T.C.

ALTINBAS UNIVERSITY

Institute of Graduate Studies

Business Administration

THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN INSTITUTIONS
CASE STUDY: AL-QALAM UNIVERSITY/IRAQ

Ahmed HUSSEIN

Master of Science

Supervisor

Asst.Prof. Arzu GİRİŞKEN

Istanbul, 2021

THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN INSTITUTIONS CASE STUDY: AL-QALAM UNIVERSITY/IRAQ

by

Ahmed Mohammed Hussein Hussein

Business Administration

Submitted to the Institute of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

ALTINBAŞ UNIVERSITY

2021

The thesis titled "THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN INSTITUTIONS, CASE STUDY: AL-QALAM UNIVERSITY/IRAQ" prepared by Ahmed HUSSEIN was accepted as a Master of Science Thesis in Business Administration.

____

Asst.Prof. Arzu GİRİŞKEN

(Supervisor)

Thesis Defense Committee Members:

Prof.Dr. Ercan GEGEZ	Business Administration, Altinbas University	____________________
Asst. Prof. Cansu YILDIRIM	Maritime Business Administration, Dokuz Eylül University	____________________
Asst.Prof. Arzu GİRİŞKEN	Business Administration, Altinbas University	____________________

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Approval Date of Institute of Graduate Studies: ____/____/____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Ahmed Mohammed Hussein Hussein

DEDICATION

To my first homeland: my mother, and to the fighter in this life: my father.

To my great home: Iraq.

And to every person who loves his country.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people helped, supported, and advised me to complete this thesis.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor Professor. Ercan Gegez, he gave me a lot of her time and effort, and her observations, contributions, and guidance helped me in my scientific benefit.

I would also like to thank all my family, especially my father and mother, for their support, and to provide everything I want and need throughout my studies.

I would also like to thank the International Academy for Leadership and Development (IALD), which provided and is still making a lot of efforts for the Iraqi community. I appreciate all my dear colleagues in the academy.

Finally, I wish that this thesis will be useful for researchers in further study on fields related to this topic.

ÖZET

KURUMLARDA REKABET GÜCÜNÜN SAĞLANMASINDA STRATEJIK PLANLAMANIN ROLÜ
ÖRNEK OLAY: EL-KALAM ÜNIVERSITESI / IRAK

Hussein, Ahmed

Yüksek Lisans, İşletme , Altınbaş Üniversitesi

Danışman: Prof. Ercan Gegez

Tarih: Mart, 2021

Sayfalar: 81

Bu çalışma, stratejik planlama ile kurumlarda rekabet avantajı arasındaki ilişkiyi öğrenmeyi amaçlamaktadır. ayrıca stratejik planlama boyutlarının (iç çevre, dış çevre, misyon, hedefler) Irak'taki El-Kalam üniversitesinde rekabet gücü elde etme üzerindeki etkisinin kapsamını açıklığa kavuşturmak. Çalışma hedeflerine ulaşmak için bir anket hazırlanmış ve verileri analiz etmek ve hipotezleri test etmek için SPSS uygulaması kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuçları, kurumun iç ve dış çevresi ile rekabet avantajı arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu kanıtlamış ve boyut (misyon ve hedefler) ile rekabet avantajı arasında bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Araştırmacı, kurumlara stratejik planlar geliştirmelerini ve eğitim, motivasyon ve terfi yoluyla insan kaynaklarını içeren iç ortama ve rakipleri analiz ederek ve ekonomik ve demografik değişikliklere ve hükümet yasalarına uyum sağlayarak dış çevreye odaklanmalarını tavsiye eder ... vb. Ve etkilenen misyon ve hedeflerin kurumlarda rekabet avantajı sağladığını göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, üniversite sahipleri / yöneticileri, kurumun misyonunu daha da sağlamlaştırmak ve onlara sürekli olarak hedefleri hatırlatmak için daha stratejik planlama faaliyetleri uygulamak için mümkün olan her çabayı göstermelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Planlama, Stratejik Planlama, Rekabet.

ABSTRACT

THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETETIVINESS IN INSTITUTIONS
CASE STUDY: AL-QALAM UNIVERSITY / IRAQ

Hussein, Ahmed

M.Sc., Business Administration, Altınbaş University,

Supervisor: Prof. Ercan Gegez

Date: March, 2021

Pages: 81

This study aimed to know the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage in institutions, as well as to clarify the extent of the impact of strategic planning dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission, goals) on achieving competitiveness at Al – Qalam university in Iraq. To achieve the study objectives, a questionnaire was prepared, and the SPSS application was used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses. The results of the study proved that there is a statistically significant relationship between the internal and external environment of the institution and the competitive advantage, and it showed that there is relationship between the dimension (mission and goals) and competitive advantage. The researcher recommends institutions to develop strategic plans and focus on the internal environment that includes human resources through training, motivation and promotion, as well as the external environment through analyzing competitors and adapting to economic and demographic changes and government laws ... etc. And showed that the mission and goals affected on achieved the competitive advantage in institutions. Therefore, university owners / managers must make every possible effort to practice more strategic planning activities in order to further entrench the mission of the institution, and to remind them constantly of the goals.

Keywords: Planning, Strategic Planning, Competitive Advantage.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

ABSTRACT…………………………...…………………………………………………… viii

TABLE OF CONTENTS ……………..………………………………………………….. ix

LIST OF TABLES……………………..…………………………………………….... xii

LIST OF FIGURES……………………..……………………………………………..... xiii

1. **INTRODUCTION.. 1**

1.1. STUDY PROBLEM 1

1.2. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY.. 2

1.3. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY.. 2

1.4. THE HYPOTHESES OF STUDY.. 3

1.5. STUDY MODEL 3

2. THEORITECAL FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING 5

2.1. THE CONCEPT OF PLANNING 5

2.2. IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING 6

2.3. TYPES OF PLANNING 9

2.4. THE DEFFRINCE BETWEEN STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL PLANNIN 10

2.5. THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING...11

2.6. STRATEGIC PLANNING OBJECTIVES 13

2.7. STRATGEC OLANNING STEPS 14

2.8. STRATEGIC PLANNING MODELS 19

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPETITIVENESS 23

3.1. THE CONCEPT OF COMPETITVINESS 23

3.2. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPETITVINESS.. 24

3.3. COMPETITVINESS GOALS... 25

3.4. TYPES OF COMPETITVINESS.. 26

3.5. COMPETITVINESS ELEMENTS.. 29

3.6. COMPETITVINESS DIMENSIONS 29

3.7. COMPETITVINESS CHARACTERISTICS 30

3.8. DETERMINANTS AND SOURCES OF COMPETITVINESS.................................... 31

3.8.1. The Determinants of Competitiveness 31

3.8.2. Sources of Competitiveness 32

3.9. CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE QUALITY OF COMPETITVINESS...................... 33

3.10. THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETITVINESS.. 34

3.10.1. The Concept of Distinction 34

3.10.2. Distinguished Institution Specifications 35

3.10.3. Excellence Goals 36

3.10.4 The Importance of Planning and Strategic Planning with Competitiveness 37

4. METHODOLOGY …………………...……………………………….……………….……… 38

4.1. STUDY MODEL ……………………………..…………………………………..... 38

4.2. THE HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY ……….…………………………..………… 39

4.3. DATA COLLECTION ………………………..……………………………………… 39

4.3.1. Questionnaire …………….………………………………………………………… 40

4.4. STUDY POPULATION ……………………..……………………………………….. 40

4.5. THE STUDY SAMPLE ……………………..…………………..…………….……… 41

4.6. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES.. 41

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS 43

5.1. INTRODUCTION 43

5.2. DESPRICTIVE STATISTICS... 43

5.3. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS EFA 45

5.4. RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT (CRONBACH ALPHA TEST) 48

5.5. OUOTLIERS AND INFLUENCERS 49

5.6. MULTIVARIATE ASSUMPTIONS 50

5.6.1. Normality Distribution Assessment 50

5.6.2. Multi-Collinearity analysis 54

5.7. CORRELATION ANALYSIS 54

5.8. LINEAR AND HOMOSCEDASTICITY 55

5.9. REGRSSION ANALYSIS FOR HYPOTHESES TESTING 56

5.9. HYPOTHISIS RESULTS SUMMARY... 58

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION....... 59

6.1. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION 59

6.2. CONCLUSIONS 62

BIBLIOGRAPHY 65

(APPENDIX TITLE)……………...………….....……………………………………….... 70

LIST OF TABLES

Pages

Table 1: Demographic Q1, Gender 45

Table 2: Demographic Q2, Age 46

Table 3: Demographic Q3, Academic qualification 46

Table 4: Demographic Q4, Career Status 46

Table 5: Demographic Q5, Years of experience 47

Table 6: Exploratory Factor Analysis EFA 49

Table 7: Reliability Assessment (Alpha test) 52

Table 8: Skew and Kurtosis Results 55

Table 9: Multi-Collinearity Analysis Results 57

Table 10: Co-relation Matrix 58

Table 11: R Square Table 59

Table 12: ANOVA Table ……………………..………………………………………..……... 59

Table 13: The Regression Analysis for Hypotheses Testing Results 61

Table 14: Hypothesis Results Summary 62

LIST OF FIGURES

Pages

Figure 1: Study Model 4

Figure 2: Frequency Distribution of Demographic Data 47

Figure 3: (Cont.) Frequency Distribution of Demographic Data 48

Figure 4: Outliers and Influential Test 53

Figure 5: Normality Assessment 54

Figure 5: Liner Scatterplot ………………………...……………...…………………………… 59

1. INTRODUCTION

Most institutions try to remain in the market and fight for profits in order to achieve competition, which requires prosperity, survival, and development in the labor market. This is a common scenario for any market-based company, but in view of the other rivalry, this differentiation can not be achieved on its own. Organizations must, therefore, collaborate and study for all of their resources (Pearce & Robinson, 2018). The organization's management must be aware of and familiar with the conditions of the external environment surrounding the organization in order to determine the opportunities available to be exploited, and on the other hand to try to avoid the risks of which as much as possible, as well as research in the internal environment of strengths to develop them, and also to avoid points of weakness, and all of these procedures, is done through the strategic planning process. (Simerson, 2019)

The value of strategic planning for their long-term work and growth is acknowledged to all excellent organisations. This helps them decide how they can do what they wish to do and what they will do to achieve their objectives. And they can learn the situation in which they are situated by having to know the surrounding atmosphere and competitive organizations in the job market, and can devise tactics that meet their objectives. They need to focus on strategic management and stringent leadership (Ghafor, 2018).

Given the prominent influence of strategic planning and its precise role for all organizations, all types and sizes (productive and service institutions) in achieving competitiveness and maintaining them, therefore, the research attempts to push all organizations to increase interest in the planning process in their work, so the problem of research The main is the weak interest in the institutions in Iraq in strategic planning to reach competitiveness. In other words, does strategic planning achieve excellence for the institution?

1.1 PROBLEM OF STUDY

Institutions face significant obstacles in their path towards their goals and visions, and these challenges lie in the speed of changes in the fields of business and the entry of the world in work technology and many other problems (Karkhi, 2014). This requires the institutions to keep abreast of developments in the surrounding environment and to use the best methods and means to obtain the market share and reach the position that the establishment aspires to. From here we can formulate the problem of research as follows:

What is the role of planning in achieving enterprise competitiveness?

Several sub-questions falls under this question, as follows:

- What is the relationship of strategic planning to competitiveness in institutions?
- What is the role of the internal and external environment in achieving competitiveness?
- What is the role of the mission and goals in achieving competitiveness?
- Does Al-Qalam university rely on strategic planning to achieve its goals and its vision to reach market competitiveness?

And this research will undertake to answer all these questions through theoretical comments and practical application of the study.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

The importance of the study stems from the fact that strategic planning has become an imperative for any institution seeking success and achieving its goals, knowing that most of the leading institutions adopt this method of planning, in addition to that competitiveness has become the only way that enables institutions to create a position for them in the market, so research must In these two variables by highlighting each.

In this way, the importance of this study is represented in the impact that occurs to institutions if these institutions use strategic planning to identify the external environment and analyze the competitors' market, as well as to identify challenges and opportunities, in addition to knowing the strengths and weaknesses within the institutions.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

By doing this study, the researcher aims to achieve several basic goals, as follows:

1. Highlighting the extent of the organizations ’interest in strategic planning, whenever this helps in the organization’s mission to obtain a competitive advantage, which represents the organization’s performance of its activities more efficiently and effectively in a way that makes it unique and distinct in creating value that other competitors cannot achieve.

2. Identify the role of strategic planning in gaining competitive advantage by knowing the role of the internal and external environment in achieving competitiveness, as well as understanding the part of the mission and the goals to attain it.
3. Knowing the extent of leadership participation in the institution under study in developing the strategic plan and following up its implementation by the staff.
4. Presenting a set of conclusions and recommendations regarding strategic planning and the competitiveness for institutions in general and educational institutions.

1.4 THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Depending on the research questions, the main hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

Strategic planning has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at Al – Qalam university.

This hypothesis is divided into three sub-hypotheses:

H1. The external environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.

H2. The internal environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.

H3. Mission and goals have a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.

