

Building Dynamic Resilience through Strategic Coherence and Ambidextrous Leadership

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Abstract: Organizations face the paradox of simultaneously exploiting current product strengths while exploring new opportunities for innovation. Achieving this balance is critical for sustained competitiveness, yet many firms struggle to manage both effectively – a challenge noted by Danneels in 2011. Ambidextrous leadership offers a potential solution by enabling leaders to alternate between opening behaviors that foster exploration and closing that drive exploitation. However, realizing the full potential of this dual-focused approach also demands strategic coherence across multiple organizational levels, ensuring that individual, team, and corporate goals reinforce one another and move in the same overall direction. Practical guidance on implementing such dual-focused leadership remains limited – especially in product strategy contexts where firms must concurrently improve existing products and innovate new ones. This study develops a conceptual model linking ambidextrous leadership to dynamic resilience – a firm’s capacity to adapt and thrive amid disruptions – within the framework of product strategy. To test the model, we applied a quantitative survey of 87 managers from eight product-oriented companies in Eastern Europe and conducted statistical analyses, including factor analysis and regression modeling. Drawing on ambidexterity theory and leadership research, we formulate hypotheses and design a diagnostic survey instrument to evaluate ambidextrous leadership practices in product-oriented companies in Eastern Europe. The model illustrates how ambidextrous leaders balance short-term exploitation and long-term exploration to reinforce resilience while maintaining strategic coherence of resources, objectives, and processes. The anticipated contribution is twofold: (1) a theoretical advancement by integrating ambidextrous leadership and dynamic resilience, expanding understanding of how balancing efficiency and innovation enhances long-term organizational resilience; and (2) managerial guidance via a practical tool for assessing organizational ambidexterity and clear recommendations for fostering leadership behaviors that simultaneously drive performance and innovation. By fostering strong strategic coherence throughout the organization, this research will help managers harmonize product development practices with adaptive strategic objectives, thereby improving organizational adaptability and competitiveness.

Keywords: Organizational ambidexterity, Ambidextrous leadership, Strategic coherence, Dynamic resilience, Product strategy

1. Introduction

Organizations have to maintain competitiveness in unstable markets while using existing products to generate short-term profits and exploring opportunities to ensure long-term resilience (March 1991, O'Reilly III 2013). This concept, known as organizational ambidexterity, involves significant strategic and operational trade-offs, as each type of activity requires a specific allocation of resources, behavior, and culture (He and Wong 2004, Raisch and Birkinshaw 2004). In a product-oriented context, these trade-offs become even more acute (Danneels, 2011; Jansen et al 2006).

Although the theory of ambidexterity has gained traction in both academic circles and among practitioners, recommendations for the effective application of ambidextrous leadership in product-oriented organizations remain limited (Batra 2022, Rosing et al 2011). The implementation of the concept itself in the development of new products also has limitations, since not all factors, such as leadership, have been studied, their influence on the achievement of ambidexterity, assessment and implementation tools, and how this affects the company's resilience (Atuahene-Gima 2005, AlSaied 2004, Hald et al 2021). In addition, the existing literature on ambidexterity in product development has a significant limitation: it lacks research in the context of Eastern European business, particularly in the context of product management (AlSaied 2004, Berraies et al 2019). Emerging evidence shows that in the Eastern-European context tightly knit informal networks (“blat”) may actively block digital product initiatives, turning social capital into a structural barrier for ambidexterity (Aksiutin et al., 2022; Bagrationi et al., 2021; 2022). Existing research has not fully clarified the role of leadership in implementing the concept of ambidexterity in modern product-oriented companies, particularly how the concept is applied in the development of a product portfolio (Hald et al 2021) – what companies focus on, how managers influence this, how companies can assess the level of ambidexterity.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews relevant literature on ambidextrous leadership, organizational ambidexterity, and product strategy in dynamic environments. Section 3 outlines

the research methodology, including data collection and analysis methods. Section 4 presents the key results of empirical study. Section 5 discusses the findings, introduces the integrated model, and highlights theoretical and practical implications. Section 6 concludes the paper with a summary of contributions and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature Review

