

# Innovation Performance and Entrepreneurial Ambidexterity in SMEs: A Systematic Literature Review

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This article presents a Systematic Literature Review or SLR of the emerging ‘innovation performance’ research scope. It proposes innovation performance that enriches entrepreneurship study. This study aims to draft and critically re-examine the articles in the features of the innovation performance area. The SLR delivered 112 studies presenting jointly to innovation performance. Ahead of descriptive analytics, outcomes highlight the foremost research issues of innovation performance as well as various methodologies that associate researchers and members within several study methods. Moreover, 43 articles are interesting to study further because of the link between ambidexterity and innovation performance. The authors highlighted that the topic has been developed over time and identified promising research streams for the near future. The study presents to further investigations and concurrent state of the art of innovation performance literature.

**Key words:** *Innovation Performance, Ambidexterity, Entrepreneur, SMEs, Systematic Literature Review (SLR).*

## Introduction

The adoption of information technology to promote innovation has appeared as a prevalent approach for managers to assure competitive situations of firms in the market (Ko & Liu, 2019). Nevertheless, SMEs' (Small and Medium Enterprises) knowledge and expertise to utilise technological innovation are insufficient (Cenamor, Parida, & Wincent, 2019). SMEs strive to exist in a highly dynamic context (Chan, Teoh, Yeow, & Pan, 2019). Concurrently sustaining

present performance within the business at the same time as being innovative and adaptive is importance for the existence of SMEs (Mu, van Riel, & Schouteten, 2020). Ambidexterity is equally successfully pursuing exploitative activities in concentrating on the exploitation of existing resources and their improvement, productivity and application; and explorative activities concentrating on invention, flexibility and novelty simultaneously (Hughes, 2018).

Especially, ambidexterity is able to inevitably influence corporate performance by enabling corporations to reach efficiency and make possible identification. The orientation needs quite complex arrangements and sources (Gonzalez & de Melo, 2019). SMEs find it more crucial to grow ambidexterity at the individual level than in larger organisations because SMEs do not have an organisational structure or resources to divide exploration activities (innovation, examination, and expansion) from more routine responsibilities such as marketing and sales (Mu et al., 2020). Therefore, the purposive division of the existing resources to exploitation and exploration is vital for the effective but too the efficient alteration of resources to successful performance (Lennerts, Schulze, & Tomczak, 2020).

Importantly, the aspects of study associated with the subject of innovation performance in the context of ambidexterity are developing. Nevertheless, a set of investigations described an unassociated methodical study to compile the realised study and the clarifications in distinguishing study problem domains. In these circumstances, a difference of engaging reports associated with the topic of innovation performance study is collected from study articles.

In this lens, the primary objective of this article shows the solutions to achieving innovation performance in the topic of investigation with a difference in facts built on the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) technique. Notably, the authors gathered related research articles based on SLR characteristics to respond to the Research Questions specifically: 1) To what extent have existing researchers found solutions to achieve innovation performance? 2) To what extent have existing researchers found solutions to achieve innovation performance by relating it to the context of entrepreneurial ambidexterity?

Prior research similar to this paper has been completed by Mu, van Riel, & Schouteten in 2020, with the year of circulation ranges between 2007 and 2019 with 65 research articles (Mu et al., 2020). Different from the study conducted by Mu, van Riel, & Schouteten in 2020 which captures the development of individual ambidexterity, this study will highlight to what extent have existing researchers found solutions to achieve innovation performance by relating it to the context of entrepreneurial ambidexterity. The composition of the article incorporates five parts; in examples, the initiation, the systematic investigation method, SLR arrangement results, and deduction.