1.5 STUDY MODEL

This study relied on two variables: the independent variable is strategic planning through its dimensions of the external environment and the internal environment as well as the mission and goals, and the dependent variable is competitiveness. And the study model can be designed in this way that shows the independent variable with its three dimensions, and its effect on the dependent variable:

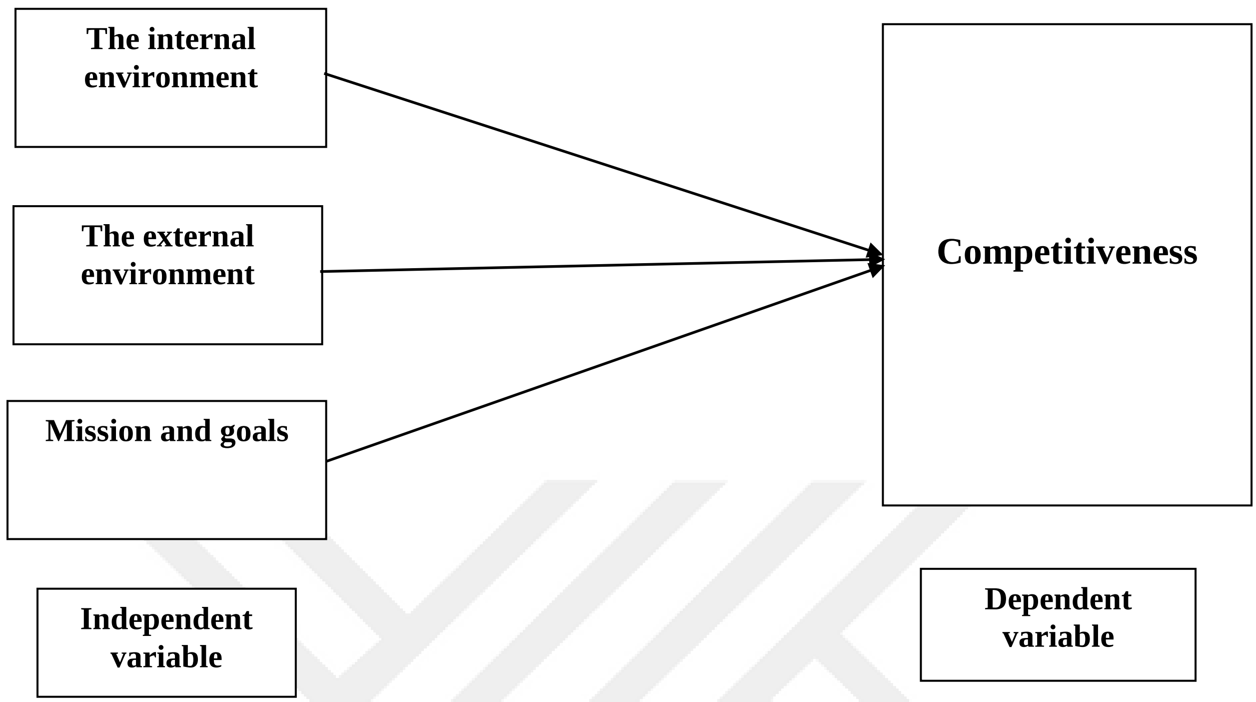


Figure 1.1: Study model

2. THEORITECAL FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING

Strategic management, large goals and transformation into projects, operational plans, and work programs are the basis of the life cycle of institutions. Institutions study their capabilities and needs to identify their distinctive points and negative points, and organizations work to adapt to the surrounding reality through Building long-term plans and strategies to exploit the opportunities and avoid the challenges and threats it faces in the internal environment and draw up its plans to achieve the distinguished and pioneering position in the field of work in which it exercises its activities. In the era of speed and globalization, strategic planning has become a prominent place and great importance compared to the past. Planning is concerned with what surrounds the institution and affects it from outside its borders, as well as the internal environment of the institution (Ghafor, 2018).

To get to know all this and more about planning and its importance in the progress and development of institutions, in this chapter, we will examine the concept of planning and methods and types and stages of planning, as well as the difference between strategic planning and tactical planning.

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF PLANNING

There are many definitions and concepts written by planning experts on their different cultures and perspectives, including concepts:

Planning is a scientific process by which a prior decision is made on what to do and how. It has essential administrative functions. Above all, the manager formulates an idea of how to work on a particular task. Thus, there is a relationship between planning, creativity, and innovation. But the manager must first set goals, and then the manager knows where to go. Planning seeks to understand where we are and where we want to go. Planning is what managers do at all levels. Requires decision-making because it involves choosing between available alternatives (Loureiro & Andrade, 2020).

Strategic planning is a model that helps the leadership of the organization to chart the organization's strategic image at the current moment, recognize the path it needs to go forward, and determine the strategic direction for the future. (Ramlal, 2019). Another way to look at it is the preparations Organized activities to build a need to do the best practicable job to fulfill the need, using a proactive strategy that helps you to identify and organize your operational strategies. Planning entails looking into the future and deciding what to do about it right now. This does not indicate that the strategy has been carried out exactly. Probably not. However, if you have a well-thought-out strategy, you would be more effective (Mosadeghrad & Isfahani, 2020).

Planning can be defined as what needs to be done and how to do it in light of the different levels within a specified period. Accordingly, decisions are made based on the vision of the institution, company, government, or country (Littman, 2019). Planning can be defined as the process by which programs and projects can be designed. This process is also developed in advance for effective and immediate response when problems occur. That is compatible with the changing conditions in the position. Planning is also defined as a mechanism that is capable of controlling all aspects of economic and social growth and involves coherence and collaboration between sectors of the national economy, so a thorough analysis is needed to ensure that all agencies engaged in planning are able to expand in a structured and organized fashion and at the necessary level, by means of expertise (Meyers & Hitt, 2018).

Planning is defined as a mental process. It examines the facts of the situation in question, should be linked to the experience and knowledge of the manager. The planner should be able to visualize the proposed model of activities and should deal with intangible things while putting his creative thinking into specific plans. (Balkar & Kalman, 2018)

Based on the above definitions, we can conclude that planning is an administrative function or one of the tasks of the manager and a component of the administrative process, and is work before the implementation of which is to determine the objectives to be achieved and the time required to do so and then develop a plan to achieve it. (Balkar & Kalman, 2018)

2.2 IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

Planning is undoubtedly essential because it tells us where we can go, it reduces the risk of uncertainty and provides direction by preparing forecasts. some benefits of planning are given below:

1. Planning provides guidelines: Planning ensures that goals are clearly defined so that they act as a guide to determine the decision to be made and in what direction. If the goals are

well defined, staff are aware of what the organization should do and what they should do to achieve those goals. Departments and individuals in the organization can work in coordination. If there is no planning, employees will work in different ways and differently, and some may work against others without their knowledge.

2. Planning reduces the risk of uncertainty: The planner may look ahead and predict improvements by planning. The graph displays how to deal with uncertain shifts and activities by defining activities to be completed in advance. We cannot eradicate shocks, changes, or incidents; however, we can anticipate them, and it is possible to establish management responses (Balkar & Kalman, 2018).
3. Planning reduces imbrication and wasteful activities: Planning is originally to coordinate the activities and efforts of departments and individuals. It helps avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Because planning ensures clarity in thinking and action, work goes smoothly without interruption. Ineffective and repetitive activities are minimized or eliminated; through planning, it is easier to detect deficiencies and take remedial action to address them.
4. Innovative concepts are assisted by planning: as preparation is the primary organizational function, new ideas should be formulated into written plans. This is the administration sector that is most difficult because it controls the course of all possible acts that contribute to business success and development. (Cheng, 2013)
5. Planning facilitates decision-making: Planning contributes to the manager's vision of the future and allows the manager the freedom to choose from several alternative work options. The manager should evaluate the alternatives and select the most applicable. Planning involves setting goals, predicting future situations, and assisting in making appropriate decisions.
6. Control requirements are defined by planning: Via preparation, coordination, recruiting, monitoring, and direction, the whole management process is based on achieving the chosen objectives. The role of preparation is to define the targets or standards on which the organization's and its employees' real success can be evaluated. By contrasting real results with a set of prescribed parameters (Anwar, Khan, & Khan, 2018).

Some researchers in management science say that the importance of planning is evident in the following points: (Soni, 2020)

1. Planning aims to achieve the greatest gain from these items, without wastefulness, through the economic activity of output elements.
2. Planning aims to develop and identify goals so that people recognize them, and the actions that lead to these goals need to be defined so that people adopt them and participate in achieving them.
3. Planning facilitates the task of leadership because the clarification of working methods, steps, and procedures makes people know what is required of them and how they can accomplish.
4. In all communication networks and all paths between administrators, individuals, managers, and subordinates, preparation promotes the communication mechanism where knowledge flows from priorities, strategies, and standards.
5. For the control process, the preparation process paves the way. It increases its usefulness by predetermining the parameters by which, after reaching them, the outcomes are measured and the circumstances under which these requirements are applied and approved.
6. Planning helps to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of managers, and various departments, to the extent that the departments, to achieve the objectives assigned to them.
7. Planning gives managers and subordinates a sense of trust, as they feel they are on a well-thought-out, specific program to perform their tasks.

And planning helps to choose the best and appropriate way to achieve the goals of the available alternatives, it also helps to reduce the degree of risk at work, by making predictions of the expected conditions, and it provides alternative plans to meet the variables conditions. Researchers believe that planning contributes to developing the skills and abilities of managers by developing plans and programs in this opportunity to master the use of their financial and human resources (Hayward, 2017).

Based on the above definitions, we can conclude that planning is an administrative function or one of the tasks of the manager and a component of the administrative process, and is work before the implementation of which is to determine the objectives to be achieved and the time required to do so and then develop a plan to achieve it

2.3 TYPES OF PLANNING

The organization usually selects a kind of planning that is appropriate to the nature of its work, serves its purposes and achieves its objectives, so it has varied planning patterns to cover the different needs of organizations and countries

Sectors and types of planning include:

1. Planning by impact size, including:

   - Strategic planning: It is the type of planning that has influential and fundamental results on the organization's future, and the effects of that are not apparent in the short term, rather they are always in the long term, for example, facing competition from institutions that work in the same field, or opening New production lines ... etc.

   - Tactical planning: It is one of the stages of strategic planning. This planning clarifies the steps of the operations that achieve the strategic plans and gives them movement and flexibility. Tactical plans are developed to achieve results in the short and medium term, for example: making a primary product. (Rumelt, 2011)

2. Time - based planning:

   - Long-term planning: It is a planning period of five years or more, perhaps ten years or twenty or twenty-five years, depending on the future need of the institution.

   - Medium-term planning: The duration of this type of planning over a while of more than one year and less than five years, and it is noted that it is neither short nor long and based on its results can make the necessary adjustments to the long-term plan.

   - Short - term planning: This type is specific to those plans that cover periods not exceeding one year. Examples include financial plans represented in budgets, annual programs (Halayqa, 2018).

3. Planning based on function:

   - Political Planning: It is the planning that deals with the scientific competencies of the State, such as foreign policy, domestic and legislative, and the distribution of responsibilities and issues of sovereignty and others.

   - Economic Planning: Planning is concerned with economic affairs such as the development of national income and various commercial sectors and others.

- Social Planning: This means planning for the event of the family and its members and empowering them economically, politically, and socially by expanding education, industry, health, social welfare, and upgrading public services for social welfare. (Nadikattu, 2020)

- Manpower Planning: It is the planning that addresses the workforce issues starting from the identification of needs and construction and preparation and qualification for the development and stability, and usually, this type of planning is linked to other plans developed by the institution.

- financial planning: It is the planning that draws the fiscal, monetary and credit policies of the organization, and provides them with access to the necessary funds, as well as the means to invest their money in various fields. At the state level, it sets the monetary and credit plan for the government, and how to manage public funds in line with the requirements and determinants of funding sources.

- Production Planning: This section of planning is concerned with production issues such as raw materials, sources, quality, flows, type of production, quantity, quality, number of qualified workers according to production lines, adequacy of production lines, development plans, etc.

4. Planning based on the organizational level:

   - Organizational and strategic planning: It is concerned with the senior management, administrative bodies, and the executive director.

   - Action Plans and Programs: Supervisory departments and committees are involved with these programs and plans and are shared by experts and staff in the preparation.

   - Personal planning: It is carried out by individuals in the form of programs and schedules, which may be daily or weekly, and so on. Set by the individual to carry out part of the tasks assigned to him within the general plan of the department or senior management. (Collins, 2011).

2.4 THE DEFFIRENCE BETWEEN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TACTICAL PLANNING

There are several fundamental differences between tactical planning and strategic planning:

1. Strategic planning is usually developed by senior management, while tactical planning is developed by lower control.
2. All the facts on which strategic plans depend are often more complicated than all the effects on which tactical plans depend.
3. The third difference between strategic planning and tactical planning is the amount of detail in the final plans, where the strategic plans rely mainly on predicting the future. In contrast, tactical plans rely on known circumstances that exist within the organization (Nadikattu, 2020).

Dr. Tariq Al Suwaidan mentioned that there are many differences between tactical planning and strategic planning, but the most critical difference is in the duration of the plan. Tactical planning does not exceed three years, while strategic planning takes five years or more. Also, strategic planning is more general than operational planning. (Suwaidan, 2014)

2.5 THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning is considered one of the critical and essential tools that work to ensure the continuity of the institution in the performance of its role, by contributing to solving the problems facing the institution by identifying its internal capabilities, and what is available from the factors of strength, weakness, opportunities and threats and how to deal with each of them and mainly the expectations of the target groups. (Mohammed M. a.-A., 2017)
And there are a lot of definitions mentioned by the authors and experts in planning, and we will discuss some of them. Strategic planning is long-term planning that puts senior management in and focuses on the organization as a whole. (Zuckerman, 2005). Planning is a complex process that focuses on the future, which is not clear. Through planning, the manager can lead the organization to find solutions to answer the questions asked about problems that hinder success. And (David, 2019) believes that strategic planning is an integrated process to identify the mind of the owners of the institution regarding the justifications for its establishment and survival and

what they want to achieve through it, when, and how? Planning is how you can answer various questions on the organization about what to do in the future, when, and how.

"A decision-making process that begins with the institution's survival and is focused on data and resources to chart the organization's future, and seek to unify and coordinate skills and capabilities, offer metrics to evaluate outcomes, and establish a framework for input," according to Peter Drucker (Halayqa, 2018).

Other aothurs describe strategic planning as one of the four institutional mechanisms in which all other tasks are centered, and involves decision-making that clarifies the organization's future, and it relies on the institution's data and knowledge to identify the goods it can strive to generate and accomplish a particular vision..

Strategic planning is the type of process that draws the long path of the organization, and this planning depends on the internal and external variables of the institution, and defines the means and tools that serve the goals and vision, as well as methods of competition with other parties. This planning determines where the work will proceed and where it will arrive, and clarifies the goals and vision that the institution aspires to, and how to reach those goals (Halayqa, 2018).

There are those who see that preparation is a mechanism linked to the assessment of the external world of the institution's priorities by relying on certain key criteria:

1. Searching and accessing data and results about the reality and the past, and anticipating what the institution will reach in the next
2. Identify the opportunities and challenges surrounding the institution.
3. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses within the institution.

Then after that, strategic planning here is a method that leads to the development of strategies for the company as a whole in various fields (Cheng, 2013).

2.6 STRATEGIC PLANNING OBJECTIVES

There is more than one opinion about the goals of strategic planning, but they crystallize around specific core points, as follows:

1. Establish and guide the future directions of the company and define its course of action.
2. Formulating the mission and goal of the company and writing its priorities in a manner that meets future aspirations and market share.

3. Endowing the means and strategies of success growth and achieving the institution's aspirations (Hunger & Wheelen, 2018).
4. Trust that the strategies set by the institution have a direct relationship with the goals of the higher management and the individuals of the organization.
5. Unify sources and direct research that raises the level of the institution’s performance and determines the market share.
6. Ensuring the achievement of the interrelationship between the mission of the organization, its goals, and the policies, rules, and work systems that are being set.

And some researchers believe that strategic planning is built to achieve many goals, the most prominent of which are the following:

1. Reorganizing the level at which the company will be and analyzing the competitive environment that the company will face after rearranging it.
2. A comprehensive view of the economic factors during the next period, which is not less than five years.
3. Determine the expected profit rates and support the marketing direction of the company or institution.
4. Review the needs and requirements of customers with what the company provides (first-hand), and review the tasks and work of the organization, according to the dimensions of overall quality.
5. The importance of using technology to raise the productivity of the company and compete with companies in the labor market, because technology today is one of the most important criteria for competition and progress (Bryson, 2011).

