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Impact of Proactive and Defensive Strategic Orientations on Competitive Advantage: The Moderating Role of Corporate Characteristics

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine the effect of strategic orientation, represented by proactive and defensive orientations, on achieving competitive advantage in industrial companies. A descriptive analytical approach was adopted, and the study instrument was developed based on relevant previous literature. Data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 166 respondents, with all questionnaires successfully returned and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed that both proactive and defensive strategic orientations have a statistically significant positive effect on competitive advantage in industrial companies. The results also demonstrated statistically significant relationships, as indicated by the probability (p) values. Based on these findings, the study recommends that senior management strengthen strategic orientation practices and foster a culture that supports proactive and defensive strategic approaches to enhance competitive advantage and achieve sustainable organizational performance.

Keywords: Strategic Orientations, Proactive Strategy, Defensive Strategy, Competitive Advantage, Corporate Characteristics.

1. Introduction

Strategic orientation is considered the cornerstone of the success of any organization, as it is the path that guides organizations in their journey to their desired future, through their orientations, organizations set their strategic goals, as the strategic orientation makes the senior management in the organization fully aware of what its goals are, what are its external areas of activities, who are the beneficiaries of the services it provides, and it benefits it in identifying its structure, structure, environment at home, the policies it follows, and the philosophical frameworks that govern its methods. in decision-making, its human and material needs, and the holistic requirements of development. The process of defining strategy in the organization is related to many variables, the most important of which are related to the company's philosophy and its different orientations, which represent an important resource to which the criteria of strategic resources with a competitive advantage apply in the scarcity, value, difficulty of imitation and the high complexity, so strategic orientation is a concept that affects the performance of organizations because it affects how management thinks and works, and the direction is useful because it focuses. First, the organization must continuously collect information on the needs of the target groups and the capabilities of competitors. Second, this information is used to generate high value for consumers on a permanent basis (Slater & Narver, 1995). Strategic orientation makes the senior management fully aware of its goals, areas of external activities, and the beneficiaries of the services and products it provides and benefits it in identifying its structure, structure, policies, philosophical frameworks that govern its decision-making methods, human and material needs, and the holistic requirements for development (Slater, 2006). The competitive advantage that arises once an organization discovers new methods is

more effective than those used by competitors, as it is able to embody this discovery in the field, in other words, once a process of innovation is created in a broad sense.

By reviewing the previous studies, we find that most of the studies dealt with the relationship between market orientation and competitive advantage, between strategic orientation, capabilities and performance, and between strategic orientation, creativity and performance, but studies that linked strategic orientation and competitive advantage are rare, which prompted the researcher to conduct this study. There are not many studies in developing countries and in Sudan in particular on the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage. Due to the importance of the role played by the strategic orientation in improving the marketing performance of companies, this study came to find out the impact of the strategic orientation with its dimensions (proactive orientation, defensive orientation) on the competitive advantage in its dimensions (quality, flexibility, creativity) of industrial companies and to know the role of the modifying characteristics of companies in its dimensions (company age, company size, nature of the company's work) on the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage

1.1 Study Problem

There are many studies that have dealt with strategic orientation, such as Morgan (2003) and Laforet, 2009, which have shown that strategic orientation plays an important role in improving the performance of organizations. There are also studies that have dealt with the relationship between strategic orientation and marketing capabilities, such as the study of (Salem Al-Ajmi, 2011), as indicated by the study (2004). al) and Wael Idris (2012) to the relationship between market orientation and performance, and some studies have identified the relationship between strategic orientation. and capabilities, creativity and competitive advantage such as the study of Al-Nasiri, (2011), (Al-Shawara, 2011), (Sinkovics & Roath, 2004), (Day & Seyrek, 2005), (Grawe, et al. al, 2009) (Choy & Mula 2008) (Avci, et.. However, there are not many studies in developing countries and in Sudan in particular on the study of the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge the gap in terms of studying the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage Through the theory of resources, which explains the tangible and intangible resources of companies and previous studies and their gaps, the formulation of the study problem was reached by asking the following questions:

* What is the impact of the proactive strategic orientation on the competitive advantage? * What is the impact of the strategic defense orientation on the competitive advantage ?
What is the effect of the modified role (organizational characteristics) on the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage?

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study mainly aimed to show the impact of the proactive and defensive strategic orientation on the competitive advantage of the industrial sector, by achieving the following objectives: Testing the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage, testing the relationship between defense strategic orientation and competitive advantage, and knowing the level of competitive advantage in Sudanese industrial companies and knowing the level of strategic orientations in Sudanese companies.