## Research Methods

The study employed the SLR technique and also complied with D. Tranfield, D. Denyer, and P. Smart (2003) (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003); B. Kitchenham and S. Charters (2003) (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007); and B. Kitchenham and S. Charters (2007) (Okoli & Schabram, 2010). According to the findings, SLR incorporates a series of projects, including preparation (defining the study issues), administering (explore papers, research preference, and evidence integration), and recording (summary writing) (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007; Okoli & Schabram, 2010). In the preparation projects, the authors describe the investigation topics according to the framework presented. In the first step, this research centres on recognising the antecedents of innovation performance. Secondly, managing activities consist of the search procedure, research choice, and data integration. The search strategy activity comprises the searching words, paper resources, and searching method. The search strings involved “innovation performance,” “entrepreneurial ambidexterity,” “individual ambidexterity,” “SME,” and “entrepreneur.” Furthermore, the words related to exploring publications in solving study questions are initiated by the merging of operators such as AND and OR. Those words consolidated pair orders, i.e., (innovation AND performance) AND (entrepreneur\* AND ambidext\*) OR (individual AND ambidext\*) AND (entrepreneur\* OR SME).

The study points to seven electronic database sources, which are the AOM, Elsevier, Emerald, SAGE, Springer Nature, Taylor & Francis, and Wiley-Blackwell Journals, from 2016 to 2020, to obtain the data grounded on the specific headline and specific abstract. The author conducted a review of articles published in international journals that are indexed in the 1st quartile Scopus. That headed to the relevant publications that are collected in the directory management instruments for choosing projects. The subject assortment was split toward three steps, as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Steps for Selecting Journals and Data Extraction

Sources	Studies Discovered	Nominee Studies	Elected Studies
AOM	5	1	1
Elsevier	893	228	73
Emerald Insight	131	46	17
Sage	68	14	2
Springer Nature	12	2	-
Taylor & Francis	115	28	4
Wiley-Blackwell	118	39	15
Total	1342	358	112

The chosen publications are populated toward 1342 related studies to be evaluated, later classified as subjects obtained. In the case mentioned above, repeated and unnecessary papers were dismissed, giving a total of 358 articles that are classified as nominee articles. The screening of the publications is resumed at step three. Subsequently, 112 articles are recognised for the construction of the results of data after conveying the elimination measures and screening of the specific outlines and complete manuscripts. The administration of the year and the number of chosen publications is presented in Table 2 in the total row section. Table 2 shows that research interest in innovation performance is relatively increasing.

**Table 2:** Papers by year and amount of Publications associated with the Innovation Performance Study

Journal	Total	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Academy of Management Review	1		1			
Baltic Journal of Management	2			1	1	
Benchmarking: An International Journal	1				1	
BRQ Business Research Quarterly	2	1		1		
Business Strategy and the Environment	1				1	
Chinese Management Studies	2		1	1		
Creativity and Innovation Management	2	1	1			
Cross Cultural & Strategic Management	1	1				
Emerging Markets Finance and Trade	1				1	
European Business Review	1				1	
European Journal of Innovation Management	1				1	
European Management Journal	4		1		2	1
European Management Review	1				1	
Industrial Marketing Management	4	1	1		1	1
Information and Management	1			1		
Information Systems Journal	2	1			1	
Innovation	1					1
International Business Review	3				2	1
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	1	1				
International Journal of Hospitality Management	1			1		
International Journal of Information Management	2				1	1
International Journal of Production Economics	3				1	2
Journal of Asia Business Studies	1				1	
Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing	1		1			
Journal of Business Research	21	7		6	5	3

Journal	Total	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Journal of Chinese Human Resource Management	1				1	
Journal of Cleaner Production	4	1		2	1	
Journal of Engineering and Technology Management	3	1		1		1
Journal of Family Business Management	1				1	
Journal of Knowledge Management	2			1	1	
Journal of Product Innovation Management	2	1			1	
Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management	1		1			
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	1					1
Journal of Strategic Information Systems	1				1	
Journal of World Business	1	1				
Long Range Planning	3		2		1	
Management Research Review	1				1	
Organisation & Environment	1	1				
Production Planning and Control	1				1	
Public Performance and Management Review	1				1	
R&D Management	1				1	
Research Policy	9	2		4	3	
Strategic Organisation	1					1
Structural Change and Economic Dynamics	1				1	
Supply Chain Management: An International Journal	1					1
Technological Forecasting and Social Change	8		6	1		1
Technology in Society	2		1			1
Technovation	3		2			1
Total Quality Management & Business Excellence	1		1			
Grand Total	112	20	19	20	36	17

## SLR Results

This discussion description provides the evaluation discovery of data synthesis to respond to the research questions. Build upon the SLR technique and the investigation of 112 nominated articles, the authors then highlight the key constructs or theoretical frameworks used by previous researchers. These key constructs or theoretical frameworks are solutions that were tested by previous researchers to prove them as solutions to achieve innovation performance.

