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The Role of Operations Risk Management, Business Development, and Digital Business Solutions in Driving Organizational Growth: Evidence from Abu Dhabi and Qatar

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of operations risk management practices, business development strategies, and the use of digital business solutions in transportation on organizational growth within the transport sector of Abu Dhabi and Qatar. Primary data were collected from a sample of 360 managers, supervisors, and operations staff across transport and logistics companies in Abu Dhabi and Qatar. Structured questionnaires were used to measure constructs, and the data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships. The conceptual framework was developed from literature on operations risk management, business growth, and digital transformation in logistics. The results revealed that operations risk management practices had a significant positive effect on organizational growth by improving efficiency, streamlining workflows, and reducing delays. Business development strategies were also found to contribute positively, enabling firms to expand market reach, build client relationships, and implement competitive pricing. Furthermore, digital business solutions—including ERP systems, fleet management software, and real-time tracking technologies—demonstrated a strong influence on organizational growth by enhancing service delivery, transparency, and customer satisfaction.

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1.0 Introduction

The transport and logistics industry has traditionally been viewed as the location of most economic development, where it enables trade, investment, and the movement of goods and services between regions. Transport infrastructure and services in the Gulf region, and especially in Abu Dhabi and Qatar, are at the center of national development strategies which are supported by such visions as Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 or Qatar National Vision 2030. Both of the economies understand that successful logistics and transportation networks play a crucial role in not only in facilitating oil and gas export activities but also in diversifying into tourism, trade, manufacturing, and knowledge-based sectors (Ben Hassen, 2022). In this aspect, the research on the operations risk management, business development strategies, and digital solutions is timely and needed, particularly when companies are facing issues like increasing the cost of operations, unstable demand, regional competition, and worldwide demand to go digital (Dutta et al., 2020). Locating this study in Abu Dhabi and Qatar, two economies with similar growth trends yet struggling to dominate the region with a logistical approach, the study offers a subtle insight into how organizations can sustainably grow with an integrated approach to management practices and technological solutions.

This study adopted operations risk management as the intended, directed and organized process of converting inputs into services and products within transportation companies. It includes also resource, workflow, planning, inventory and quality control resources; extremely important in an industry extremely dependent on speed and cost-effectiveness. Proper management of operations risk can help a transport enterprise reduce the length of delays, run its trains, and provide services to customers more efficiently, and, consequently, achieve competitive advantage within the business environment where one of the most notable aspects of competition is dependability and profitability (Oluwaferanmi, 2025). On the other hand, bottlenecks, inefficiency, and customer dissatisfaction due to failure in the management of operational risks normally creates inhibitors in organizational growth. In this way, the operational aspect is the foundation upon which other developmental and digitalization tactics in business can be supported to achieve the growth targets (Ziadlou, 2021).

Nevertheless, the term business development includes such actions and strategies that businesses use to observe growth opportunities, to enter more markets as well as establishing relations with clients. Gaining long-term contracts, strategic alliances, trying to find new trade routes and create competitive systems of price are often translated into business development in transport sector. The strategies enable organizations to move out of the former segments and take initiative to identify new maneuvers in approaching the clients (Foltean & van Bruggen, 2022). Since operations risk management is corporate efficiency, business growth is caused by the external environment to grow and to compete. The interplay between the two variables is particularly essential as concerns Abu Dhabi and Qatar, where the firms compete on the quality

of the service delivery, as well as the ability to prove themselves as trusted allies in an increasingly complex international supply chain.

Digital business solutions are actually the third variable, which refers to the application and integration of digital technologies such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), fleet management applications, real-time tracking solutions. These solutions not only brought to reality how the running of the transport companies nowadays, but it has also been innovative in the decision-making and openness and, has also raised the level of communication with the customers to a totally different level, as well. The former is the real-time-tracking which particularly is assuring the customer that the shipment was and continues to be going on and it is trustworthy and the latter is the ERP systems which is undoubtedly the process of organizing the company financially, operationally and through its human resources (Vukman et al., 2024). Governments in the Gulf have been steering towards digitalization as the competitive nations pursue national visions, and transport companies are under the pressure to embrace technology not as an enabling factor but as an engine of growth. Thus, one of the drivers that enhance the positive impacts of operations risk management and business development is digital solutions to make the organization customer-centered, agile, and competitive (Gaadi, 2024).

