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The Impact of Competitive Advantage on Project Success in the Fitness Industry in Riyadh, KSA

Vitality Fitness Center (Case Study)

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Final Project - 2

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Dedication

To all those who contributed to the success of this research, I thank you for your efforts and dedication. It was a valuable and fruitful experience, and I hope that this research work will be useful to society and the future.

Thank you.

Abstract

Purpose:

Methodology:

Findings:

Originality & Implication:

Keywords:

Table of Contents

Acknowledgment	1
Dedication	2
Abstract	3
1. Chapter 1: Introduction	8
1.1. Research Background.....	9
1.2. Research Problem.....	11
1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps	11
1.2.2. Practical Gaps	12
1.3. Research Significance	12
1.3.1. At the theoretical level	13
1.3.2. At the practical level	13
1.4. Research Questions	14
1.5. Research Objectives	14
1.6. Research Hypotheses.....	14
1.7. Research Model.....	15
1.8. Scope of The Study	16
1.9. The Project Structure.....	16
2. Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	17
2.1. Introduction	18
2.2. The independent variable	18
2.3. The dependent variable	21
2.4. The relationship between the independent and the dependent variables	22
2.5. Conclusion.....	23
3. Chapter 3: Research Methodology.....	24
3.1. Introduction	25
3.2. Operational definitions for research variables	25
3.3. Research design (research onion).....	26
3.4. Research population & Sampling methods and technique.....	27

3.5.	Data collection method.....	28
3.6.	Types of data	29
3.7.	Statistical analysis procedures.....	30
3.8.	Conclusion.....	30
4.	Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis & Findings discussion	31
4.1.	Introduction	32
4.2.	Sample profile (descriptive statistics for research sample).....	32
4.3.	Validity & reliability tests for the questionnaires	33
4.4.	Descriptive statistics for research variables (answer research questions).....	33
4.5.	Testing Hypotheses & Findings Discussion	33
4.6.	Conclusion.....	34
5.	Chapter five: Research limitations, Recommendations & Conclusion.....	34
5.1.	Research Limitations & Future Research.....	35
5.2.	Research Recommendations	35
	References	36
	Appendix	39

List of Figures:

List of Tables:

1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Nowadays any project seeks success and excellence needs to consider the competitive advantage, there is a close link between competitive advantage and project success. “Several studies have been made in this field due to the importance of finding what success is and how it is measured” (PMI, 2013).

Initially, project success was referred to as reaching the objectives and the planned results in compliance with predetermined conditions of time, cost, and performance. As knowledge in the project management field developed, the “golden triangle” was considered not enough to define project success. Project success was recognized to be a complex, multi-dimensional concept encompassing many attributes (Mir, Pinnington, 2014).

Barney [2002: 9] says that “a firm experiences competitive advantages when its actions in an industry or market create economic value and when few competing firms are engaging in similar actions”. To compete in any industry, companies must perform a wide array of discrete activities such as processing orders, calling on customers, assembling products, and training employees. (Porter, 1985)

Many organizations don't have enough knowledge of the importance of applying competitive advantage strategies and how this effect negatively achieves project objectives successfully. In this research, we shed light on the competitive advantage strategy that enhances the project's success.

The previous studies and research highlight a lot of methodologies, factors, and criteria for competitive advantage, this literature review will enable us to research and guarantee that our study will add significant value to this topic.

In this research, we addressed some deficiencies in competitive advantage such as the lack of knowledge, the importance of innovation, and quality, and how these factors directly effect to the competitive advantage and project success.

All these topics will target a large segment of project stakeholders (internal & external) to obtain their satisfaction which cause project success.

Scholars and researchers will find this study useful if they wish to use the findings as a basis for current and further research on the subject. The study will assist other scholars who wish to pursue other researches in the same field. The study will assist them gain knowledge and get some literature which may be of a great to them in their researches. (Chege, 2017).

