



DO IRAQI BANK EMPLOYEES REALIZE THE ROLE OF MARKET ORIENTATION IN ACHIEVING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES FOR BANKS?

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 7 th February 2023 Accepted: 7 th March 2023 Published: 10 th March 2023	This research aims to study market orientation in the banks of Diwaniyah Governorate in Iraq and its impact on achieving a competitive advantage compared to competitors working in the banking sector in the same region. The research used questionnaires to collect data on the distributed variables. 130 questionnaires for employees in banks, (118) questionnaires were returned, (110) valid forms for analyzing research procedures, the researcher used (SPSS V20.0) to find a relationship between the variables, and the study revealed significant relationships between closely related market orientation. With a competitive advantage, The study reached a set of conclusions and recommendations to improve the position of banks in environmental competitiveness to reach banks with outstanding performance. This study extracted the concept of market orientation to find out how these methods help in improving the competitive advantage of banks in the Diwaniyah Governorate.

Keywords: market orientation, competitive advantage, Iraqi banks

INTRODUCTION: -

In the current years, market orientation is used to improve excellence in organizations, so this study adopts market orientation to reflect the role of banks associated with strategic and marketing policies and concepts to deal with customers and competitors to improve the overall market. How do market orientation and deployment of dynamic capabilities relate to business model innovation? By developing a framework for corporate business model innovation from inception to scale, this paper contributes to the literature on small business (innovation) business models and dynamic capabilities. Randhawa, K. et., al. (2021), he results indicate that both export market orientation and marketing capabilities have direct positive effects on export performance. Moreover, the intensity of competition weakened the effect of export market orientation on export performance Acikdilli, G., et al., (2022).

Some results from studies showed market orientation has an effect on both innovation performance and firm capabilities. Moreover, there is a guide from the meta-analysis also indicates that the strength of the association between market orientation and the preparation strategy, therefore, there is greater for firms operating in multi-cultures, while market orientation and performance-related consequences for firms (Biçakcioğlu - & Ipek, (2020), In order to improve the performance of the firm, efforts must be made to

develop strategies, such as take attention to market orientation, focusing on customer orientation, directing competitors, coordinating functions, and developing or innovating new products. Puspaningrum, A. (2020) While he gave in the end, It was concluded that market orientation has a positive effect on the business to achieve a firm, especially those involved in the product industry. Thus, that contributes more an increase in the performance of the firms and practitioners involved(Boonmalert, W., et al., (2020), some researchers refer that market orientation as a whole has a significant impact on innovation Specifically, while the two dimensions—customer orientation and resource orientation—have a positive on firm innovation, the other two dimensions—inter-functional competition and coordination—have no effect on firm innovation (Alhakimi, W., & Mahmoud, M. (2020).

This study also uses competitive advantages as a variable to create more regulation of market orientation and how it is assisted to achieve directly by influencing competitive advantages, and the results of this study will provide the current literature on market orientation and the competitive advantage of banks. Market orientation is a new concept in Iraqi banks and focuses additional to the existence of many studies in In this field, market orientation is still a new concept and the empirical study will obtain evidence to test the concept and its validity in Iraqi banks. The major contribution of this study is to help Iraqi private banks by clarifying the



best strategies that are followed to gain a competitive advantage.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND:-

Relying on the relevant and empirical results in neighboring countries such as Jordan to investigate the impact of banking performance in various fields in banks so that more interest can be achieved in the current performance (Tomar and Bino, 2012), so the actual banking services in Iraq were not in line with the nature of the needs Customers of these services to improve the competitive position of these banks, where the needs of customers must be studied because of the many foreign banks that will enter the banking sector that used modern technology to expand their scope of work and attract new customers while most of the population still pays cash in daily transactions to ensure security, so that progress Iraqi banks have a traditional range of deposit accounts and lending products including (relatively new) debit and credit cards, exchange and transfer facilities and trade finance products, such as letters of credit (The National Investment of Iraq, 2015), However, this study takes different approaches to study Iraqi banks by focusing on the strategies and actions that these banks can take to improve their competitive advantage. Therefore, the main goal of this research is to search for the best ways for these banks to carry out the increased activity by determining the effectiveness of the banks' strategies compared to competing banks and suggesting improvements, so this research was conceived as an investigation of the impact of market orientation on the competitive advantage of banks in Iraqi banks.

