

# The Impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage at Jordanian Private Hospitals

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## Abstract

This study aimed to verify the impact of entrepreneurship strategies with its dimensions (innovation, proactivity, and risk) on competitive advantage with its dimensions (cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness) at Jordanian private hospitals. The study was applied on (130) managers at the middle and senior administrative levels using the comprehensive survey method by distributing a questionnaire to them, (94) questionnaires were returned with a (72%) return rate. The SPSS program was used to process the data. The study concluded that there are high levels of entrepreneurship strategies and competitive advantage at hospitals, and that there is a positive impact of entrepreneurship strategies on competitive advantage at Jordanian private hospitals, and that entrepreneurship strategies clearly impact each dimension of competitive advantage (cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness).

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Strategies, Competitive Advantage, Jordanian Private Hospitals

## Introduction

Changes in the business environment driven by technology and globalization have increased the unique challenges facing business organizations, these challenges related to environment, competition, and resource constraints, which increases the need for organizations to be more strategic in managing their businesses. Entrepreneurial strategies are of great importance for organizations, because their play a role in combining opportunity and advantage-seeking behaviors to enhance the performance and create wealth, and overcome the challenges of identifying and exploiting new opportunities while developing the competitive advantages necessary for growth and survival at the same time, by developing an entrepreneurial mindset, culture and leadership that prioritizes creativity and innovation (Triono et al., 2024).

Competitive advantage is a valuable goal that all organizations of all types aspire to, through organizational characteristics and resources that enable it to achieve better performance than the competitors on the same industry in a long term, such as providing higher quality products and services at lower costs, creating value for customers, and responding to their needs quickly (Suryono et al., 2024).

The Jordanian private hospitals sector is one of the vital, important and distinctive sectors in the region, which strives to face the challenges of competition. By implementing entrepreneurial strategies, these hospitals can be distinguished by characteristics and factors that enable them to outperform their competitors in providing healthcare, and maintain a good reputation in the minds of the recipients of their healthcare services. Based on the above, the current study was developed to verify the impact of entrepreneurial strategies on the competitive advantage at Jordanian private hospitals.

### **Study Problem and Questions**

The problem of this study lies in the competitive advantage at Jordanian private hospitals, which are considered one of the most important service sectors due to the diverse and appropriate services provide which attract customers. In the contemporary business environment characterized by rapid change and high competition, the competitive reality has imposed on these hospitals the necessity of adapting to environmental changes and providing distinguished performance that the customer realizes by responding to the changing requirements of customers and providing services characterized by high quality and at the lowest costs that meet their needs and exceed their expectations. This has made it necessary to adopt pioneering strategies that would discover and exploit opportunities, generate increasing wealth, and stimulate the surrounding environment by empowered individuals who have the desire to innovate, proactively, and take risks.

Although studies have examined the relationship between entrepreneurial strategies and competitive advantage in various sectors, there is a lack of studies that specifically examine this effect in the Jordanian private hospital sector. This is the research gap that the current study seeks to address.

From the above, the problem of the study can be formulated in the following main question:

1. What is the impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies with its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) on Competitive Advantage with its dimensions (Cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness) at Jordanian private hospitals?
2. What is the level of relative importance of Entrepreneurial Strategies and its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) at Jordanian private hospitals?
3. What is the level of relative importance of Competitive Advantage with its dimensions (Cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness) at Jordanian private hospitals?

### *Study Importance*

**Scientific importance:** The importance of this study stems from the importance of the variables it included. entrepreneurial strategies with their dimensions: innovation, proactivity, and risk are among the most prominent strategies that contribute to improving the work environment and pushing organizations towards achieving their aspirations of

uniqueness and distinction from competitors. Competitive advantage with its dimensions: cost, quality, flexibility, and speed of response is a basic goal that all organizations seek to obtain the largest market share and spread in the markets. Therefore, the researchers hope that this study will be a qualitative addition that contributes to bridging the research gap and enriching and enhancing knowledge in the Arab library regarding entrepreneurial strategies and competitive advantage, and that it will be a starting point for future studies in this field.

