



The Impact of marketing strategies on Sustainable competitive advantage: an applied study on food industrial companies

Eltahir Ahmed Mohammed Ali, Abu Mohammed ^{1*}, Kamal

Mohammed Hamid ALFaki, Abu Mohammed ²

¹ Business Administration Department , College of Humanities and Administrative Studies , **Onaizah Colleges** , Onaizah (KSA),
aali@oc.edu.sa

² Business Administration Department , College of Humanities and Administrative Studies , **Onaizah Colleges** , Onaizah , Saudi Arabia (KSA),
kalfaki@oc.edu.sa

Received: 15/10/2025

Accepted: 28/11/2025

Published: 25/12/2025

Abstract:

The study aimed to know the impact of marketing strategy in achieving competitive advantage. The study followed the descriptive analytical approach, where the questionnaire was the main tool for the study community, which is a group of food industrial companies to which (120) questionnaires were distributed, and the recovery rate was (95%). The study also relied on the non-probability sample method, and the data were analyzed using the partial list box. The most important results of the study were represented in the presence of a positive relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, but the percentage of influence differs from one variable to another. One of the most important recommendations of the study is to call on food industrial companies to pay attention to the marketing strategy to benefit from existing business opportunities in achieving permanent competitive advantages, in addition to conducting large-scale studies that address different dimensions of the study variables.

Keywords: Cost Strategy, Differentiation Strategy, Focus Strategy, Competitive Advantage, Marketing.

Jel Classification Codes: M31, L25.

***Corresponding author:** Eltahir Ahmed Mohammed Ali, Abu Mohammed

1. Introduction

One of the most important challenges facing contemporary food companies today is their continuous pursuit of achieving sustainable competitive advantage due to changes in the competitive environment and scarcity of resources. This has necessitated the emergence of an advanced level of competitive advantages that transcend the present to prevail and remain in the future of strategic companies.

In order for institutions to achieve this sustainability, employees must be satisfied and loyal to the institution with the policies and strategies it provides that are compatible with those individuals who join it. Thus, sustainable competitive advantage is a primary goal that all companies seek, but it can only be determined by defining and successfully using a specific competitive strategy, and then managing it successfully in a way that contributes to increasing the value it creates and strengthening its competitive position within its environment. In light of the major conflicts that the world is currently witnessing and the framework of economic globalization that has led to the transfer of competition in current markets to global markets, institutions have found themselves immersed in a set of challenges that fall within the new economic climate, which imposes on them the necessity of implementing effective management systems and adopting appropriate strategies to achieve success and a distinctive and sustainable marketing position (Homdi, 2013, 44).

1.1 Study Problem:

Today, contemporary companies seek to achieve global leadership in the markets and reach a distinguished level in their performance based on their competitive advantages based on comprehensive marketing knowledge that achieves the sustainability of those advantages. In light of what local markets face in terms of openness to foreign companies' products and the intensification and impact of competition between the offered goods, which is a challenge for national food companies in finding a foothold in local markets, and thus the obsession with searching for ways to achieve that represents a goal that worries those companies, so it was necessary for them to deal with what they possess of resources and advantages and the surrounding variables that require subjecting them to the sustainability of those advantages and achieving leadership in the competitive field. Marketing strategies have become a necessary need for economic institutions aiming to survive and continue, and to confront the

escalating state of competition witnessed by most of the world's markets, and to adapt to an unstable, moving environment towards serving the consumer. In light of the trend towards a market economy and where competition is intensifying, economic institutions must prepare for this stage by making profound administrative changes aimed at adopting marketing as a necessity and as a work system that imposes itself as a solution to confront competition and adapt the institution to its new environment. This is not achieved arbitrarily or by a stroke of luck, but rather the institution must adopt a future approach and a clear path for its various activities, which is represented by marketing strategies (Ibrahim, 2015, 1).

After reviewing a number of previous studies, all studies dealt with the variables of strategy and sustainable competitive advantage with different variables, so the gap in the current study is to work on linking the variable of marketing strategy with sustainable competitive advantage.

1.1.1 Main question:

- What is the impact of marketing strategy on sustainable competitive advantage?

1.1.2 Sub-questions:

-What is the impact of cost leadership strategy on sustainable competitive advantage?

-What is the impact of differentiation strategy on sustainable competitive advantage?

-What is the impact of focus strategy on sustainable competitive advantage?

Importance of the study:

1.2 The hyposthesis:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between cost leadership strategy and sustainable competitive advantage
- There is a statistically significant relationship between differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

1.3 The importance:

1.3.1 Theoretical importance:

- This study seeks to link marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

- It also shows the relationship between marketing strategy, sustainable competitive advantage and loyalty.

- Enriching the library due to its need for this type of studies based on

1.3.3 practical importance:

As for the practical importance, it is as follows:

- It may help officials and decision makers to implement the appropriate marketing strategy.

- It may help decision makers in Sudanese food companies in general to choose any of the marketing strategies that achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

1.4 Study objectives:

- The research aims to identify the relationship between marketing strategy (cost leadership - focus - differentiation) and sustainable competitive advantage.

- Identify the level of marketing strategy (cost leadership - focus - differentiation) in the researched institutions

- Identify the level of competitive advantage in the researched institutions.

1.5 Procedural definitions:

1.5.1 Marketing strategy:

It is all procedures aimed at evaluating the impact of various internal and external environmental factors, in order to set feasible goals derived from the company's basic tasks and in light of the available material and human resources within the established priorities. (Al-Bakri 2011, 55).