1.3 Importance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from the fact that it contributes to the test of strategic orientation from the perspective of proactive and defensive orientation, as most of the previous studies dealt with the orientation from the perspective of (creative, entrepreneurial, marketing). This study may help to determine the extent to which corporate characteristics affect the relationship between strategic orientation

and competitive advantage. This study may help to bridge the research gap related to the study of proactive and defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage in the industrial sector, as there are few studies that have dealt with this topic. As for the applied importance of this study, it is of great importance for decision makers in terms of knowing the effects of strategic orientation on competitive advantage, in addition to knowing the most important impact of any type of strategic orientation. This study is a step to conduct further studies that show the importance of strategic orientation with its variables for companies as well as the importance of the company's marketing performance in achieving its goals. The researcher hopes that this study will contribute to the adoption of effective strategic directions for industrial companies. It can also contribute to helping researchers to bridge the research gap in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage by addressing other modified variables, and that this would work to strengthen the philosophy of strategic orientation and provide successful management applications for managers of industrial companies to contribute to decision-making and how to apply strategic orientation and clarify the importance of corporate characteristics in the application of strategic direction.

In order to answer the research questions, the study discusses the following study concepts

1.4 Study Concepts

It is the effective behavior of the organization and the main component of innovation and renewal, which is the initiatives adopted by the organization and also the orientation that looks at and looks forward to new industries or new market opportunities, in the sense that the organization uses it to be the first in the market. Strategic Defensive Orientation: It is the least aggressive approach among other strategies, which is the behaviors that aim to protect the marketing position of the organization, which is the approach that companies take for the organization over the local markets and protect these markets from the threats of competitors, and it targets small markets and rarely offers new products or services, and it is moving very cautiously towards rapid growth. Competitive Advantage: It is the field in which an organization has a higher ability than its competitors to exploit external opportunities or reduce the impact of threats, and the competitive advantage stems from the organization's ability to exploit its material, human or intellectual resources, as it may be related to quality, technology, the ability to reduce costs, or marketing efficiency, and there may be many competitive advantages such as lower cost and quality, product excellence, and shortening of time

1.5 The Relationship between Strategic Orientation and Competitive Advantage

The study of (Sinkovics and Roat 2004) showed the relationship between strategic orientation, capabilities and performance in both England and Scotland, and the study concluded that there is a statistical function between strategic orientation, quality and performance in the private companies of the study. The study of (Daya and Seyrek 2005) also showed to examine the potential impact of the strategic orientation that includes the dimensions (entrepreneurial orientation – technological orientation and customer orientation on the competitive advantage in Turkish companies, and the results of the study showed that there is an impact of strategic orientation with its specific variables on the performance of Turkish companies). Sample companies study. The study (Jan and Batia2005) showed the extent of the impact of marketing orientation on the competitive advantage of Indian companies operating in the Indian market, and this study concluded that it supports the confirmation that the adoption of marketing orientation is an essential and indispensable issue to achieve better performance in companies with a positive relationship between marketing orientation and financial performance. Financial in terms of team spirit among employees, commitment to the organization, product quality, new product success, and customer satisfaction.

1.6 Study Model

Through the theory of resources and previous studies and its gaps, the following study model was reached:

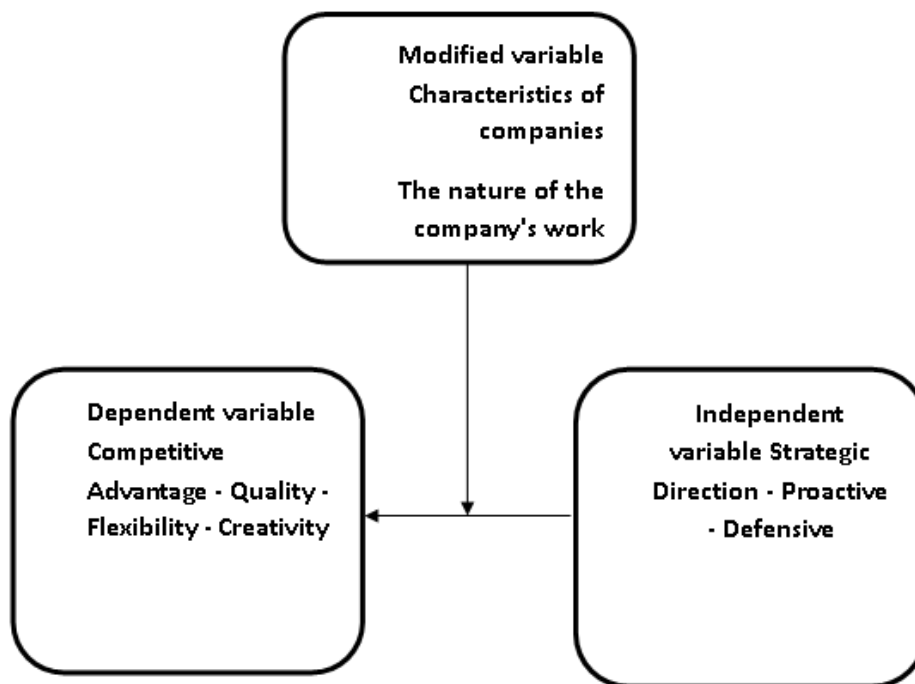


Figure 1. Study model

1.7 Previous Studies

* A study (Faisal Ghazi Ezzeddin, 2015) entitled "The Impact of Creative Orientation on Achieving a Competitive Advantage" This study aimed to show the impact of creative orientation on achieving a competitive advantage in Kuwaiti commercial banks through (the intention to create, the infrastructure for creativity, and the implementation of creativity) on achieving a competitive advantage for banks. The most important results of the study also showed that the level of achieving a competitive advantage in the Kuwaiti commercial banks under study from the point of view of the study sample was medium and the level of intention to creativity, infrastructure for creativity, and the impact of creativity, implementation of creativity in the Kuwaiti commercial banks under study from the point of view of the study sample was average. One of the most important recommendations of the study is the need for Kuwaiti commercial banks to prepare services commensurate with the needs of their customers of all categories by adopting modern concepts in the methods of providing services in accordance with their needs.

* A study (Omar Bin Mohammed, 2015): entitled "The Role of the Diversity Strategy in Improving the Competitive Performance of Industrial Enterprises" This study aimed to: clarify the nature of the diversification strategy with a presentation of the various strategies available to the organization. The study also concluded some results, the most important of which is the presence of the institution in an excellent position in terms of the presence of many competing institutions, which makes it easier for it to monitor the movements of competitors.

*A study (Noha Ahmed Abu Taha, 2014) entitled "The Impact of Environmental Disturbance on the Relationship between Strategic Orientation and Marketing Performance" This study mainly aimed to explain the role of environmental disturbance in the relationship between strategic orientation and marketing performance, and the study concluded on some results, the most important of which was

the results showed that the housing companies that were in the study sample adopted multiple strategic orientations, and it was found that the analytical strategic orientation is the most important

*A study (Marwan Hamouda Al-Dahdar, 2013) entitled "The Relationship between the Strategic Orientation of the Senior Management in Universities", and this study also aimed to identify the extent of the strategic orientation of the senior management in the industrial institutions in the Gaza Strip, to identify the extent of the interest of the senior management in the rates of innovation and technological change in the field of industry, and the continuous improvement of their institutions and its relationship with the competitive advantage of industrial institutions.

*A study (Erdil, 2015): entitled: (The relationship between orientation innovativeness and innovation performance) aimed to show the nature of the overlapping relationship between the market orientation, and both organizational creativity and creative performance, and the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between both the dimensions of market orientation, organizational creativity and creative performance, in addition to the great role that market orientation plays in directing organizational creativity and thus increasing creative performance.

* A study (Narver et al., 2015) entitled (Responsive and proactive market orientation and new-product success) aimed to develop a measure of proactive orientation and refine the current measure of responsive orientation, and analyze the relationship between responsive orientation and proactive orientation with the success of new products in those companies. One of the results of the study is that companies that rely solely on the stated needs of customers in the development of their new products do not create any new insights into the value-added opportunities for customers, thus creating weak customer reliability and weakening their loyalty to the company.

* A study (Zhou et al., 2014) entitled "Development strategic orientation in China: antecedents and consequences of market and innovation orientations", aimed to examine the effects of creative and market orientations on manufacturing industries, and one of the results of the study is that leadership charisma positively affects employees' work attitudes and attitudes, and facilitates the effects of creative and market orientations on employees' attitudes.

* A study (Ge & Ding, 2013) entitled Market Orientations, Competitive Strategy and firm Performance: An Empirical Study of Chinese firms aimed to examine the mediating effects of competitive corporate strategy on the relationship between market orientation and performance, and through the results, it was shown that customer orientation has a strong correlation with both competitive strategy and market performance. Study (Jaquin, et al., 2013) titled Market Orientation and Innovation: An Inter-Relationship Analysis European aimed to determine the extent to which companies operating in the same sector and similar market orientation are interested in innovation, and the study also found a positive relationship between the concepts of market orientation and market performance.

*A study (Zhou, 2012) entitled: innovation, imitation, and new product performance aimed to compare the effects of innovation and imitation strategies on the performance of new products and study their emergencies with different market conditions in China, and the results of the industrial survey showed, compared to the imitation strategy, that the innovation strategy leads to better performance of new products.