- **Practical importance:** The practical importance of this study comes from the extent to which Jordanian private hospital administrations benefit from the results it will reach, in supporting decision-making, promoting innovation, improving administrative and financial performance, and achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty, in addition to maintaining the good image of the health sector in Jordan in the minds of beneficiaries of health services in these hospitals and from neighboring countries, by providing human cadres capable of performing to achieve a competitive advantage in overall performance. The practical importance also lies in the importance of the sector in which it will be applied, as Jordanian private hospitals are considered one of the vital, important and distinguished sectors at the regional level, in terms of the distinction of the medical and administrative cadres in general, as well as the distinction of the medical service provided to Jordanian citizens and our brothers from all countries, especially since Jordan is considered one of the distinguished countries at the regional level in terms of service, health care and results.

#### *Study Objectives*

1. Identify the impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies with its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) on Competitive Advantage with its dimensions (Cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness) at Jordanian private hospitals.
2. Identify the level of relative importance of Entrepreneurial Strategies and its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) at Jordanian private hospitals.
3. Identify the level of relative importance of Competitive Advantage with its dimensions (Cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness) at Jordanian private hospitals.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

##### *Entrepreneurial Strategies*

Strategy is the long-term direction and goal of an organization in pursuit of excellence by taking into account available resources and environmental changes to meet the desires and expectations of stakeholder (Sultan & Othman, 2022, 178).

Entrepreneurship is not a new term, as it is derived from the French term "Entrepreneur" which has been used since the mid-eighteenth century, and the oldest reference to the term entrepreneurship goes back to Richard Cantillon in 1734 who defined it as free work with uncertain returns (Sanchez-Barríos & Gomez-Nunez, 2017, 2).

Historically, the term entrepreneurship refers to an individual who recognizes opportunities and accepts the challenge of exploiting that opportunity and turning it into a successful business venture. On the other hand, it refers to the creation of new organizations. It also focuses on generating wealth and ownership, as well as focusing on discovering and exploiting opportunities. In general, entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of generating

wealth and stimulating the surrounding environment. This wealth is generated by individuals who have the willingness to take personal and professional risks (Leitão et al., 2020, 60).

As for entrepreneurial strategies, refer to strategies adopted by the organization that encourage innovation, risk-taking, and proactivity to adapt with environment and competition. These strategies are developed by individuals who have a power of thinking, focus on opportunities, and make decisions that lead to the growth of the organization (Abd Alrahim & Abdulaziz, 2021).

Entrepreneurial strategies are defined as the achievement that leads to wealth creation in the face of fierce competition. It is a process through which organizations seek to obtain and adopt entrepreneurial opportunities with a focus on the novelty of new processes and products and entering new markets (Elo et al., 2022). Al-Naqa (2024, 113) defined entrepreneurial strategies as distinguishing opportunities, being prepared to exploit them, accepting and managing risks, and organizing and coordinating resources to create a competitive advantage to adopt and exploit opportunities.

#### *Entrepreneurial Strategies Dimensions*

Entrepreneurial strategies express strategies that stimulate innovation, risk-taking and proactivity, and encourage employees in the organization to make decisions in performing work and achieving competitive advantage. Researchers have pointed to multiple dimensions of entrepreneurial strategies, and most of them agreed that innovation, risk-taking and proactivity are dimensions of entrepreneurial strategies, which are the same dimensions that the researcher adopted in the current study, as follows:

#### *Innovation*

Innovation is a mental ability in which a person tries to produce (an idea, a means, a tool, a method...) that did not exist before, or a major development of it without imitation in a way that benefits society (Abu Al-Nasr, 2012, 19). In organizations, innovation indicates the degree of the organization's commitment to creativity and experimentation with new ideas to develop new products, services and processes (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). As a dimension of entrepreneurial strategies, innovation is referred to as "arriving at a new idea related to technology and affecting organizations, which is the part related to the new idea, and the innovative organization is the organization that innovates valuable things in services, ideas, procedures and processes within a group of workers with each other within the social framework of the organization that consists of individuals and groups to influence the behavior that determines the organizational innovation of the organization" (Sultan & Othman, 2022, 183).