Table 3 represents the key constructs or theoretical frameworks and the supporting journals concurrently.

**Table 3:** Antecedents of innovation performance from literature in 2016 to early 2020

Antecedents of innovation performance	Sources
Knowledge (26 supporting articles)	Knowledge exploration and exploitation (Benitez, Castillo, Llorens, & Braojos, 2018; H. Zhang & Hu, 2017); knowledge strategy ambidexterity (Martínez-Pérez, García-Villaverde, & Elche, 2016); knowledge absorption and knowledge transfer (Cabeza-Pullés, Fernández-Pérez, & Roldán-Bravo, 2019; Gölgeci, Ferraris, Arslan, & Tarba, 2019); product and customer knowledge (Chang, 2017; Falasca, Zhang, Conchar, & Li, 2017; X. Wang & Xu, 2018); knowledge management (Ferraris, Giachino, Ciampi, & Couturier, 2019; Shujahat et al., 2019); internal knowledge creation capability (Forés & Camisón, 2016); knowledge spillovers (Grinza & Quatraro, 2019; G. Park, Shin, & Choy, 2020); knowledge heterogeneity and knowledge tacitness (Guo, Guo, Zhou, & Wu, 2020); willingness to combine existing knowledge (Harmancioglu, Sääksjärvi, & Hultink, 2020); knowledge Base (Ko & Liu, 2019); knowledge search strategy (J. Li, Li, Yu, & Yuan, 2019; Zhengyun & Kalle, 2019); external knowledge search practice (Martini, Neirotti, & Appio, 2017); openness to external knowledge (Monteiro, Mol, & Birkinshaw, 2017; Tsinopoulos, Yan, & Sousa, 2019); external and internal knowledge source (Serrano-Bedia, López-Fernández, & García-Piqueres, 2018); knowledge supply (Ma, Hou, Yin, Xin, & Pan, 2018); knowledge sharing (Markovic & Bagherzadeh, 2018; Sheehan, Garavan, & Morley, 2020; Tassabehji, Mishra, & Dominguez-Péry, 2019); knowledge visibility (Sofka, de Faria, & Shehu, 2018); knowledge-based view (KBV) (Xie, Zou, & Qi, 2018)
Absorptive capacity (16 supporting articles)	(Albort-Morant et al., 2018; Ali, Bahadur, Wang, Luqman, & Khan, 2020; Božič & Dimovski, 2019; Chan et al., 2019; C.-J. Chen, Lin, Lin, & Hsiao, 2016; Crescenzi & Gagliardi, 2018; Duan, Wang, & Zhou, 2020; Forés & Camisón, 2016; Garcia Martinez, Zouaghi, & Sanchez Garcia, 2017; Hong, Zheng, Deng, & Zhou, 2019; Junni, Chang, & Sarala, 2019; Kranz et al., 2016; Lin, Zeng, Liu, & Li, 2016; Solís-Molina, Hernández-Espallardo, & Rodríguez-Orejuela, 2018; J. Wu, Wang, Hong,