1.5.2 Sustainable competitive advantage:

It is the distinctive skill, technology, or resource that produces for the company the production of values and benefits for customers that exceed what competitors provide (Al-Dawri; Bousalem, 2011, 9).

2 Theoretical Framework:

2.1 Marketing Strategy:

It contains the dimensions, concepts, definitions and different importance for the study variables (marketing strategy, sustainable competitive advantage, organizational loyalty). And the relationships between the study variables.

2.1.1 The concept of strategy:

Strategy has existed since competition has existed, and competition appeared in ancient and distant times when man competed with others for the purpose of survival and continuity, and each of them relied on a method or style in order to seize the opportunity or the desired goal

from others. In our present era, there have been developments and intellectual endeavors, especially during the last century. (Al-Jafri, 2024, 83).

2.1.2 Marketing Strategy:

Marketing strategy is a general term used to describe the organization's program in choosing a specific market segment and working to satisfy this segment through the appropriate use of marketing mix elements. Marketing strategy in this description refers to the organization's plan to reach the customer by diagnosing the target market and its marketing program. (Tahtah, 2009, 9). The researchers define it is the process that allows the organization to occupy its limited resources in appropriate opportunities to increase sales and reach competitive advantages under a creative policy for products and services. (Al-Waleed, 2009, 11)

2.1.3 The importance of marketing strategy:

It is very important to have a marketing strategy for the organization because there are continuous and dangerous changes in the environment in which the organization operates and is exposed to unexpected shocks and surprises, (Al-Ziyadat; Al-Awamrah, 2012, 33), especially in the marketing activities it practices. These shocks can be called strategic windows that the organization seeks to close in the face of potential competitors before they succeed in entering its markets through these strategic windows (Al-Awad, 2002, 53).

2.1.4 Dimension of competitive Marketing strategy

2.1.4.1 Cost Leadership Strategy:

Porter (1996) believes that cost leadership is one of two broad strategies that an organization can adopt. This strategy is based on the idea of the organization's commitment to being the lowest-cost producer in the sector in which it operates while maintaining relatively average levels of excellence.

Myler indicates that organizations that use the lowest-cost strategy are those that operate in an environment less susceptible to environmental fluctuations. He states that these organizations target customers who care more about price than about the shape or luxury of the product (Hassan, 2020, 40). There is a difference related to the interpretation of the meaning of "cost leadership", especially determining whether cost leaders compete on the basis of price (on the demand side) or on cost control (on the supply side). The other matter is the relationship

of the strategy to the environmental and organizational characteristics that affect the cost strategy.

2.1.4.2 Differentiation Strategy:

In which the company's strategy is to provide distinguished products or services such as personal prices and after-sales services from those provided by competing companies, and therefore the customer accepts to pay a higher price than usual. An example of Sony products.

When the organization follows the differentiation strategy, it distinguishes its products from those of competitors. This differentiation requires that it cannot be imitated by competing organizations, at least in the short term. The consumer can pay the price for this differentiation and that the differentiation is clear to the consumer to differentiate the organization's products from those of competing organizations. It benefits him, at least for a large group of consumers. When the organization follows the differentiation strategy, it allocates an important place for one of the elements of the marketing mix. Choosing an element of the marketing mix is at the expense of the consumer's view of it as the most important, and thus it is possible to achieve a competitive advantage (Jadou 2013, 79).

2.1.4.3 Focus strategy:

Focus strategy means providing a product or service that satisfies the needs of a specific segment of consumers or serves a specific geographical area. The organization seeks to benefit from a competitive advantage in the target market by providing products at lower prices than competitors due to focusing on reducing costs or providing distinguished products in quality, specifications, or customer service, for example (Al-Bastanji 2010, 306).

2.2 The sustainable competitive advantage:

2.2.1 The concept:

The concept of competitive advantage occupies an important space and position in the field of strategic management and business economics, as it represents the critical strategic element that provides a fundamental opportunity for the organization to achieve continuous profitability compared to its competitors. This important point is that the most important and determinant factors for the success of business organizations is the competitive position, and sustainable competitive advantage is a major goal that all organizations seek, but it is only determined by defining and successfully using a specific competitive strategy, and then managing it successfully, in a way that contributes

to increasing the value it creates within it and strengthening its competitive position within the environment in which it operates (Al-Abadi; Al-Otaibi, 2014, 218).

Achieving profitability goals, gaining large market spaces, and achieving leadership and excellence are no longer a major issue in light of the unstable environment in which contemporary organizations live. Rather, their ambition has gone beyond that to reach how to maintain and create a state of sustainability for those goals that have been achieved. They are obtained due to the competitive advantages that these organizations enjoy, which make them superior to their counterparts. The concepts of competitive advantage have varied according to the point of view of researchers and writers, as it is the ability to provide superior value to the market for a long period of time, and the organization's ability to discover new methods that are more effective than those used by competitors, and the organization's ability to exploit its internal sources of strength in performing its activities to create value that competitors cannot achieve. It is the skill, technology, or distinguished resource that produces for the organization the production of values and benefits for customers that exceed what competitors provide, stemming from the adopted strategies. And the organization's ability to achieve the highest returns on investment and industry, and to continue and maintain this progress (Al-Rafad, 2019, 135). Accordingly, the interest in the sustainability of competitive advantages represents a priority in the contexts of strategic thinking for these organizations, which prompted many researchers to explore the depth of this topic by identifying its contents and trying to find mechanisms that contribute to achieving the sustainability of competitive advantage. The term actually emerged in 1985 when Porter discussed the basic types of competitive strategies that organizations possess to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. (Porter, 1996, 48)

2.2.2 The Definition:

According to Michael Porter, "competitive advantage arises once the organization reaches the discovery of new methods that are more effective than those offered by competitors, or it is the events of the innovation process in its broad sense" (Hreiz; Boushmal, 2014, 43).

