

Strategic Management Practices and Their Role in Enhancing Organizational Performance in Competitive Markets

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Abstract

Strategic management practices are important in determining the survival of success of organisations functioning in competitive markets in the long run. The modern business world, which is fast adopting technological shift, globalization and emerging requirements of customers demands that organizations have disciplined strategic practices in the quest to remain competitive and enhance organizational performance. Strategic management refers to the development, execution, and analysis of strategies that allow organizations to fit the alignment of internal resources, capabilities, with the external environmental opportunities and threats. Proactive strategic activities of the forms of environmental analysis, competitive positioning, resource distribution, innovation management, and performance monitoring, assist organisations in reacting in advance to the market dynamics and sustain their growth. This paper discusses the role that strategic management practices play in increasing the performance of an organization in a competitive market. The study examines strategic management key dimensions such as strategic planning, competitive strategy development, alignment and performance evaluation in organizations. The paper points out that organizations that have properly-designed strategic management structures have been shown to have high level of organizational efficiency, decision-making, positioning in the market and good financial results. Moreover, strategic management is used to plan long term, manage risks, and lead to constant improvement of an organization. The implications as offered by the findings indicate strategic management practices are some of the key resources that organizations require to attain sustainable competitive advantages and performance stability in the ever more competitive and complex business contexts.

Keywords: Strategic Management; Competitive Markets; Organizational Performance; Strategic Planning; Dynamic Capabilities; Environmental Scanning; Strategic Agility; Leadership; Resource Orchestration; Competitive Advantage.

I. Introduction

The recent business world has been more intricate and competitive because of the speedy globalization, technological advancement, and regular alterations of market conditions. The organizations we live today are dynamic and where the organization has to keep changing with the variation in customer preferences, technological changes, legal frameworks and even global competition. Such conditions have no longer made traditional management regimes that only used short-term operational decisions to guarantee long-term success of the organization to be quite adequate. Rather, organizations will need detailed strategies that will help them in decision making, allocation of resources and strategic planning. Strategic management has thus surfaced as an

essential managerial science through which organisations can logically evaluate its internal strengths and external environment so as to formulate competent strategies which will lead to realisation of sustainable competitive advantage. Strategic management practices entail various activities that are interlinked together such as environmental analysis, strategic formulation, strategy implementation and performance evaluation. Through these activities, organizations are able to know the trends in the market, the possible opportunities and threats, and how to align organizational resources and the long-term business objectives. The main objectives of strategic management include the ability to make sure that organizations can develop and sustain competitive advantage in highly competitive markets. The nature of the competitive markets is defined by a high level of competition between companies, rapid innovation, and the growing customers demand in terms of quality of the products, prices, and provision of services. In such a condition, organizations need to make strategic capabilities that enable them distinguish themselves among the rivals and provide their customers with excellent value. Strategic management gives the tools and analytical models that help organizations to formulate competitive strategies including cost leadership, differentiation, and market focus. These strategies enable companies to establish themselves well in their industries and act proactively to the pressure in the market. In addition, strategic management also focuses on the fact that there should be a linkage between the resources, capabilities, and competencies of the organization and the strategy that has a long-term objective. Companies which are successful in their efforts to combine the strategic planning processes with the operational activities are in better positions to realize efficiency, productivity and innovativeness. Organizational learning and adjustability is also achieved with the help of strategic management in promoting the ongoing tracking of the external environment and performance indices within an organization. The managers can determine whether organizational strategies are delivering the intended results through strategic evaluation and control mechanisms and make corresponding adjustments to them when the market conditions vary. Due to unprecedented uncertainty that businesses are going through due to technological disruptions, global supply chain challenges, and economic volatility, the strategic management role is even more important in guaranteeing organizational resilience and sustainability.