Antecedents of innovation performance	Sources
	Piperopoulos, & Zhuo, 2016; Xavier Molina-Morales, Belso-Martinez, & Mas-Verdú, 2016; Yang & Tsai, 2019)
Collaboration (12 supporting articles)	R&D collaboration (Beck, Lopes-Bento, & Schenker-Wicki, 2016; Hong, Zheng, et al., 2019; G. Zhang & Tang, 2017); Collaboration intensity (Greco, Grimaldi, & Cricelli, 2017; Kobarg, Stumpf-Wollersheim, & Welp, 2019; Stefan & Bengtsson, 2017); R&D collaboration diversity (Gkypali, Filiou, & Tsekouras, 2017); collaborative networks (De Noni, Orsi, & Belussi, 2018; Grimpe & Sofka, 2016; Liang & Liu, 2018); technology collaboration networks (Fernández-Olmos & Ramírez-Alesón, 2017); inter-organisational (J. Lee & Kim, 2019); university-industry (M.-H. H. Huang & Chen, 2017);
Learning (10 supporting articles)	Relationship learning capabilities (Albort-Morant et al., 2016, 2018); learning capacity (Gieske, van Meerkerk, & van Buuren, 2019); learning orientation (Costanzo, 2019); learning ambidexterity (X. Wang & Xu, 2018); technological learning routine (Guo et al., 2020); organisational learning (Jiao, Wang, & Liu, 2019; J. Lee & Kim, 2019; Rafailidis, Trivellas, & Polychroniou, 2017); learning motivation (N. Wang & Wang, 2020)
Culture (8 supporting articles)	Cultural diversity (Elia, Messeni Petruzzelli, & Piscitello, 2019); innovation culture (Haniruzila, Abdul, Hazlina, & Ali, 2019; Haniruzila, Hasliza, Hazlina, & Ali, 2019; Junni et al., 2019; K. Lee, Woo, & Joshi, 2017); ambidextrous organisational culture (Khan & Mir, 2019); organisational culture (Rafailidis et al., 2017; Shahzad, Xiu, & Shahbaz, 2017)
Dynamic capabilities (8 supporting articles)	(Albort-Morant et al., 2016; Božič & Dimovski, 2019; Falasca et al., 2017; Fernández-Olmos & Ramírez-Alesón, 2017; H. Wu, Chen, & Jiao, 2016; Xu, Guo, Zhang, & Dang, 2018)
Quality (6 supporting articles)	Institutional quality (Bianchini, Llerena, & Martino, 2019); supply chain quality management capabilities (Hong, Liao, Zhang, & Yu, 2019); participation quality (Ommen et al., 2016); quality competitive capability (Rafailidis et al., 2017); horizontal and vertical relationship quality (Xu et al., 2018)
Environmental factors (6 supporting articles)	dynamism (Andersson, Moen, & Brett, 2020); regulation (Jiang, Wang, & Li, 2018); complexity and munificence (Lin et al., 2016); uncertainty (Ortiz de Guinea & Raymond, 2020);

Antecedents of innovation performance	Sources
	Zimmermann, Ferreira, & Moreira, 2020); other factors (Khan & Mir, 2019)
Social capital theory (5 supporting articles)	(Haniruzila, Abdul, et al., 2019; Haniruzila, Hasliza, et al., 2019; Jiao et al., 2019; Martínez-Pérez et al., 2016; Uen, Chang, McConville, & Tsai, 2018)
Leadership (4 supporting articles)	Leadership (Lukoschek, Gerlach, Stock, & Xin, 2018); shared leadership (Q. Chen & Liu, 2018); authentic leadership (Scheepers & Storm, 2019); transformational leadership (Sheehan et al., 2020)
Entrepreneurial orientation (4 supporting articles)	(Ghantous & Alnawas, 2020; Nobakht, Hejazi, Akbari, & Sakhdari, 2020; Xu et al., 2018; J. A. Zhang, Edgar, Geare, & O’Kane, 2016)
Top management teams (TMTs) (3 supporting articles)	(Q. Chen & Liu, 2018; P. Y. Li & Huang, 2019; Röd, 2019; Ruiz-Jiménez & Fuentes-Fuentes, 2016)
Agility (2 supporting articles)	Agility (Chan et al., 2019); Process agility (Kwak, Lee, & Lee, 2019)
Opportunity (2 supporting articles)	Opportunity-capitalising capability and opportunity-recognising capability (H. Wu et al., 2016); embracing opportunity (Zhou, Lu, & Chang, 2016)
Social Network Theory (2 supporting articles)	(Jiao et al., 2019; Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017)
Resource-based perspective (1 supporting articles)	(Gu, Jiang, & Wang, 2016)
Attention-based theory (1 supporting article)	(Brattström, Frishammar, Richtnér, & Pflueger, 2018)
Conservation of resources theory (1 supporting article)	(Sheehan et al., 2020)
Effectuation orientation (1 supporting article)	(Szambelan, Jiang, & Mauer, 2019)
Employee welfare (1 supporting article)	(Wei, Nan, & Wei, 2020)
Triple Helix (1 supporting article)	(Guerrero & Urbano, 2017)