2.2.3 The importance:

The importance of competitive advantage is embodied in that it (Al-Abadi; Al-Otaibi, 2014, 219)

gives the institution a qualitative and quantitative superiority, and an advantage over competitors, and thus enables it to achieve high performance results, and contributes to the positive impact on customer perceptions and motivates them to continue and develop dealings, and that it is characterized by continuity and renewal.

2.2.4 Characteristics of competitive advantage:

It is characterized by being determined based on the desires and needs of customers, and provides a unique harmony between the organization's resources and opportunities in the environment, and is also characterized by sustainability, strength, and difficulty for competitors to imitate it. (Abu Sitta, 2013, 04)

2.2.5 Mechanisms for developing sustainable competitive advantage:

Competitive advantage is to be better than competitors in one or more dimensions of strategic performance (cost, flexibility, creativity...) With the escalation of competition and the increase in new entrants with their new methods and products in light of globalization, there is no guarantee that any competitive advantage will last long unless it is continuously developed (Al-Bakri; Khaled, 2010, 45). Achieving a competitive advantage at the present time is not an opportunity in itself as much as it is a threat, as the company that achieves this distinction becomes the focus of all competitors to reach it and achieve this distinction or excel over it, in all ways and methods, and therefore this company needs to work on improving, renewing, and developing its advantage continuously, and the superior organization is the one that is able to discover, realize, and appreciate the original and real source of competitive advantage Sustainable (Abu Tabikh; Al-Dumai, 37: 2012 AD) and companies develop and improve new competitive advantages by realizing or discovering new and better ways to compete, by innovating continuous improvements and developments in technology, in the product, in marketing methods and in production processes, which are carried out using research and development and developing creative capabilities and individual skills (Yahyaw, 112: 2013). (Saleh; Bani, 18: 2013) believes that the most important thing facing contemporary companies is competitive pressures, which (insurance companies) are undoubtedly one of them, which requires building a competitive strategy that enables them to survive, and considering that the competitive advantage is the driving force that affects the customer's behavior to deal with the company rather than other competitors, therefore it should be dynamic in nature

according to what the environmental environment requires in terms of change and renewal and the result of the competitive escalation to provide the new, the best and the distinctive.

2.2.6 The importance of sustainable competitive advantage:

The importance of sustainable competitive advantage is that it is a criterion for successful organizations to distinguish themselves by finding unique and new models that are difficult to imitate or replicate their benefits. Sustainable competitive advantage is the main weapon to face the challenges of the market and similar organizations, by the organization developing its competitive knowledge and its ability to meet the needs of customers in the future, through its core ability that enables it to adapt to rapidly changing opportunities (Al-Zaabi 2009, 60) until sustainable competitive advantage represents a positive indicator towards the organization's orientation to occupy a strong position in the market by obtaining a larger market share than competitors and increasing the volume of sales and profits. (Al-Dawri; Bousalem, 2011, 8).

2.2.7 Factors affecting sustainable competitive advantage:

Organizations work to achieve competitive advantage through the products and services they provide, as there are factors represented by (technological factors, production factors, factors related to distribution, skills, marketing factors, the organization's capabilities and potentials (Ogazi, 2021: 116).

Achieving competitive advantage depends on the influence of internal and external factors. According to this vision, there are five forces that affect the competitive environment, which Porter called the five forces. The stronger one of these factors becomes, the more the company's power to raise prices and achieve profits decreases. The strength of the five factors may change over time according to changing conditions in the industry (Porter). The operational definition of sustainable competitive advantage (is the organization's ability to find something unique and different that positively distinguishes its products and services from competitors in the eyes of customers by the organization performing its activities more efficiently and effectively). Competitive advantage appears when a company has a product or service that customers target in the market and is viewed as one of the best products or services provided to them. (Al-Dosari; Kane, 2022, 17). Achieving competitive advantage requires long-term strategies appropriate to the product or service

provided by companies. Companies that do not develop strategies that suit them are expected to fail in their product or service. In order to achieve competitive advantage, there are three important strategies that are a factor that positively affects competitive advantage, namely: the competitive strategy that relies on distinguishing differences in meeting the desires of customers and clients for a specific product, which in turn encourages customers to pay a premium that helps improve the performance of companies and competitive strategies that rely on the company itself, as it deals with matters of cost, management and improving employee skills, sustainability. And the competitive strategy that gives the company the ability to continue taking opportunities, enhance performance and defend itself against other competing companies, and this strategy often achieves success, progress and increases the company's profits, and creates obstacles and barriers that help prevent the ease of imitating its products or services. Also, the standard economy, which relies on the policy analysis matrix, or generating and distributing added value along the value chain, is one of the factors that affect competitive advantage, as the standard economy focuses on the value of consumption from capital inputs, the extent of providing communication services and other factors that reduce costs, and enhance production units. Competitive advantage is achieved when it uses its resources and capabilities to achieve a less expensive production structure, by estimating the positive factor that reduces the negative factor that positively affects the achievement and enhancement of competitive advantage for companies. Also, sound management practices help companies obtain competitive prices and significantly reduce production costs, which gives the company a competitive advantage and achieves the maximum possible profit.