The effectiveness of an organization is based on the use of existing strengths and the search for new opportunities (He and Wong 2004, Jansen et al 2006, O'Reilly III 2008). There is a need to balance exploration and exploitation for the long-term success of organizations, as an excessive focus on one of these areas can lead to either stagnation or uncertainty (Andriopoulos et al 2009, March 1991). There are only three approaches (Rosing 2017) to implementing ambidexterity: sequential, structural, and contextual (Birkinshaw 2004, Duncan 1976, O'Reilly III 2013, Tushman 1996). The first approach involves alternating between exploration and exploitation processes, with temporary cycles of work on tasks, and can be implemented at the product level. The structural approach to ambidexterity establishes dedicated units for exploration and exploitation – classically, new-venture divisions or R&D labs – and recent case evidence suggests that well-designed corporate universities can perform a comparable bridging role (Lissillour & Rodríguez-Escobar, 2022; Zinchenko et al., 2024). The creation of separate structural units allows conflicts between two areas to be avoided (Tushman 1996). A third approach emerged later, which is highly dependent on the culture within the company and allows decisions about the direction of activities to be made at the individual level (Wang 2014). Organizations need to maintain a balance, as if they lose effectiveness in one of the two areas, the company risks becoming ineffective in the long term. Based on this, many researchers emphasize the importance of balancing short-term and long-term goals (Lee et al 2017, De Wit 2014).

The origins of ambidextrous leadership lie in the theory of ambidexterity (Duncan 1976, March 1991). Against the backdrop of the development of this concept, researchers recognized the importance of leadership. It was seen as a key factor in integrating exploitation and exploration, as noted in studies linking managerial behavior to ambidexterity (Lubatkin et al 2006). The role of leadership in balancing paradoxical demands is emphasized, highlighting the prerequisites and results of ambidexterity (Birkinshaw 2004). Leaders who are able to balance between them contribute to a significant increase in the company's potential (O'Reilly III 2011, Rosing et al 2011). Leadership itself consists of three elements: open style (focused on innovation, encourages exploration), close (maintaining stability and optimizing current processes, maintains exploitation) and flexibility (the leader's ability to switch from one style to another depending on the situation). Recent empirical evidence from an Eastern-European management-buy-out shows that “change-oriented leadership” can serve as the behavioral interface that lets managers toggle between these open and closed modes while safeguarding employees' psychological safety during radical transitions (Diakova et al., 2024). Ambidextrous leadership is about applying the right approach at the right time (Alghamdi 2018). Research shows that teams and organizations with such leaders achieve higher performance (Zacher 2015). Ambidextrous leadership plays a significant role in product management, as product managers must be able to anticipate and implement new product features. In this context, the results confirm that there is a positive correlation between the two factors regardless of the size and age of the company (Berraies et al 2019). And business has a need for leaders who can simultaneously ensure the efficiency of current operations and develop innovations.

The term resilience is often used to denote the ability to withstand stress and maintain (or improve) functioning despite the presence of adverse factors (both internal and external) or to recover after adverse events (Vogus 2007). The theory of dynamic capabilities is closely intertwined with the concept of resilience. Dynamic capabilities are a company's ability to integrate, build and reconfigure competencies to adapt to conditions (Eisenhardt 2000), describing how firms achieve competitive advantage in a rapidly changing environment. Thus, dynamic capabilities can be viewed as a mechanism for forming resilience. It is dynamic capabilities that allow an organization to balance between these extremes, as they enable it to quickly see where changes are needed, launch innovative initiatives or strengthen existing ones in a timely manner, and regularly adapt its business models, teams and strategies (Teece 1997). Thus, dynamic capabilities are not just a backdrop for implementing an ambidextrous strategy, but its active driving force. The concept of dynamic resilience is closely related to the idea of organizational agility in product innovation. Leadership is often cited as a critical element in building and deploying dynamic capabilities, because leaders influence the organizational mindset towards change. Nevertheless, there has been limited explicit examination of how specific leadership behaviors contribute to a dynamically resilience and product strategy. At the core is the point that **ambidextrous leadership of product development teams leads to greater dynamic resilience of the product strategy**. This study extends this line of work by focusing on the *leadership behavior* level within

product teams and by introducing the notion of dynamic resilience as a measurable outcome of strategic leadership.