According to (Langslow, 2018) , she summarizes the goals of strategic planning with two essential points:

1. It helps to facilitate communications and partnerships and direct senior management to priority topics.
2. Define the vision and goals clearly and formulate and develop the institution's mission and its various strategic goals in an accurate scientific manner.

2.7 STRATEGIC PLANNING STEPS

There are many authors specialized in strategic planning, they divided the stages of the strategic planning in different ways, but these steps can be broadly categorized into five stages, and they are with an explanation of each step:

1. **Strategic Vision:** The institution's destination and vision are dictated by the targets it aims to accomplish in the future, the market share it wants to win, and the team it wants to assemble. Furthermore, there should be no dispute between the institution's vision and its mission and objectives (Jaher, 2019).

   The existence of a long-term vision that is based on foundations in strategic planning in terms of relying on the principles of analysis of the market, the external environment, the internal environment of the institution, the analysis of competitors and the provision of the information necessary to reach the goals, all of this leads to reaching the required market and achieving the profits that it targets Enterprise. A team specialized in formulating long-term plans and a strategic vision must be provided to ensure the use of scientific approaches and modern methods in the planning process, and the team must take sufficient time for the purpose of providing information about competing institutions and analyzing the market and the organization to ensure access to a mature plan that achieves results.

   Therefore, the strategic vision reflects the aspirations that the Foundation seeks to reach in the future to achieve distinction from others. Therefore, the vision controls the strategic practice in the organization, as building it on the internal and external intelligence that gives a future picture of the customers 'needs and competition shortcomings, risks, opportunities, and skills that can be developed leads to drawing new features for the markets and possible executive approaches, which represents a framework of practice. The strategy. Moreover, the practice of strategic vision allows the institution to know its trends as well as understanding the elements that enable it to reach its goal from those elements that impede it on that.

   In this context, points out that an adequate strategic vision must contain the following specifications:

   1. Fictional: that is, the image by which the future can be imagined.
   2. Focus: clear and focused efforts and resources.

3. Flexibility: It is general, comprehensive, and vital, allowing it to be used as a basis for specific initiatives.
4. Rooted: Its origins are derived from the foundation’s past and present.
5. Collective: All employees participate in writing it.
6. The ability to communicate: It is characterized by linguistic ease so that it can be explained and related to its meaning to most people and communicate through them.
7. Attractiveness: attracts the hearts and minds of the customer groups by expressing their ambitions and aspirations (Loureiro & Andrade, 2020)

2. **Strategic Mission**: The life of any institution is connected to the specific task it aims to accomplish, and the mission derives its basic constituents from the principles carried out by its founders and from the environment in which the institution and the society to which it belongs, such that the mission is the object or justification for the existence of the institution in a particular situation, that is, a written text which reflects the institution and the society to which it belongs.

There are a set of characteristics that must be met in a good mission, the most important of which are the following:

1. To reflect the goals and objectives that the Foundation seeks to achieve.
2. The mission should include real data about the institution, without exaggerating it.
3. The mission must be achievable.
4. That the mission serves as a guide and a general framework for managers through which to take different strategies within (David, 2019).

We find that a consensus among most researchers is that the components of the institution's mission are as follows:

1. The field of work of the institution: It is assumed that the area in which you intend to be active in the institution is determined flexibly and clearly that allows for the subsequent development.
2. The clients of the institution: The customers of the organization represent the primary source of income in it, and therefore the organization is supposed to determine these

customers, not in the immediate perspective, but with the possibility of increasing this number.

3. Products and services: The mission of the organization focuses on the nature of the main products and services that are provided in the markets and meets the customers' needs.
4. The Corporation's Markets: Where does the Corporation compete, and in what markets is this competition?
5. Technology: Technology expresses a general framework that represents the technical or knowledge aspect of the organization.
6. Suppliers: the supply has become special importance due to the scarcity of supply sources and the high prices of the necessary materials. Therefore, it is important to give the suppliers the concern and care within the framework of the organization's directions and mission (Nadikattu, 2020).

3. **Strategic Goals:** The role of the goals is to clarify the direction that the institution is going to, and through the objectives, the method and nature of the interaction between the institution and the external environment represented by the opportunities and challenges can be measured. One of the criteria for evaluating institutions and knowing the extent of their performance development. Therefore, institutions must set goals formulated in a scientific and systematic way on which to base plans and evaluation.

   It is defined as the results of activities carried out in a highly organized manner, and it expresses the intention of the planner, to move from the current position to the targeted position, which qualitatively increases in terms of the ability to accomplish from the current position, and sets goals usually what the organization should do? And when is this act?

The distinct goals have several characteristics, as follows:

a. To be precise, measurable, and verifiable.
b. The clarity of the sub-goals must be compatible, complementary, and non-contradictory to achieve the main goal.
c. Flexibility: The objectives are characterized by the ability to achieve adaptation to unexpected changes in the organization's business environment.

d. Understanding: Goals should be formulated in words as easy and understandable as possible by the individuals who will achieve them (Wu, Zhang, & Luo, 2020).

4. **Strategic Assessment of The Surrounding Environment:** It is the method by which the internal environment of the institution, represented by its strengths and weaknesses, is identified, as well as the external environment (opportunities and challenges). (Mintzberg, Lampel, & Ahlstrand, 2015)

   (Hussein, 2019) defined strategic analysis as the necessity of environmental analysis as a basic necessity for strategic planning and not relying on the past, because the variables are growing at dynamic speed, and what is an opportunity now may disappear tomorrow, and what are the strengths that may turn into weaknesses and vice versa, and this analysis can lead To change in the institution's mission, or one of its goals or in some of its activities and strategies, or it may enhance the existing strategy of the institution and maintain the same mission.

   The strategic analysis includes the analysis of the internal and external environment of the institution, as follows:

a. Internal environment analysis: The Foundation is carrying out a strategic analysis of the internal environment to determine its current strengths and weaknesses, and to identify future strengths and weaknesses and take two forms:

   - Strengths: These characteristics give the institution excellent capabilities that enhance the elements of strength and contribute to the completion of work with high skill and expertise, which must be relied on mainly.

   - Weaknesses: It is the situation that makes an organization unable to compete or compels it not to reach competitive advantage and, therefore, must work to strengthen it and turn it into strengths. (Lafley & Martin, 2013)

b. External environment analysis: The external environment refers to all the external factors that affect the institution, directly or indirectly, when the institution carries out its activities, which affects its decisions taken to achieve its goals. It also takes two forms:

   - Opportunities: those conditions are surrounding the institution in a specific place in the market and at a particular time, and the organization can take advantage of these conditions to achieve its strategic goals.

- Threats: These are potential events that, if they occur, will cause risks or negative impacts to the organization. (Littman, 2019)

5. **The strategic choice:** It is the stage that follows the environmental analysis process, which is the reference in the sequential and interrelated process, in which strategic alternatives are presented, and the best ones are identified according to criteria determined by the option process itself, which mainly depends on the results of the environmental analysis mentioned in the previous steps. (Karkhi, 2014)

A strategic alternative is chosen that has the following characteristics:

a) Which depends on the strengths of the institution.
b) Which helps to overcome the weaknesses of the institution.
c) which helps in taking advantage of the opportunities created by the environment and achieves its desired goals.
d) which helps reduce the impact of environmental threats.
e) Which is commensurate with the resources and capabilities of the institution. (David, 2019)

2.8 STRATEGIC PLANNING MODELS

Some say that the lack of common ground and unified agreement among management experts on a unified model for strategic planning is one of the big problems in strategy. Until it becomes clear how correct this opinion is, some strategic planning and management models for some researchers in management should be reviewed and examined.

The nature of strategic planning varies according to the quality of the organization and the responsibility for its development that is based on it, and we mention some of the current models and are as follows:

Harvard Model: This model is considered one of the first models that presented the topic of strategic management and has benefited from the components of most of the early models that preceded it, and the model calls for identifying the resources available to the organization and determining its goals and policies and then creating a balance between strengths and weaknesses in the external environment and the strengths and weaknesses in its internal environment. According to this model, the strategy is adopted in two phases:

a. The first: the strategic direction stage of the organization.
b. Second: the implementation stage.

Steiner Model: Strategic planning processes start from the planning phase under this paradigm, which focuses on the five major elements, which are external parties, internal management, database, appraisal and review. The process of preparation of the programme, which involves setting targets, strategies and executive programs, then continues, as it is split into two categories of programs (medium and short term), followed by execution. (Rowley, Dolence, & Lujan, 2017)

Hoshin Model: This model focuses on values, links strategic and operational plans, and singles out this for alternative scenarios, and recommends modifying the plan when needed. The Hoshin model for building the strategic plan boils down to the following processes:

a) Identify key issues for the organization.
b) Set strategic goals.
c) Strategize.
d) Distribution of sub-goals according to strategic goals.
e) Benchmarking for performance evaluation. (Darbi, 2012)

Howe Model: This model addressed the strategic planning process and included the following components:

a) Identify opportunities and threats in general.
b) Analyzing the capabilities and skills available in the company.
c) Analyzing the capabilities and skills available in the company.
d) Evaluating alternatives and strategic options.
e) Determine the values of senior management.
f) Identify opportunities, goals, and objectives.
g) Define strategy, policies, and programs.
h) Define strategy, policies, and programs.
i) Make strategic decisions. (Cheng, 2011)

Power and Colleagues Model: This model examined the strategic management process and included the following details:

a) Environmental examination - external environment.
b) Organizational analysis - internal environment.
c) Set strategic goals.
d) Creating and developing available strategic measures and options.
e) Strategy evaluation and testing.
f) Strategy implementation.
g) Control of the strategy. (Karkhi, 2014)

Bowman And Colleague Model: This model is concerned with strategic management and planning, and includes the following stages:

a) Diagnosis and examination of the company's current strategic position.
b) Analyze and define conditions in the current and future - internal, external, and internal environment.
c) Analyzing and identifying subjective abnormal circumstances, including many social, psychological, political, organizational, cultural, and corporate values.
d) The strategic change required to introduce the existing strategy of the company.
e) The start of a new cycle to determine the strategic position of the company (Mosadeghrad & Isfahani, 2020)

Daft Strategic Planning Model: It includes the following steps:

a) Evaluate the current situation for each of the mission, goals, and strategy.
b) Examination and analysis of the external environment.
c) Examination and analysis of the internal environment.
d) Outlines strategic external factors: opportunities and threats.
e) Internalization of strategic factors: strengths and weaknesses.
f) Define the new message, new goals, and objectives.
g) Formulating and shaping strategies: company strategy, business strategy, and career strategy.
h) Applying strategies. (David, 2019)

Greenly Model: And it contains the following points in some detail:

a) Environmental analysis, which consists of three sub-components:
    1. Strategy review and examination.
    2. Determine the competitors and competitive position.
    3. Determine the structure of the market.
b) The main thrust planning consists of three sub-components:
    1. Organizational message.
    2. Organizational goals.
    3. Values and expectations as factors affecting the mission and goals.
c) Strategy planning consists of three sub-components:
    1. Strategic alternatives.
    2. Choose a strategy.
    3. Structural impacts as factors affecting the identification of alternatives and choice of strategy.
d) The implementation of the strategy consists of three sub-components:
    1. Operating strategies. ·
    2. Control and effectiveness. ·
    3. Managing the human component as influencing operational and control strategies.
    4. Implementing the approved strategy. (Zoibi, 2014)

DPT Model: It contains the following details and steps:

1. The goals of the company's business areas.
2. Identify problems and opportunities in both the current and future internal environment.
3. Diagnosing problems and opportunities and their effects on the company.
4. Propose and provide possible strategies (methods) to deal with problems and opportunities.
5. Analyzing the possible results of the proposed work programs.
6. Choose the appropriate alternative.
7. Establishing implementation programs and estimated budgets for the chosen alternative
8. Leading application operations through communications and motivation.

9. Measuring performance against targets.
10. Note the significant trends and the possibilities of failure to reach both the internal and external environment of the company.
11. Repeat the cycle for all or some of the previous steps or components. (Kahveci, et al., 2012)

Pfeiffer's Model: is summarized by saying that strategic planning is the key to the organization's development and success, and calls for adopting the practical method in that, which includes two pages: (environmental auditing and examination and considerations), and the achievement of these two pages on steps to accomplish the strategic plan is carried out in many stages, as follows:

1. Plan - Strategic Planning.
2. Environmental examination.
3. Review the values.
4. Maintenance and formation of the mission.
5. Strategic Business Modeling.
6. Performance review.
7. Gap analysis.
8. Emergency planning.
9. Integration of career plans.
10. Strategy implementation.
11. Application considerations. (Mintzberg, Lampel, & Ahlstrand, 2015)

In this model, strategic planning processes continue with the planning phase, which focuses on the five core components, which are external parties, internal management, database, evaluation and analysis. The program planning process, which includes the setting of goals, plans and executive services, then begins, as it is separated into two program groups (medium and short term) (Balkar & Kalman, 2018).

3 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPETITIVENESS

The global competition forced countries and public and private organizations to focus on achieving competition and rethinking strategies in production and providing services, and how to invest them for their various resources in order to achieve their goals with quality, excellence, and low cost, and to assess their location among competitors to achieve continuous superiority in their competitive position (Zaghdar, 2018) . Therefore, in the fifties and early sixties of the twentieth century, in the countries of Western Europe, Japan and the United States of America, where competition was the goal (purpose) of a general business plan, the idea of competitiveness originated and gained further focus from academics and scholars in other countries or organisations. (Bhatt & Grover, 2014)

3.1 THE CONCEPT OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

In the world of business management, the idea of competition is a true breakthrough because it lets the company attain success and constant dominance over its rivals. And it can be characterized by implementing a particular strategic approach, whether it comes to cost leadership strategy, as an advantage or feature of dominance that the company achieves making the lowest (Anwar, Khan, & Khan, 2018).

The competitive edge can be described as what can be achieved and formulated by the company from the business strategies that contribute to the market share it needs to gain over a certain period of time. This can be accomplished by spending the human capital available and the raw materials that the organization holds on the basis of plans drawn up in advance by the upper management of the company. (Saeidi, Sofian, Saeidi, Saeidi, & Saaeidi, 2015)

Michael Porter said competition comes primarily from the value that a company can produce for its consumers so that it can take the form of cheaper pricing compared to the prices of rivals with similar benefits or by providing special commodity benefits that compensate for the price increase that exists.