One of the most important factors in achieving competitive advantage is ensuring that the service or product is provided in the market at the appropriate time without any delay, by consulting experts specialized in advisory services in the company. There are also factors that affect achieving competitive advantage, such as obtaining sufficient information about the market, using the latest technologies in production, activating the advisory communications system, and adopting modern production methods to reduce production costs (Al-Abadi; Al-Otaibi, 2014, 220).

2.2.8 Determinants of competitive advantage:

Based on Porter's approach, the determinants of competitive advantage are represented by the political, economic and social conditions of the country, types of demand for products or services, related industries and support provided to the company and organizations, strategies followed and implemented by companies, as well as the structure and competitiveness. Also, the policy followed by the government, and the opportunity for external shocks. As this approach looks at the group of small industries and helps in knowing how to use the advantage in the appropriate way that develops the company. The determinants that affect competitive advantage include limited capital, support, and financial production factors and resources: human resources, knowledge sources, financial resources, capital resources and infrastructure, as well as the presence of inefficient and unskilled labor, lack of raw materials, unfavorable climatic conditions, lack of water resources, and lack of access to investment opportunities that help increase production. (Azra et al, 2021, 32)

Based on the above, the determinants that affect competitive advantage are represented by the current economic and production conditions of the country, capital and human resource determinants, technological and infrastructure determinants. Also, limited labor efficiency.

2.2.9 Dimensions of sustainable competitive advantage:**2.2.9.1 Improving organizational efficiency:**

Efficiency is a long-term goal in which the organization survives by understanding and absorbing multiple goals such as profit, productivity, people's satisfaction, and other goals. To measure efficiency, there are many indicators, including cost reduction, which can be achieved through many means, such as increasing the volume of operations to benefit from economies of scale, and the advantages of the experience curve, and through it controlling indirect operating expenses, and focusing marketing efforts towards current and targeted customers or achieving economic benefits from reducing resource costs. The more satisfied people are, the more their contributions to improving the efficiency of the organization increase. To develop innovations, it is necessary by introducing new ideas and methods that lead to high production, low cost, or added values to stand up to

competitors, reaching the desired state of success and survival for the organization (Okeke; et al, 2019, 132). 2.

2.2.9.2 Developing core capabilities:

Resources are the organization's inputs used in production processes, which are represented by capital, equipment, individual skills of workers, knowledge, patents, material resources, financing, and the talent of managers. They also include people, society, and organizational aspects. Resources in the organization are classified into tangible resources, which are assets that we can see and measure, such as production equipment and manufacturing buildings. Their value can be observed through financial statements, and intangible resources, which are assets deeply rooted in the organization's history, accumulate over time, and exist in a unique way that is difficult for competitors to understand and imitate. As for the capabilities that the organization possesses, they must be subject to specific standards called core capabilities, which are a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the organization (Xu; et al, 2023:105). 3.

2.2.9.3 Increasing market share:

The market is an important element in the marketing process because the market is the framework in which the price-determining forces operate. The market share measure is used to distinguish between winners and losers in the market. This measure is used to calculate the organization's share of sales in the market and compare it to competitors. Market share means: the ratio of the organization's sales to industry sales (Ida; et al 2022:21).

The organization follows several methods in order to increase its market share and thus achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. The organization seizes opportunities that lead to increasing its profits, and also contributes to increasing the value that has the greatest impact on suppliers and stakeholders, and is a basis for confronting competitors and achieving advantages that other organizations lack. Increasing market share is also linked to the organization's use of quantitative statistical methods that contribute effectively to strategic planning and developing sustainable competitive advantages (Al-Hamdani; Muhammad, 2009, 90).

2.2.9.4 Quality improvement:

Quality means that the product or service satisfies customer expectations, or obtains a product that is worth what was paid for. The quality of the product is one of the basic pillars that can ensure

customer loyalty and increase their consumption of the product or service. Quality assurance refers to all activities that are built within the production process to ensure that the final goods conform to the agreed requirements (prevention of defects) and quality control refers to the procedures taken to evaluate the acceptance of the product or service (defect detection) by customers (Avinash; et al, 2022, 121).

2.3 The relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage:

One of the most important requirements for the success of organizations is choosing or adopting an appropriate marketing strategy that achieves this success, survival and continuity, and developing the skills and capabilities of the organization so that its capabilities keep pace with modern developments in its work, and activating and planning strategically that is characterized by flexibility to keep pace with future changes, which helps create organizational loyalty. Achieving the organization's goals and enhancing its competitive capabilities is done in light of the chosen strategy that distinguishes the organization from other organizations in the labor market, provided that this strategy is practical and flexible. When there is moral and emotional loyalty, there is a balance between give and take. Loyalty begins to be built. Individuals with high organizational loyalty make more effort for their organizations, support their values, and continue working in them. Job stability is a requirement upon which organizational loyalty is based. Therefore, everyone should feel that they are continuing and remaining in the organization for life, and that the organization is a source of livelihood for everyone who works in it and is surrounded by a group of risks, the most important of which is strong competition in the labor market, and that the environment in which organizations operate in the present era is rapidly changing. (Al-Jafri, 2024, 15).