Delener (2012, 371) indicated that innovation is based on continuing to generate new ideas, experiences, products/services, processes and new technologies, and the relationships resulting from these ideas are considered sources of competitive advantage that distinguish the organization in the competitive market.

Innovation aims to bring about fundamental changes within the organization to create better goods or services than existing ones, and develop the organization's current operations, and is concerned with adopting policies or ideas or applying new behaviors in a

way that leads to increased productivity and available job opportunities, which ultimately leads to driving growth and success (Obeidat et al., 2021).

### *Proactivity*

Organizations face many uncertainties, which requires them to demonstrate proactive characteristics to fight aggressively by inciting boldness, demonstrating management flexibility in adapting and changing positions, the ability to anticipate future impacts and opportunism, in addition to the continuous search for new market possibilities and opportunities (Ziyae & Sadeghi, 2020).

Proactivity means searching for new opportunities that may or may not be related to the organization's current operations, and introducing new products and brands before the competition (Teixeira et al., 2019, 107).

Proactivity reflects the organization's ability to seize initiatives related to market opportunities by implementing innovation before competitors and market changes (Morris et al., 2011). Lumpkin and Dess (1996) explained that proactivity is acting in anticipation of future problems, needs or changes, and as such it refers to a forward-looking perspective accompanied by the early formulation of an innovative or new activity, thus being crucial to the organization's entrepreneurial orientation.

Proactive behavior reflects an opportunistic, forward-looking behavior characterized by anticipating market changes and acting ahead of competitors. Proactivity plays an important role in superior performance because it means focusing on customers, understanding customer needs, identifying and exploiting what customers need, and actively dismantling what competitors offer so that they can offer better ones (Kavana & Puspitowati, 2022).

### *Risk-Taking*

Risk-taking is a systematic process that includes practices and actions required to recognize, analyze, and document risks. Risk-taking is the willingness to deviate from routine organizational activities and take bold actions such as venturing into new markets and making risky resource commitments to initiatives with uncertain outcomes (Mostafiz et al., 2022).

Teixeira et al. (2019, 107) defined risk-taking as the willingness to commit resources to ideas, processes, or projects whose outcomes are uncertain and whose failure costs may be high. Ziyae and Sadeghi (2020) pointed out that risk is venturing into the unknown, and allocating resources and capital to projects that have no guarantee of success, as when entering new markets with new products or services, organizations should encourage experimentation because they will operate under ambiguous conditions. Kavana and Puspitowati (2022) described risk as an opportunity, and it appears in successfully turning an idea into an opportunity, and at the same time risk is always associated with the possibility of something happening that would harm the business unexpectedly, so risk is considered a commitment to explore and accept all ideas for business, and it is also a psychological variable that reflects the ability to take calculated risks and challenges that can be achieved.

### *Competitive Advantage*

Basically, Chaberlin introduced the concept of competitive advantage in 1939, and in 1965 Selznick linked this concept to core capability (Ahmed, 2016, 99). In 1965, competitive advantage appeared in the discussion of strategic management through the work of Ansoff (Saurabh, 2019, 14). Until Porter came in the early eighties of the last century and presented in his book "Competitive Strategy" in 1985 that competitive advantage arises when the organization reaches the creation of new methods and methods that differ from those offered by competitors in the market and are more efficient and effective (Correia et al., 2020). Porter (1991) defined competitive advantage as the organization's ability to provide better value and service to its customers compared to competitors.

Barney (1991) noted that an organization has a competitive advantage if it implements a strategy currently when no other organizations enter the same market. Competitive advantage is defined as the extent to which an organization is able to create a defensible position in the face of its competitors. It consists of the capabilities that enable the organization to differentiate itself from its competitors, and results from decisive management decisions (Cahyono et al., 2023).