There is another view of competition because it is a talent, technology, or a different resource that helps the company to create more consumer values and rewards than the competitors offer and promotes its differentiation and distinction from those competitors from the point of view of consumers who supports this. Distinction and distinction because it provides them with more benefits. Values that outperform other competitors. Business competitiveness is often known as an advantage or a part of it. (Taylor M.L, 2015)

The concept of competitiveness illustrates an organization's desire to formulate and enforce strategies that help it to function better in the same process as other organizations. Thus, something that is distinctive to the company may be called competitive. Competitiveness is the organization's desire to produce something special and distinct from other rivals, and it's all about it. (Krajňáková, Navikaitė, & Navickas, 2017)

It can be claimed that competition is the ability of the organization to outperform its competitors by providing a high-quality commodity at the lowest cost and by providing value to consumers who satisfy their desires compared to competitors, which allows the organization to develop its activities, its market share, improve its profits and ensure its survival in the market. That is, if it has the potential to generate demand for its improvement by taking a competitive advantage, then one might assume that the firm has a competitive advantage. (Bakr, 2016)

3.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPETITIVENESS

What distinguishes one of the institutions from others in the field of work in recent decades is the extent of the interest of these institutions in the manufacture of the brand for their products and achieving the forefront in action, and the importance of competitiveness can be limited to the following points:

1. It gives a qualitative and quantitative advantage over the competitors. It thus allows it to achieve high results that make the organization superior in performance or in the value of what it offers to customers or both.
2. It adds to the positive impact of understanding the organization's customers and other clients and motivates them to move forward in developing the agreement. (Salem, 2019)
3. The fact that the competitive advantage is characterized by continuity and renewal in this matter allows the institution to follow the development and progress in the long run.
4. Given that the competitive positions are based on the organization's resources, capacity, and fields, it gives dynamic movement to the organization's internal operations.
5. Create value for clients who satisfy their needs, maintain loyalty, and enhance and improve the organization's brand and image.

6. Achieve a market share for the corporation and high profitability, to ensure survival and continuity in the market.
7. Achieving strategic distinction in the care of hearing and the consumer from competitors, with the possibility of excellence in capital, skills and strategies that have been created considering a highly competitive world.

3.3 COMPETITIVENESS GOALS

All profit and non-profit organizations work to reach global competition, and each institution has its own goals, some of which are to achieve the most significant amount of profits. Some of them help many people, and from them have social and political goals and aspirations .... etc. But all of these institutions all want to achieve competitiveness because competition has many goals, including the following:

1. To be of a degree of magnitude that enables the organization to achieve significant benefits or benefits in the event of entering the market or a specific sector of the market.
2. To be continuous and relatively continuous, meaning that it cannot be imitated easily by competing organizations.
3. The effect should be significant and noticeable.
4. The value of competencies or resources must be valuable for the institutions. After all, it allows the creation of a winning opportunity in the contract because it contributes to creating the value of the final product (ALfarra, 2018).

In particular, there is a set of competitiveness conditions: (Naima Abbas Al-Khafaji, 2014)

1. Scarcity: Resources must be scarce so that only a few institutions can obtain practically or only one institution. In addition to scarcity, limited or rare resources are not intended, but the process of transferring them is not possible for everyone.
2. Durability: The competencies are the most permanent, and existing resources can be replaced by new future support, which serves and helps extend the life of the competency.
3. Inability to imitate: imitation or difficulty requires, many institutions resort to achieving competitiveness by owning a patent to register the latter with the competent authorities, which is called industrial intellectual property rights.

4. Non-substitution: That is, the lack of a comparable resource that substitutes it and since, under this part, human resources come from among the uncommon resources that are not available for redistribution because, if a human resource replaces it, the comparative advantage arising from human resources will not proceed with us. (Bhatt & Grover, 2014)

3.4 TYPES OF COMPETITIVENESS

The economist Porter has relied on his classification of competitiveness on the value it brings to the buyer, which is the advantage of lower cost and the advantage of excellence. And we will explain to them as follow:

1. **Lower Cost Advantage:**

It means the ability of the organization to design, manufacture, and market a product that is less expensive compared to competing institutions, and that leads in the end to achieve higher returns. To acquire a lower cost advantage, it is based on monitoring the factors of cost development, and the organization is not able to gain the advantage of the lower cost unless it reaches reasonable control over these factors compared to other competitors. The process of monitoring the elements of cost development is as follows:

a. Volume control: It is understood that the growth in volume contributes to a reduction in the two situations, but the optimal size must be taken into account in order to achieve it with the estimated costs for all the activities needed, in the sense of the targeted market, in order to prevent any discrepancies that might occur from the failure to absorb one or more undertakings of this size, resulting in a pressure that increases the expense of the undertakings of this size. (Yasaa, Giantaria, Setinib, & Rahmayantic, 2020)
b. Education monitoring: It is possible to learn from reducing the relative costs of the institution, and if it can gain the exclusive ability of a learner, this constitutes a valuable opportunity to own advantage through costs, especially in the basic activities that produce the sensitive value of learning. Therefore, knowledge needs to be improved and its goals set, and this is done by comparing the degree of learning at the institution with the established standards in the sector.
c. Linking approach: the organization can improve its position in the field of costs when it becomes aware of the links that exist between the productive activities on the one hand and

then work to exploit them on the other side. With the suppliers and distribution channels to take advantage of the existing links, but in practice, to share the profits resulting from these links with them.

d. Control of intersections: This occurs if two or more units participate in the same value-producing activities, and this enables the organization to reduce its costs compared to competitors.
e. Integration Control: Integration sometimes provides essential possibilities for cost reduction, whether for the creation or forwards. (Radwan, 2015).

2. The Advantage of Excellence:

The organization is distinguished from its competitors if it can achieve unique properties in the form of a complex in the value desired by the customer and delves into them. This feature gives excellent capabilities to the institution that enables it, especially about the ability to sell more quantities of its products with achieving a more considerable margin of profit because of the relatively higher price, as this feature lies in the institution of forming a kind of loyalty to customers. The latter is the most important result of this feature Because it means its continuity. Loyalty enables an organization to continue producing, selling, and making profits in comparison to competitors. To obtain this advantage, a group of factors called distinctions is required. And as follows:

a. Estimated actions: Estimated procedures: These procedures are represented in choosing the desired activities to be practiced, as well as how they are practiced, and product excellence may be in several forms, including the characteristics and efficiency of products, the services provided, the quality of the means of production ... etc. (Bhatt & Grover, 2014)

b. Links: The distinction feature can be produced through links between activities, or relationships between activities, or through links with suppliers and distribution channels. The explanation for these links is as follows:

Links between activities: To meet the needs of customers, there must be coordination between the activities associated with each other, for example, the deadlines for poisoning for a specific reason, by external gifting, but also quickly in processing orders and the frequency of sellers to take their orders.

Links with suppliers: To meet the needs of customers too well, good coordination with suppliers is necessary, as it is possible to reduce the period of developing a good model if the suppliers accept the provision of basic tools in the manufacture of new parts until the end of the institution with the process of designing the equipment for manufacturing the new model, and thus the institution can from distinguishing their products.

Links with distribution channels: These links can contribute to the uniqueness of the organization, either through coordination with these channels or through better exploitation of joint activities between the institution and the latter, for example, the formation of distributors, financing of investments in distribution channels ... etc.

c. Calendar: It can link the distinctive feature of an institution to the date it commences its activity, for example, we find that an institution that was proactive to the use of a specific image of the product can gain the advantage of distinction for this product, and in return, some sectors require late entry so that they benefit from the use of more technology novelty.
d. Distributor (location): The distinctive feature of the institution may be the result of its location, through its proximity to consumers, for example, where it can provide the products that the consumer needs and after-sales services in the nearest future. (N, A, & J.M, 2011)
e. Learning: And its publication, which is reflected in the development of performance, has sparked for the better thanks to the knowledge possessed by all members of the institution.

The factors, as mentioned above, allow the institution to obtain an advantage, and the importance of these factors varies according to the sector of activity to which the institution belongs. It must be pointed to a fundamental point, which is the cost of discrimination. The use of the most primary or most expensive resources compared to that of other competitors. The cost of excellence varies from one institution to another, and this is the difference in the location of the institutions towards the factors of cost development, which means that the cost of excellence is related to the elements of cost development, both of which affect and are affected by the other (Taylor M.L, 2015).

3.5 COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE ELEMENTS

Achieving competitiveness depends on the availability of many elements and the nature of the interaction between them. Among the most prominent aspects of competitive advantage are the following:

1. Natural Resources: Given the importance of the abundance of natural resources in obtaining a strategic advantage for the country or company, owing to many recent global and local changes, the availability of natural resources is no longer a significant source of this advantage, as the lack of these resources is no longer an obstacle to achieving them. (Pergelova & Ruiz, 2014)
2. Capital: A significant competitive advantage can be gained through the abundance of capital in the region. However, the modern transnational global economy, which allows the movement of capital from one country to another and is not linked by multinational corporations to specific geographic and political boundaries and it's spread in developed countries, has contributed to the depreciation of the capital available to the state or company to gain an advantage. Competitive. (Nicholas J Aquilano, 2011)
3. Technology: The technological component plays an important role in improving production efficiency and achieving competitive advantage through the processes of creating and assimilating knowledge, as well as creating and applying new technology in performing business, but the benefit from this element is no longer limited to specific countries, where many countries can obtain on technology.
4. HR: Human resources with distinguished education and high skill represent an important strategic dimension in achieving competitive advantage as it is considered one of the most critical intangible resources and has a significant role in creating and applying technology, as well as being an element that is not simulated or imitated quickly and easily by competitors (Taylor M.L, 2015).

3.6 COMPETITIVENESS DIMENSIONS

Competitiveness is linked to two main dimensions: perceived value to the customer and the company's willingness to achieve excellence:

1. The first dimension - the perceived value of the customer: Organizations can take advantage of their various capabilities to improve the value that the customer realizes for the goods and services provided by these organizations, which contributes to building a competitive advantage for them and the failure of any organization to exploit that has dominated the IBM industry its distinct capabilities may suffice many. One of the most famous examples of this is the Computer Company The mechanism in the seventies failed to define and realize the importance of the developing market for personal computers, which caused it to lose about $ 81 billion, and this forced it to reconsider its strategy, policy, and organizational structures. (J.B.Byarne, 2013)

The competitive advantage of the organization is achieved if customers realize that they are getting higher value than their competitors because of their dealings with the organization. Despite what studies have indicated that the price plays the most significant role in determining the concept of value with the customer, the matter is more complicated than just comparing the level of product quality in relation to its price where the concept of value includes the extent of conviction of the product or service, the extent of dependence and after-sales services in addition to price and quality.

2. The second dimension - Excellence: Competitive advantage can also be achieved by offering a good or service that competitors cannot easily provide or copy. There are several sources for achieving excellence, the most important of which are financial resources, human resources, organizational capabilities, etc.

3.7 COMPETITIVENESS CHARACTERISTICS

The competitiveness has many characteristics, and scientists have written many of them in different forms and many linguistic terms. However, the features and attributes of competitiveness can be illustrated as follows:

1. In addition, it is relative, that is, accessed, not absolute.
2. It leads to dominance and preference over competitors.
3. It is drawn from within and adds meaning to the company.
4. It is expressed in the quality of the success of its operations by the company or in the importance of what is offered to customers or both.

5. Long-term and impossible to copy by rivals (Anwar, Khan, & Khan, 2018).
6. This contributes to the power of consumers and their knowledge of desires as it presents and motivates the company to purchase from them.
7. Make the most important contribution to business success.
8. It offers a unique fit between an organization's resources and opportunities in the environment.
9. Provides a base for subsequent improvements.
10. It provides direction and motivation to every organization.
11. It leads to superiority and importance to its systems.

It is expressed in the success of the organization's results and operations, or in the importance of what is given to consumers, or both (Bhatt & Grover, 2014).

3.8 DETERMINANTS AND SOURCES OF COMPETITIVENESS

3.8.1 The Determinants of Competitiveness

Administration scholars mentioned that competitiveness has many determinants, and they differed in determining their number and in choosing the words that express each determinant. We will limit ourselves to two essential determinants, which are as follows:

1. The volume of competitiveness:

The competitive advantage attributes the continuity feature if the company can maintain the advantage of lower-cost or distinguish the product in the face of competing companies. In general, the higher the advantage, the more efforts it requires from competing companies to overcome or determine its impact, and as is the case with the life cycle of the products, then Competitiveness is the stage of progress or rapid growth, followed by the stage of adoption by the competing companies. Through imitating and simulating competition and attempting to succeed, the level of acceptance by the rival firms, and eventually the stage of need arises, meaning the need for technical advancement in cost control and promoting Mi Thus the company's product starts to refresh and enhance the existing feature or have a new strategic edge to gain more excellent benefit to the cons. (Seung-Hyun Lee, 2013)

2. Scope of competition:

The scope expresses the extent of the activities of the institution to achieve competitiveness. The expansion of this range can meet the cost compared to competitors in the industry sector. On the other hand, the scope can help the organization in achieving competitiveness by focusing on a specific market sector and serving less a distinct cost or product of the good or service. (Krajňáková, Navikaitė, & Navickas, 2017)

Four dimensions of the scope of competition can be found, and we can list them below:

a. Business segment: represents the scope of the goods of the organization and the consumers represented, and therefore the decision is taken between concentrating on a single market area or servicing the market.

b. Vertical sector: the degree to which the company carries out its operations internally or internationally by depending on multiple sources of supply, such as vertical and high integration relative to rivals, will achieve the benefits of lower costs or higher efficiency. (Bakr, Human Resource Management entrance to achieve competitive advantage, 2008)

c. Geographical sector: illustrates the number of geographical areas or countries from which the organization is competing. By offering one quality of operations in many various geographical areas, this factor facilitates the achievement of strategic advantages, and the value of this function is emphasized for the institution that functions internationally as it delivers its goods and services worldwide. (Amitava, 2013)

3.8.2 Sources of Competitiveness

All profit and non-profit institutions are looking for competitiveness in their labor market and trying to occupy the top and the forefront in the field of work. In order to reach their goal and achieve their vision, you must know the sources of access to this, and therefore the sources of competition are many, including the following:

1. Pressure on costs: The organization presses costs by performing its functions more efficiently.
2. Excellence in the product or service offered: excellence is dependent on quality or quality here in the product or service, these two strategies reflect a fundamental competitiveness strategy and help the organization to obtain a persistent and lasting advantage (Bhatt & Grover, 2014).

3. Appropriate time management: in the context of regularity, whether at the stage of manufacturing, selling, delivery or consumer entry of new goods, and experience of these aspects, the organization can recognize the different threats to its field of operation.

4. The degree of continuous improvement and renewal of competitiveness: The organization must move towards creating new benefits and faster before competitors can imitate the existing advantage, which requires them to strive to change old advantages and develop new ones and a higher level.

5. Technology and innovation: innovation or creativity has a vital role in economic countries and directly affects the extent of the institution or product in the market and obtain an appropriate market share (Seung-Hyun Lee, 2013).