We find that there is a study that addressed the role of marketing strategies in achieving competitive advantage by applying it to Dal Food Company. The study reached several results, including: The company tends to continuously reduce direct industrial costs. The company works to reduce administrative costs to ensure competition. The company uses a policy of differentiation for its products to ensure rapid response to changing demands. The company is unique in its innovation in product design compared to competitors. The company works to develop pricing methods to respond quickly to market

variables with the aim of increasing sales volume. The company has a network of intermediaries spread geographically across the target markets. There is a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the marketing strategy (lower cost, differentiation, focus) and competitive advantage. (Abdullah; Muhammad, 2022, 1). The study aimed to know the relationship between marketing strategies and competitive advantage. It concluded that the marketing strategy has a large and clear role in achieving competitive advantage. (Al-Dosari; Kane, 2022). There is a study that sought to identify the role that marketing strategy can play in achieving the desired competitive advantage in the tourism sector. The study concluded that marketing strategy has a large and clear role in achieving competitive advantage in the tourism sector and tourism marketing in particular. It also showed that most tourism sector institutions apply marketing strategies at a high rate, while it was proven that applying marketing strategy with accurate ideas and methods leads to raising the performance of the tourism organization. On the other hand, it was confirmed that marketing strategies have a great impact in enhancing the competitive advantage in the tourism sector and are the main guarantor of the success of the organization's work. Also, methods of advertising products and reducing prices with high quality are a marketing strategy that creates a competitive advantage for the organization and helps empowerment in the market. (Al-Dosari, 2024, 1)

In light of the rapid changes and developments in the business environment, marketing strategy plays an important role, as marketing strategy has become a necessary need for economic institutions today in order to gain a competitive advantage to ensure their survival and continuity, and confront their competitors and internal and external environmental variables (Bouissa, 2018, 1). This research paper aimed to measure the impact of strategic marketing practices on raising the competitiveness of Algerian economic institutions. The study concluded that strategic marketing allows us to estimate its main role in raising the competitiveness of the institution (Al-Sameh; Issa, 2021, 1).

There is a study that aimed to identify the impact of marketing strategy on competitive advantage through electronic promotion. It was concluded that there is an impact of marketing strategy in its dimensions on competitive advantage. There are no differences in the impact of marketing strategy in its dimensions on competitive

advantage in its dimensions combined in light of the use of electronic promotion (Al-Rafad, 2019). There is a study that aimed to shed light on the role of marketing strategy in achieving competitive advantage in a sample of private colleges. The research concluded that there is a significant correlation between marketing strategy and competitive advantage. (Hassan, 2020)

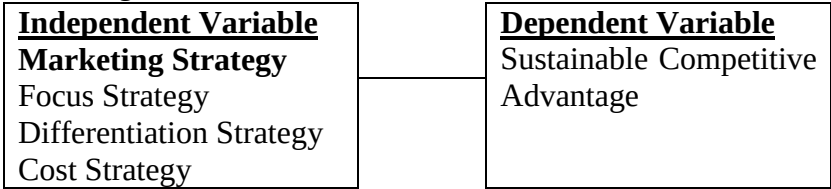
3. **Study Methodology**

3.1 **Introduction:**

The methodology is the link between what is achieved from the accumulation of knowledge, theory, and application, and the possibility of embodying it in business organizations.

3.2 **Study Model:**

This study tests the impact of marketing strategy on sustainable competitive advantage, and also examines the level of correlation between the independent variables (cost leadership, differentiation, focus), and the dependent variable sustainable competitive advantage. The impact of marketing strategies on sustainable competitive advantage:-



3.3 **Study hypotheses:**

There is a relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, and the following sub-hypotheses branch out from it:

1. There is a relationship between cost leadership strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.
2. There is a relationship between differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.
3. There is a relationship between focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

3.4 **Study community and sample:**

The study community includes all food manufacturing companies within Khartoum State, numbering (444) companies, and the sample size was determined at (120) companies.

3.5 Sample size:

The intentional sampling method was applied, and to achieve more objectivity in the study, (120) individuals were selected with a recovery rate of (95%), thus the number of questionnaires subject to the study was (114) questionnaires.

3.6 Study methodology:

The published literature related to the subject of the study was referred to from previous books and studies to prepare the theoretical aspect of the research, and the descriptive analytical method was used to collect data from the study variables, analyze them statistically, and reveal the relationship between these variables.

3.7 Study tools and sources of information:

Collected through books and previous studies divided into two sections:

A. Secondary sources: include books, previous studies, and scientific articles in order to build the theoretical aspect of the research.

B. Primary sources: are the questionnaire prepared by the researchers specifically to collect data and information related to the subject of the study and include a number of questions that reflect the objectives of the study and its questions to be answered by the sample members.

The five-point Likert scale was adopted in the third, fourth and fifth parts of the questionnaire, so that the answer is (strongly agree - 5 points), the answer is (agree 4 points), the answer is (neutral 3 points), the answer is (disagree 2 points), and the answer is (strongly disagree 1 point).

3.8 Statistical methods:

The following are a number of statistical methods used in the research using the Smart Plus path analysis program, which is one of the modern and important statistical programs in analyzing data and extracting results, to describe the characteristics of the study sample, describe its variables and test its hypotheses (Sayed; Bani Shamsah; Al-Latif; Hanani, 2011, 22).

3.9 Reliability and validity of the study tool:

Ensuring the validity and stability of the questionnaire:

To ensure the validity and stability of the questionnaire from the sample individuals from the study community to measure the extent of validity and stability of the statements, shown in the following table:

Table (1): shows the validity and stability of the questionnaire.

No.	dimension	Alpha
1	Cost leadership strategy.	.881
2	Differentiation strategy.	835.
3	Focus strategy.	862.
4	Sustainable competitive advantage.	959.