1.2. Research Problem

The role of knowledge as the key source for competitive advantage in enterprises has become a hotly debated topic. The idea that knowledge can be managed is fundamental to the related notions of the knowledge-based business, the learning enterprise and the management of intellectual capital. The recent interest in these overlapping concepts reflects important phenomena that enterprises have to deal with, such as perceptions of increased competition, rates of change and market turbulence. Enterprises are hence looking for new ways to remain in business or compete effectively. (Ndlela, 2001)

1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps

Lack of understanding of the importance of knowledge as a competitive resource. The role of knowledge as the key source for competitive advantage in enterprises has become a hotly debated topic. The idea that knowledge can be managed is fundamental to the related notions of the knowledge-based business, the learning enterprise and the management of intellectual capital. The recent interest in these overlapping concepts reflects important phenomena that enterprises have to deal with, such as perceptions of increased competition, rates of change and market turbulence. Enterprises are hence looking for new ways to remain in business or compete effectively. (Ndlela, 2001).

1.2.2. Practical Gaps:

Applications of Innovation Methodology in Competitive Advantage Study

The importance of applying Total Quality Management in competitive advantage strategy to drive project success. Total Quality Management does produce value, through a variety of benefits: improved understanding of customers' needs; improved customer satisfaction; improved internal communication; better problem-solving; greater employee commitment and motivation; stronger relationships with suppliers; fewer errors; and reduced waste (Juran, 1988; Schmidt and Finnigan, 1992; Spechler, 1991).

This study addresses the following main research question is

“What is the impact of the competitive advantage on achieving project success?”

1.3. Research Significance

The ability to stay ahead of present or potential competition, thus superior performance reached through competitive advantage will ensure market leadership. Also it provides the understanding that resources held by a firm and the business strategy will have a profound impact on generating competitive advantage. Differentiation strategy is usually developed around many characteristics such as product quality, technology and innovativeness, reliability, brand image, firm reputation, durability, and customer service, which must be difficult for rivals to imitate (Mose, 2010).

1.3.1. At the theoretical level

Competitiveness is a key factor of success on national and international market and can be observed at the level of economy, sector (industry), company or individual products or groups of products. The measurement of competitiveness and comparative advantages based on different theories (Rikardo, Hecksher-Ohlin) create a number of difficulties that are primarily related to the coverage of a large number of factors of comparative advantage as well as the difficulty of measuring and comparing these factors across countries and 15 sectors (Utkulu, Seymen, 2004).

1.3.2. At the practical level

Demir (2017) accentuated the importance of a holistic approach for the identification of risks and strategic management of competitive advantage in industrial zone company managers and owners ..etc.

According to Kotler (2012), in the competition it is important to develop competitive strategies that would stand out from its competitors, but firstly it is essential to know its market position, goals, capacities and resources.

Hanningtone, Struwig, Smith (2013) stated that competitive advantage is sustainable when rival firms give up plans to imitate the resources of the competitors or when barriers to imitation are high. When the imitative actions have come to an end without disrupting the firm's competitive advantage or when it is not easy or cheap to imitate, the firm's competitive strategy can be called "sustainable".

1.4. Research Questions

Sub Question 1: What is the impact of the value creation on project success?

Sub Question 2: How do stakeholders' satisfaction and project success?

Sub Question 3: What are competitive advantage factors that lead to project success?

Sub Question 4: What strategy can enhance the competitive advantage on project success?

1.5. Research Objectives

General Objective: Explore the relationship between the competitive advantage and Project Success.

Identify the impact of the value creation on project success

Examine the role of stakeholders' engagement on project success

Evaluate the factors of competitive advantage that lead to project success

Explore the strategy of application competitive advantage to achieve project success

