definition of urban stakeholders:

**Proposition 1** Strategic urban networks are characterised by their stakeholders, which will be engaged in the networks, influence (attract/repel) other stakeholders, and urban stakeholders can leave the networks whenever they want.

According to Pihkala et al. (2007), social capital and dynamic capabilities promote the city and regional development, which is based on social networks for bonding social capital, creative social capital, intra/inter-regional social capital, and bottom-up governance. Furthermore, urban marketing also matters for increasing the strength and power of the strategic urban networks by attracting and making strategies to increase urban attractiveness (Japutra et al., 2019; Beck and Ferasso, 2022).

However, urban marketing should represent the actual conditions of the networks' locations by highlighting the role of *non-human and human resources* (the other component of the mainstream research) is in urban governance dynamics (Beck and Ferasso, 2022). Consequently, place marketing can enhance place competitiveness (Porter, 1990; Kotler et al., 1993; Nguyen, 2011; Foroudi et al., 2016; Hafeez et al., 2016; Bose et al., 2017; Bose et al., 2020). For instance, good place marketing could benefit the fashion industry, strategic urban networks and stakeholders in Milan, Italy (Jansson and Power, 2010). Therefore, considering the whole rationale developed in this paragraph, we propose that:



Proposition 2 Social capital, dynamic capabilities, human resources, non-human resources, and place marketing are critical aspects for structuring stronger and more attractive strategic urban networks.

Strategic urban network stakeholders can cooperate and compete simultaneously (Porter, 1990). For instance, high-tech industries can compete in the software market but can cooperate by sharing knowledge and experiences. Also, governments can cooperate by investing in research and development (R&D), fostering networking and synergies among stakeholders, and incentives to the industries, e.g., in the start-up nation, Israel (Engel and Del-Palacio, 2011; Wonglimpiyarat, 2016; Beck and Vigoda-Gadot, in press).

Moreover, the VRIO framework developed by Barney (1986a, 1986b, 1991, 1997, 2001) could also be applied to the resources of strategic urban networks. As for individual firms, VRIO can be a source of competitive advantage and urban attractiveness. Also, isolating mechanisms could be derived from the VRIO framework, urban and regional resource heterogeneity and capacity. Other critical theoretical aspects of RBV that can be applied to strategic urban networks are dynamic capabilities and the knowledge (organisational learning and routines) of the urban stakeholders engaged in strategic urban networks. All these aspects matter in empowering strategic urban networks since distinct stakeholders and resources are connected (Beck and Storopoli, 2021). Thus, we propose that:

Proposition 3 Valuable, rare, inimitable, well-deployed and allocated non-human and human resources, heterogeneity and capacity of non-human and human resources, dynamic capability, knowledge (information exchange, shared organisational learning and routines) are sources of sustainable competitive advantage and attractiveness of strategic urban networks.

Further research should empirically explore strategic urban networks and Propositions 1, 2 and 3 to confirm if these theoretical implications are true. Notably, these three propositions above proposed a different approach from those *strategic networks* proposed by Gulati et al. (2000): first, our study focused only on networks based on cities as units of analysis; second, this study contributed not only to business administration but also to public administration and urban studies. Furthermore, further investigation should also analyse similarities between the concept of *strategic networks* of Gulati et al. (2000) with the concept proposed by us of *strategic urban networks* and detailed explanations of how resources should be strategically managed in strategic urban networks by all stakeholders involved, mainly by the public, private, and mixed-own organisations.

Moreover, although strategic urban networks are *urban*, the urban stakeholders are not always exclusively local. Depending on the urban context, these *strategic urban networks* could be inserted in *geographic clusters* with *global nodes* (e.g., other cities around the world, organisations, and many other global stakeholders) and with *national and regional nodes*, such as the national/central government and regional authorities (Porter, 1990; Carmeli and Cohen, 2001; Cook et al., 2012). Furthermore, the engagement of regional, national, and global urban stakeholders strengthens the power of strategic urban networks in fostering innovation and better urban and regional development, as seen in Finnish, San Francisco (Silicon Valley) and Israeli cities (Pihkala et al., 2007; Engel and Del-Palacio, 2011; Wonglimpiyarat, 2016; Beck and Storopoli, 2021). The reason is that urban stakeholders create value for each other by exploring/exploiting resources synergically and in a sustainable manner (Beck and

Storopoli, 2021), which also fosters innovation ecosystems (Ferasso et al., 2018; Ferasso and Sztando, in press). Finally, the last proposition about strategic urban networks is:

**Proposition 4** Although strategic urban networks are prone to be mainly composed of local stakeholders, it is crucial that regional, national, and global stakeholders be engaged in strategic urban networks since it allows the exploration/exploitation of non-human and human resources, and hence, it fosters innovation and socioeconomic development.

Overall, all these propositions argue that *non-human and human resources* play a strategic role in *strategic urban networks* composed of *public, private, and mixed-owned organisations*. Furthermore, these resources are important not only for strategic urban networks, but also for each one of these three organisational types. Hence, a resource-oriented strategy could also be a stakeholder-oriented strategy since stakeholders are the main source of resources for organisations and strategic urban networks (Beck and Storopoli, 2021). Thus, our propositions go beyond the idea that RBV and Stakeholder Theory are integrated (Freeman et al., 2021), we argue that not only RBV, but also RV and ISV could also be integrated into Stakeholder Theory. Our main argument is that it is not possible to strategise resources if stakeholders are not considered in public, private, mixed-owned organisations, and urban networks.