3.9 CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE QUALITY OF COMPETITIVENESS

The continuation and longevity of the institution on the market allows it to work to enhance, refresh and consistently grow its competitiveness, since, in fact, the entity is unable to retain its competitive edge indefinitely because the competition institutions are actively trying to resolve this advantage by brilliant inventions that fundamentally alter the goods and services.

For competitiveness to be effective, it must be: decisive, that is, to give precedence and superiority over competitors. It can be defended, especially from the competitors' tradition. And any possibility of continuity over time.

Three conditions unite these standards:

1. Source of competitiveness: The competitive advantage can be arranged according to two levels:
   a. Competitive advantages from a lower-valued rank lower for both workforce and raw materials, as they are relatively easy to imitate and simulate by competing institutions. (Fayad, 2018)
   b. High exchange costs govern the advantages of a high ranking such as product differentiation, distinction, and exclusivity from providing a product or service of a certain quality, medical reputation over the brand based on the accumulated marketing efforts or close relationships with customers.
   c. If the company depends on only one competitive advantage, such as designing the commodity at the lowest price or the opportunity to buy inexpensive raw materials, the

consequences of that advantage can be offset by rivals, but in the case of many sources of advantage, it is impossible for the opponent to mimic any of them. (Krajňáková, Navikaitė, & Navickas, 2017)

2. The degree of development, growth, and constant renewal of the competitive advantage: institutions must work towards developing new advantages and move faster before the current advantage is replicated or simulated by rivals, meaning that institutions can need to change old homes and build special, highly competitive advantages. It is not enough for a company to have a competitive edge, but to be able to recognize and assess the success of this advantage, and this is achieved essentially.

3.10 THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN ACHIEVING COMPETITIVENESS

The process of examining and analyzing the internal and external environment and then working on developing, formulating, and implementing a strategic alternative is called strategic planning so that the organization can achieve its mission, goals, and objectives through helping it to obtain the competitiveness that the organization seeks to accomplish. (Khalil, 2018)

3.10.1 The Concept of Distinction

Considering the new environment in which many variables abound, survival is no longer an easy goal, not to mention achieving growth and sweeping new markets. Survival is only the best performance and the ground for the various parties, and this is the significance of excellence.

Excellence is a strategic goal through which organizations seek to achieve success and enhance their competitive position. It is relatively understood in two ways: it is variable depending on the dimensions of time and space. And that its significance stems from a process compared to competitors. (Anwar, Khan, & Khan, 2018)

Perhaps these two characteristics represent the boundary between excellence and quality, as the quality reflects the extent to which the production system respects the benchmarks established by the institution itself, that is, quality is an internal matter for the institution. The distinction is an external matter for it, and with that, it cannot be denied. Quality is the main gateway to excellence.

The distinction is not an end but rather a means of achieving satisfaction, the satisfaction of the owners of the institution, and the satisfaction of society as a whole. Before distinction was a way to earn profit as the best way, it is a tool to gain the respect and satisfaction of others. (Hudson, 2011)

3.10.2 Distinguished Institution Specifications

Distinctive institutions are the institutions that maintain the highest level of quality, permanent listening to customers and their employees, and giving freedom for innovation and development in products. And several basic advantages have been identified for these institutions, as follows:

1. The institutions adopt the principle of movement: Considering time is the most crucial source of the institution, and it has more value than money and capital than time, officials must invest it with great care. Although these institutions may tend to analyze when making decisions to ensure the flexibility and flow of movement to reach the goal, what is new is that for the organizations under study, experimentation is a low-cost process. (David, 2019)
2. Rounding out to the customer: The organization has succeeded through the new ideas that came in most of them because of satisfying the desires of the customers through continuous listening to them, as the consumer is the one who determines the product. This product is the one that determines the fate of the institution, and it is not the institution that determines the outcome, meaning that the beginning of the product begins with the consumer and his desires, and the organization produces what the customer deems appropriate.
3. Independence and the spirit of renewal: Studies have shown that leaders do not interfere with the behavior of workers so as not to hinder their ability to display their talents and ideas, but on the contrary, they support every purposeful attempt on their part, independence has been given to all individuals and units, whatever their level. (Pergelova & Ruiz, 2014)
4. Achieving productivity through workers ’motivation: The institution’s view of the worker was a source of knowledge because the organization cannot dispense with this factor, whatever its status in the organizational structure, it is the implementer of the strategy defined by the institution, and attention to this element must be as important as it affects the implementation of the strategy, as it was prevalent in the principle of respect and appreciation of workers and trust in them, and it was given them a sense of belonging (Altwile, 2020)

5. Excellence is through serious respect for individuals, working on training them, building goals, and giving them the opportunity to achieve these goals through motivating them, because if a worker has incentives, his level of performance rises and vice versa when he lacks the motivation factor, the concentration decreases.

6. Clustering around core values: Among the distinguished institutions is the ability of the organization to extract energy and provide an opportunity for workers to show their talents and everything they can do.

7. It is limited to what it knows to accomplish: The studies that were conducted showed that the institutions concerned were distinguished by their commitment to the orientation towards the activity they mastered, i.e., their commitment to the original line of business, as the diversity in the activity leads to a decrease in the focus required by the institution.

8. The simple structure depends: The organizational structure of distinguished American institutions does not take the matrix form, as they were characterized by simplicity, and the administrators at the top are few.

9. Linking the characteristic of seriousness and softness: The institutions under study enjoy centralization and decentralization at the same time, where we find it on the one hand that it leaves freedom of movement and decision-making for the implementation units at the lowest line of organization, and at the same time we find that the institution revolves around the fundamental values that are distinguished. These characteristics are not strange or new, but some are almost unknown and old.

3.10.3 Excellence Goals

All institutions reach excellence to achieve several goals, and among these goals are the following: (David Lee, 2012)

1. Creating a customer-centered culture.
2. Improving employee confidence and performance.
3. Improving participation and social responsibility.
4. Improving the quality of the outputs.
5. Working to create an environment that supports and maintains continuous improvement.
6. Achieve better productivity levels.
7. Competitiveness is not the same for all institutions.

3.10.4 The Importance of Planning and Strategic Planning Concerning Competitiveness

Strategic preparation is crucial in assisting organizations in recognizing the external environment and competitors' expertise, as well as assisting organizations in detecting opportunities and challenges in the external world, as well as assisting organizations in understanding their strengths and limitations so that they can resolve them. Prior to rivals trying to (Mariam, 2019).

Organizations rely on a specific strategy to compete to achieve precedence over their competitors through strategies that enable the institution to obtain a competitive advantage or advantages. Porter classed to achieve competitive advantage into three categories which are cost leadership, discrimination, focus or specialization, which he called general strategies, Where the institution can choose any combination of them according to the competition conditions in its industry, and these strategies will be addressed as follows:

1. Cost Leadership Strategy: This strategy aims to achieve lower costs compared to competitors, but it usually requires a strategy of excellence at the same time. (J.B.Byarne, 2013)
2. Discrimination approach: The corporation will distinguish products from competing organizations by delivering multiple model models, providing excellent assistance, providing replacement materials, superior quality, technological growth, a wide range of services delivered, high reputation, and increasing the success standards of this approach with increasing enjoyment. (Yasaa, Giantaria, Setinib, & Rahmayantic, 2020)
3. Goal or specialization approach: The aim of this strategy is to build a competitive advantage and achieve a stronger market position by meeting the unique demands of a single user population or by concentrating on a narrow regional market or by focusing on new commodity applications for a different customer segment.

The entries for competitive analysis have become like a strategic analysis of the institution, based on dismantling the organization into a set of sub-activities and fundamental or analyzing it through the resource entries that you use during its work from human, material, financial, and also information that is the primary strategic material for the establishment of any system. (Yasaa, Giantaria, Setinib, & Rahmayantic, 2020)

4. METHODOLOGY

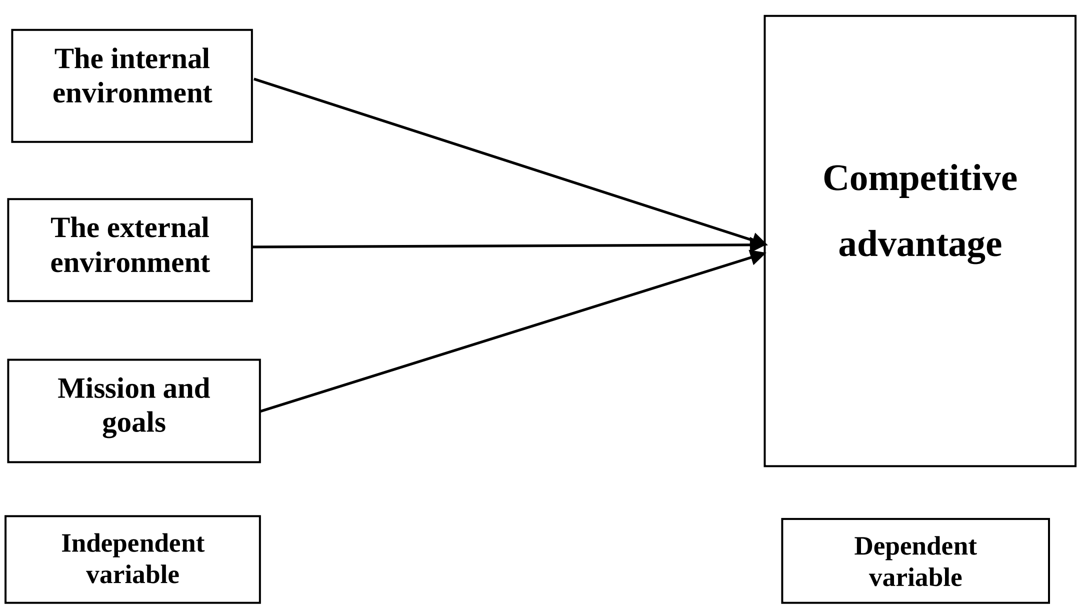
In order to reach the objectives of the study and answer the questions previously posed and to know the relationship between strategic planning and its role in achieving competitive advantage , we relied on the descriptive approach in describing, analyzing and presenting the elements related to the concept of strategic planning as well as the competitive advantage . Also, a case study method, by taking Al-Qalam university as a model by relying mainly on the distribution of a questionnaire. This is to know the role of each element, how it is related, and affected by other aspects of the study.

4.1. STUDY MODEL

This study relied on two variables:

1. The independent variable is strategic planning, which includes three dimensions:
   - Internal environment
   - External environment
   - Mission and goals
2. The dependent variable is the competitive advantage.

The study model can be designed in this way that shows the independent variable with its three dimensions, and its effect on the dependent variable.



There is an influential relationship between the two variables above, and it indicates that the independent variable (strategic planning) affects through its three dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) on the dependent variable (competitive advantage).

4.2.THE HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Depending on the research questions, the main hypotheses can be formulated as follows:
Strategic planning has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at Al – Qalam university.
This hypothesis is divided into three sub-hypotheses:
H1. The external environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.
H2. The internal environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.
H3. Mission and goals have a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at the university under study.

.

4.3. DATA COLLECTION

The type of survey used in this study is a questionnaire. The survey was conducted at the Al – Qalam university. The questionnaire is designed to consist of four parts and 36 questions. Likert scale is adopted as the answer scale. Likert scale is one of the most important methods of determining measures and questionnaires, and the five-dimensional Likert method has been adopted in the current study. According to this ranking, items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Diagree	Totally Disagree

4.3.1. Questionnaire

The required data is obtained by distributing the questionnaire to the target sample in the survey. The questionnaire consists of 36 questions. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

Section A – Demographic data: This section is a demographic section also known as personal questions, which gives details of the respondents' personal information, these details include:

- Gender
- Age
- education level
- Career Title
- Years of Experience

Section B – Strategic Planning Variable: This section presents 21 questions that are all categorized in the form of a 5-point Likert scale, and are divided as follows:

- The internal environment dimension: It consists of 6 questions. This scale was adopted by (Ghafor, 2018)
- The External Environment Dimension: It consists of 8 questions. This scale was adopted by two studies conducted by (DEMİR, 2019) and (Ghafor, 2018)
- Mission and goals Dimension: Includes 7 questions. This scale was adopted by (Al-Atoum, 2009) and (Hamdan, El Talla, Al Shobaki, & Abu-Naser, 2020)

Section C – Competitive Advantage Variable: This section presents 10 questions. This scale was adopted by (ALfarra, 2018).

4.4. STUDY POPULATION

The definition of the term population in this study is the group of people or elements that process and contain the required information and for which tests and conclusions will be made (Malhotra & DF, 2006). By applying this definition to this study, the population will refer to all the employees of the Al – Qalam University in the city of Kirkuk (the university's board of directors, the teaching staff, the administrative staff, the service employees), as these employees form the study population, which aims to discover and know the perceptions of employees in the university about the extent of the impact of strategic planning through its dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) on the competitive advantage of the university under study. The total number of the university's employees was about 270 employees, and 211 respondents from the university's employees were reached in this questionnaire.

4.5.THE STUDY SAMPLE

The group on which the information was collected is called a sample in relation to the definition (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011). Based on this definition, the researcher distributed the questionnaire online to all employees of Al – Qalam University due to the Corona pandemic (Covid 19). There are around 270 employees at the university. Of the total target sample, 211 respondents were obtained. Al – Qalam University was chosen because it is considered one of the best private universities in Iraq. Data were collected from different departments of the university using an appropriate sampling method. Fit was defined by (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009) as the sample selection method known to the researcher or persons living near the survey site. The researcher used Likert scale method to collect data. The questionnaires were distributed to all employees at the university, starting with the board of directors, passing through the faculty and administrative staff, to the service employees.

4.6.DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The questionnaire was distributed between April 12-18, 2020, and then the questionnaire was published again between February 13 and 18. The questionnaires were delivered directly to the researcher. The researcher collected a large group of questions through a number of references, then used two academic experts to filter these questions into only 36 questions that fit the research variables. And cooperation with the two experts took place after obtaining the approval of the previous supervisor. The two experts translated the scale elements from English into Arabic, which is the native language of the respondents, with emphasis on preserving the meaning of each question during translation, as the experts are bilingual.

The data analysis was carried out using the statistical software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 23 of SPSS. It starts with a simple percentage analysis, then a reliability analysis. The Cronbach alpha test is conducted for reliability analysis, and a factor analysis test (EFA) is performed. Multiple regression was tested to find out the effect of strategic planning in its three dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) on competitive advantage.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is discussing the analysis that was done for the research data that was collected from the respondents to test the hypothesis, it starts with the Simple percentage analysis then the regression assumptions tests, and finally the hypothesis regression analysis with an explanation about the results.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

To get an understanding of the respondents targeted for this research and their answers, a descriptive statistics was done.

descriptive statistics gives an accumulated summary of the provided answers given by the respondent according to the data collected frequency distribution.