Antecedents of innovation performance	Sources
The base of the pyramid (BoP) (1 supporting article)	(Reficco & Gutiérrez, 2016)

Based on 112 articles obtained, there are 43 articles which according to the author are interesting to study further because of the link between ambidexterity and innovation performance. The analysis of research topics of innovation performance will be based on the context of ambidexterity to answer research question 2, which is to identify the solutions to achieve innovation performance. Table 4 shows the review findings of data synthesis to highlight the main investigation topics of innovation performance in the context of entrepreneurial ambidexterity.

**Table 4:** Key Points Addressed in Innovation Performance Papers

Source	Key point
(Agostini, Nosella, & Filippini, 2016)	This paper focusses on the tension between <b>radical and incremental innovation</b> . Ambidextrous organisations can be explained <b>contextually and structurally</b> .
(Benitez et al., 2018)	The ability of social media shows a moderating effect in the association between <b>IT infrastructure</b> and the ability of <b>social media</b> towards ambidexterity knowledge.
(Božič & Dimovski, 2019)	The use of BI&A is positively related to the success of <b>harmonising explorative-exploitative</b> activities, which then improves company performance. Innovation ambidexterity is improved indirectly through relationship with <b>absorptive capacity</b> .
(Brattström et al., 2018)	This paper presents a conceptual framework on how to measure innovation as a tool that identifies two types of ideal measurement practices; <b>directional measurement</b> and <b>conversion measurement</b> .
(Bustinza, Vendrell-Herrero, & Gomes, 2019)	To maximise company performance, <b>product service innovation</b> must be developed through sequential Exploitation-Exploration paths.
(Cabeza-Pullés et al., 2019)	Internal networks formed in university research groups have a positive and significant relationship with <b>knowledge transfer and knowledge absorption</b> .
(Q. Chen & Liu, 2018)	There is a positive relationship between the use of <b>TMS</b> and the ambidexterity of innovation mediated by <b>TMT leadership</b> , which refers to collective decision-making behaviour and can integrate TMS heterogeneous knowledge into a coherent strategic form.

Source	Key point
(Costanzo, 2019)	This paper focusses on the concepts of <b>balanced dimensions (BD) and combined dimensions (CD)</b> organisational ambidexterity.
(Crescenzi & Gagliardi, 2018)	Companies that complement <b>potential and realised absorptive capacity</b> that can take advantage of a favourable external environment by actively combining internal and external knowledge sources.
(Elia et al., 2019)	The effects of <b>cultural diversity</b> depend on the content of the alliance, positive in <b>exploration</b> and negative in <b>exploitation</b> alliances.
(Ghantous & Alnawas, 2020)	This paper discovers the differential effect of <b>market orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation</b> on hotel <b>ambidexterity</b> .
(Gieske et al., 2019)	This study inspects the influence of <b>connective, ambidextrous, and learning capacity to innovation and optimisation</b> .
(Guo et al., 2020)	This study discusses the moderating effect of <b>tacitness knowledge and heterogeneity of knowledge</b> about the relationship between ambidexterity.
(Gurtner & Reinhardt, 2016)	This research investigates whether ambidextrous <b>idea generation</b> (incremental and radical ideas) influences the accomplishment of <b>new product development</b> . This discovery is in line with the <b>construal level theory</b> .
(Haim Faridian & Neubaum, 2020)	This study links the dynamic capabilities with ambidexterity by describing how <b>sharing assets</b> enables the <b>exploration-exploitation capabilities in dynamic environments</b> .
(Harmancioglu et al., 2020)	Based on <b>organisational learning theory</b> , ambidexterity involves <b>organisational cultures</b> . The <b>intensity of competition</b> is the main condition that controls the extent to which of organisational culture and innovation are needed for greater company performance.
(Junni et al., 2019)	The <b>absorption capacity</b> of the CV unit and the <b>innovation-oriented</b> moderates the influence of the CV unit ambidexterity to its performance.
(Kaulio, Thorén, & Rohrbeck, 2017)	This study utilises <b>business model innovation</b> and ambidexterity literature to investigate contradictory cases in the Swedish-Finnish Telecom operator TeliaSonera.
(Khan & Mir, 2019)	The research objective is to advance a scale for ambidextrous company <b>culture</b> and to analyse the role of <b>external forces</b> and internal loose resources on the relationship between company culture and <b>contextual ambidexterity</b> and <b>new product innovations</b> resulting from empirical investigations in India.

