

Overview	
Organizations become more powerful when they can balance the benefits of acquiring necessary resources from external organizations against the dependence that comes with having to acquire resources from external organizations.	
Example Application to Implementation Science	
Lengnick-Hall, R., Willging, C., Hurlburt, M., Fenwick, K., & Aarons, G. A. (2020). Contracting as a bridging factor linking outer and inner contexts during EBP implementation and sustainment: a prospective study across multiple US public sector service systems. <i>Implementation Science</i> , 15(1), 1-16.	
Zinn, J. S., Weech, R. J., & Brannon, D. (1998). Resource dependence and institutional elements in nursing home TQM adoption. <i>Health Services Research</i> , 33(2 Pt 1), 261.	
Construct	Definition
Munificence	The availability and accessibility of resources necessary for an organization's development and survival within the external environment
Dynamism	The rate of environmental change or innovation in the external environment
Competition	The number and diversity of stakeholders (competitors, suppliers, and buyers) that an organization needs to consider in formulating strategies (Yeager et al., 2015); perceptions that another organization in the field poses a threat
Power	Dominance in a relationship; the obverse of dependence
Dependence	The extent that an organization relies on another organization to obtain resources that it requires to exist (e.g., material, human resources; legitimacy); the obverse of power
Adaptability	Ability of an organization to change in an attempt to address environmental demands
Demand for resources acquisition	An organization's need to acquire resources from the external environment to sustain its internal environment
Propositions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To acquire power, organizations exchange their autonomy for resources from other organizations within their field. That is, organizations want autonomy and/or control, but they need resources to survive and/or produce in a way that satisfies stakeholder demands.</li> <li>2. Competition increases uncertainty and decreases stakeholders' willingness to adopt or implement new strategies.</li> <li>3. Decreased munificence requires organizations to reduce their dependence on some resources and/or find alternative resources.</li> </ol>	
Potential Relevance to Implementation Science	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizations may <b>adopt</b> a new strategy to adapt to dynamism in the environment or to create a more stable, predictable existence.</li> <li>2. Making evidence-based practices (EBPs) a resource that confers power and/or decreases dependence on other organizations will increase <b>adoption</b> and/or <b>implementation</b>. Regulations or requirements can be leveraged to control the adoption (or non-adoption) of EBPs. The following features of organizations or their environment moderate this relationship: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Decreased munificence may compel organizations to adopt or implement an EBP because a lack of other resources decreases their power.</li> <li>b. Increased competition may compel organizations to adopt or implement an EBP due to the threat of relatively less power associated with not doing so.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

- c. Decreased power may compel organizations to adopt or implement an EBP because of the threat to the organization’s survival implied in diminished power. But organizations with copious amounts of power may forgo accreditation because accreditation does not represent an adequate relative increase in resources.
  - d. Increased interdependence may compel organizations to adopt or implement an EBP because a not doing so may decrease their power within the field.
  - e. Increased adaptability may improve organizations’ ability to adopt or implement an EBP.
3. The features of 2 above suggest the following **strategies may facilitate implementation**:
- a. Coopting entities that have resources necessary to implement.
  - b. Modifying demands by, for example, getting on boards of regulatory organizations.
  - c. Coordinating with other organizations to promote interdependence.
  - d. Improving adaptability (e.g., by increasing slack resources).

**Criticisms and/or Bounds on the Theory**

Casciaro, T., & Piskorski, M. J. (2005). Power imbalance, mutual dependence, and constraint absorption: A closer look at resource dependence theory. *Administrative science quarterly*, 50(2), 167-199.

Hillman, A. J., Withers, M. C., & Collins, B. J. (2009). Resource dependence theory: A review. *Journal of management*, 35(6), 1404-1427.

Johnson Jr, B. L. (1995). Resource Dependence Theory: A Political Economy Model of Organizations. [dissertation].

**References**

Pfeffer, J. (2005). *Great Minds in Management: The Process of Theory Development* (K. G. Smith & M. A. Hitt, Eds.). <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.23467624>

Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*.

**Type: Theory (grand, mid-range), perspective, model, etc.**

- Mid-range theory