The first part of th descriptive statistics is representing the Demographic data which dives an idea about the characteristics of the respondents as below:

Table 5.1: Demographic Q1, Gender:

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	122	57.8%	57.8%
Female	89	42.2%	100.0%
Total	211	100.0%	

More than half of the respondents are males while almost 40% are females.

Table 5.2: Demographic Q2, Age:

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
From 20 to 29 years old	46	21.8%	21.8%
From 30 to 39 years old	107	50.7%	72.5%
From 40 to 49 years old	44	20.9%	93.4%
More than 50 years old	14	6.6%	100.0%
Total	211	100.0%	

Half of the respondents are between 30 to 39 years old while the reaming respondents are 22% less than 30 years old and almost 20% more than 39 years old.

Table 5.3: Demographic Q3, Academic qualification:

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
High school	9	4.3%	4.3%
Bachelor Degree	101	47.9%	52.1%
Master degree	60	28.4%	80.6%
Ph.D.	41	19.4%	100.0%
Total	211	100.0%	

Half of the respondents are having a bachelor's degree and then a master's then Ph.D. Graduates.

Table 5.4: Demographic Q4, Career Status:

Career Status	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Service employee	18	8.5%	8.5%
Administrative	106	50.2%	58.8%
Academic	87	41.2%	100.0%
Total	211	100.0%	

More than half of the respondents are administrative staff than the academic lecturers.

Table 5.5: Demographic Q5, Years of experience:

Career Status	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 5 years	76	36.0%	36.0%
From 5 years to less than 10 years	93	44.1%	80.1%
From 10 years to less than 15 years	21	10.0%	90.0%
15 years and older	21	10.0%	100.0%
Total	211	100.0%	

Almost half of the respondents have working experience between 5 and 10 years, then 36% have less than 5 years.

5.3 FACTOR ANALYSIS:

"EFA help to determine to what extent the observed variables are connected to their underlying factors and to identify the minimal number of factors that account for the covariation among the observed variables" (Byrne, 2010). Questions with multiple loading between variables were removed, to get the needed factor loading. (KMO) factor measure was giving a positive indicator for a good loading as it was 0.839. Questions with multiple loading and low or zero loadings were removed from the study, from External Environment Q9 was removed, and from Competitiveness Q24, Q25, and Q27 were removed. The factor loading of the survey questions is presented below.

Table 5.6: Exploratory factor analysis EFA

	Factor: 1	Factor: 2	Factor: 3	Factor: 4
External Environment Q1: The university's ability to quickly respond to external changes, such as new laws or technology.	.517			
External Environment Q2: The university determines the opportunities available in the external environment for investment.	.520			
External Environment Q3: The University follows the latest developments and its applications in the field of education, which can be invested to develop work.	.411			
External Environment Q4: The university is developing strategies for project financing in the long term.	.611			

External Environment Q5: The university is constantly familiar with the various laws regarding education.	.419
External Environment Q6: The university studies external conditions outside the university.	.496
External Environment Q7: The University is working to exploit its capabilities to increase the available opportunities.	.599
External Environment Q8: The university works to know the social conditions of its employees and students.	.555

Table 5.6: Con. Exploratory factor analysis EFA

	Factor: 1	Factor: 2	Factor: 3	Factor: 4
Internal Environment Q10: The university depends on the use of the most recent technologies in the field of education.		.401		
Internal Environment Q11: The university works to reduce or eliminate disciplines that are not useful or that are offered by a small number of students.		.425		
Internal Environment Q12: The university works to harness its human potential and invest it positively.		.709		
Internal Environment Q13: The university is distinguished by the appropriate nature of work.		.612		
Internal Environment Q14: The university provides an environment of competition among career cadres.		.658		
Mission and Goals Q15: The university's mission is clear and appropriate according to the available capabilities and resources.			.481	
Mission and Goals Q16: The university has a future vision that works to reach it.			.401	
Mission and Goals Q17: The university has long-term goals that it seeks to achieve.			.568	
Mission and Goals Q18: The goals of the university are realistic and measurable.			.637	
Mission and Goals Q19: The goals of the university stimulate the capabilities and skills of the cadres.			.517	
Mission and Goals Q20: The university seeks to achieve profits and growth in the long term.			.579	
Mission and Goals Q21: The goals of the university are characterized by its ability to adapt to unexpected changes.			.409	

Table 5.6: Con. Exploratory factor analysis EFA

	Factor: 1	Factor: 2	Factor: 3	Factor: 4
Competitiveness Q22: The university seeks to deliver its services to all of Iraq.				.417
Competitiveness Q23: It is difficult to imitate the services provided by the university by other universities.				.506
Competitiveness Q26: The university possesses qualified human resources.				.529
Competitiveness Q28: The University's marketing programs helped it gain competitiveness.				.583
Competitiveness Q29: The University adopts distinguished students by sending them for the purpose of developing them and possessing the appropriate skills.				.413
Competitiveness Q30: The advantages offered by the university make students attracted to apply for study at the university.				.597
Competitiveness Q31: The university is working to reduce the costs of studying.				.572

5.4 RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT (CRONBACH ALPHA TEST):

Reliability is used to evaluate the measurement tool's quality (the answers provided by the respondents to the survey) when working on a quantitative study that has to be measured indirectly by a measurement instrument.

Reliability is “the level the test scores are free from measurement error that occur when testing something” (Muijs, 2004).

If there the measurement is unreliable the variables will have insignificant relation. Cronbach Alpha test is one of the analyses that are used to evaluate reliability, it is “an internal consistency measure, that shows how closely related a set of items are as a group and explains if the scale is reliable or not.

According to (Muijs 2004) when the test results are more than 0.70 then the measurement is reliable, and 0.60 is accepted, the reliability test results of each variable of this study are shown in the table below:

Table 5.7: Reliability Assessment (Alpha test):

Variable name	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
External Environment:	.741	8
Internal Environment:	.692	5
Mission and Goals:	.712	7
Competitive:	.717	7

According to the results above which were achieved after removing the ninth question from the study, it can be concluded that the study measurement is reliable to be used for testing the hypothesis.

5.5 OUTLIERS AND INFLUENCERS:

Outliers and influencers are different from the other scores or different response from the other respondents, the standard deviation calculation is used to find if there are responses that are far away from the mean of each response, when the result is more than 3 an Outlier is influencing the results (Kline, 2011).

According to the test done for this research, the highest amount is 0.08 which leads to conclude that there are no Outliers and influencers in the responses of this study.

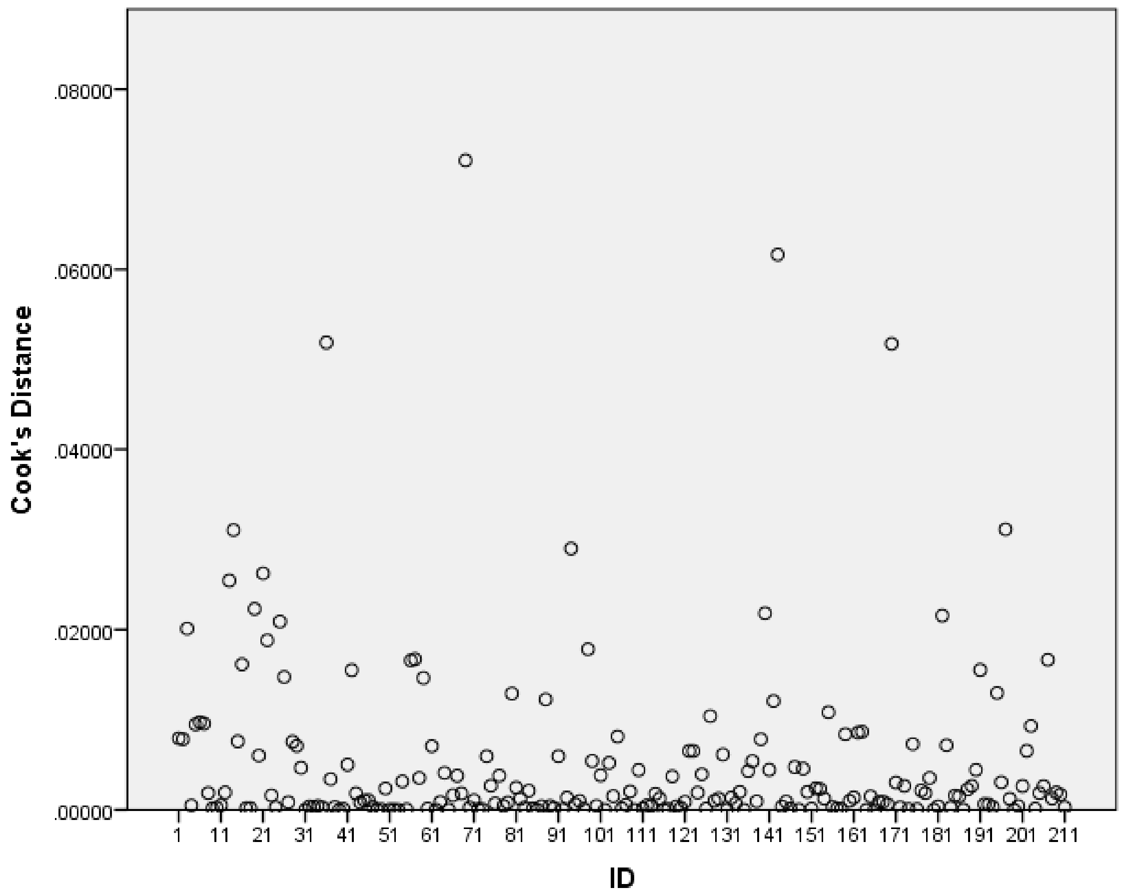


Figure 5.2: Outliers and Influential test

5.6 MULTIVARIATE ASSUMPTIONS:

Some conditions must be taken into consideration, before starting the linearity and regression test between independent and dependent variables, which are called the Multivariate Assumptions. These assumptions are Normality distribution and Multi-collinearity.

5.6.1 Normality Distribution Assessment:

Normality assessment is one of the main conditions to conduct many statistical tests, for this research according to the below chart of data distribution it is concluded that the data is normally distributed.

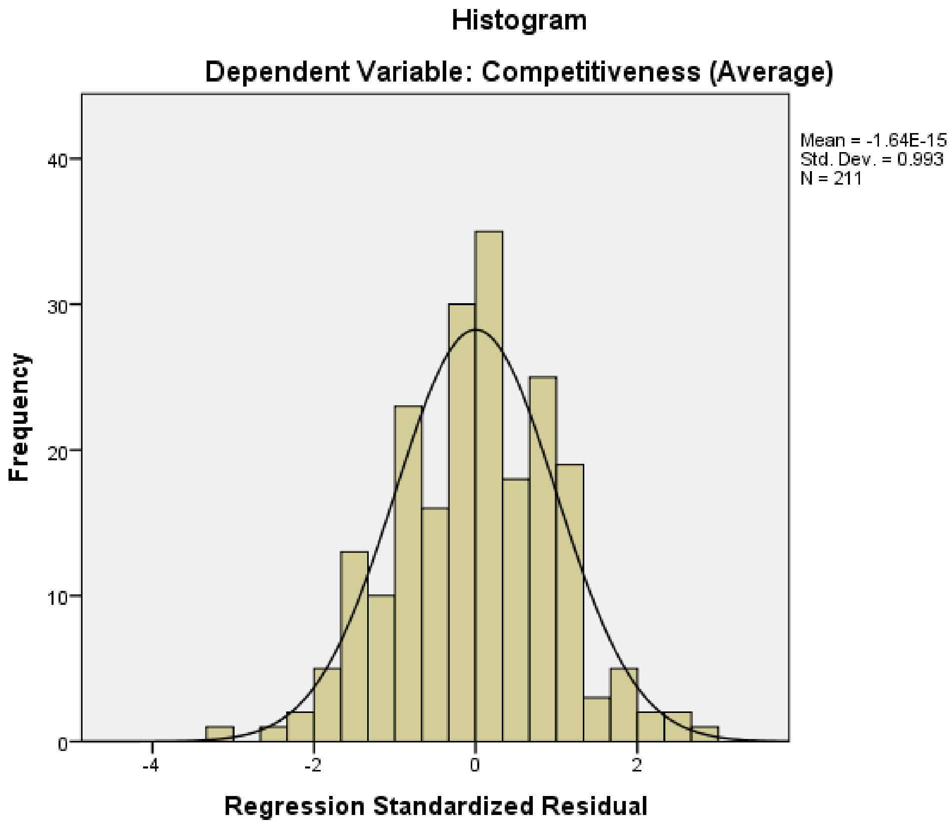


Figure 5.3: Normality assessment

Part of Normality assessment is making sure that there is no Skew and Kurtosis:

- Skew: **"**happens when the data distribution is not asymmetrical around its mean, either below or above the mean" (Kline, 2011) for not having a Skew the Skew analysis results must be between 3 and -3.
- Kurtosis: "happens when the data have a higher or lower peak comparing to normal distribution" for not having a Kurtosis the Kurtosis analysis results must be between 8 and -8.

According to the results shown below table, it can be concluded that there is no Skew and Kurtosis.

Table 5.8: Skew and Kurtosis results:

	Skew	Kurtosis
External Environment:		
External Environment Q1: The university's ability to quickly respond to external changes, such as new laws or technology.	.143	.049
External Environment Q2: The university determines the opportunities available in the external environment for investment.	-.133	1.366
External Environment Q3: The University follows the latest developments and its applications in the field of education, which can be invested to develop work.	-.189	.106
External Environment Q4: The university is developing strategies for project financing in the long term.	-.090	-.772
External Environment Q5: The university is constantly familiar with the various laws regarding education.	-.368	-.394
External Environment Q6: The university studies external conditions outside the university.	.004	-.554
External Environment Q7: The University is working to exploit its capabilities to increase the available opportunities.	-.256	-.145
External Environment Q8: The university works to know the social conditions of its employees and students.	.043	-.853
Internal Environment		
Internal Environment Q10: The university depends on the use of the most recent technologies in the field of education.	.200	-.599
Internal Environment Q11: The university works to reduce or eliminate disciplines that are not useful or that are offered by a small number of students.	-.160	.048
Internal Environment Q12: The university works to harness its human potential and invest it positively.	-.212	.158
Internal Environment Q13: The university is distinguished by the appropriate nature of work.	-.261	-.685
Internal Environment Q14: The university provides an environment of competition among career cadres.	-.100	-.618

Table 5.8: (Cont.) Skew and Kurtosis results:

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mission and Goals		
Mission and Goals Q15: The university's mission is clear and appropriate according to the available capabilities and resources.	-.507	.108
Mission and Goals Q16: The university has a future vision that works to reach it.	-.649	.588
Mission and Goals Q17: The university has long-term goals that it seeks to achieve.	-.601	2.046
Mission and Goals Q18: The goals of the university are realistic and measurable.	-.660	1.254
Mission and Goals Q19: The goals of the university stimulate the capabilities and skills of the cadres.	-.280	.028
Mission and Goals Q20: The university seeks to achieve profits and growth in the long term.	-.473	.464
Mission and Goals Q21: The goals of the university are characterized by its ability to adapt to unexpected changes.	-.694	.140
Competitiveness		
Competitiveness Q22: The university seeks to deliver its services to all of Iraq.	-.414	.682
Competitiveness Q23: It is difficult to imitate the services provided by the university by other universities.	-.420	-.173
Competitiveness Q26: The university possesses qualified human resources.	-.369	.083
Competitiveness Q28: The University's marketing programs helped it gain competitiveness.	-.270	-.182
Competitiveness Q29: The University adopts distinguished students by sending them for the purpose of developing them and possessing the appropriate skills.	-.113	-.327
Competitiveness Q30: The advantages offered by the university make students attracted to apply for study at the university.	-.979	1.569
Competitiveness Q31: The university is working to reduce the costs of studying.	-.275	.369

5.6.2 Multi-Collinearity Analysis:

Multi-Collinearity happens when independent variables are correlated with each other, not with the independent variable, when such correlation between variables is high some accuracy problems will appear when interpreting the regression results.