MARKET ORIENTATION

The concept of marketing began to be used in the late fifties, and marketing was positioned as an organizational function at the top of management. It refers to the integration and coordination of all marketing functions to maximize profits in the long run (Chang et al, 2014; Kirca, 2011). A study was presented on the existence of evidence to understand the relationship between market orientation and performance, through the mediating effects of each of the dynamic capabilities and competitive advantages. Correia, R.J., et al. (2020).

According to (Zhou and Dev, 2009) the organization seeks to adopt a market orientation strategy to survive in the market and the other side needs to be empowered to maintain customers and satisfy their needs in the long term. The indicated management adopts market orientation to increase marketing activities to achieve organizational goals and

comparatively understand actual customer needs and satisfaction, where the result can be market orientation expanded to include offerings tailored to market preference (Kim et al., 2013).

Several recent studies explain market orientation from a behavioral or cultural perspective. First, the behavioral perspective involves specific activities related to the generation, dissemination, and response of market intelligence. This perspective was constructed by (Kohli and Jaworski 1990) as this perspective focuses on the organization's norms and values that encourage behaviors. Market orientation consists of many dimensions such as customer orientation, competitor orientation, and job coordination that were built by (Narver and Slater, 1990) (Altuntaş et al., 2013; Kirca, 2011; Nasir, 2013; Theodosiou, 2012; Al- Mohammad ,2010; Tutar et al., 2015)) Adopting a cultural approach (Narver and Slater 1990: 21) defines "market orientation" as "the organization that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviors to create higher value for buyers, and that sustained superior performance of firms "

When an organization needs to outperform its competitors by adopting market orientation as source of competitive advantage through customer value creation, it must be a rare specialist and not easy to imitate (Altunta's, et al., 2013), Although the concept of market orientation is important according to many studies, organizations have paid little attention in strategic management otherwise marketing management receives more attention (Altindag and Zehir, 2012).

In this study, I discussed the market orientation and the fiercely competitive environment, so the organization is looking for the best strategy in the market to achieve a competitive advantage (Avci, 2011).

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE:-

In the field of competitive strategy, some researchers mentioned the use of mixed competitive strategies between low costs and differentiation and identified their use to achieve high performance according to (Corte and Aria, 2016; Handoko et al, 2015; Dereli, 2015; Izuchukwu et al., 2014; Kim et al. , 2011,) and based on what was discussed in previous studies, the organization through the tendency to low-cost leadership, and this was reflected in the customers to reduce the price of products and this added value for him, in return the organization when it tried to achieve significant growth compared to competitors, customers and long-term goals represent an element In the market orientation (Kumar et al., 2011) that, the organization



seeks cost reduction as a competitive advantage when it is able to produce the same products or services for customers compared to competitors but in, or if the organization needs to seek a differentiation advantage to overcome competitors Others through products or services that will exceed those of competing products, and therefore, the resources and capabilities that have been used by the top of the competition that help create a competitive advantage to maximize the high value provided to customers (Agha et al, 2012) (Sadler, 2003). Some studies indicate that path analysis suggests that entrepreneurial improvisation may lead to less learning for the entrepreneurial team, which in turn leads to a competitive advantage (Xiong, L. (2020). The other scholars find out that competitive advantage is reduced and affected by customer knowledge and that the impact of customer orientation and technical ability on competitive advantage is significant and positive. (Al Karim, R., & Habiba, W. (2020).

It is indicated that there are many characteristics of resources and capabilities to achieve competitive sustainability: -

Stability: Means for the period of time that the product covers the maintenance of specifications compared to competitors' products.

Transfer: - It is difficult to transfer to other competitors because it has become a sustainable competitive advantage.

Reliability: This means that competitors cannot be imitated or bought from the market if the organization needs to achieve a competitive advantage requires researching the scope of the competitive advantage that competes with competitors (all things to all people is a recipe for strategic mediocrity and below-average performance, as it often means that The firm has no competitive advantage at all (porter, 1985:12).