Agustian et al. (2023) indicated that competitive advantage is a concept that reflects a situation in which an organization has a significant advantage or superiority over its competitors in a particular market. This advantage enables the organization to achieve better results than its competitors, such as increasing market share, increasing profitability, or a strong position in the market.

Davies and Ellis (2000) also believe that competitive advantage is available to organizations that are able to create superior value, and how this value is created is embodied by reducing the cost structure rates or by differentiating the product or service.

### *Competitive Advantage Dimensions*

The dimensions of competitive advantage vary according to the nature of the organizations' work and objectives. Specialized studies and literature have come with different names and dimensions based on the study environments and researchers' interests. The dimensions also vary between focusing on low cost, product or service quality, and excellence in performance. Cost, quality, flexibility, and speed of response are among the most common dimensions of competitive advantage, and they are the most appropriate to the nature of the work and environment of Jordanian private hospitals, which can be explained as follows:

#### *Cost*

Cost means the ability to design, manufacture, and market products at a lower cost compared to competing organizations (Yousef & Dalhoum, 2019). Porter (2008, 75, 77) indicated that the value created by an organization is measured by the amount that buyers are willing to pay for a product or service, and the organization becomes profitable if this value exceeds the cost of performing value activities, and in order to gain a competitive advantage over its competitors, it must either perform these activities at a lower cost, or perform them in a way that achieves differentiation and obtains a higher price (higher value), and accordingly, the competitive advantage in terms of cost is a function of the organization's

value chain, and the organization's position in terms of cost reflects the total cost of performing all of its value activities compared to competitors.

Almotawteh (2020) emphasized that organizations that seek to obtain a larger market share as a basis for their success and superiority are those that offer their products at a lower cost than their competitors, as reducing costs is the main operational goal of organizations that compete through cost, and even organizations that compete through competitive advantages other than cost, seek to achieve low costs for the products they produce. Abbo and Namoni (2023) added that the organization can reduce costs in several ways, such as using low-cost distribution systems and primary resources, reducing the cost of product improvements, and providing low-wage human resources.

### *Quality*

The quality revolution in the 1980s changed the thinking process, and it became necessary to obtain flawless quality at competitive prices for all products. In addition to the competitive advantage that quality represents, it is considered a necessary tool for survival (Srinivasan, 2010, 14).

Quality refers to doing things right and providing products and services that suit customers' needs and desires. Organizations that do not provide high-quality products that reflect customer expectations cannot stabilize, succeed, or remain competitive (Wang Lin, 2016).

El Khoury and Nasralla (2023, 122) believe that quality is the specifications, features, and characteristics of goods that meet customers' desires, as it varies according to the type of goods, the way they are used, and even the benefit from them.

Al-Masoudi (2012, 69) indicated that quality is a competitive advantage for the organization, and includes two types of quality: product design quality, which is represented in the methods of designing the product and the extent to which it meets customer requirements, and process quality, which is concerned with designing processes with the aim of providing products that are free of defects and at the same time conform to design specifications.

### *Flexibility*

Flexibility is one of the most important dimensions of competitive advantage and indicates the extent to which the organization is able to respond quickly to the challenges and environmental changes it faces, by adopting new procedures and methods of work that are compatible with those changes (Al-Harban & Al-Zoubi, 2022).

Almotawteh (2020) Flexibility is the basis for achieving the organization's competitive advantage by responding quickly to changes that may occur in the product design and in a manner that suits customer needs. Flexibility means the organization's ability to change operations to other methods, which means changing the performance of operations as well as changing the method and time of performing operations.

Salah and Ahmed (2022) referred to flexibility as the organization's ability to allocate or redeploy resources in order to respond to customer needs. Flexibility includes multiple features such as planning, product diversity, size changes, and others.