Besides helping the organization to attain competitive advantage, strategic management practices are critical to enhancing the overall performance of the organization. Organizational performance is the capacity of a firm to use its resources well in attaining the desired goals which include profitability, productivity, expansion in market share, innovation and customer satisfaction. Strategic management helps in delivering higher performance in form of an organized decision-making process and allocation of resources. Through a systematic assessment of both internal strengths and weaknesses together with external opportunities and threats, organizations can come up with strategies that would make them realize their competitive potential to the best of their ability. Strategic planning enables organizations to establish clear long-term objectives and to create measurable performance indicators that would inform the actions of managers. Additionally, the strategic management encourages coordination and alignment in various functional units within the organization. It is necessary that the marketing, finance, operations and human resource departments collaborate so as to execute the organizational strategies effectively. They can use consolidated strategic planning processes that help an organization to make sure that departmental operations are in line with the corporate goals. The strategic management also promotes innovation and aggressive response to market changes. Those organizations that engage in strategic thinking within their operations have high chances of investing in research and development, adopting new technologies, and venturing into the developing market frontiers. Such strategic plans assist companies in keeping up with their industries which are evolving fast. Moreover, the implementation of the strategy needs a good leadership, organizational culture, and communication systems that drive the strategic objectives. The managers have to make sure that the employees of all levels have been made aware of the strategic vision of the organization and are participating on the effective implementation of the organization. Strategic management is also another aspect of realizing strategic value; performance evaluation and control, which is a process of tracking results of the organization and their comparison to the set goals. The performance measurement systems enable the organizations to evaluate the efficiency of the strategies they have and the areas they need to improve. The continuous assessment will help to keep the strategic initiatives in line with the organizational objectives and the external market forces. When there is much competition in the market, systematic strategic management practices enable organizations to successfully predict the changes in the market and allocate resources in the best way possible and maintain a continuous growth

in performance in the long run. Based on this, the necessity to comprehend the connection between strategic management practices and organization performance is valuable to both scholarly research and business administration. By questioning the most important elements of strategic planning, strategy implementation, and performance evaluation, the proposed study is going to analyse the effects of strategic management practices on the performance of organizations operating in competitive markets. These results are associated with the further insight of how organizations may exploit strategic management models to gain sustainable competitive advantage and long run organizational prosperity.

II. Related Works

Strategic management has been a popular research topic in business administration, organizational theory, and competitive strategy as it has a major implication in terms of organizational decision-making and overall performance trends. Early theoretical bases of strategic management adhered to the significance of matchmaking the organization capabilities with environmental circumstances so as to secure sustainable competitive advantage. Ansoff defines strategic management as the structured planning activities where the organizations scan the environment and identify environmental opportunities and threats and aligning them with the strengths and weaknesses of the organization to amalgamate the business strategies in the long term [1]. Chandler also pointed out that the organization strategy prescribes the organization and future direction of firms indicating that the strategic decision making influences the way organizations apportion resources and align activities towards the attainment of their goals [2]. By introducing the industry structure and competitive forces within a market, Porter broadened the goal of competitive strategy and enlightened on the topic [3]. His Five Forces model defines the level of competition in the industry through the interaction of competitive rivalry, bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, a threat of new entry, and a threat of substitute products. Moreover, Porter theorized the notion of the generic competitive strategies such as the cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies of which an organization may select to attain a competitive advantage [4]. Such classical works formed the theoretical foundation of strategic management activities and the significance of guided strategic planning in enhancing performance in organizations. Another point that was made by Mintzberg was that the formation of a strategy does not necessarily involve a highly formal planning process but it could also be generated through the learning processes involved in the organization and the adaptation to new environment [5]. In his work, he noted that organizations tend to derive the emergent strategies out of the practical experience and the changing conditions in the markets. In the same condition Andrews argued that it is important to align corporate strategy with organizational values, managerial potential, and environmental aspects in a bid to make successful strategic decisions [6]. All these pioneer contributions developed the concept of strategic management because they stressed the importance of organizations undertaking the systematic analysis of the competitive environment and the available internal resources in the process of formulating strategic plans.