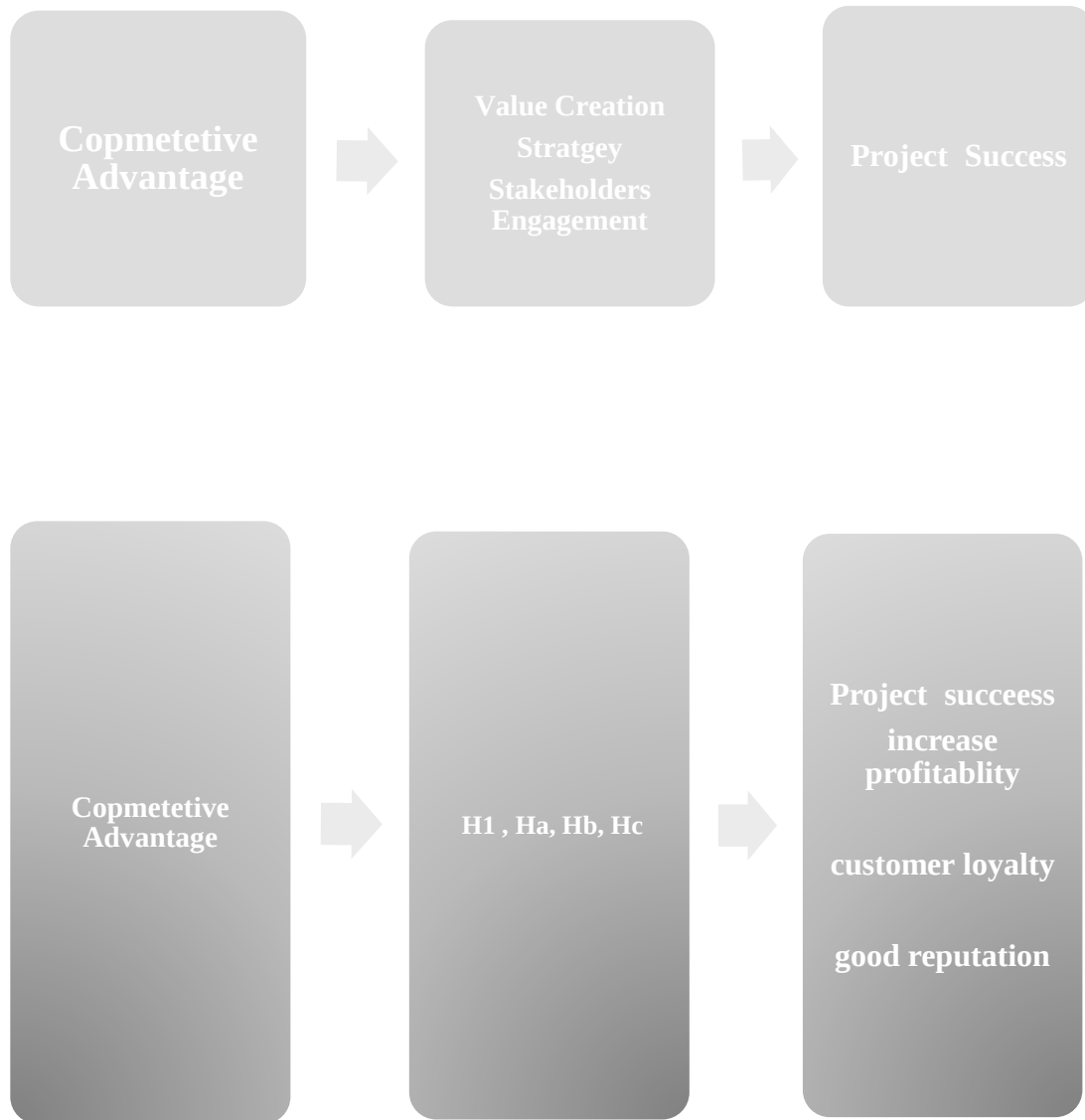
1.6. Research Hypotheses

There is a statical significant relationship between value creation on project success

There is a significant positive relationship between stakeholders' engagement with project success

There is a significant positive relationship between competitive advantage and project success

1.7. Research Model



“Figer 1”

1.8. Scope of The Study

A privately owned Saudi hospitality brand with an International reach, operating and investing in a complete range of high-quality lifestyle products & services. This research will help the organization improve its competitive advantage and profit.

1.9. The Project Structure

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology
- Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis
- Chapter 5: Findings` Discussion and Conclusion

2.Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This literature review seeks to reconceptualize the relationship between competitive advantage and project success. Many scholars have pointed out that there are critical success factors for project success and competitive advantage implementation on business performance. However, empirical studies on the correlation between the critical success factors for competitive advantage, level of implementing project success activities have been few.