Building on the reviewed literature, we formulated hypotheses linking ambidextrous leadership and organizational conditions to dynamic resilience and effectiveness in product strategy: (1) Ambidextrous leadership positively affects organizational dynamic resilience, (2) Organizational processes and dynamic capabilities positively affect organizational dynamic resilience, (3) Organizational ambidexterity positively affects company effectiveness and (4) Strategic coherence strengthens the relationship between ambidextrous leadership, organizational factors, and effectiveness.

3. Methodology

To address questions, a mixed approach including qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted. The primary component was a **survey-based quantitative study** of product development leaders and their teams, aimed at testing the relationship between ambidextrous leadership behaviors and resilience. Data was collected from managers in charge of product development across several product-oriented companies.

Representatives of product teams, as well as managers and leads, are best positioned to be aware of the product portfolio, cross-functional collaboration, and company strategy, rather than members of execution teams (e.g., developers, analysts, designers). A total of 87 responses were received (38% response rate). A large proportion of the sample consists of product or project managers (42%), with the remaining 58% being middle managers (including team leaders and department heads). The main areas of activity were limited to three: Banking and Investment, Retail, and IT. Most respondents were from IT (40%) and retail (38%). The survey was conducted using a questionnaire that included sets of statements on key constructs under study. Participants rated their level of agreement with each statement on a 7-point Likert scale. Quantitative data was analyzed using Jamovi software. Some blocks were assessed using previously developed questions (Gibson 2004, Kump 2019, Jansen 2006). The dependent variables are resilience and overall effectiveness, reflecting multidimensional performance results. The independent variables are Leadership (measured through questions developed based on the MLQ (Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire) (Bass 1999), KPI and reward system (the relationship between short-term and long-term goals), Level of organizational processes, Ambidexterity, measured through the balance of exploitation and exploration, Dynamic capabilities (sensing, seizing, transforming) and one of the subtypes, Strategic Coherence, which assesses the level of strategic clarity and cascading of goals, as well as coordination.

First, reliability test and **factor analysis were performed** to verify survey. The reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω coefficients, which reflect the internal consistency of the test (Table 1). High values of these coefficients indicate that all questions in the block measure a single construct and that the questionnaire is reliable (values > 0.7)

Table 1: Reliability of the questionnaire scales

Scale	Average	Number of points	Cronbach's α	McDonald's ω
Ambidexterity	5,76	8	0,746	0,775
Organizational processes	5,63	4	0,753	0,788
Leadership	5,60	9	0,747	0,785
KPIs	5,25	3	0,740	0,780
Dynamic Capabilities	5,70	13	0,713	0,726
Strategic Alignment	4,99	9	0,739	0,781
Effectiveness	5,67	4	0,797	0,823
Dynamic Resilience	5,06	5	0,742	0,776
		55	0,772	0,802

All subscales demonstrate satisfactory reliability. A more accurate McDonald's ω confirmed good metric properties. The final index across the entire pool of questions is reliable. The low dispersion of responses on several items in the 'Ambidexterity' and 'Leadership' scales indicates a possible ceiling effect, while the reduced α of the long 'Dynamic capabilities' scale hints at its potential multidimensionality. A detailed analysis of the reliability of individual items showed that in each block, the removal of any question leads to an increase in Cronbach's α by 0.05–0.13, which indicates the hidden multidimensionality of the scales.

The next step in analyzing the questionnaire results is to verify its validity through a two-stage factor analysis (EFA and CFA) – for identifying hidden factors and confirming the correspondence of the data to the assumed model. Within the framework of EFA, the correlation structure of the six blocks of the questionnaire was analyzed. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin criterion showed a satisfactory measure of suitability (above 0.5) (0.706), and Bartlett's test was significant ($\chi^2=186$, $p<0.001$). Using the principal axis method two factors were extracted from the data with parallel analysis and varimax – the method is objective and does not depend on subjective decisions. The threshold for conclusion was determined to be 0.5 as optimal (Hair 1995).