The third variable, digital business solutions, means the implementation and incorporation of digital technologies including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, fleet management programs, and real-time tracking technologies. These solutions have re-organized the way in which transport companies operate, and it has facilitated transparency, foresight in making decisions and it has also facilitated a stronger interaction with the customers. An example is the use of real-time tracking, which affirms the customer with the certainty of the shipment and a sense of trust, and the ERP systems, which undoubtedly enhance the coordination of the company by integrating financial, operational, and human resource processes (Vukman et al., 2024). In the Gulf, where governments are driving toward digitalization as the competitive countries focus on their national visions, transport companies are facing pressure to adopt technology not as a support mechanism but a growth engine. Therefore, digital solutions are a driver that increases the positive effects of operations risk management and business development so that organizations can be customer-focused, agile, and competitive (Gaadi, 2024).

These variables are so interrelated and theoretically can be linked. In terms of the Resource-Based View (RBV) practices and digital business solutions are forms of operations risk management that are important organizational resources, which when properly utilized, create sustainable competitive advantage. In the same vein, Dynamic Capabilities Theory focuses on the capacity of firms to combine, create, and reorganize capabilities in response to changing environments at accelerated pace, a model that is specifically applicable to strategies

in business development (Tran and Vo Thai, 2025). Digital transformation can also be considered as the implementation of Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) theory that implies that the readiness to adopt technology, external pressure, and technological opportunities influence the implementation of technology. Collectively, these theoretical lenses underpin the conceptual framework of this research, in which operations risk management, business development, and digital solutions are mutually supportive and separate and independent factors in growing organizations. They note that expansion is not caused by individual strategies and is the outcome of combining internal efficiencies, external opportunities, and technological enablers (Kahveci, 2025).

Although much has been written on operations risk management, business development, and digital transformation, as single dimensions, few studies have been conducted that combine these three dimensions in the transport industry. The past research tends to be siloed, with researchers studying operational efficiency or digitalization and not examining how they can interact to grow an organization. More specifically, the empirical literature is limited in the Gulf context where transportation not only is a fundamental source of diversification, but also a location of highly competitive activity.

2.0 Literature Review

The importance of theory in explaining the processes by which organizations grow has long been a focus in management and organizational research. The Resource-Based View is one of the most powerful frameworks that emphasize that when valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable, unique internal resources, can be used as the foundation of a lasting competitive advantage. Within the framework of transport firms, one can define operations risk management practices and digital business solutions as resources that allow firms to surpass the competition due to their ability to enhance efficiency and transparency. The Dynamic Capabilities Theory, along with the RBV, is concerned with the organizational ability to restructure and remodel competencies within highly dynamic environments, which is needed in the dynamic logistics marketplace due to the impact of globalization, unstable fuel costs, and disruptive technology (Zywiolek et al., 2025). The Technology Organization Environment (TOE) framework also provides insight on how organisations adopt technological advances, and emphasize the relationship between organizational preparedness, technological opportunities, and externalities. Collectively, these theoretical lenses form the framework through which the connections between operations risk management, business development, digital business solutions, and organizational growth in the Abu Dhabi transport industry and Qatar will be explored (Leal-Arcas et al., 2025).

Although traditionally business development was the focus of research in marketing and strategy, it is becoming a focus of research in logistics. Research indicates that companies that practice active business development initiatives like strategic alliance, market diversification

and long-term relationship with clients are in a better position to increase their market share. Recently, empirical studies show that transport companies that adopt new pricing schemes, differentiated packages of services, and joint ventures experience customer retention and expansion. Business development helps companies to shape their strategies to fit the new market demand in scenarios such as Abu Dhabi and Qatar where mega-projects led by the government and intercontinental trade routes provide a steady stream of opportunities (Bodrick et al., 2025). According to empirical research in other emerging economies, companies that incorporate market intelligence in their development strategies are better placed to withstand economic shock and competition. Thus, business development is a valuable activity that ties organizational resources to the external opportunities and maximizes the effects of operations risk management (Sun et al., 2025).

The logistics and transport industry is also undergoing further transformation due to the digitalization of business processes. The studies conducted on the subject of digital business solutions show that the ERP systems, fleet management systems, real-time trackers, and other tools improve decision-making processes, minimize uncertainty, and reinforce customer confidence. Empirical analysis points to the reality that digital solutions not only streamline the internal processes but also enable value-added services such as shipment visibility, predictive analytics, and automated reporting that are vital in customer-centric markets. The national visions in the Gulf have been used to promote digital transformation across governments and have led to the increased use of smart logistics systems (Al-Ajmi et al., 2025). The presence of international transport centres like Singapore and Rotterdam has demonstrated that the adoption of digital is closely associated with increased efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness. Nevertheless, studies are scarce in the Middle Eastern context, especially those that connect digital solutions with growth results as opposed to viewing them as operational instruments. This provides a window of opportunity to extrapolate empirical knowledge by exploring ways that digital technologies relate to business development and operations risk management to give birth to organizational growth (Urbinati et al., 2020).