The (Anabila et al., 2020) provides benefit guide for marketing strategy and especially MO achievement to improve performance in a private organization and provided this study a field study to private organizations that reach of compete positively in a competitive environment that's study provided recommendations especially focus on innovations, technology development, and continuous updates to the information technology will needs of the organization in a way that coincides with the changes and increasing dynamics in the organizations market and the expectations of its customers (Ngobe, E.K. (2020)

Moreover, for economic development such as in Iraq, it must encourage competitive advantage which is the

main source for this purpose (Kavaliauskiene et al., 2014).

(Dereli, 2015) refers to the competitive advantage that represents price and quality, and the rapid response to changing customer preferences and obtaining new opportunities will add value to customers compared to competitors, and the big mistake that some organizations have a competitive advantage but they were not using this competitive advantage effectively, and others next to some Institutions, they do not enjoy the competitive advantage but they think about obtaining it in the end and fail to continue (Švárová, and Vrchota, 2014).

Some authors point to a sustainable competitive advantage that was difficult to replicate or imitate because they had the characteristics of this competitive advantage (Kim et al, 2011; Priyanto et al, 2012; Mahdi and Almsafire, 2014)) such that if they replicate or imitate, they pay Significant cost by competitors in strategic management, the most important competitive advantage put into three variables (Priyanto et al, 2012).

A- Value: - It represents the resources that came from the external environment when taking care of opportunities and escaping from threats

B- Earnings: - It means achieving large sales with an excellent position in a competitive period.

C- Difficulty: - High cost of replication or imitation (Corte and Aria, 2016). In a similar fashion ((Bhuiyan, 2011; Pelc, 2014) mention that the organization prevents threats and seizes opportunities to achieve stability for competitive advantage through the ability to understand and quickly respond strategically (Herrera, 2015).

Intangible assets are represented as a source that can be used at any time to achieve a competitive advantage such as organizational culture, organizational brand, celebrity organization, and product quality, in contrast to tangible assets that were a source of competitive advantage due to their ease of replication such as property, vehicles, and machinery (Pearson et al, 2015; Todericiu and Stanit, 2015).

According to (Porter, 1980, 1985) there has been an ongoing discussion about how an organization can obtain a competitive advantage through matching by selecting the appropriate strategy for the organization's environments (Nilssen et al, 2015). Therefore, in order to consider achieving a high level is a prerequisite for achieving competition (Striteska and Jelinkova, 2015) (Pelc, 2014), They mentioned the strategic management and marketing literature discussion about the many facets of market orientation that can



significantly affect performance and organizational competitive advantage beyond marketing direction while competitiveness is the ability to seek and protect high growth rates, and competitive advantage can be related to different aspects of Organization and activity such as (price, product, quality, service level, social responsibility).

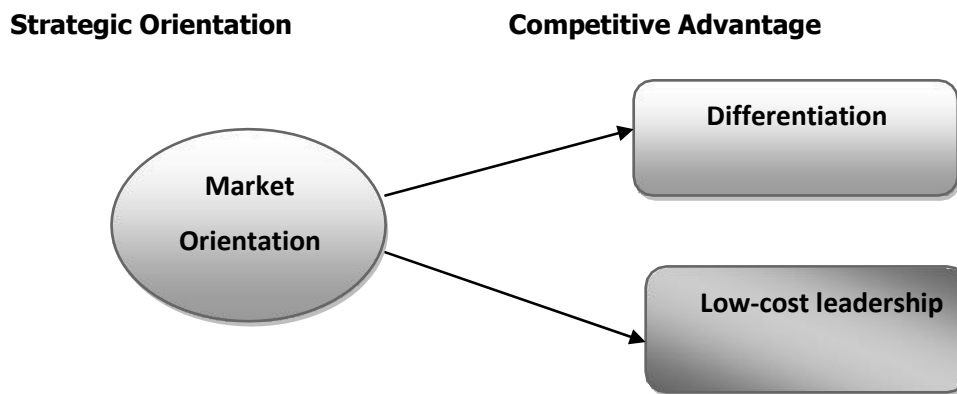
DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between market orientation and competitive advantage, based upon literature review, the hypotheses were proposed based on group of

relationship between variables that put to test: -
 H: there is relationship between market orientation and competitive advantage
 Ha: there is relationship between market orientation and differentiation.
 H b: there is relationship between market orientation and low- cost leadership.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main of this study is to understand the relationship among the dimensions of market orientations and competitive advantage. within the context of this study is presented in figure -1*