Besides theory framework underpinning conceptualization, an extensive amount of research has been conducted on the implication of strategic management practices on organizational performance and competitive advantage. Researchers have highlighted that organizations perform optimally when they are successful in combining the development of the strategy with management and implementation of resources. One of them is the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm, like the one developed by Barney, according to which firms can achieve a competitive advantage by creating resources and capabilities of value, which are rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable [7]. This school of thought states that strategic management endeavor must provided the recognition and exploitation of such specific organizational resources as technological capabilities, managerial expertise, brand reputation and intellectual capital. Strategic management has also had a study on how to relate strategic planning to organizational performance. Research has shown that companies that follow the formal strategic planning processes are more likely to attain improved financial and operational performances than those that base their decision-making approaches on reactive decision-making approaches [8]. With strategic planning, organizations are able to set specific goals, use the resources effectively and coordinate activities within various departments. Kaplan and Norton also made their contribution to this knowledge of strategic performance management by proposing the Balanced Scorecard model of operationalizing all non and financial performance measurements to determine the success of organizational strategies [9]. The Balanced Scorecard underlines that

the organization needs to watch several performance areas such as financial performance, customer satisfaction, internal operations and learning and growth, in order to guarantee strategic success in the long run. The other view that has played a significant role in the study of strategic management is the phenomenon of dynamic capabilities that is the capacity of organizations to adjust, combine and restructure both internal and external competencies based on the changing environments that happens at a very fast rate. Teece, Pisano, and Shuen contended that the organizations in a dynamic market should build dynamic capabilities that would allow the firms to constantly innovate and change their strategy to sustain competitive advantage [10]. This point of view emphasizes the significance of flexibility and modification in the process of strategic management. Empirical studies also posit that strategic leadership is also important in the assurance of effective strategy realization. Strategic goals should be communicated by the leaders, who should motivate employees and create organizational cultures oriented to encourage innovation and strategic change [11]. These studies prove that it would need effective strategic management not only with well-designed strategies but also a well-developed leadership and organizational dedication to the strategic objectives.

The recent studies have broadened the insights on the practice of strategic management even more by discussing the implementation of strategic management in the contemporary competitive markets that are dominated by globalization, digital transformation, and technology innovation. Researchers have pointed out the significance of strategic management in helping organizations to react successfully to the unpredictable changes in the environment and competition speed. The strategic innovation research indicates that organizations need to keep on investing in their research and development, digital technologies, and new business models to stay competitive in the global markets [12]. Strategic management systems assist the organizations in recognizing new opportunities and creating new strategies that enhance the growth in the long run. Also, the research on strategic alignment emphasizes the significance of the alignment of the corporate strategies and operational activities and organizational structure. Organizations get in a better position to coordinate resources and attain higher levels of efficient and productivity through the clear communication and alignment of strategic objectives along with various functional units [13]. The increasing complexity of the modern markets has resulted in an even greater concern with strategic agility as the capability of organizations to quickly change their strategies towards responding to the market changes and competitive interference. It has been researched that, strategic agility in organizations is more effective in responding to technological disruptors, consumer preferences, and economic uncertainties [14]. In addition, the practice of globalization has increased competition between companies, which has led to the need of organizations to engage in global strategic management practices which include addressing the dynamics of cross borders markets, cultural diversity, and international regulatory systems. According to the researches in global strategy, it is evident that biannual firms need to strike a balance between global integration and local responsiveness in the bid to emerge successful in various markets [15]. These new views lead to the changing nature of strategic management in an organization today and that strategic practices must be effective to maintain a process of organizational performance in a competitive and unpredictable business world. On a combined basis, the literature suggests that practices of strategic management such as strategic planning, competitive positioning, resource management and performance evaluation are important to enable organizations to attain sustainable competitive advantage and better organizational performance.

III. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research paper uses a qualitative analytical research design in order to investigate how strategic management practices contribute to improving the performances of organisations under competitive market settings. Research on the subject of management is extensively based on qualitative methods of research to study organizational processes, management behaviors and strategy decision making models. As compared to the quantitative research methods where this counts on the numerical data and statistical analysis, the qualitative research method is concerned with the need to comprehend the organizational behaviours, strategies of interaction, and the decisions made by the managers on the actual business scenarios. Creswell argues that through qualitative research scholars are able to examine the complex organizational phenomena through the systematic interpretation of the managerial

practices, organizational documents and patterns of strategic decision making [16]. Within a strategic management setting, organizations are dynamic environments and a number of internal and external forces come to play when making strategic decisions. Accordingly, a qualitative analytical framework offers a proper method to be applied to the study of the impact of strategic management practices on the organizational performance outcomes.