Source: Prepared by researchers from the field study, 2022.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Data presentation and analysis:

Sample response rate:

Data was collected from the field via a questionnaire directed to a sample of food industrial companies, where a questionnaire was distributed, (120) questionnaires were obtained from the total distributed questionnaires at a rate of (95%) and (6) questionnaires were not returned at a rate of (5%)

4.2 Exploratory factor analysis of the study model:

The statistical analysis program package (SPSS) was used to conduct the exploratory factor analysis process for the independent variable, where each of the phrases used to measure all the variables of the questionnaire was given, and Table (1) shows the results of the exploratory factor analysis process for the study consisting of a number of phrases (total number of phrases 20 phrases).

**Table (2) Exploratory factor analysis of the model
(sample size: 114)**

	focus	Differentiation	cost	Competitive Advantage
Focus1	0.816			
Focus2	0.898			
Focus3	0.935			
Focus4	0.876			
Focus5	0.827			
Differentiation1		0.772		
Differentiation2		0.848		
Differentiation3		0.804		
Differentiation4		0.847		
Cost1			0.761	
Cost2			0.837	
Cost3			0.793	
Cost4			0.836	
Competitive Advantage1				0.851

Competitive Advantage2				0.746
Competitive Advantage3				0.883
Competitive Advantage4				0.860
Competitive Advantage5				0.803

Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data 2022

4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This type is used to test hypotheses related to the existence or absence of a relationship between variables and latent factors. Confirmatory factor analysis is also used to evaluate the ability of the factor model to express the actual data set as well as to compare several factor models in this field. The matrix that includes these partial correlations was used to test the model using the AMOS 23 program (analysis of moment structure). The table shows the goodness of fit indicators.

To verify the degree of reliability, the questionnaire questions were tested based on the reliability scale, **as Table (3) below shows that the reliability coefficient (Crombach alpha)**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Cost Strategy	.881	0.919	0.935	0.768
Differentiation Strategy	.835	0.841	0.887	0.677
Focus Strategy	.862	0.903	0.901	0.765
Sustainable Competitive Advantage	.959	0.891	0.912	0.606

Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data 2022

4.4 Correlation and variance analysis:

Correlation analysis was used between the study variables in order to identify the correlation between the independent variables, the dependent variable, and the mediator. The closer the correlation degree is to the correct one, the stronger the correlation between the two variables. The lower the correlation degree is from the correct one, the weaker the relationship between the two variables. The relationship may be direct or inverse. In general, the relationship is considered weak if the value of the correlation coefficient is less than (0.30) and can be considered medium if the value of the correlation coefficient ranges between (0.30 - 0.70). However, if the value of the

correlation is more than (0.70), the relationship is considered strong between the two variables.

Table (4): Correlation analysis between the study variables:

	Focus Strategy	Differentiation Strategy	Cost Strategy	Sustainable Competitive Advantage
Focus Strategy	1.000			
Differentiation Strategy	0.803	1.000		
Cost Strategy	-0.025	0.171	1.000	
Sustainable Competitive Advantage	0.878	0.686	-0.048	1.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data 2022

4.5 Analysis of study hypotheses:

There is a positive statistically significant relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

Table (5): Using path analysis test for hypotheses

independent variable	Sustainable Competitive Advantage	sig
Focus Strategy	0.298***	0.000
Differentiation Strategy	0.055	0.076
Cost Strategy	0.221***	0.043
R ²	0.320	
Adjusted R ²	0.303**	
ΔR^2	0.320	
F change	29.500	

Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data 2022

4.6 The positive relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage

A multiple regression analysis was employed to examine how various components of marketing strategy influence sustainable competitive advantage. The Beta coefficient measured the anticipated change in the dependent variable resulting from a one-unit variation in an independent variable. The R² value evaluated the model's ability to explain the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. To test the overall significance of the regression model, the F-test was applied. A significance threshold of 0.05 was established to determine the relevance of the observed effects. The calculated

significance level was then compared to this threshold, with effects deemed statistically significant if the calculated value was below 0.05; otherwise, they were considered insignificant.

4.6.1 The first hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

Regression analysis of the first hypothesis revealed a statistically significant connection between the focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage. This is supported by the data presented in Table 5, which reports a beta value of 0.298 and a significance level of 0.000.

4.6.2 The second hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between Differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

Regression analysis of the second hypothesis revealed no statistically significant relationship between the differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage. As presented in Table 5, the beta coefficient was 0.055, with a significance level of 0.076.

4.6.3 The third hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between cost strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.

Regression analysis of the first hypothesis revealed a statistically significant connection between the focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage. This is supported by the data presented in Table 5, which reports a beta value of 0.221 and a significance level of 0.043.

Table (6): Summary of hypothesis testing:

Hypothesis	Proof Status
There is a statistically significant relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage.	
There is a positive relationship between focus and sustainable competitive advantage	Supported
There is a positive relationship between differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage	Not Supported
There is a positive relationship between cost strategy and sustainable competitive advantage	Supported
Level of support for the hypothesis	Partially Supported

Source: Prepared by the researcher from the field study data 2022.