*Based on an international organization, (2012). The study aimed to examine the different components of the dimensions of strategic orientation and its impact on the performance of the organization, and this study concluded that there is a strong relationship between all forms of strategic orientation and the performance of the organization, and the study stated that a deep understanding of this relationship facilitates the process of formulating strategies and methods of implementing

them, which leads to enhancing the performance of the organization, and this also enables the organization to obtain feedback on whether the implementation of strategies is carried out as planned.

*A study (Asikhia, 2010) entitled Strategic Marketing Orientation and Performance: A Case for Synergistic Merger Effects of Nigerian Banks, the study aimed to show the relationship between strategic marketing orientation and performance in Nigerian banks, the study reached many results, most notably that strategic marketing orientation has a positive impact on the performance of banks, and also that there are many factors mediating the relationship between strategic marketing direction and performance and demand assurance.

*A study (Sonnin, 2011) entitled The Relationship between Innovation Organization Performance The study aimed to test the relationship between creative orientation and organizational performance in a sample of Canadian companies, and the study reached many results, most notably that there is a high positive correlation between orientation.

2. Methodology

The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage. It is divided into the following hypotheses:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality.
- There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility
- There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity .

-The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between * defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage. It is divided into the following hypotheses:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between strategic defensive orientation and quality
- There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility
- There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and innovation .

*The third main hypothesis: Institutional characteristics modify the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage.

- The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality
 - The nature of the company's work changes the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility .
 - The nature of the company's work changes the relationship between proactive strategic direction and creativity
 - the size of the company changes the relationship between proactive strategic direction and quality
 - Company size changes the relationship between proactive strategic direction and quality
 - Company size changes the relationship between proactive strategic direction and flexibility
 - Company size changes the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and *hypothetical - creativity
- Key Four: Institutional Characteristics Modify the Relationship between Defense Strategic Orientation and Marketing Performance

- The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and quality
- The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and flexibility
- The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and creativity
- Company size changes the relationship between strategic defense orientation and quality
- Company size changes the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and flexibility

- Company size changes the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and creativity

3. Analysis and Results

Means, Standard Deviation and Reliability of Study Variables: In order to decide on the required Cronbach's alpha value, Nunnally (1967) stated that it depends on the purpose of the research, as in the early stages of basic research, a credence of 0.50-0.60 is sufficient, and an increase in credibility of no more than 0.80 may be extravagant, as Hair et al., 2010 have suggested, that Cronbach's alpha value should be more than 0.70, however, Cronbach's alpha of 0.50 and above is also considered acceptable in the literature (Bowling, (2009), and Table 1 shows the reliability of the study measures according to Cronbach's alpha method. It can be seen from the table that the alpha coefficient for the independent variables ranged between (0.69) – (0.89) while the dependent variables were (0.78) – (0.90), so the reliability of the study measures is at a higher level than the minimum level applicable to accept the credibility of the measures of this type of study.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha values for study variables

Cronbach's alpha	Axis
0.69	Proactive strategic direction
0.89	Strategic Defense Direction
0.88	Quality
0.90	Flexibility
0.78	Creativity

3.1 Testing the Study Hypotheses

3.1.1 The First Main Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage. It is divided into the following hypotheses: - There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality - There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility - There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity

3.1.2 The Second Main Hypothesis

there is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and the competitive advantage It is divided into the following hypotheses: - There is a statistically significant relationship between the strategic defensive orientation and the quality - There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility - There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity The researcher used the simple regression analysis method as the appropriate statistical method, as this method tests the extent of a statistically significant causal relationship between all the proactive and defensive strategic orientation and the competitive advantage under study, and the results of the test of the study hypotheses are as follows. .

3.1.3 The Third Main Hypothesis

Corporate characteristics modify the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage. - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between proactive strategic direction and quality - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity - Company size modifies the relationship between proactive strategic direction and quality - Company size modifies the

relationship between proactive strategic direction and flexibility - Company size modifies the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity

3.1.4 The Fourth Main Hypothesis

Corporate Characteristics Modify the Relationship Between Defensive Strategic Orientation and Marketing Performance - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defense orientation and quality - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defensive orientation and flexibility - The nature of the company's work modifies the relationship between strategic defense orientation and creativity - Company size modifies the relationship between strategic defense orientation and quality - Company size modifies the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility - Company size modifies the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity

The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage. It is divided into the following hypotheses: There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity

3.1.1.1 The First Sub-Hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality. To test this hypothesis, simple regression was used to examine the relationship between the dependent variable (quality) and the independent variable (proactive strategic orientation). The results are shown in the following table:

Table 2. Results of the regression analysis of the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression Coefficient (B)	The first sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.001	3.31	0.24	
			0.25	Correlation coefficient R
			0.06	Determination Coefficient)R2(
			10.9	F value
			0.001	Significance level

It is clear from Table 2:

There is a direct correlation between proactive strategic orientation and quality, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows:

*The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.25) and this value indicates the existence of a correlation between the proactive strategic orientation and the quality in the society under study. - The value of the regression coefficient was (0.24), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between the proactive strategic orientation and quality. - The results of the assessment also indicate that the proactive strategic orientation affects the quality in the studied

community by (6) %, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.06) while they affect other variables by (94).

- The results of the analysis also show that there is a statistically significant relationship between the proactive strategic orientation and quality according to the (t) test and the (F) test at the significance level (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the relationship coefficient between the proactive strategic orientation and quality was (3.31) at the level of significance (0.001) and the value of F (10.9) at the level of significance (0.001), and these values are less than the significance level of 5%. Therefore, the assumption of nullity is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the proactive strategic orientation and quality. Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted The first subsection is that there is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality Second sub-hypothesis There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility To prove this hypothesis, the simple regression method was used, which measures the relationship between the dependent variable and represents it in the study (flexibility) and the independent variable (proactive strategic orientation), and the following table shows the results of the analysis:

Table 3. Results of the regression analysis of the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression Coefficient (B)	The first sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.014	2.47	0.19	
			0.19	Correlation coefficient R
			0.04	Determination Coefficient)R2(
			6.13	F value
			0.014	Significance level

It is clear from Table 3: - There is a direct correlation between the proactive strategic direction and the market share, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows: * The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.19) and this value indicates the existence of a correlation between the proactive strategic orientation and flexibility in the society under study. - The value of the regression coefficient was (0.19), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between the proactive strategic orientation and flexibility. - The results of the assessment also indicate that the proactive strategic orientation affects the resilience of the society under study by (4) %, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.04) while other variables affect (96) %. - The results of the analysis also show that there is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility according to the (t) test and the (F) test at a significant level of (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the coefficient of the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility was (2.47) at a significant level (0.014) and the value of F (6.13) at a significant level (0.014), and these values are less than the significance level of 5%. Therefore, the assumption of nullity is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates

that there is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility

Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted. The second subsection is that there is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility.

The third sub-hypothesis: There is a statistically significant relationship between the proactive and creative orientation. To prove this hypothesis, the simple regression method was used, which measures the relationship between the dependent variable and represents it in the study (creativity) and the independent variable (prospective orientation), and the following table shows the results of the analysis:

Table 4. Results of regression analysis of the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression coefficient (B)	The third sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.000	3.94	0.27	
			0.30	Correlation coefficient R
			0.09	Determination Coefficient (R ²)
			15.5	F value
			0.000	Significance level

It is clear from Table 4: - There is a direct correlation between proactive strategic orientation and creativity, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows: * The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.30) and this value indicates the existence of a correlation between the proactive strategic orientation and creativity in the society under study. - The value of the regression coefficient was (0.27), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between proactive strategic orientation and creativity. -The results of the assessment also indicate that the proactive strategic orientation affects creativity in the studied society by (9) %, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.09) while they affect other variables by (91). - It is also clear from the results of the analysis that there is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity according to the (t) test and the (F) test at the level of significance (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the coefficient of the relationship between the proactive strategic orientation and creativity was (3.94) with a significant level of (0.000) and the value of F (15.5) at a significant level of (0.000) and these values are less than the level of significance (5%). Therefore, the assumption of null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the proactive strategic orientation and creativity

Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted. The third subsection is the existence of a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity.

The following is a summary of the hypothesis of the first major study Table 5 Summary of the results of the first main hypothesis

Table 5. Summary of the results of the first main hypothesis

Conclusion	Sub-Assumptions
I supported	1/ There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and quality
I supported	2 /There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and flexibility
I supported	3 /There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and creativity

From the above, we conclude that the main hypothesis of the study, which stated: "There is a statistically significant relationship between proactive strategic orientation and competitive advantage, has been supported in all the elements of the sub-hypotheses.