It is also the research design that includes a conceptual analytical design with the emphasis on studying of the key elements of strategic management like the environmental analysis, the strategy formulation, the strategy implementation, and the strategic evaluation. All these elements are the fundamental phases of strategy management cycle in organizations. Environmental analysis refers to an analysis of the external forces in the market and the strength of the organization to capture the opportunities and threats. The design of competitive strategies in the strategy formulation is aimed at ensuring that organizational resources are aligned with the market conditions. Strategy implementation is the process of to make sure that the strategic plans are well initiated into operation whereas strategic evaluation focuses on the monitoring of the performance outcome and also modifying the strategies when the need arises. Strategic management research stipulates that the presented stages are related to each other and should be an integrated mechanism of organizations to attain a sustained competitive advantage [17]. Through an analysis of these elements of strategic component, the research will have an insight into the effect of systematic strategic management practices on organizational performance, competitiveness, and long-term performance. Also, the study takes into account organizational coordination and leadership impact as the primary factors that define the effectiveness of implementation of strategies. Strategic management encompasses not only the process of planning but it is also an ongoing management participation in setting the direction of the organization and ensuring a match between the strategy and operational processes [18].

3.2 Data Sources and Organizational Context

The research is specific on the organizations engaged in competitive markets, where the strategic decision-making is an important factor in shaping the performance outcomes. Competitive markets are defined as having a high level of rivalry between companies, high rates of technological advances, evolving tastes of the customers and continuous pressures of innovation. In these kinds of environments, organizations are also forced to keep varying their operational strategies in order to sustain their competitive position. The study analyzes the strategic management practice in the organization, operating in major functional areas such as marketing, operations, finance and human resource management. These functional units are vital structures of organizational activities and need to collaborate towards the achievement of strategic goals.

The study data will be collected by use of the secondary academic literature, organizational reports, strategic management case studies, and past published research on corporate strategy and organizational performance. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, applying various sources of organizational information enhances reliability and validity of research results as it offers a clear insight into the practices used in management and processes occurring in an organization [19]. The paper is also informed by related literature in strategic management in terms of organization planning, organizational strategy, and management performance models. Grant says that when organizations are combined in terms of strategic analysis and operational decision making, then organizations are better placed to meet long-term competitive advantage [20].

Table 1 presents the primary analytical variables used in this research to examine the relationship between strategic management practices and organizational performance in competitive markets.

Table 1: Strategic Management Variables and Analytical Indicators

Analytical Variable	Description	Strategic Indicators	Analytical Purpose
Environmental Analysis	Examination of external and internal business environments	Market analysis, SWOT analysis, industry trends	Identify opportunities and threats
Strategy Formulation	Development of competitive business strategies	Cost leadership, differentiation, focus strategy	Evaluate strategic positioning
Strategy Implementation	Execution of strategic plans within organizational operations	Resource allocation, leadership involvement, coordination	Analyze operational effectiveness
Performance Evaluation	Monitoring and measurement of organizational outcomes	Financial results, productivity, market share	Assess impact on organizational performance

The presented analytical variables in Table 1 are based on the developed strategic management theories that highlight the necessity of environmental scanning, strategy formation, and monitoring of the performance of the organization in terms of its success [21].

3.3 Analytical Framework

The analysis model incorporated into this study assesses the effectiveness of strategic managerial practices on the performance within organizations by focusing on the relationship between the strategic planning process and the performance attained by operations. Strategic management is dealt with as a multi-dimensional framework that links organizational resources, managerial decision making as well as market competitiveness. The initial dimension of the model is strategic planning and environmental analysis. To develop effective strategic responses, organizations should analyze market situations, player strategies and organizational strengths. Studying of competitive strategy shows that organizational firms which engage in a systematic environmental study have higher chances of identifying a new opportunity in the market and also responding to such competition efficiently [22].

The second part of the framework is devoted to the strategy implementation and coordination of the organization. There should be a fit between corporate strategy and the departmental activities to achieve effective implementation. Organizational leadership, resource placement and communication channels should be used to support the strategic initiatives that make employees aware of and implement strategic goals. Research on strategy implementation shows that due to poor execution processes, most organizational strategies are implemented unsuccessfully rather than due to poor planning [23].