Source	Key point
(Ko & Liu, 2019)	This research highlights how IT integration influences <b>exploratory and exploitative innovation</b> .
(Kranz et al., 2016)	This study discusses theoretical gaps regarding the role of <b>emotional capacity</b> and <b>organisational complexity</b> in the process of changing business models due to the appearance of disruptive innovations.
(Kwak et al., 2019)	IT <b>enables standardisation of processes</b> and <b>agility</b> . <b>Ambidexterity</b> of team processes influences <b>inter-team coordination</b> and team innovation; also has a direct influence on <b>team performance</b> .
(J. Lee & Kim, 2019)	<b>Balanced exploration and exploitation</b> are advantageous for a <b>performance</b> , and <b>explorative collaboration</b> is more advantageous for internally highlighting exploitation.
(K. Lee et al., 2017)	This study discusses the mediating role of <b>organisational ambidexterity</b> in the association between <b>pro-innovation culture</b> and <b>new product development</b> performance.
(M. T. Lee & Raschke, 2020)	This research uses content analysis and widens the theory of <b>organisational ambidexterity</b> and operationalises mutual understanding of stakeholders as a measure for <b>stakeholder theory</b> in the context of <b>corporate social responsibility</b> research.
(Lennerts et al., 2020)	The research discusses reciprocal effects of <b>exploitation</b> and <b>exploration</b> on the <b>performance</b> of <b>incremental</b> or <b>radical innovations</b> .
(Lukoschek et al., 2018)	Based on research on leadership and innovation, this paper introduces multiple <b>innovation leadership</b> , which consists of two leader behaviours: <b>fostering the generation of ideas</b> and <b>encouraging the realisation of ideas</b> .
(Maclean, Harvey, Golant, & Sillince, 2020)	The research shows how the construction and communication of four <b>innovation narratives</b> (contextualisation, mutualisation, dramatisation, and focalisation) reduce tensions and increase <b>organisational ambidexterity</b> .
(Martínez-Pérez et al., 2016)	This study integrates the dimensions of bonding and bridging <b>social capital</b> , <b>exploration</b> , and the <b>exploitation</b> of <b>incremental</b> and <b>radical knowledge and innovation</b> .
(Nobakht et al., 2020)	This study aims to examine the relationship between <b>open innovation</b> , <b>organisational ambidexterity</b> , and <b>entrepreneurial orientation</b> . Open innovation, <b>entailing inbound, and outbound open innovation activities</b> , significantly enhances organisational ambidexterity.