The second main hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant relationship between the strategic defensive orientation and the marketing performance, and the following assumptions are derived from it: - There is a statistically significant relationship between the strategic defensive orientation and the quality - There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility - There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity First: The First Sub-Hypothesis There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and quality To prove this hypothesis, the simple regression method was used, which measures the relationship between the dependent variable and represents it in the study (quality) and the independent variable (defensive strategic orientation), and the following table shows the results of the analysis:

Table 6. Results of regression analysis of the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and quality

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression coefficient (B)	Fourth sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.000	6.69	0.43	
			0.46	Correlation coefficient R
			0.22	Determination Coefficient (R ²)
			44.7	F value
			0.000	Significance level

It is clear from Table 6: -

There is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and quality, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows: * The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.46) and this value indicates that there is a correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and the quality in the society under study. - The value of the regression coefficient was (0.43), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and quality. - The results of the assessment also indicate that the defensive strategic orientation affects the quality in the society under study by (22) %, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.22) while they affect other variables by (78). 3. The results of the analysis also show that there is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and the quality according to the (t) test and the (F) test at the level of significance (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the coefficient of the relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and quality was (6.69) at a significant level of (0.000) and the value of F (44.7) at a significant level of (0.000), and these values are less than the level of significance (5%). Therefore, the imposition of nullity is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and quality. Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted The first subdivision is the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and quality.

3.1.2.2 The Second Sub-Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility.

Table 7. Results of the regression analysis of the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression coefficient (B)	Second sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.000	8.23	0.54	
			0.54	Correlation coefficient R
			0.29	Determination Coefficient)R2(
			67.8	F value
			0.000	Significance level

It is clear from Table 7: -

There is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and flexibility, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows: * The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.54) and this value indicates that there is a correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and flexibility in the society under study. . The value of the regression coefficient was (0.54), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and flexibility. - The results of the assessment also indicate that the defensive strategic orientation affects the resilience in the studied society by (29) %, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.29) while the other variables are affected by (71). - The results of the analysis also show that there is a statistically

significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility according to the (t) test and (F) test at a significant level of (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the coefficient of the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility was (8.23) at a significant level (0.000) and the value of F (67.8) at a significant level of (0.000), and these values are less than the significance level of 5%. Therefore, the assumption of nullity is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and flexibility. Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted The second subsection is that there is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility

3.1.2.3 The Third Sub-Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant relationship between the strategic approach of defense and creativity.

Table 8. Results of regression analysis of the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity

Decision	Significance level	T value	Regression coefficient (B)	Third sub-hypothesis
Accepted	0.000	8.62	0.50	
			0.56	Correlation coefficient R
			0.31	Determination Coefficient)R2(
			74.3	F value
			0.000	Significance level

It is clear from Table 8: 1/ There is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity, and this is evident through the value of the correlation coefficient (R) and the value of the regression coefficient (B) as follows: * The value of the correlation coefficient was (0.56) and this value indicates that there is a correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity in the society under study. *. The value of the regression coefficient was (0.50), and this positive value indicates that there is a direct correlation between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity. - The results of the assessment also indicate that the defensive strategic orientation affects creativity in the studied society by (31) percent, where the value of the determination coefficient was (0.31) while the other variables are affected by (69). - The results of the analysis also show that there is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity according to the (t) test and the (F) test at the level of significance (5%), where the value of (t) calculated for the coefficient of the relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity was (8.62) with a significant level of (0.000) and the value of F (74.3) at a significant level of (0.000), and these values are less than the level of significance (5%). Therefore, the assumption of null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative assumption is accepted, which indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity. Based on the results of the statistical analysis described in the preceding paragraphs, the hypothesis is accepted The third subdivision is the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and creativity The following is a summary of the hypothesis of the second major study

Table 9. Summary of the results of the second main hypothesis

Conclusion	Sub-Assumptions
I supported	1/ There is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and the quality
I supported	2 /There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and flexibility
I supported	3 /There is a statistically significant relationship between defensive strategic orientation and creativity

From the above, we conclude that the main hypothesis of the study, which stated: "There is a statistically significant relationship between the defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage, has been strengthened in all the elements of the sub-hypotheses. Analysis of the Third Main Hypothesis: The Modifying Role of Corporate Characteristics in the Relationship between Proactive Strategic Orientation and Competitive Advantage

Table 10. The moderating role of company size in the relationship between strategic orientation and quality

Quality				
	Form 3	Form 2	Form 1	
	-1.362	.170	.164	Proactive Orientation
	-2.281	.371	.377	Defensive orientation
2.56-				Company size
	1.836			Company size * Proactive orientation
	2.950			Company size * Defensive orientation
	.225	.219	.218	R²
	.200	.205	.208	Adjusted R²
	.005	.001	.218	ΔR²
	.544	.300	22.560	F change

The table below shows the role of company size in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (quality), and the results indicate that the company's size*is proactive, as the beta value (1.83) and the significance level (0.67), as well as the size of the company, does not modify the relationship between the defensive quality, where the beta value was (2.95) and the significance level (42). This shows that the size of the company does not modify the relationship between strategic orientation and marketing performance (quality).