There has been some interest in the interplay between operations risk management, business development, and digitalization, but much of the literature is still fragmented. In this regard, studies suggest that digital solutions can amplify the benefits of lean operations provided with real-time data to implement a continuous improvement. In the same manner, studies show that business development concepts work better with sophisticated technologies, since online platforms allow companies to enter new markets, establish closer relationships with clients, and distinguish their services. Empirically, organizations that combine them are reported to grow more than those that apply them separately (Agostini and Nosella, 2020). However, not many studies investigate these three relationships in the situation of transport companies in emerging economies. Majority of the existing research is based either on

operational efficiency or digital adoption, but few studies have been carried out on how the two dimensions together influence growth trajectories. The lack of integrated empirical evidence suggests that there is a gaping void that this study would help to fill (Osei, 2025).

The gap in research is especially prominent when one might speak about the specifics of Abu Dhabi and Qatar. Although the two economies have been spending a lot of money on logistics infrastructure and both have ambitions to be regional transport hubs, the micro-level strategies of the transport companies have not been explored extensively in the literature. A large part of the literature on the Gulf transport sectors focuses on infrastructure, regimes, or macroeconomic effects (Hertog, 2017), and little on practices at the firm level. By filling this gap with empirical evidence of Abu Dhabi and Qatar, not only does this fill the international literature but also provides information about decisions in the area.

Based on these theoretical and empirical findings, this paper formulates a set of hypotheses to test the association between operations risk management, business development, business digital solutions and organizational growth. Considering the steady evidence that operations risk management increases efficiency and competitiveness, it is assumed that effective operations risk management practices have positive effects on organizational growth. Likewise, as business development practices broaden market opportunity and build customer rapport, it is hypothesized that business development practices have a positive influence on growth outcomes. Moreover, given the accumulating evidence of the transformative nature of digital technologies in the logistics sphere, it is theorized that digital business solutions contribute to organizational development to a considerable extent. Lastly, based on both theoretical and empirical research, which highlight complementarities, it is further hypothesized that the combination of operations risk management, business development, and digital solutions explicates a significant share of variance in organizational development. All these hypotheses are the foundations of the conceptual framework which will be tested in this study and will fill the important gaps in the literature and also offer practical implications to transport firms in Abu Dhabi and Qatar.

3.0 Methodology

The study was based on a positivistic philosophy that reality is objective and can be quantified by systematizing observation and analysis. This position was considered suitable since the aim of the study was to test hypothesized association between variables using quantitative methods, thus, making it possible to generate generalizable results. It used the deductive methodology, where theoretical ideas behind the Resource-Based View, the Dynamic Capabilities Theory, and the Technology-Organization-Environment framework were applied to empirical evidence. The focus on quantifiable concepts and statistical testing was a response to the desire of the researcher to maintain objectivity, reliability and replication of results.

The research population was managers, supervisors, and operational employees in large urban centers like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, and who work in transport and logistics companies. These people were presumed to be the right respondents since they are directly involved in designing, implementing, and assessing organization processes, strategies, and technologies that affect growth. The researchers considered the sample size of 360 respondents to be sufficient, given what is recommended in structural equation modeling, where relatively large samples are required to attain statistical power and robustness. The sampling method used was stratified random sampling in an attempt to be representative of the various organizational levels and types of transport companies such as road, freight forwarding, and logistics service providers. The respondents within a given stratum were chosen at random to reduce bias and increase the representativeness of the data. The method enabled the study to include the views of both the managerial and operational employees giving a comprehensive view of how organizational practices and strategies interrelate within the transport sector.