2.2. The independent variable

Many organizations have gained competitive advantages in today's business landscape despite facing unattractive, high-threat, low-opportunity environments. Even after carefully analyzing their competitive environments, the success of these firms cannot be fully explained without considering their internal attributes - their strengths and weaknesses - as sources of competitive advantage. In the following discussion, internal attributes will be referred to as resources and capabilities, following more recent practice. C. K. Prahalad and Gary Hamel (1990).

The competitiveness of an enterprise is reflected in its adaptability, which indicates the adequacy of its responses to environmental impact and its ability to comply with changes in the environment. Competitive advantages are key to shaping and developing an enterprise's competitiveness. The modern concept of competitive advantages has emerged due to scientific and technical progress, globalization, and the internationalization of competitive relations. Competitiveness is demonstrated through competitive advantages, and it is believed that competitiveness is reflected in the manifestation of competitive

advantages. competitiveness exists as a result of having competitive advantages, without which achieving competitiveness is impossible. In order to understand the mechanism for shaping competitiveness and its internal connections, it is necessary to explore the essence of competitive advantages. Various definitions of competitive advantage have been provided in the scientific literature. Azoev (2000). For example, competitive advantage refers to the characteristics of a company and its product that provide value to consumers. This evaluation serves as the basis for developing marketing strategies, as noted by Yaneva. Markova (2005).

Likewise, considers competitive advantage as a specific characteristic of a product that adds value to consumers and is more useful than competitors' products. Competitive advantages are the time-consuming features or external environmental factors that give an enterprise superiority over competitors in a specific market. Kyurova (2018) According to Kotler (1996) , a competitive advantage is earned by offering greater value or lower prices, or through more benefits justifying higher prices. In summary, a competitive advantage is a specific positive quality that makes an entity stand out and differ positively from its competitors.

Over recent years, competitive advantage is one of the most important concepts addressed in strategic management and the marketing literature. Incidentally, there exist several perspectives regarding constructive and impressive factors, where the industrial organization researchers study the environmental factors as the determinants of competitive advantage. The first researcher who stated his point of view in 1968 was Bain; however, the eminent character of this field is Michael Porter. In the model presented by Porter, the analysis level is the industry in which the profitability of the enterprises depends on the industry's potential and their relative situation in the industry. Based on this model, the core competencies

would pave the path for excellence and result in a competitive advantage for the organization if the organization adopts a different strategy than those of competitors. Schoemaker and Amit (1993) developed another theory according to which the profitability of the enterprise depended on the degree of consistency between strategic assets and strategic factors of the industry; therefore, the base of competitive advantage is founded on the industrial organization and competency approach interaction. The most significant empirical contributions measuring the competitive advantages are gained through the firms placed in industrial districts via the district effect. Claver-Cortés E, Marco-Lajara B, Seva-Larrosa P, Ruiz-Fernández L. (2019), some scholars focus on the more critical role of internal factors of the organization (resource-based and dynamic-capability perspectives). In the resource-based approach, organizations Competitiveness in the New Era 8 are considered as groups of resources and it is believed that the competitive advantage of an organization stems from its resources, if they are advocated by scarcity, being valuable, scarce substitution, and unimitability or difficulty in modeling. Otherwise, the resources of the organization are the sources of competitive advantage and it will be sustainable if the resources meet these four conditions. Barney J. (1991). In the dynamic-capability perspective, the source of competitive advantage is considered as unique processes. Accordingly, the term ‘dynamic’ implies the potential of the firm in rebuilding the competencies consistent with the changing business environment. The term ‘capabilities’ refers to the critical role of strategic management in coordinating, integrating, and reconfiguring the organization’s competencies, assets, and strategies to cope with the requirements of the changing environment. Also, as to this approach, achieving the dynamic capabilities of the market is not possible simply since it requires inter-organizational dynamic management processes. Resources and dynamic capabilities include 89.3% of the variation of competitive advantage in

which 82% belonged to the resources, indicating the significance of resources in attaining competitive advantage. In sum, the analysis level in environmental approaches is the industry; however, the analysis level in resource-based, dynamic capabilities approaches and core competency approach is the enterprise. Sachitra V, Chong S. (2018) Resources, The current chapter is going to develop the mentioned approaches and provide an inclusive model through the combination of these perspectives to establish a national, industrial, and organizational model.