According to the conducted CFA coefficients were statistically significant. The highest value was recorded for the dynamic capability's indicator ($\beta=1.052$). This allows us to interpret factor 1 as an integrative construct of organizational flexibility, including ambidexterity ($\beta=0.680$), organizational processes ($\beta=0.420$), dynamic capabilities, and strategic coherence. Conversely, factor 2 is formed by leadership culture ($\beta=0.479$) and KPI systems ($\beta=0.680$) and reflects the 'leadership focus' of the organization. Second, the amount of covariance between the factors is 0.680 indicating a moderately strong relationship between the variables. Third, the incremental indices CFI=0.959 and TLI=0.923 are above the recommended thresholds of 0.95 and 0.90, respectively. Despite the relatively high RMSEA=0.103, the effect of the small number of degrees of freedom ($df=8$) makes this value conservative; the other criteria indicate a good level of fit. Thus, the results obtained empirically confirm the correctness of combining the initial blocks into two latent variables, demonstrate good statistical fit and provide a causal basis for constructing correlation-regression model.

The analysis above showed the validity and reliability of the developed tool and suggested a division into blocks: Factor 1 (Ambidexterity, Organizational Processes, Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Coherence) and Factor 2 (Leadership and KPIs). To check the influence of several factors on the results, it is most advisable to use multiple regression analysis. The first analysis allows us to assess the impact of two sets of factors on dynamic resilience (Table 2).

Table 2. Regression results explaining dynamic viability

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	AIC	BIC	RMSE
1	0,716	0,512	0,433	191	226	0,618
2	0,930	0,865	0,711	147	266	0,325

The conducted hierarchical regression analysis, in which behavioral scales of leadership and KPI systems were introduced in the first stage, and operational and strategic process practices in the second, showed that these predictors form a significant part of the dynamic resilience. The model based solely on leadership explains 51% of the variability of the variable ($R^2=0.512$; $F(12,74)=6.48$; $p<0.001$), while the adjusted value ($Adj.R^2=0.433$) indicates the stable predictive power of this complex. The greatest contribution within the block is provided by the agile behavior of the head ($\beta_{std}\approx 0.30$; $p=0.004$) and active change and innovation management ($\beta_{std}\approx 0.23$; $p=0.035$). The addition of the second factor, considering the ambidexterity, processes and capabilities of the block, leads to a sharp increase in the explained variance to 86.5%, which indicates the high predictive power of the extended model. Dynamic resilience is formed through a combination of flexible leadership practices with ambidexterity and advanced organizational processes. This dual mechanism echoes recent bibliometric evidence that resistance to change and readiness for change are not opposite ends of one continuum but distinct constructs that demand, respectively, reactive and proactive leadership levers (Bagrationi & Gordienko, 2024). The leadership contour, while necessary, turns out to be insufficient without the support of the processes of finding and using opportunities.

The second part is related to the study of the impact of these factors (Table 3). Behavioral leadership scales and KPIs were also introduced in the first model. This set of predictors provides a coefficient of determination $R^2=0.279$, that is, it explains about a quarter of the variation in the resulting performance indicator. Of the predictors, only the agility variable shows a statistically significant direct contribution ($\beta_{std}\approx 0.43$; $p<0.001$), while the remaining elements of the leadership block turn out to be neutral.

Table 3: Regression results explaining the effectiveness

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	AIC	BIC	RMSE
1	0,528	0,279	0,162	170	205	0,548
2	0,831	0,690	0,334	165	283	0,359

The inclusion of the second block increases R² to 0.69 (Adj.R² increases to 0.334). Despite the high nominal increment of the explained variance ($\Delta R^2=0.411$), the integration F-criterion ($F(34,40)=1.56$; $p=0.088$) indicates that with such many new parameters, the improvement in the model remains at the level of 10%. The leadership contour provides a basic but limited level of effectiveness. The impact of the transformational style becomes significantly positive only in the presence of process-structural predictors, confirming the assumption about the necessary but insufficient nature of leadership drive in the context of ambidexterity. The final model demonstrates that efficiency increases in organizations that combine inspiring leadership with organized knowledge sharing and focused use of opportunities, while controlling the level of coherence.