Flexibility is the basis for achieving a competitive advantage for the organization by responding quickly to changes that may occur in product design to suit customer needs. Flexibility means the organization's ability to change operations to other methods. This may mean changing the performance of operations as well as changing the method and time of performing operations. The customer needs to change operations to provide four requirements (Davies & Ellis, 2000):

- Product flexibility: is the ability of operations to offer new or modified products.
- Mix flexibility: means the ability of operations to produce a mix of products.
- Volume flexibility: means the ability to change the level of output or the level of production activity to offer different sizes of products.
- Delivery flexibility: refers to the ability of operations to change product delivery times.

### *Speed of Response*

Response is related to the ability, willingness and desire of service providers to be at the service of customers continuously, and their ability to provide service to them when they need it (Boudia, 2017). Speed of response is defined as "the organization's ability to provide products and services on time, and the type and size of products required by customers" (Al-Shanti & Al-Jiar, 2021).

Response speed has also been defined as the extent to which the organization is able to respond to customer needs quickly and achieve the required quality levels at the same time (Siddiqi & Hamou, 2022). The ability to respond quickly to customers means giving them greater value, and adopting steps and procedures to improve the efficiency of its operations and the quality of its products in line with its goals (Abdelaal, 2023).

The speed of response is shown by the lead time, commitment to the schedule, and on-time delivery (Mahadevan, 2007, 34). The more the organization is able to respond quickly to the needs and requirements of customers, the more it obtains a larger market share and charges higher prices for its products or services (Diab, 2014).

### **Relationship between Entrepreneurial Strategies and Competitive Advantage**

Some researchers have tested the relationship between entrepreneurship strategies and competitive advantage. For example, the study of Al-Harban and Al-Zoubi (2022) aimed to reveal the impact of entrepreneurship strategies on achieving competitive advantage in private Jordanian universities, and concluded that there is a statistically significant impact of entrepreneurship strategies on achieving competitive advantage. The study of Abd Alrahim and Abdul Aziz (2021) investigated the impact of entrepreneurship strategies on achieving competitive advantage in private universities in Sudan, and concluded that there is a correlation and influence relationship between entrepreneurship strategies on competitive advantage.

Also, the study of Ahmed (2020) sought to know the extent of the impact of using entrepreneurship strategies on achieving competitive advantage in Saudi industrial companies, and also concluded that there is a correlation and influence relationship between using entrepreneurship strategies in achieving competitive advantage. In addition to the study of Moawad (2022), it aimed to identify entrepreneurship strategies and their relationship to competitive ability and concluded that there is a statistically significant positive moral relationship between entrepreneurship strategies and the competitive ability of small and medium sports projects in Egypt.

### **Study Hypotheses**

Based on the main question of the study and the sub-questions, the study hypotheses can be determined as follows:

H1: There is an impact at a significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Entrepreneurial Strategies with its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) on Competitive Advantage at Jordanian private hospitals.

H2: There is an impact at a significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Cost at Jordanian private hospitals.

H3: There is an impact at a significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Entrepreneurial Strategies on quality at Jordanian private hospitals.

H4: There is an impact at a significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Entrepreneurial Strategies on flexibility at Jordanian private hospitals.

H5: There is an impact at a significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of Entrepreneurial Strategies on responsiveness at Jordanian private hospitals.

### **Methodology**

#### *Study Sample*

The study population consisted of (130) managers at middle and senior administrative levels across (20) Jordanian private hospitals in the central region. The researchers distributed questionnaire to collect information through a comprehensive survey method, (94) questionnaires were retrieved, representing (72%) of the total questionnaires.

#### *Study Measurement*

To collect the necessary data, this study adopted a questionnaire that was developed based on previous studies that investigated Entrepreneurial Strategies and Competitive Advantage, this questionnaire included of (35) items distributed into (15) items to cover the three dimensions of Entrepreneurial Strategies with (5) items for each dimension, and (20) items to cover the four dimensions of Competitive Advantages with (5) items for each dimension.

### **Results**

Table (1) indicate results of descriptive analysis -means and standard deviations- for the dimensions of study variables (Entrepreneurial Strategies and Competitive Advantage). The result shows that Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the minimum value that can be accepted for data quality which is 0.70 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, 290). Thus, the data enjoy high internal Consistency. Also, the mean values reached high levels ranging between (3.686) for the proactivity, and the highest values was (4.038) for flexibility of the five-point Likert scale.