2.3. The dependent variable (Project Success)

The traditional method of evaluating project success involves looking at the "iron triangle" of scope, cost, time, and quality. However, project success may not be solely determined by these factors. Projects differ across industries, and each project has its own unique characteristics. Therefore, the definition of project success can differ depending on various circumstances. Müller and Turner (2007), for example, it is important to note that project success criteria vary depending on the type of project.

In the case of complex projects or projects on a fixed contract, customer satisfaction is a primary determinant of project success. However, for high-performing projects or those involving multiple stakeholders, the needs of a broader group of stakeholders must be considered in establishing the project success criteria.

The success of a project can be based on various aspects of the project organization, including the performance of the contractor, project management, and the functional performance of the organizations involved. Some studies analyze the net value of the product operation and the net cost of project execution as measures of project success. Yu et al. (2005).

Some studies suggest that the critical factors influencing project success are the typical measures of cost, time, and quality, and, more importantly, the relationships among key project stakeholders.

Wang, X and J Huang (2006).

According to PMI (2013), the overall project success criteria should include the elements of the iron triangle (scope, cost, time, quality), as well as the satisfaction of all the key stakeholders involved in the project.

Project efficiency, which refers to meeting the project's cost, time, and scope, is considered a key measure of project success. It is suggested that project efficiency is strongly correlated with other aspects of project success, such as stakeholder requirements and customer acceptance. Serrador and Turner (2015).

About ten years ago, Ika (2009) proposed two alternatives for project success measurement: (1) a contingent approach where project success is a context-specific tool for achieving goals and objectives, and (2) a subjectivist approach where project success is grounded in empirical narratives of success and failure. Because of the challenges posed by variations in project industry, sector, nature and stakeholders, context-specific tools for measuring project success need to be continuously developed and updated. This makes project success evaluating an arduous process. Moreover, no specific patterns for the selection of project success criteria exist in previous literature across various context-specific fields of application (Albert et al., 2017).

2.4. The relationship between the independent and the dependent variables

In order to gain a competitive advantage over their project success, organizations must understand and analyze how their strengths compare to their rivals' weaknesses.

By incorporating sustainability principles into their business strategies, organizations can differentiate themselves from rivals in the same industry. Additionally, by openly sharing their sustainability strategies, they can enhance their reputation in the market. These organizations will be able to meet the sustainability expectations of their stakeholders and minimize information asymmetry by disclosing reports that can provide them with a competitive advantage (Zhao et al., 2019).

Therefore, we have discovered a strong correlation between competitive advantage and project success in any organization.

2.5. Conclusion

To evaluate the success of a project, it's crucial to take into account different aspects and timeframes, including short-term and long-term goals. Each project has its own unique characteristics, and the importance of these characteristics may vary. Further research is needed to validate the multi-dimensional concept and to investigate other related questions. For example, the definition of project success may vary depending on the specific context.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction:

This section explains the methodology that was applied in the current project, in order to answer the study questions and test the study hypotheses. The following titles explain, the operational definitions for the research variables, and what has been applied, as follows:

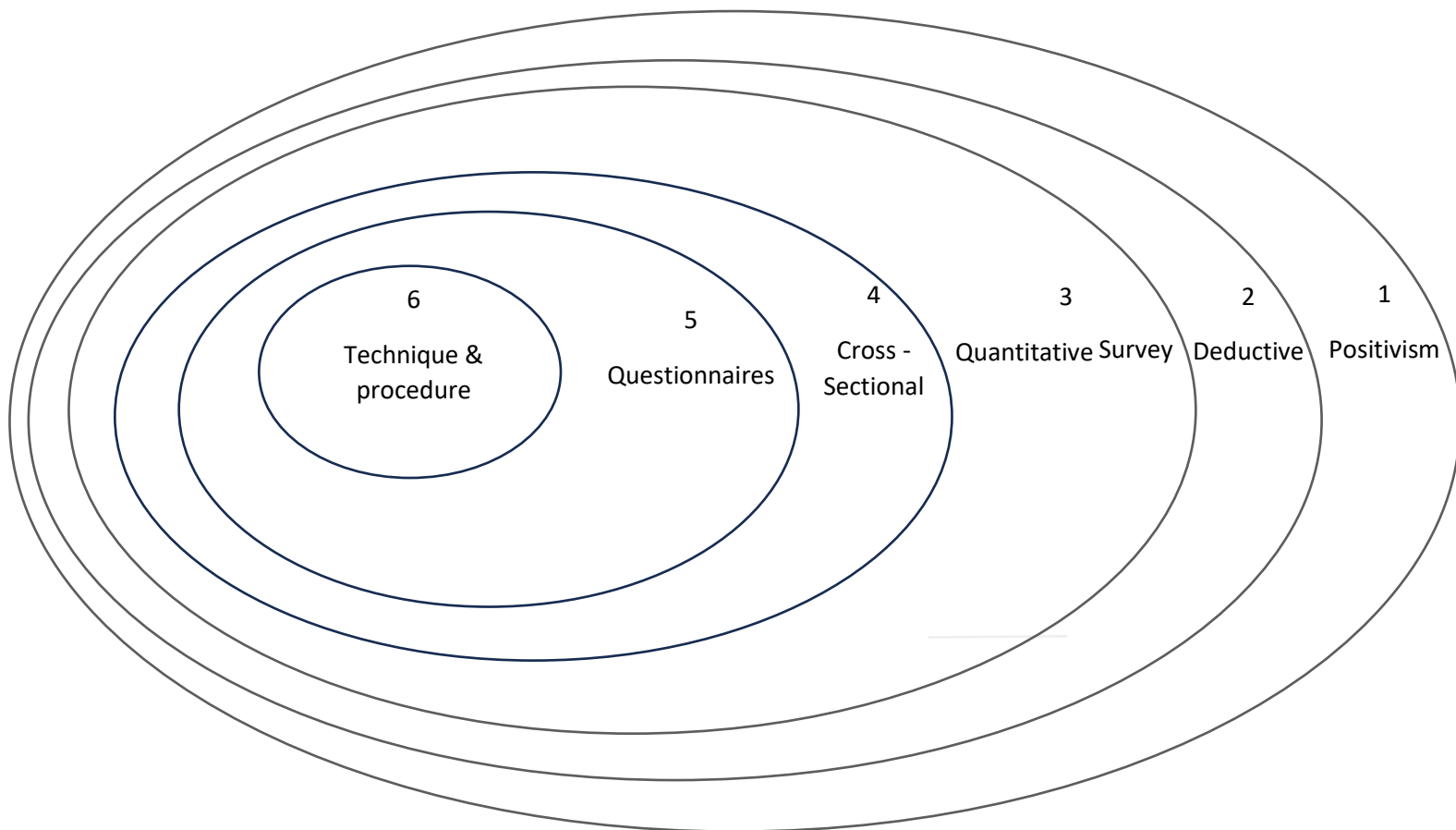
3.2. Operational definitions for research variables

3.2.1 Competitive Advantage (Independent Variable) Competitive advantage refers to unique benefits and differentiated value offerings deliver for target customers that go significantly above parity solutions from competitor vendors or alternative ways of addressing needs. It carves an enduring position by sustainably conveying pricing power, lower costs, margins, or other equity dimensions in executing the business model other providers struggle to replicate at scale.

3.2.2 Project Success: (Dependent Variable) Project success is a project that meets its objectives under budget and under schedule, and is usually used to describe the positive completion of a project.

3.3. Research design (research onion)

1. **Research philosophy:** Positivism
2. **Research Approach:** Deductive
3. **Research Strategy:** Survey
4. **Time horizon:** Cross-sectional
5. **Research Choice:** Quantitative
6. **Data Collection and Method:** Technique and procedure



3.4. Research population & Sampling methods and technique

This section provides information about the study population & sample.