The empirical part of the study confirmed the proposed conceptual model that combines the leadership and process determinants of ambidexterity, dynamic resilience and overall effectiveness.

4. Results

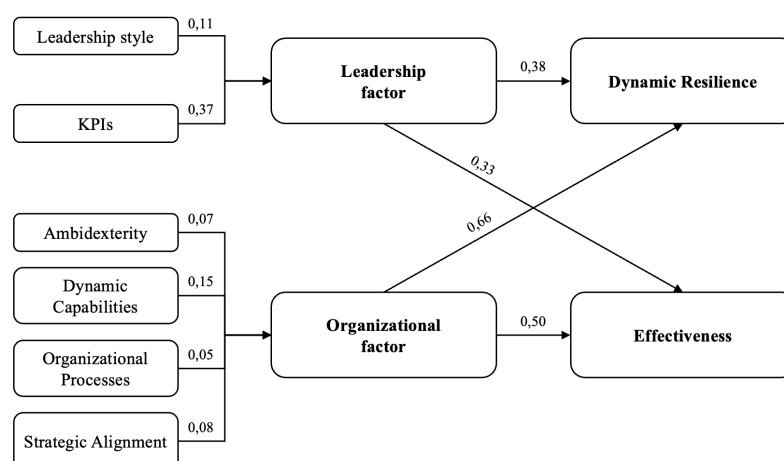


Figure 1: The Ambidextrous Leadership Model

The analysis revealed strong support for the proposed importance of ambidextrous leadership in achieving dynamic resilience in product strategy. In this section, we highlight three key findings: (a) the prevalence and balance of opening vs. closing behaviors among effective product leaders, (b) the impact of these behaviors on innovation and performance metrics, and (c) the resulting integrated model of leadership and product strategy.

The model visually reflects that the combination of flexible leadership behavior and favorable organizational conditions jointly determines the level of ambidexterity, and through it, the company's performance and resilience indicators. The leadership aspect includes, first, flexible leadership style – the ability of a leader to alternate between an "open" style and a closed style in response to the demands of the situation. This behavioral component reflects the core of ambidextrous leadership. In addition, the leadership aspect includes a KPI, and motivation system designed to balance short-term and long-term targets: performance metrics and remuneration for managers should stimulate them both to achieve current goals and to innovate. The organizational aspect combines variables that characterize the internal environment of a company: organizational processes and structures (the presence of formalized, clearly structured, but adaptive development and decision-making processes that allow parallel operational and exploration initiatives), the dynamic capabilities of the organization (its ability to notice changes in the external environment, quickly rebuild and master new technologies, as well as strategic consistency, a type of dynamic resilience (the degree to which the goals and actions of various departments align with the overall dual strategy of the company)). The central resulting element of the model is organizational ambidexterity – the achieved balance of

exploitation and exploitation. Thus, the model reflects a multi-stage mechanism: leadership practices + organizational conditions → efficiency and resilience of the company

Organizational conditions create a context for leadership: if a company has formalized but flexible processes, current operations and innovation flows are differentiated, and resources for experimentation are provided, then managers get the opportunity to exhibit ambidextrous behavior.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study offer strong support for the proposition that ambidextrous leadership is a crucial enabler of dynamic resilience in product strategy. In this section, we interpret the results in light of existing literature, highlight the study's novel contributions, and outline practical implications and limitations.

Our results are consistent with earlier research that highlighted the interdependence between leadership behavior and organizational ambidexterity (Lubatkin et al 2006, Jansen et al 2009). In particular, the demonstrated importance of leaders' flexibility in alternating between opening and closing behaviors echoes the conceptualization of ambidextrous leadership as proposed by Rosing, Frese, and Bausch (2011) and later empirically supported by Zacher and Rosing (2015).