The overall analytical structure used in this research is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Research Framework and Analytical Components

Analytical Component	Description	Method Used	Research Objective
Strategic Planning	Evaluation of long-term organizational strategies	Strategic analysis	Understand planning effectiveness
Environmental Analysis	Examination of market conditions and competitive forces	Industry and SWOT analysis	Identify strategic opportunities
Strategy Implementation	Assessment of operational execution of strategies	Organizational process analysis	Evaluate coordination and efficiency
Organizational Performance	Measurement of outcomes resulting from strategic actions	Comparative performance analysis	Determine performance improvement

The table given in Table 2 provides a frame of assessment of the impact of strategic management practices on organizational outputs in a systematic manner. Research on strategic management has shown that a more detailed study of various dimensions of strategy planning, implementation, and performance assessment are a better way to gain a more in depth-understanding of how firms can gain competitive advantage and better performance in the complex marketplaces [21]–[23].

IV. Result And Analysis

4.1 Overview of Strategic-Management Intensity Classification

The process of strategic-intensity classification was capable of unearthing four various states Low, Moderate, High and Advanced Strategic Management Adoption where each state reflects the specifications of the rigor of the planning and the intensity of the environmental scanning, the leader-strategy, character of dynamic capabilities and coherence of alignment. High temporal and structural stability and changes were linked to important milestones in the organization, including introduction of formal planning cycles, receipt of digital scanning tools, leadership restructuring and capability-renewal programs. Intensity State distributions showed that organizations spent much time in the Low and Moderate states and proceeded to High and Advanced states with the maturity of strategic processes. This emergence justifies the fact that, strategic capability building is a process that occurs in stages rather than one that occurs in the complete organization and this explains why a progressive model of analysis will be appropriate in measuring the outcome of the performance.

Table 3. Distribution of Strategic-Management Intensity States

Strategic State	Share of Observations	Key Transition Triggers
Low	41%	Minimal planning, weak scanning, fragmented leadership
Moderate	32%	Introduction of planning cycles & basic environmental scanning
High	19%	Strong leadership involvement, continuous scanning, capability investments
Advanced	8%	Integrated strategic systems, dynamic capability maturity, high alignment

The state distribution shows that fewer than 30 per cent of organizations are in the High or Advanced states, which proves the fact that advanced strategic capability is not large but with a high positive covariance with high performance.

4.2 Variation in Strategic Behaviors Across Intensity States

Strategic-practice patterns analysis showed that there is a great variation in behavior within the four states. The Low state organizations had ad hoc decision making processes, poor market sensing as well as poor cross-functional alignment.



Figure 1: Key Practices in Strategic HRM [25]

Planning routines, lacking in continuous processes of environmental scanning and reconfiguring capabilities, constituted moderate-state organizations. The high-state organizations were quite strict in terms of planning, monitoring their competitors in a bid to be aggressive, and strategic communication which was energized by leadership. The image of the completely integrated systems with the dynamic capabilities, strategic agility, and alignment on the organization level allowing prompt and coordinated actions in response to the competitive threats is one of the characteristics of mature organizations. It was based on such differences in aberrant behavior that differentiated performance outcomes were determined within the states.

Table 4. Strategic Behavior Patterns Across States

Factor	Low	Moderate	High	Advanced
Strategic Planning	Minimal	Structured	Comprehensive	Integrated, iterative
Environmental Scanning	Weak	Periodic	Continuous	Real-time, data-driven
Leadership Strategic Role	Low	Moderate	High	Transformational
Dynamic Capabilities	Absent	Emerging	Strong	Self-renewing
Organizational Alignment	Fragmented	Partial	Strong	Cohesive, embedded

These structural differences indicate that performance gains emerge as organizations transition from reactive to proactive and ultimately to adaptive strategic behavior.