Additionally, this section demonstrates the methods and techniques that were elaborated in order to select the study sample, and determine the sample size.

3.4.1 Research Population

The research community in Vitality Zone fitness club consists of 45 people

3.4.2 Research Sample

The sample was selected using a questionnaire to accurately represent various groups, and 30 employees were included in the study.

Place of Research	Population	Sample
Vitality Zone Fitness Club	50	30

3.4.3 Sampling Method & Techniques

The sampling methods are probability and the sampling technique is simple randomness

3.5. Data collection method

This section describes the research instruments that were used to collect the required data in order to answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses. This survey method relied on collecting the quantitative data via questionnaires. The following sections present the instruments that were used to measure the research variables.

3.5.1 The independent variable (Competitive Advantage)

This questionnaire relied on the of Masilhi, N. A. H., & Naglaa Ibrahim. (2022) To measure the independent variable (Competitive Advantage), in terms of three dimensions namely: competitive knowledge, competitive Quality, and competitive innovation with an overall 11 items for the whole variable. As, the competitive knowledge, dimension consists of 5 items, the competitive quality dimension consists of 3 items, and the competitive innovation dimension consists of 3 items. The instrument type is a 3-point Likert-scale type. Hence, Agree, to some context and disagree.

Table () for the instrument of the independent variable.....

Variable	Dimensions	No. of Item	Source
Competitive Advantage	Competitive Knowledge	5	Masilhi, N. A. H., & Naglaa Ibrahim. (2022)
	Competitive Quality	3	
	Competitive Innovation	3	
	Over All	11	

Source: by the researcher (2024)

3.5.2 The dependent variable (Project Success)

This questionnaire relied on the of Hughes, S. W., Tippet, D. D., & Thomas, W. K. (2004). To measure the dependent variable (Project Success), in terms of three dimensions namely: Performance, Schedule, and cost with an overall 9 items for the whole variable. As, the Performance, dimension consists of 3 items, the schedule dimension consists of 3 items, and cost dimension consists of 3 items. The instrument type is a 7-point Likert-scale type. Hence,. - 3 Strongly Disagree, -2 Disagree, -1 Somewhat Disagree, 0 – Neutral or Undecided +1 Somewhat Agree, +2 Agree, +3 Strongly Agree

Table () for the instrument of the dependent variable.....

Variable	Dimensions	No. of Item	Source
Project Success	Performance	3	Hughes, S. W., Tippet, D. D., & Thomas, W. K. (2004).
	Schedule	3	
	Cost	3	
	Over All	9	

Source: by the researcher (2024)

3.6. Types of data:

Many sources were utilized in the current study to test hypotheses and achieve objectives.

3.6.1. Primary data

The main data was collected using a questionnaire as the primary tool for the study. The questionnaire was thoughtfully designed to address all aspects of the research topic and meet the study objectives. It was distributed to a representative sample of the target population, resulting in a high response rate. We then conducted a quantitative analysis of the collected primary data using advanced statistical programs. We extracted relevant statistical indicators and measures to draw results and conclusions..

3.6.2. Secondary data

From research, references, and previous studies related to the subject of the study.

3.7. Statistical analysis procedures

After collecting data, it is essential to analyze the information gathered to draw meaningful conclusions. As, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), specifically version 27, was used to analyze the collected data

- The sample profile test was conducted, via descriptive analysis, to gain insights into the characteristics of the sample population. It helps researchers understand the demographics, preferences, and other relevant information about the individuals involved in the study.
- Validity and reliability tests are crucial in ensuring that the data collected is accurate and consistent. Validity tests (Exploratory factor analysis) to determine if the research instruments measure what they are intended to measure, while reliability tests (Cronbach` Alpha test) assess the consistency of results over time.
- The sample profile test was conducted, via descriptive analysis, to gain insights into the characteristics of the sample population. It helps researchers understand the demographics, preferences, and other relevant information about the individuals involved in the study.