* Figure 1 the conceptual framework prepared by author

THE MEASURING SCALE: -

The hypothesis measurement model is shown above in figure one. the data were obtained from the developed questionnaire with dimensions of market orientations from (Langerak et al .2004) and competitive advantage from (Kumar et al., 2011) were used a point Likert ranging from "1 strongly disagrees to 5 strongly agree ".the *Table 1 results of reliability for Cronbach's Alpha

gathered data from questionnaires were analyzed through SPSS 20.0, the items of the questionnaire were divided into 7 items for market orientation, 5 items for differentiation, and 5 items for low-cost leadership .table (1) shows all the items from each of the dimensions and Cronbach's Alpha for each of them.

Construct	No of item	Cronbach's Alpha
market orientation	7	.674
Differentiation (diff)	5	.763
Low -cost leadership(low)	5	.701

*Prepared by authors

ANALYSIS: -

To test hypotheses a Pearson correlation analysis has been conducted to find the relationships among

the constructs of market orientation and competitive advantage(differentiation and low-cost leadership) and after using correlation we test



the effects between the variables by regression analysis to determine all effect firstly between all independent variable and the effect on competitive advantage secondly we need to test the effect between independent variable represented market

orientation separately on (differentiation and low-cost leadership).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: -

Table 2 illustrated the correlations between the variables used in a study, all correlations have a significant level (0.01)

*Table 2 correlations and descriptive statistics.

Construct	Mean	S.D	Mar	Diff	Low
Mar	2.997	.525	1		
Diff	3.643	.598	.803**	1	
Low	3.215	.552	.705**	.688**	1

**Correlation is significant at 0.01level

*Prepared by authors

Following Pearson correlation analysis, a linear regression analysis has been done to find an interaction between variables, firstly market orientation has been taken as the independent variable and competitive advantage differentiation and low-cost leadership as the dependent variable to develop a model to present the effect of independent variables on the dependent as one in model 1. As can be seen in Table 3

of market orientation is 0.707($p > 0.001$) these findings are consistent with the literature(Hult et al.,2005; Wong and Tong , 2012) in the same way there is the interaction between the market orientation as independent variables and differentiation and cost –leadership in the using alone separately (.803 ($p > 0.001$) and (.823 ($p > 0.001$) and this consistent with previous literature (Al-mohammad,2010; Wong and Tong,2012).

, linear regression analysis reveals that the effect

*Table 3. Results in multiple of linear regression analysis

Model No.	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
R	.705	.803	.823
R square	.497	.645	.677
R adjusted square	.492	.641	.674
Model F	106.63**	195.984**	22.145**
Standards coefficient (β) for Mar	.705**	.803**	.823**
Standards coefficient (β) for Diff	-	-	-
Standards coefficient (β) for Low	-	-	-
Degree of freedom	109	109	109

** $p > 0.01$

*Prepared by authors

The main objective of this research is to examine the influence of market orientation on competitive advantage, the results of this study indicate that market orientation has a direct effect on competitive advantage in banks, especially the differentiation strategy that has been taken from banks to introduce a new service to customers, study findings the positive influence of market orientation on competitive advantage, these results suggest that

market orientation will be more successful in responding the customer needs and wants and to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage by focusing on differentiation, low-cost leadership is insignificant relationship between market orientation.

CONCLUSION: -

This research was interesting by focusing the benefits of market orientation to determine the



natural of the role of competitive advantage to understanding the scope of effect of market orientation to attain competitive advantage for the banks in Al- Dewaniya province , and from analysis reveals of variables study is found significant relationship between market orientation and competitive advantage, therefore the banks must adopt these strategies such as these strategies to achieve high performance comparing with competitors , the findings suggest to develop a new visions to produce a new services with low cost to keep the recent customers and brings potential customers at any time , another important from this study is to procedures future studies to make a benefits for customers about seeking to introduce a new services for best customers , this study established the importance of market orientation in order to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage in the competitiveness world by low-cost leadership and differentiation strategies.

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