Source	Key point
(Ortiz de Guinea & Raymond, 2020)	Taking a configuration approach, this paper investigates the causal configurations of <b>IT ambidexterity</b> (IT's ability to exploit and explore), <b>dynamic capabilities</b> (that is, innovation and network capabilities), and <b>environmental uncertainties</b> associated with service innovation performance on a small and medium company.
(K. M. Park & Meglio, 2019)	Intensive technology acquisition and achieving two competencies in (1) <b>innovation and ambidexterity</b> , (2) <b>exploration and exploitation capabilities of ambidexterity</b> , and (3) a tight and loose <b>integration approach</b> .
(Rafailidis et al., 2017)	This study confirms the mediating role of <b>quality competitive ability</b> on the relationship between <b>exploitation</b> and <b>exploration</b> -oriented organisational culture and <b>innovation performance</b> .
(Reficco & Gutiérrez, 2016)	<b>Successful cases of the base of the pyramid (BoP) ventures in large corporations</b> remain hard to find. The study looked at both <b>failures and success cases</b> , and extracts lessons from them.
(Röd, 2019)	Drawing on the family firm's <b>upper echelon</b> perspective, the results indicate that <b>TMT diversity</b> induced through external managers and multiple generations is positively related to <b>innovation ambidexterity</b> .
(Scheepers & Storm, 2019)	The results show that <b>authentic leadership</b> has significant direct and positive effects on <b>ambidexterity</b> and significant indirect effects through a climate of <b>innovation</b> .
(Solís-Molina et al., 2018)	The study discusses how <b>absorptive capacity</b> plays a moderating role in the relationship amongst <b>ambidexterity</b> and <b>specialisation in exploitation or exploration</b> on <b>firm performance</b> .
(Stefan & Bengtsson, 2017)	This study examines the impact of <b>intellectual property protection mechanisms</b> (formal, semi-formal and informal) and <b>openness</b> on the performance of innovative <b>exploitation and exploration</b> .
(J. Wu, Wood, Chen, Meyer, & Liu, 2019)	This study investigates the effect of <b>ambidexterity-innovation</b> , and how this effect is moderated by <b>managerial ability</b> .
(Xie et al., 2018)	This paper examines the effects of mediation in the relationship between <b>knowledge capacity</b> and <b>innovation performance</b> , based on <b>knowledge-based view (KBV)</b> .
(J. A. Zhang et al., 2016)	The results provide support for the significant effect of interactions between <b>EO</b> and <b>HRM</b> based on ability on <b>innovation ambidexterity</b> .
(L. Zhang, Wang, & Wei, 2019)	Apart from the potential of managerial bonds to facilitate competition for resources, which is caused by <b>innovation ambidexterity</b> and

Source	Key point
	<b>social capital theory</b> , they differ in results depending on the type of <b>managerial ties</b> that produce these benefits.
(Zhou et al., 2016)	This paper examines the impact of <b>ambidextrous</b> , <b>exploration</b> capabilities and <b>exploitative</b> capabilities on the performance of <b>product innovations</b> in the context of internationalisation and cross-cultural environments.

Of the 43 papers that have been further reviewed, there are 2 qualitative studies (Kaulio et al., 2017; K. M. Park & Meglio, 2019), 2 case studies (Kranz et al., 2016; Maclean et al., 2020), 3 conceptual studies (Brattström et al., 2018; Haim Faridian & Neubaum, 2020; M. T. Lee & Raschke, 2020), and the remaining 36 are empirical studies. From 36 empirical studies, 5 papers used a sample of SMEs as a unit of analysis (Benitez et al., 2018; Ko & Liu, 2019; Ortiz de Guinea & Raymond, 2020; Rafailidis et al., 2017; Röd, 2019), 4 papers used a sample of MNEs or MNCs as a unit of analysis (Bustinza et al., 2019; Elia et al., 2019; J. Wu et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2016), 4 papers used a sample of individuals as the unit of analysis; either it is employees (Scheepers & Storm, 2019) or executives (Cabeza-Pullés et al., 2019; K. Lee et al., 2017; Lukoschek et al., 2018), 1 papers used a sample of teams as the unit of analysis (Kwak et al., 2019) and the remaining 22 papers used a sample of firms or companies or organisations as a unit of analysis. From this it can be concluded that there is still limited research that accommodates SMEs as the unit of analysis. Mathematically, 14% of a total of 36 papers collected were representing the SMEs as a unit of analysis.

## Conclusions

The investigation exhibits a summary of the antecedents of innovation performance by implementing the SLR technique. Different from other similar SLR research, as conducted by Mu et al., 2020 (Mu et al., 2020), which emphasises the advancement of individual ambidexterity in the studies since 2007, this research focusses more to answer research questions: To what extent have existing researchers found solutions to achieve innovation performance? And to what extent have existing researchers found solutions to achieve innovation performance by relating it to the context of entrepreneurial ambidexterity? Based on 112 articles obtained, there are 43 articles that are interesting to study further because of the link between ambidexterity and innovation performance. Based on 43 chosen investigations, an examination was administered, and the main topic had been highlighted, as presented in Table 4. While this outlines a commencement, this study is not the final word on this critical problem, and we urge different researchers to provide improvements to generate specific results for SMEs.

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