3.8 Conclusion

Competitive advantage and project success are essential elements for achieving success and sustainability in a competitive business market. This process focuses on achieving high performance and excellence in all aspects of the business, with an emphasis on efficiency, effectiveness, innovation, and customer and employee satisfaction. The benefits of competitive advantage include improving performance in all areas of the business, increasing operational efficiency, defining vision and goals, assessing the current situation, and developing and implementing an improvement plan, while measuring and evaluating progress. In conclusion, competitive advantage and project success should be an essential part of the strategy of any organization seeking to excel and distinguish itself in the business market.

4. Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis & Findings discussion

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Sample profile (descriptive statistics for research sample)

4.3. Validity & reliability tests for the questionnaires

4.4. Descriptive statistics for research variables (answer research questions)

4.5. Testing Hypotheses & Findings Discussion

4.6. Conclusion

5. Chapter five: Research limitations, Recommendations & Conclusion

5.1. Research Limitations & Future Research

5.2. Research Recommendations

5.3. Conclusion

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Appendix

Questionnaire:

Please kindly answer this questionnaire which was designed to collect data for a research entitled “The Impact of Competitive Advantage on Project Success in the Fitness Sector, an Applied Study in Sports Fitness Centers in Riyadh - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.”

I assure you that your answer will be treated with complete confidentiality and will not be used for scientific research purposes only.

I thank and appreciate your valuable effort in advance and your cooperation which will have a great impact on the success of this study.

❖ Demographic Data:

1- Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2- Age:

- ☐ 18 – 25
- ☐ 26 – 35
- ☐ 36 – 45
- ☐ 46 – and above

3- Education:

- ☐ Pre graduate
- ☐ Graduate
- ☐ Postgraduate
- ☐ None

4- Fitness Level:

- ☐ Beginner
- ☐ Intermediate
- ☐ Advance

❖ First Axis: Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage is anything that gives a company an edge over its competitors, helping it attract more customers and grow its market share.

Competitive Knowledge				
No.	Questions	Agree	To some extent	Disagree
1	The Management of Sports Fitness Centers seeks to appoint trainers with scientific qualifications specialized in sports activities			
2	Specialized trainers are subjected to continuous development opportunities			
3	The Management of the Sports Centers is eager to stay updated on the latest developments in the sports field and the necessary requirements to enhance the trainees' skills.			
4	The Sports Centers Management is interested in equipping trainers with knowledge of sports activities budget management.			
5	Sports trainers are keen to learn about the new and modern in the world of sports activities			

Competitive Quality				
No.	Questions	Agree	To some extent	Disagree
1	The Fitness Centers management adopts quality standards in a way that is advertised.			
2	Sports centers use equipment and tools that meet good specifications to implement sports activities			
3	The management of sports centers is seeking to assess the feasibility of sports activity plans.			

Competitive innovation				
No.	Questions	Agree	To some extent	Disagree
1	Fitness center management seeks to develop innovative sports activity plans for customers			
2	Sports center management encourages fitness trainers to propose innovative ideas when developing sports activity plans.			
3	Sports center management aims to market its sports activities to secure financial resources for implementing sports programs.			

❖ Second Axis: Project Success

To achieve the project objectives within an agreed timescale and budget according to their acceptance criteria.

- 3 Strongly Disagree, -2 Disagree, -1 Somewhat Disagree, 0 – Neutral or Undecided
+1 Somewhat Agree, +2 Agree, +3 Strongly Agree

Performance								
No.	Questions	+1	+2	+3	0	-1	-2	-3
1	Project performance data (metrics) were in good alignment with informal customer feedback.							
2	Project operational performance goals were met.							
3	A formalized method was established for managing project performance data (metrics).							

Schedule								
No.	Questions	+1	+2	+3	0	-1	-2	-3
1	Overall project schedule performance was met based on baseline goals, targets, or expectations.							
2	Equipment availability was well managed.							
3	Schedule float management was optimized.							

Cost								
No.	Questions	+1	+2	+3	0	-1	-2	-3
1	Market competition was well understood.							
2	Budget contingencies were well managed.							
3	Overall project cost performance was met based on baseline goals, targets, or expectations.							