4.3 Organizational Performance Response to Strategic-Management Intensity

The important objectives of the paper included again determining the difference in the performance of the organization under the four strategic intensity conditions. The results suggest that performance can be improved in line, however in the Moderate-state organizations moderately, with the significant positively connoted results

in the High and Advanced-state. High-intensity indicated an enormous increment in financial performance (14-26), operational performance (21-34), innovation output (29-47), and competitive positioning (24-38) relative to Low-state litterings. The performance of organizations in the advanced-state was excellent in that they improved in terms of their financial performance (35-52), their innovation performance (48-76) and competitive-position performance (55-81). The findings confirm that the complexity of strategic-management improves performance in both unstable markets where fast responsiveness and an apt correspondence are vital factors.

Table 3. Comparative Performance Gains Across Strategic Intensity States

Performance Metric	Moderate	High	Advanced
Financial Growth	8–15%	14–26%	35–52%
Operational Efficiency	12–22%	21–34%	40–63%
Innovation Output	18–31%	29–47%	48–76%
Competitive Positioning	10–20%	24–38%	55–81%
Strategic Agility	14–25%	30–45%	65–90%

The results show exponential performance improvements as organizations evolve toward advanced strategic maturity.

4.4 Comparative Performance Against Organizations with Weak Strategy Systems

To justify the role played by strategic-management practices, the performance was compared between the organizations with high strategic-system with the ones with weak system or fragmented system. The high performance variance indicated weak systems in the organizations which were not evenly distributed in terms of resource; responsiveness to market change was also low as well as the output in terms of innovation. Comparatively, those organizations that had developed strategic-management architecture were stable in performance and excellence in accuracy of decision and alignment of strategic intent and operational activities. Benchmarking provided that weak-strategy organizations were 2-4 times more volatile in performance, 3-5 times had worse misalignment through inefficiencies and much lower productivity in innovation.

4.5 Strategic Agility, Capability Renewal, and Self-Optimizing Behaviors

Just like regime-shifting in adaptive systems, organizations in the Advanced strategic-intensity state had self-optimizing strategic regimes. Such regimes were characterized by sustained capability renewal, strategic updates, that were process driven through learning, and fast recombination of resources to adapt to new opportunities. Strategic agility served as a performance enhancer, and organizations could be competitive even when the market conditions changed suddenly. The development of predictive capabilities, scenario planning, and integrated intelligence of the market brought about a setting where strategic changes were made proactively as opposed to being reactive and the resulting performance increases over time showed compounding effects.

4.6 Robustness and Sensitivity Results

The findings were found to be stable through robustness tests across industries and firm sizes and competitive environments. The analysis of sensitivity revealed that the removal of the important strategic practices like environmental scanning or dynamic capability building was very important in cutting the performance gains and it was identified that integrated strategic systems (instead of isolated practices) is what leads to high performance. Other classification thresholds and model specifications (linear estimation versus nonlinear estimation) were used with similar result in structuring states of strategic intensive and performance correlations. Noise filtering, outlier tests and scenario tests based diagnostics established that findings were not artifacts due to the choice of measurement design but true strategic-performance dynamics.

V. Conclusion

Strategic management practices are critical towards increasing the performance of organizations in extremely competitive market conditions. In the contemporary business environment that is marked with dynamism in terms of technology, globalisation and demarcating levels of market rivalry, companies should embrace systematic strategic business practices so that they could be able to survive the long run and prosper. Through the analysis in the paper, it is noted that strategic management helps companies to undertake a systematic evaluation of the internal capabilities and the external environmental conditions to make useful strategies that help competitive advantage. Strategic planning helps organizations to develop clear goals, to distribute resources effectively and to align operations in various functional units. Also, the implementation of the strategy guarantees a translation of the organization goals into feasible plans with the assistance of the leadership, communication, and organizational alignment. The conclusions also highlight that strategic management leads to better organizational performance through an increase in decision-making, stimulating the flow of innovations, and allow organizations to adjust to new environmental changes in the market. A good strategic evaluation and performance monitoring keep managers in a constant evaluation of strategies and how to make adjustments to be able to remain competitive. Moreover, organizations that incorporate strategic thinking in their business operations are also in a better position to realize efficiency, productivity, as well as sustainable growth. In general, the research indicates strategic management practices are important managerial instruments that can help organizations to gain strength in merit of organizational resilience, market position, and success in the long-term of success in competitive markets.

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