4.0 Results

4.1 Measurement Model

Table 4.1 Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Operations Risk Management	0.892	0.917	0.655
Business Development	0.864	0.902	0.614
Digital Business Solutions	0.879	0.915	0.642
Organizational Growth	0.901	0.929	0.686

The results of the reliability and validity analysis indicate that all the constructs in the study have reached the suggested thresholds of internal consistency and convergent validity. The alpha values of operations risk management (0.892), business development (0.864), digital business solutions (0.879), and organizational growth (0.901) are significantly higher than the acceptable minimum level of 0.70, which attests to good reliability between the constructs. In a similar manner, the composite reliability (CR) scores, 0.902 to 0.929, are higher than the recommended value of 0.70, which means that

measurement items are always able to measure the target latent variables. AVE values of all constructs exceed the value of 0.50, and vary between 0.614 and 0.686, indicating that each construct has more than 50 percent of the variance of its indicators, which is the sign of convergent validity. Taken together, these results provide evidence that the measurement model is reliable and valid and can be used to model the structural equation and hypothesis testing later.

Table 4.2 Discriminant Validity

Constructs	**OM**	**BD**	**DBS**	**OG**
Operations Risk Management (ORM)	–			
Business Development (BD)	0.712	–		
Digital Business Solutions (DBS)	0.698	0.724	–	
Organizational Growth (OG)	0.681	0.707	0.735	–

The findings of the HTMT discriminant validity analysis show that each construct measures a different dimension of the study as the constructs are distinct enough. All the HTMT ratios of operations risk management and business development (0.712), operations risk management and digital business solutions (0.698), and operations risk management and organizational growth (0.681) fall below the recommended 0.85 indicating clear differentiation. The same can be said of the values of business development vs. digital business solutions (0.724), business development vs. organizational growth (0.707), and digital business solutions vs. organizational growth (0.735), all of which fall well below the cut-off and again confirm the discriminant validity. These findings show that the constructs have a positive relationship, but are not redundant, and each has a unique contribution to the explanation of organizational growth in the transport sector. This makes the measurement model stronger and gives confidence in the interpretation of the structural relationships that were tested in the analysis to follow.

4.2 Structural Model Path Coefficients

Table 4.3 Structural Model Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Operations Risk Management → Organizational Growth	0.312	5.94	0.000	Supported
H2	Business Development → Organizational Growth	0.284	4.87	0.000	Supported
H3	Digital Business Solutions → Organizational Growth	0.365	6.21	0.000	Supported

The results of the structural model indicate that all the three hypothesized relationships are strongly supported in the empirical data and it can be argued that the management of operations risks, business development, and digital business solutions play a significant role in the organizational growth. In particular, operations risk management was found to have a positive and significant impact on organizational growth ($b = 0.312$, $t = 5.94$, $p < 0.001$), which implied that any effect of efficiency, workflow optimization, and resources utilization can be directly translated into an improved growth outcome. The impact of business development was also a significant positive effect ($b = 0.284$, $t = 4.87$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that strategies aimed at market growth, establishment of client relationships, and competitive positioning are key drivers of business growth. Moreover, digital business solutions became the most significant predictor ($b = 0.365$, $t = 6.21$, $p < 0.001$), and it is clear that the technologies included in this category like ERP systems, fleet management software, and real-time trackers played a transformational role in enhancing quality of service, transparency, and customer satisfaction.

5.0 Discussion

The findings of current research indicated that operations risk management has significant effect on Organizational Growth. Previous studies also support the findings

of current research. Furthermore, Business Development has also signifnact effect on Organizational Growth. Previous studies also support the findings of current research. Lastly, digital business solutions have significant effect on organizational growth. Previous studies also support the findings of current research. This leads to the conclusion one can make based on the findings, which is that transport companies require the implementation of an integrated growth model combining the old school of management with the new. Business development will make operations risk management assure the stability and viability required to deliver services with consistency, growth and competitiveness in volatile markets, flexibility and customer orientation will provide the digital solutions required to survive long term. These variables are synergies and form an organizational development profile which in this case is more than just extremely relevant to Abu Dhabi and Qatar, but to other emerging markets which are all dealing with the same issues with their logistics and transport systems.

Some recommendations can be made on the basis of such findings. The initial aspect through which transport firms should consider recommending to eradicate inefficiencies is that first, through conducting capacity building of operations risk management, investment in training, process standardization and performance monitoring systems helps to eradicate inefficiencies. Secondly, organizations are advised to also constantly broaden business development cycles as regards ongoing market conduct research initiative, tactical joint ventures and client all-purpose charges. Third, online business organizations must accelerate their digitalization by adopting an ERP system, GPS-based fleet-management systems, real-time tracking solutions, technology must be incorporated in their competitive strategy and not in the supplement of the competitive strategy. Resourcefulness and awareness of technology and digital infrastructure development and facilitation of accessibility to cost-effective capital can also enable and support policymakers.

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