(VIF) and tolerance is used to test Multi-Collinearity:

The VIF must be less than 3 and tolerance must be more than 0.1 to accept that there is no Multi-Collinearity issue (O'Brien, 2007, p. 673).

In this research three independent variables are representing the institution Strategic Planning (the external environment, the internal environment, and Mission and goals) using SPSS one variable of the three variables was put as dependent and the other two as independents to see the results which are as below and lead to conclude that there is no multi-collinearity issue:

Table 5.9: Multi-Collinearity analysis results:

Collinearity Statistics: Part 1		
Dependent Variable: External Environment	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
Internal Environment (Average)	.591	1.691
Mission and Goals (Average)	.591	1.691
Collinearity Statistics: Part 2		
Dependent Variable: Internal Environment	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
External Environment (Average)	.702	1.424
Mission and Goals (Average)	.702	1.424
Collinearity Statistics: Part 3		
Dependent Variable: Mission and Goals	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
External Environment (Average)	.609	1.642
Internal Environment (Average)	.609	1.642

5.7 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlation is "the extent to which two variables are linearly related" while Regression is defined according to (Gkioulekas & Papageorgiou, 2019) as "a predictive analysis tool that examines the relationship between independent and dependent variables, to fit a mathematical function describing how the value of the response changes when the values of the predictors vary”

To find that there is a correlation between two variables the P-value should be less than 0.05. Table. 10 shows the correlation between the selected variables:

Table 5.10: Co-relation matrix:

Dependent Variable: Competitiveness	Sig	Results
External Environment (Average)	.000	There is a correlation
Internal Environment (Average)	.000	There is a correlation
Mission and Goals (Average)	.000	There is a correlation
Competitiveness (Average)	.000	There is a correlation

According to the results shown in the above table which are .000 less than 0.05 it is concluded that there is a correlation between External Environment, Internal Environment, and Mission and Goals from one side and Competitiveness from the other side.

5.8 LINEAR AND HOMOSCEDASTICITY

Before testing the regression, it is important to see if the data are linear or not, from the scatterplots chart below it is concluded that the data is a liner, and data distribution is quite consistant with indacte a Homoscedasticity issue with is one of the regression asumptions that describes a situation in which the random disturbance in the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is the same across all values of the independent variables.

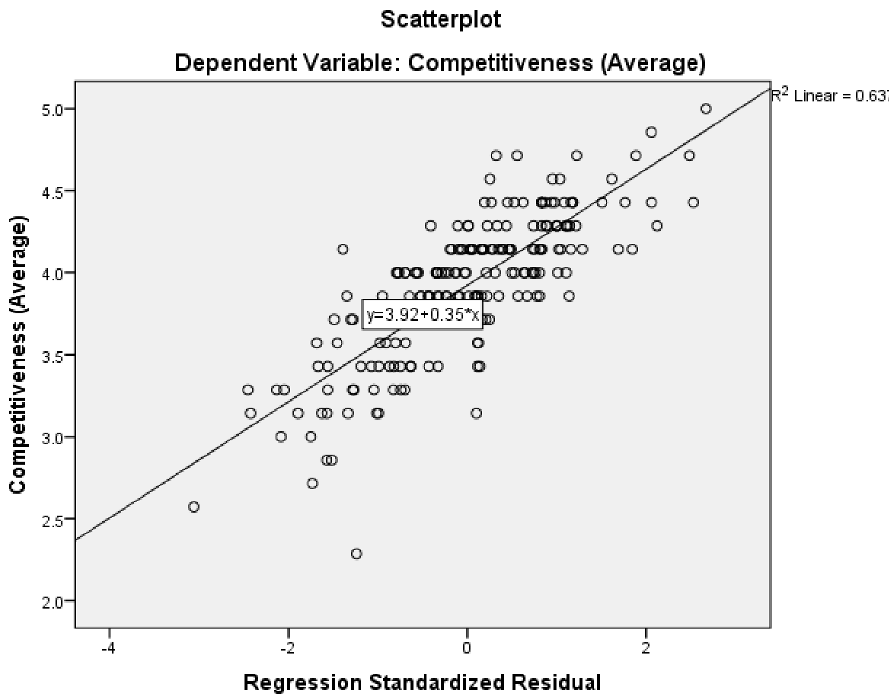


Figure 5.4: Liner scatterplot

5.9 REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR HYPOTHESES TESTING:

Regression is defined as “a predictive analysis tool which works on examining the relationship between independent and dependent variables, with the target to fit a mathematical function that describes how the value of the response changes when the values of the predictors vary” (Gkioulekas & Papageorgiou, 2019)

Linear regression is the simplest form of regression which in the case of multiple regression, works on explaining the data by simply fitting a hyperplane minimizing the absolute error of the fitting.

Regression Analysis for Hypotheses Testing result is the P-value that is between 0 and 1, for accepting or rejecting a hypothesis, the cutoff point 0.05, if it is less the hypothesis, is accepted if more it is rejected (Hair Jr, et al., 2014).

Table 11: R Square table

Model Summary

					Change Statistics				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.442[a]	.196	.183	.684	.196	15.314	4	252	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mission and Goals (Average), External Environment (Average), Internal Environment (Average)

b. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness (Average)

Table 2: ANOVA table

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.638	3	5.213	42.770	.000b
	Residual	25.228	207	.122		
	Total	40.865	210			

a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness (Average)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mission and Goals (Average), External Environment (Average), Internal Environment (Average)

The Regression Analysis for Hypotheses Testing results is shown in the below table:

Table 5.13: The Regression Analysis for Hypotheses Testing results:

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.833	.280		2.974	.003
External Environment (Average)	.281	.081	.244	3.458	.001
Internal Environment (Average)	.252	.072	.257	3.488	.001
Mission and Goals (Average)	.275	.086	.229	3.215	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Accumulated Competitiveness

The P-value which is less than 0.05 results lead to conclude that:

- The external environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution.
- The internal environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution.
- Mission and goals have a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution

5.10 HYPOTHESIS RESULTS SUMMARY

Table 5.14: Hypothesis Results Summary

	Relationships	P-value	Interpretation
H1	External Environment → Competitiveness	.001	Supported
H2	Internal Environment → Competitiveness	.001	Supported
H3	Mission and Goals → Competitiveness	.002	Supported

The results show that Al – Qalam university's mission and goals, external environment, and internal environment affect its competitiveness.

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates the impact of strategic planning through its dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) in achieving competitive advantage. The researcher divided this study into two aspects. The theoretical aspect represents a discussion of research variables through previous studies and literature reviews. In practical aspect, the researcher chose to study the case of the University of Qalam in Iraq. A questionnaire tool was used in the survey, in which data were collected by university employees. The data were analyzed using SPSS application to find out the relationship between the two variables and the extent of the independent variable (strategic planning) impact on the dependent variable (competitive advantage).

And through testing the three sub-hypotheses on which the study was based, the researcher reached the following results:

1. The external environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at al – Qalam university, as the result of P-value was 0.001. This result is consistent with the results of a study (Sandana, 2015) that was conducted in Zimbabwe. The external environment consists of many factors that institutions must consider, including these factors: political, economic, and social analysis of the environment in which the institution is located, standards, Porter's five forces, expected social and economic changes ... etc. (Karami, 2008). Considering the high competitiveness experienced by institutions in the world and due to uncertainty and turmoil, institutions should study the external environment continuously and in a rapid response to discover changes and address pitfalls to raise the level of their competitiveness. This indicates that the follow-up examination and analysis of the external environment is very important. Because this will enable businesses and institutions to adapt to the dictates of the market that change daily. Many studies emphasized the importance of the external environment as a dimension of strategic planning and an influential factor in preparing plans for institutions (Jorosi, 2008).

   However, the R was 0.196 which show weak effect as the environment in Iraq due to the political crisis, economic fluctuations, the inability to analyze the market clearly, and the lack of experts with sufficient capabilities to study the education needs in the country and the extent of the development of this field in the world. ... etc.

2. The internal environment has a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at al – Qalam university, as the result of P-value was 0.001. Several studies reached the same conclusion, from these studies research (Pellissier & Kruger, 2011) that was conducted in South Africa. (Thompson, Strickland, & Gabble, 2013) emphasize that enterprise management must take the internal resources of the institution into consideration in the process of formulating strategic plans that aim to achieve added value and a competitive advantage in the labor market. The internal environment includes the main issues to be considered in strategic planning by educational institutions, including academic issues (teaching, research, and extension), governance, finance, physical infrastructure, information and communication technology, human resources, gender inclusiveness, internationalization, and progress. Anything less than that, can lead to poorly designed, unworkable, or poorly executed special services, thus, defeating the intended purpose of quality improvement for corporate effectiveness and competitive advantage. (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2006) support the use of monetary rewards and non-monetary incentives to motivate employees to achieve goals, and they confirm this by saying that providing rewards is a necessary condition to encourage employees to work to successfully achieve strategies.

   However, the R was 0.196 indicating a weak effect of the internal environment on achieving competitiveness in Iraq. The researcher believes that the reasons for the weakness of the impact are due to several factors, represented by the lack of programs and training courses for the teaching cadres and employees to develop their skills to perform their tasks, as well as the weakness of material resources such as the Internet, communication tools, and others. And one of the most important factors affecting private education in Iraq is the low salaries provided to employees in institutions.

3. Mission and goals have a significant effect on the competitiveness of the institution at al – Qalam university. This result is supported by study of (Hamdan, El Talla, Al Shobaki, & Abu-Naser, 2020), which concluded that goals have an important role in creativity behaviors in NGOs. As well as study of (Al-Atoum, 2009), which emphasized the importance of the institution's mission to reach competitive advantage. Based on this

result, it can be said that the university administration has been relatively succeed to clarify the importance of the mission and goals as dimensions in the strategic plan of the institution, and (Bart & Hupfer, 2004) confirms that the mission statement and objectives enhance the work performance because it reminds employees of the main organizational values that provide general guidelines for diagnosing and solving problems and reaching the vision that the institution aspires to it, and as a result, it reaches to achieve a competitive advantage.

However, the R was 0.196 indicating the weak impact of mission and objectives in achieving competitiveness in Iraq. The researcher believes that the main reason for this is that the mission and goals are moral and invisible matters, and they need great efforts and a long time and specific programs to take root in the employee, as well as the weakness of the experience of specialists in preparing and implementing these programs in Iraq in general. And in the private education sector in particular.

Based on the results achieved by this study, the researcher provides the following recommendations to the administration of Al - Qalam University and to all private universities in Iraq:

1. Taking care of employees at the university through promotions, training and development programs, and raising salaries in order to gain employee loyalty to the university.
2. Keeping pace with the global development in the use of educational tools, especially electronic resources, as communication tools are one of the most important elements in achieving added value for educational institutions.
3. Continuous analysis of the market and following up on the rapid changes in government laws and the fluctuations of the economy to ensure the development of plans that achieve access to customers as well as achieve the required profits, as Iraq is a country of security and economic turmoil and many changes in laws, therefore, it needs constant communication with all Stakeholders.
4. Designing specific and long-term programs to entrench the university's values and mission among employees, and this should be done through the supervision of experts specializing in these programs.

The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. Temporal limits: The study was conducted during the period 2020-2021.
2. Spatial limits: Only the environment of private universities in Iraq was taken as a population for study, and Al – Qalam University in Kirkuk city was taken as a case study.
3. Limits of the target sample: The target sample in this study was employees of Al – Qalam University only. The study did not address the students 'opinions, as the study aimed to know the employees' perceptions about the impact of strategic planning dimensions on the university's competitiveness.
4. Limits of variables: Only three dimensions of strategic planning (external environment, internal environment, mission and goals) were taken, and the extent of their impact on the dependent variable (competitiveness) was measured.

6.2. CONCLUSIONS

There is no agreement on a specific concept or definition of strategic planning in the literature, but all specialists agree that planning has major limitations without which planning is not carried out, such as environmental scanning, analysis of opportunities and challenges, strategic vision, mission, strategic goals.

According to (Elbanna, 2008) , strategic planning represents the first step in any institution, project, or business and is continued on an ongoing basis through evaluation and adjustment processes. The study of (Mazzarol, Rebound, & Soutar, 2009) indicates that if organizations practice strategic planning, they will be able to assess their environment, adjust their strategies, protect themselves from the dynamic environment, and thus improve their performance. All components of strategic planning (environmental scanning, mission and vision statement, strategic planning formalities, sources of information about the environment, strategy evaluation and monitoring, incentives for strategy implementation, employee participation in the strategic planning process and time horizon for strategic planning) need improvement to develop their performance. Therefore, the owners / managers of enterprises or companies should make every effort to undertake more strategic planning activities to enhance their competitiveness.

Also, the studies that specialize in the science of competitiveness differed in defining the exact concept of competitiveness, but they agreed on key criteria for competitiveness between institutions and companies, including prices, the market share of the institution, financial capacity, human and material resources that it possesses, innovations and the use of technology ... Etc., as these indicators represent the source of achieving added value and thus competitiveness. The extent of the organization's development and its access to competitive advantage can be measured through these criteria.

There is a scarcity of dedicated studies in Iraq to examine the extent of the impact of strategic planning in achieving competitive advantage in institutions and companies. This study focused on knowing the relationship between a Three of strategic planning dimensions (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) and the competitive advantage of enterprises. The practical study was conducted in the education sector/Al - Qalam University where the case study model was adopted in the research.

The conceptual framework of the study is based on enriching administrative knowledge with additional research in the science of planning, its strategies, importance, types, stages, and approved models that institutions can use to formulate model plans. The same applies to competitive advantage and how to invest it in achieving added value for the institution and society.