4.7 Discussion of results:**4.7.1 The relationship between the differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage**

The results of the study showed that there is no positive relationship between the differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage. This is due to the fact that most of the companies studied do not care about distinguished performance to achieve the goal due to their inability to create value for the customer. This result differs from the study (Abdullah; Muhammad, 2022), which indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the marketing strategy (lower cost, differentiation, focus) and competitive advantage. It also differs from the study (Al-Dosari; Kane, 2022)

4.7.2 The relationship between the focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage:

The results of the study showed that there is a positive relationship between the focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, and this indicates the importance of the companies under study in dividing the market into sectors and targeting the appropriate and profitable market, and this result is consistent with the study (Hassan, 2020), whose results indicated that there is a significant correlation between the marketing strategy and competitive advantage. It also agrees with the study (Al-Rafad, 2019), whose results indicated that there is an effect of the marketing strategy in its dimensions on the competitive advantage

4.7.3 The relationship between the cost strategy and sustainable competitive advantage:

The results of the study showed that there is a positive relationship between the focus strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, and this indicates the importance of the companies under study in dividing the market into sectors and targeting the appropriate and profitable market, and this result is partially consistent with the study (Al-Dosari, 2024), whose results indicated that marketing strategies have a significant impact in enhancing competitive advantage in the tourism sector. I agree with the study (Al-Sameh; Issa, 2021), which indicated that strategic marketing has a major role in raising the competitiveness of the institution.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The result:

The study showed that there is no positive relationship between the differentiation strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, but there is a positive relationship between the (focus strategy, cost strategy) and sustainable competitive advantage.

5.2 Theoretical effects:

This study tested the relationship between marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage. This theoretical importance comes from knowing the role that marketing strategy and sustainable competitive advantage can contribute to workers in food industrial companies.

5.3 Applied effects:

Managers in companies should pay attention to marketing strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. According to the results of the study, it was shown that if the marketing strategy is implemented, it will in turn lead to achieving sustainable competitive advantage in food industrial institutions.

5.4 Recommendations:

1. The food industrial institutions under study should pay attention and increase efforts to adopt a differentiation strategy and provide an appropriate organizational environment to create continuous loyalty among employees.
2. The institutions under study should pay more attention to the focus strategy and cost strategy, which will create a sustainable competitive advantage for them.
3. The institutions under study should pay attention to employees and encourage incentive and promotion opportunities in order to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage.

5.5 Recommendations for future research:

1. Conduct studies on sustainable competitive advantage in different dimensions.
2. Conduct studies on the marketing strategy in all its dimensions in other industrial or service sectors.
3. Conducting comparative studies in the field of marketing strategies and competitive advantage in government and private sectors.

5. Bibliography List :

- Al-Awad, Muhammad bin Abdullah 2002, *Competitive marketing strategies: a new framework for a new concept*, Marketing Forum in the Arab World: Reality and Prospects for Development. Publisher: Arab Administrative Development Organization, UAE, Sharjah.
- Al-Bakri, Thamer Yasser 2011, *Marketing Management*, Fourth Edition, Ithraa Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan.
- Al-Ziyadat, Muhammad Awad; Al-Awamrah, Muhammad Abdullah 2012, *Marketing Strategies: An Integrated Perspective*, Dar Al-Hamed for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan.
- Al-Zoubi, Ali Falah 2009, *Marketing Management - A Strategic Applied Perspective*, Al-Yazouri Scientific House for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan.
- Hariz, Hashim; Boushmal, Abdul Rahman, 2014, *(Marketing as a Strategic Approach to Improving the Competitive Ability of the Institution)* - Publisher: Al-Wafa Legal Library - First Edition, Alexandria, Egypt.
- Porter, Micheal, what is strategy? *Harvard business review*, November – December, 1996.
- Xu, G., Liu, H., Zhou, K. et al. (2023), *Cause-related Marketing Strategy in Supply Chain Considering Quality Differentiation*. *J. Syst. Sci. Syst. Eng.*
- Abu Sitta, Ali Abbas 2013, *The impact of strategic management factors on competitive advantage - the role of marketing strategies as an intervening variable, an applied study in the telephone communications market in Sudan*, an unpublished doctoral dissertation in business administration, Sudan University of Science and Technology, Sudan.
- Al-Rafad, Moataz Muhammad Ranat 2019, *The Impact of Marketing Strategy on Competitive Advantage - The Moderating Role of Electronic Promotion: An Applied Study* King Abdullah II Center for Design and Development - KADDB, PhD Thesis, World Islamic Sciences and Education University.

- Al-Walid, Hilali 2009, *General foundations for building competitive advantages and their role in creating value: A case study of the Algerian mobile phone company*, Master's thesis, University of Mohamed Boudiaf - Faculty of Economics - 2008 - 2009 AD.
- Homdi, Hanaa 2013, *(Promotional methods and their role in achieving competitive advantage in small and medium enterprises: A case study of (Hassi, Wissal, Modren) institutions in Ouargla State*, Master's thesis, Faculty of Economics - University of Qasdi Ouargla.
- Sayed, Hanan Khaled Sidqi; Bani Shamsah, Hiba Nizam Hafez; Al-Latif, Bardis; Hanni, Muntaha Fahd 2011, *Senior Management Strategies and Their Impact on Competitive Advantage in Public Shareholding Companies*, Bachelor's Graduation Paper) - Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences - Department of Business Administration, An-Najah National University - Palestine.
- Tahtah, Masoud 2009, *The Importance of Marketing in Enhancing the Competitive Advantage of the Institution: A Case Study of an Economic Institution*, Master's Thesis, University of Hajj Lakhdar - Panta, Faculty of Economic Sciences - 2008 - 2009 AD.
- Yahyaoui, Razika 2013, *(Creativity as an approach to gaining sustainable competitive advantage in business organizations: A case study of Al-Hadna Dairy in M'Sila*, Master's thesis, Faculty of Economics, Commerce and Manag
- Abu Tabikh, Mr. Laith Shaker Mohsen; Al-Dumay, Alaa Farhan Talib 2012, *The role of total quality management in achieving sustainable competitive advantage: A survey study in the Iraqi General Insurance Company*, Journal of Financial and Accounting Studies, Volume 7, Issue 21, pp. 33-70.
- Al-Abadi, Sanaa Abdul Rahim Saeed; Al-Otaibi, Taghi Zidane Muhammad Nasser 2014, *(The impact of critical success factors in achieving sustainable competitive advantage: A field study of the opinions of a sample of managers in Al-Mu'tasim General Contracting Company for Construction*, Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences, Volume 20, Issue 80, pp. 204-235.
- Al-Bakri, Thamer Yasser; Khaled, Bani Hamdan 2010, *(The conceptual framework for sustainability and sustainable competitive advantage, simulating HP in adopting a sustainability strategy)* Academy for Social and Human Studies, Volume 5, Issue, pp. 3-11.