Table 11. The moderating role of company size in the relationship between strategic orientation and flexibility

Flexibility				
	Form3	Form 2	Form 1	
	.731	.083	.089	Proactive Orientation
	-.206	.458	.450	Defensive orientation
0.042-				Company size
	0.792			Company size * Proactive orientation

	0.746			Company size * Defensive orientation
	.248	.245	.243	R²
	.225	.231	.233	Adjusted R²
	.004	.002	.243	ΔR²
	.374	.458	25.943	F change

The table below shows the role of company size in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (flexibility), and the results indicate that the company's size*proactive as the beta value (0.792) and the significance level (0.85) as well as the size of the company does not modify the relationship between the defensive flexibility as the beta value was (0.746) and the significance level (83). This shows that the size of a company does not modify the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (flexibility)

Table 12. The moderating role of company size in the relationship between strategic orientation and creativity

Creativity				
	Form3	Form2	Form 1	
	-.259	.196	.191	Proactive Orientation
	-1.114	.468	.473	Defensive orientation
1.26-				Company size
	.539			Company size * Proactive orientation
	1.763			Company size * Defensive orientation
	.337	.333	.332	R²
	.316	.321	.324	Adjusted R²
	.003	.001	.332	ΔR²
	.413	.295	40.25	F change

The table below shows the role of the company's size in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (creativity), and the results indicate that the company's size*proactive as the beta value (0.539) and the significance level (0.89) as well as the size of the company does not modify the relationship between the defensive creativity as the beta value was (1.76) and the significance level (60). This shows that the size of the company does not modify the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (innovation).

Analysis of the fourth main hypothesis: The modifying role of firms' characteristics in the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage .

Table 13. The moderating role of company nature in the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage (quality)

Quality				
	Form 3	Form 2	Form 1	
	.123	.142	.165	Proactive Orientation
	.255	.366	.377	Defensive orientation
0.482-				Nature of the Company
	.109			Company Nature * Proactive Orientation
	.529			Company Nature * Defensive Orientation

	234.	230.	218.	R²
	210.	216.	209.	Adjusted R²
	003.	010.	218.	ΔR²
	0.321	2.57	22.74	F change

The following table shows the role of the company's nature in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (quality), and the results indicate that the company's proactive nature, as the beta value (0.109) and the significance level (0.85), as well as the nature of the company, does not modify the relationship between defensive quality, where the beta value was (.529) and the significance level (45). This shows that the nature of the company does not modify the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage (quality).

Table 14. The moderating role of company nature in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (flexibility)

Flexibility				
	Form 3	Form 2	Form 1	
	-.167	.093	.100	Proactive Orientation
	.561	.461	.465	Defensive orientation
0.679-				Nature of the Company
	1.096**			Company Nature * Proactive Orientation
	-.310			Company Nature * Defensive Orientation
	.281	.264	.263	R²
	.258	.250	.254	Adjusted R²
	.017	.001	.263	ΔR²
	1.843	.267	28.509	F change

The results indicate that the nature of the company is proactive as the beta value (1.0) and the significance level (0.05) as well as the nature of the company does not modify the relationship between the defensive flexibility where the beta value was (-.310) and the significance level (65). This shows that the nature of the company modifies the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and (flexibility)

Table 15. The moderating role of company nature in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (creativity)

Creativity				
	Form 3	Form 2	Form 1	
	.093	.213**	.213**	Proactive Orientation
	.549**	.477***	.477***	Defensive orientation
0.208-				Nature of the Company
	.498			Company Nature * Proactive Orientation
	-.266			Company Nature * Defensive Orientation
	.356	.352	.352	R²
	.336	.340	.344	Adjusted R²
	.004	.000	.352	ΔR²
	0.458	.000	43.53	F change

The table below shows the role of the company's nature in the relationship between strategic orientation and competitive advantage (creativity), and the results indicate that the company's proactive nature, as the beta value (0.498) and the significance level (0.35), as well as the nature of the company, does not modify the relationship between the defensive creativity, where the beta value was (-.266) and the significance level (68). This shows that the nature of the company does not modify the relationship between defensive strategic orientation and competitive advantage (innovation).