The researcher conducted a survey among employees of the University of Al-Qalam / Iraq. The results of the quantitative study were collected and analyzed. The results were tested and showed that the three dimensions of strategic planning (internal environment, external environment, mission and goals) have a significant impact on the competitiveness of the organization.

Based on the conclusions reached by the study, the researcher offers the following suggestions for future studies**:**

First of all, this study was conducted in the education sector / Al - Qalam University, future studies can do a similar study in different sectors and institutions such as factories or companies for the purpose of making sure the reliability of the scale more accurately.

Secondly, this research deals with only three dimensions of strategic planning, which are (the internal environment, the external environment, the mission and goals) to identify the extent of its impact on achieving competitive advantage in institutions. Studies can be conducted on taking the rest of the planning dimensions to know their impact on the competitive advantage, such as the formalities of strategic planning, sources of information about the environment, evaluation and monitoring of strategy, incentives for implementing the strategy, employee participation in the strategic planning process and the time horizon for strategic planning.

Third, another option for future research is to conduct comparative studies of the relationship between strategic planning and competitive advantage, for example between a university in a developed country and an emerging one, or between a university owned by the private sector and public sector universities.

REFERENCES

Al-Atoum, M. F. (2019). The mission of the organization and its impact on achieving competitive advantage, a field study on the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry. Jordan: Middle East University for Graduate Studies.

Alfarra, n. (2018). The role of the intellectual capital in achieving competitive advantage: a comparative study between private universities of turkey and uae. Turckey: çankaya university.

Alshubaily, N., & Altameem, A. (2017). The Role of Strategic Information Systems (SIS) in Supporting and Achieving the Competitive Advantages (CA): An Empirical Study on Saudi Banking Sector. International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications, 128 - 139.

Altwile, h. (2020). A research on the external environment factors in the companies' swot analysis that are competing in the international market: an example of oil companies. Turkey: karabuk university.

Amitava. (2013). Fundamentals of quality control and improvement. India: New Delhi: Prentice.

Anwar, M., Khan, S. S., & Khan, N. U. (2018). Intellectual Capital, Entrepreneurial Strategy and New Ventures Performance: Mediating Role of Competitive Advantage. India: Business & Economic Review.

Bakr, M. M. (2018). Human Resource Management entrance to achieve competitive advantage. Cairo, Egypt: University House.

Bakr, M. M. (2016). Human Resource Management, entrance to achieve competitive advantage. Alexandria: Al-Ibrahimia University House for Publishing.

Balkar, B., & Kalman, M. (2018, July 23). Examining school administrators' beliefs and understandings about strategic planning: An exploratory typological perspective. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.29329/epasr.2018.143.2

Bhatt, g., & grover, v. (2014). Types of information technology capabilities and their role in competitive advantage: an empirical study. Journal of management information systems, 253 - 277.

Bryson, J. (2011). Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement. USA: Wiley.

Cheng, E. C. (2013, 10 2). KEDI Journal of Educational Policy,. Retrieved from https://edsb-ebscohostcom. ezp.waldenulibrary.org/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer vid=3&sid=be031e1e-99cd-48ee-90b2-aa42deb80889%40pdc-v-sessmgr01

Creswell, J. W. (2012). Educational research. Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. Boston, MA: Pearson.

David, L. (2019). Strategic management" Building and Sustaning competitive Advantages. New York: West publisher.

Demir, ö. (2019). Executive opinions on the relationship of external environmental analysis made in public hospitals and private hospitals with vision and mission building (an application in ankara). Turkey: gazi university.

Elbanna, S. (2018). Planning and participation as determinants of strategic planning effectiveness: evidence from the Arabic context,. Management Decision, 776 - 796.

Fayad, M. A. (2018). Empowering employees as an administrative input and its impact on competitiveness. Ammaan Jordan: Amman Arab University.

Ghafor, b. M. (2018). The impact of strategic planning on organizational performance: a study of private hospitals in erbil city. Turkey: bingöl university.

Gkioulekas, I., & Papageorgiou, L. G. (2019). Piecewise regression analysis through information criteria using mathematical programming. Expert Systems With Applications, 121, 362–372.

Halayqa, G. (2018, 7 19). The concept of strategic planning. Retrieved from Subject, the largest Arab site in the world: https://mawdoo3.com/

Hamdan, M., El Talla, S., Al Shobaki, M., & Abu-Naser, S. (2020). The Effect of Choosing Strategic Goals and Core Capabilities on the Creative Behavior of Organizations. International Journal of Academic Information Systems Research (IJAISR), 54 - 75.

Hayward, F. M. (2017). Lessons learned from strategic planning for improved teaching and learning in developing economics. Planning for Higher Education Journal, 54 - 67.

Hudson. (2011). The search for competitive advantage through simultaneous execution of cost leadership and differentiation strategies: an investigation into the impact of multiple strategies on the financial performance of firms in the united states auomotive component. Florida, USA: Nova Southeastern University.

Hunger, D., & Wheelen, T. (2018). Strategic Management. USA: Pearson.

Hussein, N. G. (2019). Nada Gouda Hussein. Egypt: University of Banha.

Jaher, A. (2019). Managers guide to strategic planning. Alexandria Egypt: University Publishing House.

Jannesson, E., Nilsson, F., & Rapp, B. (2011). Strategy, Control and Competitive Advantage. Berlin: springer.

Karkhi, M. (2014). Strategic planning results-based. Doha, Qatar: Al-Rayyan for publication and distribution.

Khalil, N. M. (2018). Competitive advantage in business. Alexandria Egypt: University Publishing House.

King, W. R. (2009). Planning for Information Systems. USA: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

Kline, R. B. (2011). Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling (3ed ed.). New York: THE GUILFORD PRESS.

Kot, S., Androniceanu, A., Jermsittiparsert, K., Haseeb, M., & Hussain, H. I. (2019). Role of Social and Technological Challenges in Achieving a Sustainable Competitive Advantage and Sustainable Business Performance. sustainability.

Krajňáková, E., Navikaitė, A., & Navickas, V. (2017). Paradigm Shift of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Competitive Advantage to Management of Customer Satisfaction. Engineering Economics, 327 - 332.

Langslow, S. (2018, 7 18). Top Ten Leadership Skills. Retrieved from That bossy little girl with some leadership skills…: http://www.sarahlangslowcoaching.com/that-bossy-little-girl-with-some-leadership-skills

Littman, T. (2019). Planning principles and practices, victoria transport policy institute.

Loureiro, G., & Andrade, H. d. (2020). A Comparative Analysis of Strategic Planning Based on a Systems Engineering Approach. Business Ethics and Leadership.

Malan, R. (2010). The role of shared mental models of strategic thinking in the development of organizational strategy. Australia: Faculty of Business, University of Southern Queensland.

Mariam, H. I. (2019). The importance of strategic vigilance in achieving competitive advantage.

Meyers, C., & Hitt, D. (2018). Planning for school turnaround in the United States: an analysis of the quality of principal-developed quick wins. School Effectiveness and School Improvement. An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice, 3.

Mintzberg, H., Lampel, J., & Ahlstrand, B. (2015). Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through The Wilds of Strategic Mangament. Free Press.

Mohammed, A. A. (2017). The role of strategic planning in achieving competitive advantage in the organization. Algeria: Arabi Bin Mahidi University.

Mohammed, M. a.-A. (2017). The impact of strategic planning on achieving the competitiveness of the institution. Algeria: University of Oum el Bouaghi.

Mosadeghrad, M., & Isfahani, P. (2020). Strategic planning challenges in the hospital: A qualitative study. 19 - 39.

Muijs, D. (2004). Doing Quantitative Research in Education with SPSS (1st ed.). London: Sage Publications.

N, K., A, A., & J.M, N. (2011). Competitive advantage: mediator of intellectual capital and performance. Journal of Intellectual Capital, 152 - 164.

Nadikattu, R. R. (2020). Effective Innovation Management in Strategic Planning. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING, SCIENCE AND, 106 - 116.

Naima Abbas Al-Khafaji, I.-D. (2018). Competitive advantage according to the perspective of organizational change strategies. Ammaan Jordan: House days for publication and distribution.

Nicholas J Aquilano, R. F. (2019). OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE. USA: Mc Graw- Hill Companies.

Odeh, H. M. (2019). The impact of selection on human resources to achieve the objectives of strategic planning. Iraq: Journal of Administration and Economics.

Pearce, J., & Robinson, R. (2018). Strategic Management: Formulation, Implementation, and Control. USA: Irwin/McGraw-Hill.

Pergelova, A., & Ruiz, F. A. (2014). The impact of government financial support on the performance of new firms: the role of competitive advantage as an intermediate outcome. United Kingdom: Entrepreneurship & Regional Development .

Radwan, M. A. (2015). Competitiveness as one of the mechanisms of economic globalization and its role in supporting growth and development efforts in the world. Alexandria: University Publishing House.

Ramlal, A. R. (2019). Principals’ Experiences Leading Strategic Planning in High - Performing Primary Schools in Trinidad and Tobago. USA: Walden University.

Rashad, A. A. (2019). Planning methods of development. Egypt: University Library.

Robinson, R. (2010). Strategic Management. USA: McGraw-Hill Education.

Rowley, D. J., Dolence, M., & Lujan, H. (2017). Working Toward Strategic Change: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Planning Process. USA: Jossey Bass Publishers.

Rumelt, R. (2011). Good Strategy Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters. USA.

Saeidi, P., Sofian, S., Saeidi, P., Saeidi, S. P., & Saaeidi, S. A. (2015). How does corporate social responsibility contribute to firm financial performance? The mediating role of competitive advantage, reputation, and customer satisfaction. Journal of Business Research, 341 - 350.

Salem, O. (2019). The role of information technology in achieving competitive advantage. Algeria: Umm Al-Baqi University.

Sandada, m. (2015). Strategic planning dimensions in small and medium enterprises (smes) in south africa: their relative importance and variations in selected demographic variables. University of zimbabwe.

Seung-Hyun Lee, G. G. (2013). Strategic Management: Creating Competitive Advantages. USA: McGraw-Hill.

Simerson, B. K. (2019). Strategic Planning: A Practical Guide to Strategy Formulation and Execution. USA: Praeger.

Soni, V. D. (2020). Importance and Strategic Planning of Team Management. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IN TECHNOLOGY.

Suwaidan, T. (2014). How to write a strategic plan. Al Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: House of intellectual creativity.

Taylor M.L, G. L. (2015). Strategic mangement: creating competitive advantage. New York: McGRAW-Hill Company.

Thompson, Strickland, & Gabble. (2013). Crafting and executing strategy: the quest for competitive advantage. . Glasgow: Mc GrawHill.

Vanderstoep, S., & Johnston, D. (2009). Research Methods in Everyday Life: Blending Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wu, X., Zhang, L., & Luo, M. (2020). Current strategic planning for sustainability in international shipping. Environment, Development and Sustainability, 1729 - 1747.

Yasaa, N. K., Giantaria, I. K., Setinib, M., & Rahmayantic, P. L. (2020). The role of competitive advantage in mediating the effect of promotional strategy on marketing performance. Management Science Letters , 2845 - 2848.

Young, R. R. (2010). Strategy in the 21st Century. LookingGlass Publishing.

Zaghdar, A. (2018). Competitiveness and strategic alternatives. Ammaan, Jordan: Jarir House for Publishing and Distribution.

Zoibi, R. (2014). The impact of strategic planning on the performance of Algerian higher education institutions. Algeria: Muhammad Khidir University.

APPENDIX

A QUESTIONNAIRE

Applied study at Al – Qalam University

Greetings,

I am the student (Ahmed Muhammed Hussein), a master student at Altinbas University in Istanbul / Turkey. I am now doing a field study for the purpose of completing my thesis entitled (The role of strategic planning in achieving competitive advantage in institutions), and your university has taken a model for the study.

You are kindly requested to help me complete this thesis by answering the questions raised in this questionnaire.

Sincerely.

Researcher: **Supervisor:**

Ahmed Hussein **Asst Prof. NEVRA BAKER**

(**Note**: The questionnaire was designed during the supervision of Dr. Nevra, and then it was changed after that by the administration of the institute).

SECTION 1: Demographic information.

1. Gender:

   ( ) Male , ( ) female

2. Age:

   ( ) 20 – 29 years old

   ( ) 30 – 39 years old

   ( ) 40 – 49 years old

   ( ) older than 50 years old

3. Educational level:

   ( ) High School

   ( ) Bachelor Degree

   ( ) Master Degree

   ( ) Doctorate Degree

4. Career Title**:**

   ( ) academic

   ( ) administrative employee

   ( ) Service Officer

5. Years of Experience:

   ( ) Less than **5** years

   ( ) 5 – 10 years old

   ( ) 11 – 15 years old

   ( ) More than 15 years old.

	Items	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Totally Disagree
	First - The external environment of the institution					
1	The university's ability to quickly respond to external changes, such as new laws or technology.					
2	The university determines the opportunities available in the external environment for investment.					
3	The University follows the latest developments and its applications in the field of education, which can be invested to develop work.					
4	The university is developing strategies for project financing in the long term.					
5	The university is constantly familiar with the various laws regarding education.					
6	The university studies external conditions outside the university					
7	The University is working to exploit its capabilities to increase the available opportunities.					
8	The university works to know the social conditions of its employees and students.					

	Second - The internal nvironment of the institution					
9	The university relies on promotional means to attract students.					
10	The university depends on the use of the most recent technologies in the field of education.					
11	The university works to reduce or eliminate disciplines that are not useful or that are offered by a small number of students.					
12	The university works to harness its human potential and invest it positively.					
13	The university is distinguished by the appropriate nature of work.					
14	The university provides an environment of competition among career cadres.					
	Third - Mission and goals					
15	The university's mission is clear and appropriate according to the available capabilities and resources.					
16	The university has a future vision that works to reach it.					
17	The university has long-term goals that it seeks to achieve					
18	The goals of the university are					

	realistic and measurable					
19	The goals of the university stimulate the capabilities and skills of the cadres.					
20	The university seeks to achieve profits and growth in the long term.					
21	The goals of the university are characterized by its ability to adapt to unexpected changes.					
	Forth - Competitiveness					
22	The university seeks to deliver its services to all of Iraq.					
23	It is difficult to imitate the services provided by the university by other universities.					
24	The university has a system on the Internet, publishing schedules, times, and results for students.					
25	The university allocates funds for continuous research, development and improvement.					
26	The university possesses qualified human resources.					
27	The university has the financial ability to expand and open new branches without the need to borrow.					
28	The University's marketing programs helped it gain a competitiveness.					

29	The University adopts the distinguished students by sending them for the purpose of developing them and possessing the appropriate skills.					
30	The advantages offered by the university make students attracted to apply for study at the university.					
31	The university is working to reduce the costs of studying.					