- Al-Bastanji, Ghaleb Muhammad 2010, External environmental factors determining the choice of marketing strategies in companies operating in the Jordanian construction sector, *Zarqa Journal of Research and Human Studies*, Volume 10, Issue 1, pp. 87-109.
- Al-Dosari, Ibrahim Adel Ibrahim 2024, The role of marketing strategy in achieving competitive advantage in the tourism sector (Riyadh region), *International Journal for Publishing Research and Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 56.: <https://www.ijrsp.com/volume/issue-37/15/>
- Al-Dosari, Ibrahim Adel Ibrahim; Kane, Chi Wei 2022, The Role of Marketing Strategy in Achieving Competitive Advantage in the Tourism Sector (Riyadh Region), *International Journal of Publishing Research and Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 37.: <https://www.ijrsp.com/volume/issue-37/15/>
- Al-Douri, Zakaria Mutlaq; Bousalem, Abu Bakr Ahmed, 2011, Intellectual capital as an approach to achieving competitive advantage Sustainable, the fifth international conference on intellectual capital in Arab business organizations in light of modern economies, held during the period: 13/14 December 2011, organized by: Faculty of Economics, Commerce and Management Sciences, Hassiba Ben Bouali University, Chlef - Algeria
- Al-Hamdani, Raad Adnan Raouf; Muhammad, Salem Hamid Hamdi 2009, Marketing knowledge and sustainability of competitive advantage: A field study in a sample of industrial organizations in Nineveh Governorate, *Journal of Development of Rafidain*, College of Administration and Economics, University of Mosul - Volume 32, Issue 100.
- Al-Jafri, Mazen Mahdi Eidros, 2024, The impact of marketing strategies on sales volume, a case study of the cement company, *Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, Volume 5, Issue 2: <https://doi.org/10.53796/hnsj52/31>
- Al-Sameeh, Abdulrahman Al-Zain Al-Nour; Issa, Murtada Yaqoub Abdullah 2021, Marketing Strategies and Their Impact on Achieving Competitive Advantage: The Mediating Role of Consumer Behavior: A Study on a Sample of Service Sector Institutions in South Darfur State, *Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, Volume 2, Issue 5: hnjournal.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/12

- Avinash Malshe, Douglas E. Hughes, Valerie Good, Scott B. Friend, (2022), *Marketing strategy implementation impediments and remedies: A multi-level theoretical framework within the sales-marketing interface*, *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, Volume 39, Issue 3.
- Azra, S.A.F. , Ummah, M.A.C. Salfiya): 2021), *IMPACT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON BUSINESS GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN SRI LANKA*, *SEUSL Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 6, No. 1
- Bou Issa, Riyadh 2018, *The Role of Marketing Strategy in Gaining Competitive Advantage*, *International Journal of Business and Economics*, Volume 5, Issue 3: pp. 282-287
- Eid Allah, Abdullah Ibrahim Abkar; Muhammad, Al-Naji Muhammad Abdul Rahim 2022, *The role of marketing strategies in achieving competitive advantage with application to Dal Food Company (2014-2019 AD)*, *Journal of Humanities and Natural Sciences*, Volume 3, Issue 5: *HNSJ*, 2022, 3(5); <https://doi.org/10.53796/hnsj357>
- Hassan, Sahera Mohammed 2020, *The impact of marketing strategy on competitive advantage through market knowledge: A survey study in private colleges in Baghdad*. *Dinars Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 19, pp. 295-326. : <https://search.emarefa.net/detail/BIM-1293565>
- Ibrahim, Bin Al-Tayeb, 2015, *The Role of Adapting Marketing Strategies in Supporting the Competitive Advantage of Economic Institutions Case Study: Cement and Derivatives Company in Chlef*, *Academy of Social and Human Studies*, Volume 7, Issue 1, pp. 27-36: <https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/73592>
- Ida D'Attoma, Marco Ieva,(2022)*The role of marketing strategies in achieving the environmental benefits of innovation*,*Journal of Cleaner Production*,Volume 342
- Jadou, Mukhallad Hamza, 2013, *The Role of Banking Marketing Strategies in Achieving Competitive Advantage: An Applied Study in a Sample of Iraqi Private Banks*, *Journal of Financial and Accounting Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 25.
- Ogazi, Tabitha Uchechi (2021), *mpact of Marketing Strategies on Sales Performance in Ebonyi State: A Case Study of Tedi Group Enterprise*, *International Journal of Science and Resear*, Volume 10 Issue 3.

Okeke, Uche Ndem: (2019): *EFFECT OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON SALES PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA*, The Asian Institute of Research, *Journal of Economics and Business*, Vol.4, No.1

Saleh, Qais Abdul Hadi; Bani, Basima Muhammad 2013, *The role of marketing strategies in supporting the dimensions of competitive advantage: An analytical study in a selected group of industrial companies in Najaf Governorate*, *Al-Ghari Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, University of Kufa, College of Administration and Economics, Issue 29, pp. 75-116