Table 16. Summary of the hypotheses for the moderating variable (corporate characteristics)

Defensive	Proactive	Summary of sub-hypotheses of corporate characteristics
Unmodified	Unmodified	The nature of the organization's work modifies the relationship between strategic direction and quality
Modified	Unmodified	The nature of the organization's work modifies the relationship between strategic orientation and
Unmodified	Unmodified	The nature of the organization's work modifies the relationship between strategic orientation and creativity
Unmodified	Unmodified	Company size modifies the relationship between strategic orientation and quality
Unmodified	Unmodified	Company size modifies the relationship between strategic orientation and flexibility
Unmodified	Unmodified	Company size modifies the relationship between strategic orientation and creativity

4. Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

-The results of the study showed that the defensive strategic orientation is the most important, followed by the proactive strategic orientation for the companies in the study population, and this is due to the fact that most companies are working to protect their marketing position .

-The results showed that flexibility is one of the criteria for evaluating the competitive advantage for the companies in the study population, where flexibility ranked first, followed by quality, and then creativity .

-The results showed that there is a statistically significant effect of proactive strategic orientation on competitive advantage, this hypothesis has been strengthened in all elements of the sub-hypotheses, and these results are consistent with Farah's study, 2010

-.The results showed that there is a statistically significant effect of the defensive strategic orientation on the competitive advantage, and this hypothesis has been supported in all the elements of the sub-hypotheses, and these results are consistent with the study of Ahmed Abu Taha, 2013 .

-The results proved that the nature of the company, which is one of the dimensions of the characteristics of companies, modifies the relationship between proactive strategic orientation and (flexibility).

- The results proved that there was no adjusted effect of the company's age and company size as modified variables for the proactive and defensive strategic direction. Through the analysis that most of the industrial companies use or are familiar with the axes of strategic orientation, and thus the

arrangement of the axes of strategic orientation according to the level of use, that the defense axis is in the first place, followed by the proactive axis, this result differs from the results of a study (Nohi Ahmed Abutha, 2010) regarding the importance of strategic orientation on competitive advantage, and the results of the study also agreed with the results of the study (Omar bin Mohammed, 2014). The longer the process of innovation and development in products, the more it negatively affects the performance of the product in the market, as some influences in the market may change during this long period of time, which makes the commodity unsuitable for the market when it is introduced (changing the taste of consumers) and therefore its fate is to fail.

4.1 Recommendations

Through the research and the findings of the researcher, he recommends the following:

- * The management of Industrial companies should pay attention to investing in research and development and monitoring the changes in the external environment in order to keep pace with these changes and respond to the changing needs and desires of customers, this study and other studies have shown that the proactive approach, for example, which is characterized by research and development and continuous monitoring of the environment, is one of the most strategic directions that gives the company success and distinction. This recommendation was in agreement with the study of (Marwan Hamouda Al-Dahdar, 2013).
- Researchers should work on further development to achieve competitive advantage by meeting the changing needs of customers, whether at the level of the local market or foreign markets, as this recommendation was in agreement with a study (Noha Ahmed Abu Taha, 2014)
 - *Decision makers should Working to shorten the time period taken to develop products to gain a head start and so that these products remain suitable and keep pace with market changes, as they differed with a study (Marwan Hamouda Al-Dahdar, 2013).
 - *Searching for ways, techniques and means capable of reducing time, effort and costs of products.
 - * Conducting periodic studies in order to identify the changes and developments in the shopping environment to work to keep pace with these changes and meet the new needs and desires of customers. This recommendation was also in agreement with the study (Narver et al., 2015).
 - *Conduct the same study on the same sector but take organizational performance as a dependent variable and not a competitive advantage.

*The intensity of competition between industrial companies, in addition to the small size of the market, imposes the need to pay attention to competitors, monitor the efforts made in the market, and develop policies capable of facing this competition and maintaining market share. In order to achieve this, these companies must adopt both a proactive and defensive strategic orientation, as both approaches have a clear impact on the competitive advantage, which is confirmed by the results of the current study. We note through analysis, results and recommendations that most industrial companies are interested in the dimensions of competitive advantage (quality, flexibility, creativity), where flexibility ranked first, followed by creativity and finally quality. Also, the study (Asikia 2014) aimed to show the relationship between strategic direction marketing and performance in banks,

where the results of the study reached many results, most notably that the strategic marketing direction has a marketing effect that has a positive impact on the competitive advantage of the bank. The study agreed with the conclusion of a study (Faisal Ghazi Ezzeddin, 2013). The study (Al-Ameri, 2005) indicated that there is no positive relationship between the size of the company and competitive performance, while there is a positive relationship between the age of the company and competitive performance, and there is a strong relationship between competitive performance and research and development, and this study agreed with the current study with a positive relationship between the age of the company and competitive performance, and differed with it in the absence of a positive relationship between the size of the company and Performance marketing.

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