Table 1

*Descriptive Analysis*

Dimension	Items	Alpha	Mean	Std. deviation
Innovation	5	.863	3.789	.571
proactivity	5	.908	3.686	.528
risk-taking	5	.923	3.696	.667
Cost	5	.909	3.717	.626
quality	5	.931	4.036	.553
flexibility	5	.861	4.038	.433
responsiveness	5	.754	3.834	.350

The data in Table 2 indicate the results of testing the impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies with its dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking) on Competitive Advantage. The multiple linear regression coefficient was used to analyze this hypothesis.

The results showed a significant impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage with value of  $R^2=0.631$ , which means that 63.1% of the variance in Competitive Advantage is due to Entrepreneurial Strategies, and the value of  $F=29.724$  at a significance level of 0.00.

As for the dimensions of Entrepreneurial Strategies, the results of the analysis indicated that two of them (Innovation and risk-taking) had a significant impact on Competitive Advantage at significance levels of .186, and .000 respectively, while proactivity didn't have a significant impact on Competitive Advantage.

Table 2

*Impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage*

Variable	B	T	Sig.
Innovation	.140	1.333	.186
proactivity	.053	.643	.522
risk-taking	.277	4.294	.000
$R^2 = .631$	$F=29.724$	$Sig.= .000$	

Table 3 indicate the results of analysis the hypotheses (H2, H3, H4, and H5) by using simple linear regression coefficient, the results of the analysis of hypotheses shows that there is a significant impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Cost with an interpretation value of  $R^2= .680$ , on quality with an interpretation value of  $R^2= .142$ , on flexibility with an interpretation value of  $R^2= .380$ , and on responsiveness with an interpretation value of  $R^2= .257$ , at a significance level of 0.00.

Table 3

*Impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage dimensions*

Hypothesis	$R^2$	$\beta$	F	Sig.
H2	.680	.825	195.642	.000
H3	.142	.377	15.287	.000
H4	.380	.616	56.361	.000
H5	.257	.507	31.758	.000

## **Discussion**

This study was examined the impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage at Jordanian private hospitals.

The results indicated that there are high levels of Entrepreneurial Strategies dimensions (Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking), which reflects the interest of leaders at Jordanian private hospitals in adopting strategies that contribute to generating new ideas and solutions that are out of the ordinary, and their continuous encouragement to take risks and challenges in work, and develop strategic plans to seize and benefit from the opportunities available in the external environment.

Also, the results indicated that there are high levels of Competitive Advantage dimensions (cost, quality, flexibility, and responsiveness), which indicate the ability of Jordanian private hospitals to optimally exploit available resources and capabilities to respond quickly to and adapt to environmental changes, and achieve excellence and superiority in providing services that meet customer needs at the lowest cost.

On other hand, the results indicated that there is a significant impact of Entrepreneurial Strategies on Competitive Advantage, that confirms the importance role of innovation everything new to keep pace with changing customers requirements and enter new markets before competitors, Creative thinking, proactive work and tendency to risk-taking are a method for organizations to achieve entrepreneurship and competitive advantage.

## **Recommendations**

1. Continuing focus and enhance of Entrepreneurial Strategies at Jordanian private hospitals to ensure the provision of distinguished services and achieve competitive advantage.
2. Activating and employing new sources of competition that provide communication between internal resources and opportunities available in the external environment through the advantages provided by innovation, risk and proactivity strategies as new competitive sources that affect the achievement of competitive advantage.
3. Focus on bringing the required change to meet the challenges imposed by changes in the external environment, enabling it to seize the right opportunities at the right time, and face these challenges with the least financial losses, thus achieving a competitive advantage.
4. Recommendation for Jordanian private hospitals at the North and South regions to benefit from the results of this study in achieving distinguished performance in its work, which is reflected in their achievement of competitive advantage.

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