## 6 Conclusions

This study answered the research question by mapping the seminal intellectual structure, the recent mainstream research, and the evolution from seminal intellectual structure to mainstream research on RBV for strategic management of any organisation in the urban context. It is noteworthy that in the urban context, RBV has not been enough for public, private or mixed organisations to set their strategic management because the view is short if organisations have a narrow understanding of the context they are inserted. This justification is noticed in that – the power of networks and resources – is one of the two mainstream components that integrate networks and resources into one unique component. In the urban context, resources such as social capital, investments, commodities, and products are interchangeable and relational among organisations. These networks have the power to lead cities and regions to successful socioeconomic development because they not only compete but also cooperate among themselves. In this way, our study also reveals how the relational view and industry-structure view complement the resource-based view in the urban context. Another relevant affair is applying RBV constructs to organisational human resources management to lead organisations to develop their competitive advantage.

Also, this study proposed four propositions based on the integration of the two components of the recent mainstream research:

- 1 power of networks and resources
- 2 human resources.

The first proposition contributed with a definition of strategic urban networks, which considered the importance of organisational strategy concerning the dynamic of resources and stakeholders within the urban context. The second proposition highlighted the role of

social capital, dynamic capabilities, human resources, non-human resources, and marketing in structuring more robust and more attractive strategic urban networks. The third proposition considered the importance of applying the primary RBV constructs (e.g., VRIO model, dynamic capability, knowledge-based view) for strategic urban networks. Finally, the fourth proposition argued that global and diversified stakeholders could improve the efficiency in exploring/exploiting resources in strategic urban networks, which results in better socioeconomic development.

In this way, a resource-oriented strategy could also be a stakeholder-oriented approach since stakeholders are the primary source of resources for organisations and strategic urban networks (Beck and Storopoli, 2021). Thus, our propositions go further with the idea that RBV and Stakeholder Theory are integrated (Freeman et al., 2021). We argue that not only RBV but also RV and ISV could also be integrated into stakeholder theory. Our central assertion is that it is impossible to strategise resources if stakeholders are not considered in public, private, mixed-owned organisations, and urban networks.

The novelty of this study lies in: first, mapping the seminal intellectual structure and the recent mainstream literature on RBV in the urban context, revealing that RBV has not been enough for strategic resource management of public, private, and mixed-owned organisations. However, RV, ISV, and stakeholder theory are complementary theories to be used with RBV in order to advance better strategic resource management. Second, providing propositions on strategic urban networks and exploration/exploitation of non-human and human resources can enhance the competitive advantage of public, private, and mixed-owned organisations. In this way, local communities can benefit from strengthened socio-economic development in their city and regions, better industrial development, and better public services because resources will be efficiently allocated, and the urban governance arrangement will properly explore and exploit the resources.

This study also provided implications for urban planners and public and private organisations. First, an implication for urban planners is that city districts (e.g., downtowns) should be able to provide critical resources for urban stakeholders (Runyan and Huddleston, 2006). For instance, industries, residents and businesses will require different infrastructure needs, so urban planners should be aware of this.

Second, the implications for urban policymakers and municipal public organisations are:

- 1 the constructs of RBV theory not only works in business administration, but also can be adapted to public administration, such that, dynamic capabilities, core-capabilities, core-resources, human capital, organisational culture and others can be explored and exploited by urban managers to enhance the performance of urban policies and systems (Carmeli and Cohen, 2001)
- 2 RBV and HRM are synergetic, and the combination of these two perspectives can improve the allocation of human resources by managers
- 3 taking the regional and local development into account, urban public managers can collaborate with others urban stakeholders (industries, citizens and other government spheres), strengthen urban networks and urban governance, and then, creating value for urban stakeholders
- 4 acquiring knowledge from other parts of the urban and regional network

- 5 increasing the extent in which the city is considered global in order to attract more foreign direct investment (Cook et al., 2012)
- 6 understanding the variety of resources available for facing global crises (for instance, e.g., in times of a world facing global crises, cities should develop autonomous resource allocation systems, preparation of HRM for such times, and on the financial side using specific bonds as a resource)
- 7 developing theories on the impact of various resources on organisational performance and other outcomes (e.g., what type of resource is more critical under what circumstances).

Third, as for private organisations, industries, and firms, the implications are twofold:

- 1 the geographical location, resource availability, clusters, logistics, and socioeconomic issues in where the organisation is inserted should be considered because these factors matter to organisational performance (Battisti et al., 2013; Eng, 2016)
- 2 managers ought to understand the urban milieu and how they can efficiently use the social capital ethically and sustainably because it improves organisational performance and is socially relevant.

Further studies should investigate more deeply on:

- 1 how resource-based view, relational view, and industry-structure view can be better integrated in the perspective to regional and urban development in relation to network and resource management (Freeman et al., 2021)
- 2 connecting our framework discussed on networks and resources to specific themes of urban studies, such as urban governance, socioeconomic inequalities, urban mobility and transportation, urbanism, among others (Galaskiewicz et al., 2021; Neal et al., 2021)
- 3 the role, relevance, and salience of urban stakeholders in social capital and dynamic capabilities development (Pihkala et al., 2007; Beck and Storopoli, 2021)
- 4 how to use urban resources and networks to make regions, cities, and industries more sustainable, smarter, plural, and global
- 5 how to integrate with urban design the extant knowledge on – clusterisation, milieu, social networks, location, and resources availability – in order to strengthen urban networks, urban systems efficiency and socioeconomic dynamism
- 6 how an RBV approach can be related to *new public management* in public administration as a whole.

One of the main limitations of this study is that we extract data only from the Scopus database, which we believe is the most comprehensive scholarly database regarding social sciences and urban planning. In addition, the qualitative approach used to fix cross-loadings can be a limitation due to the chance of subjective bias from the researcher even when the method was rigorously applied.

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