An original structural modeling was developed in which six measurable managerial structures (ambidexterity, leadership style, KPI system, organizational processes, dynamic capabilities, strategic coherence) are aggregated into two complementary latent blocks – "leadership" and "organizational". This approach makes it possible to form a system by combining various factors. This resonates with the broader ambidexterity debate, where scholars stress the need to move beyond leadership-only perspectives and consider structural and contextual antecedents (Birkinshaw & Gibson 2004, O'Reilly & Tushman 2013). The configuration was successfully verified: Factor analysis confirmed the theoretical connection and empirical adequacy of the model. Thus, a balanced combination of two factors forms an integrated framework for increasing the efficiency and resilience of the company. It has been found that the inclusion of an organizational unit significantly increases the explained variation in the effectiveness of companies. The basic model, which includes only leadership variables (leadership styles, KPIs), gave $R^2 \approx 0.28$ when evaluating effectiveness. However, activating the second organizational unit increases the R^2 of the model to about ~ 0.69 . Consequently, accounting for processes and dynamic capabilities, etc., almost tripled the explanatory variation achieved in efficiency ($\Delta R^2 \approx 0.41$). Organizational ambidexterity based on balancing the exploitation and exploitation of new opportunities, is an independent predictor of a firm's long-term resilience in a transitional economy.

Despite the valuable results obtained, this work has a number of limitations that must be taken into account when using the conclusions. The main limitations are related to the design and sampling of the study. Although the statistical results are consistent with the theory of the influence of leadership/processes on efficiency, it is impossible to exclude the opposite effects (for example, high results could facilitate the introduction of ambidexterity, and not just the other way around). The sample has limited representativeness: it is purposefully biased towards successful product companies characterized by a certain culture. The sample size (87 respondents from 8 companies) is acceptable for identifying average effects, but a broader scope is desirable in further research. Similarly, in less innovative industries or in the public sector, for example, the influence of leadership on ambidexterity may be different – one can consider expanding both the geography and the sample of future research, and additionally the model can be tested in various industries – for example, in industry, healthcare, public administration – where the balance of the two activities may have its own specifics. Also, only quantitative research was used in the work, qualitative research and case studies on this topic are promising. In-depth interviews with leaders of such companies and an analysis of specific implementation cases will help identify subtle mechanisms and barriers that are difficult to detect from personal data. For example, a qualitative approach can reveal which qualities of leaders help or prevent them from becoming ambidextrous, or which elements of corporate culture have a greater impact. It will also be correct and important to study the existing KPI systems in more detail and develop a system that will allow for better and more efficient work within the framework of the implemented ambidexterity. Additionally, it is worth continuing to refine and validate the toolkit – to expand the sample, pool of questions, or work out their more precise wording, as well as consider the impact of identified factors on specific financial indicators and metrics. Another limitation is related to measuring long-term outcomes: dynamic resilience and effectiveness were assessed through managers' perceptions, rather than through objective metrics (such as revenue growth, market share in a few years, and so on).

6. Conclusion

This paper presented an academic examination of how ambidextrous leadership contributes to dynamic resilience within a product strategy framework. Our results led to the development of an integrative model showing that ambidextrous leadership fosters exploratory and exploitative innovation in tandem, resulting in sustained strategic performance over time.

The contributions of this research are threefold. All the hypotheses put forward have found empirical confirmation: both leadership and organizational factors have proven to be important for achieving balance and improving performance. Among the drivers is the availability of flexible processes that separate the flows of current activity and innovation, as well as balanced incentives focused simultaneously on short-term results and the development of new ones. Barriers include conservative management systems that reward only operational efficiency and cultural resistance to change. In practice, this means that without flexibility in processes and without corresponding changes in the KPI system, the level of ambidexterity remains low.

The paper substantiates a new conceptual model of ambidextrous leadership that combines leadership practices and organizational conditions. The model identifies two complementary components: the leadership aspect and the organizational aspect. According to the obtained model, the combination of flexible leadership behavior and a favorable organizational environment forms organizational ambidexterity and promotes a high level of dynamic resilience. Empirical validation showed a high explanatory power of the model (R^2 0.7–0.9).

Ethical declarations: Ethical clearance was not required for the research

AI declarations: AI: (ChatGPT o3) was used to enhance language quality

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