

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework Development

By

Rashad Mithqal Ismail Afaneh

Supervisor

Dr. Ayham Jaaron

This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Engineering Management, Faculty of Graduate Studies, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine.

2018

**Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry:
A Framework Development**

**By
Rashad Mithqal Ismail Afaneh**

This Thesis was defended successfully on 1/4/2018, and approved by:

Defense Committee Members

Signature

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| – Dr. Ayham Jaaron / Supervisor | |
| – Dr. A / External Examiner | |
| – Dr. B / Internal Examiner | |

III

Dedication

To my homeland Palestine.

*To my beloved family; without their care, support, and encouragement,
this thesis would have never been completed.*

*To my beautiful fiancée who is my soul mate and I will spend the rest of my
life with her. Love is beautiful and great, when you find the right person
who cares and loves you.*

Thank you all for everything!

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, my greatest gratitude to Allah Almighty who gave me the patience, health, and strength to achieve this and complete my studies.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Ayham Jaaron, for giving me the opportunity to carry out my thesis project with him. I owe my deepest gratitude for his support, continuous guidance, accuracy suggestions and astute criticism during the practical phase and for his inexhaustible patience during the correction phase of this thesis and all throughout my period of study. Besides completing an MSc thesis, he stimulated and directed me in publishing journal papers. I am enormously indebted to him.

I would like to acknowledge to the faculty and staff for all of the great work you do in educating me and my friends and colleagues in An-Najah National University provided considerable support throughout the course, too many to thank individually.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express a deep sense of gratitude to my parents, especially to my dearest darling mom, who has always stood by me like a pillar in times of need and to whom I owe my life for her constant love, encouragement, moral support and blessings. Special thanks are due to my one and only loving sister Rose and her husband. Your company has been the main motivation for me to complete my assignments and to have faith in my dreams.

Nablus, April 2018

Rashad Afaneh

الإقرار

أنا الموقع أدناه مُقدم الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework Development

استراتيجيات الشركات في قطاع الصناعات الغذائية الفلسطينية: تطوير إطار عمل

أقر بأن ما اشتملت عليه هذه الرسالة إنما هي نتاج جهدي الخاص، باستثناء ما تمت الإشارة إليه حيثما ورد، وإن هذه الرسالة ككل، أو أي جزء منها لم يقدم من قبل لنيل درجة أو لقب علمي أو بحثي لدى أية مؤسسة تعليمية أو بحثية أخرى.

Declaration

This work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

Student's Name:

اسم الطالب: رشاد مثقال اسماعيل عفانه

Signature:

التوقيع:

Date:

التاريخ: 1/4//2018

Table of Contents

Dedication	III
Acknowledgment	IV
Declaration	V
Table of Contents	VI
List of Abbreviations	XIV
List of Tables	XV
List of Figures	XX
List of Appendix	XXIII
Abstract	XXIV
Chapter One	2
Introduction	2
1.1 Chapter Overview	2
1.2 General Background	2
1.3 The Problem Statement	4
1.4 The Research Questions and Hypotheses	5
1.5 The Purpose and Objective of the Research	9
1.6 Scope of the Research	10
1.7 The Significance of the Research	11
1.8 Ethical Considerations in Research	12
1.9 Thesis Structure	13
1.10 Chapter Summary	15
Chapter Two	17
Literature Review	17
2.1 Chapter Overview	17
2.2 Strategic Planning Process	18
2.2.1 Definitions of Strategic Planning	18
2.2.2 Patterns of Strategic Planning Process	20

VII

2.2.3	A Frameworks of the Strategic Planning Process	21
2.3:	Conceptions of Corporate Strategy	31
2.3.1:	Definitions of Corporate Strategy	31
2.3.2	The Levels of Corporate Strategy	34
2.3.3	Key Elements of a Corporate Strategy	36
2.3.4	Corporate Strategy Formulation Tools.....	42
2.4	Factors Affecting Corporate Strategy	46
2.4.1	Internal Factors	47
2.4.2	External Factors.....	51
2.5	Common Corporate Strategies for Food Manufacturers.....	55
2.5.1	Sustainability Strategy.....	56
2.5.2	Social Responsibility Strategy.....	57
2.5.3	Competitive Strategy	58
2.5.4	Manufacturing Strategy	58
2.5.5	Growth Strategy.....	59
2.5.6	Human Resources Strategy.....	60
2.5.7	Innovation Strategy.....	61
2.5.8	Marketing Strategy	62
2.5.9	Financial Strategy	63
2.5.10	Supply Chain Strategy	63
2.6	The Palestinian Food industry.....	64
2.6.1	History of the Palestinian Food Industry.....	65
2.6.2	Food Industry and the Palestinian Economy	65
2.6.3	Food Industry Sub-Sectors	67
2.6.4	Key Success Factors in the Palestinian Food Manufacturing Industry	68
2.6.5	Key Challenges Facing the Palestinian Food Processing Industry.....	68

VIII

2.6.6 Strategic Policy Development in the Palestinian Food Processing Industry.....	70
2.7 The Conceptual Framework.....	71
2.8 Chapter Summary.....	76
Chapter Three.....	78
Research Methodology	78
3.1 Chapter Overview	78
3.2 Research Approach	78
3.3 Research Design.....	80
3.4 Research Methodology Flowchart	82
3.5 Research Population and Sample Size	84
3.6 Data Collection Techniques	90
3.6.1 Qualitative Data.....	91
3.6.2 Quantitative Data.....	95
3.7 Quality of the Research Design	99
3.7.1 Research Validity	99
3.7.2 Research Reliability.....	100
3.8 Data Analysis	102
3.8.1 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	103
3.8.2 Quantitative Data Analysis.....	105
3.9 Chapter Summary.....	106
Chapter Four	108
Data Analysis	108
4.1 Chapter Overview	108
4.2 Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interview Data	108
4.2.1 Theme 1: The different participants in crafting corporate strategies	113
4.2.2 Theme 2: Corporate strategy formulation practices...	114

4.2.3	Theme 3: Practice approaches used in the decision-making process	115
4.2.4	Theme 4: Key factors to consider when formulating strategies	115
4.2.5	Theme 5: Tools used in capturing the required information.....	115
4.2.6	Theme 6: The major challenges and obstacles encountered during the structuring of company strategies.....	116
4.2.7	Theme 7: Competitive advantage.....	116
4.2.8	Theme 8: The current corporate strategies of the food companies	117
4.2.9	Theme 9: The expected future corporate strategies that will be adopted.....	117
4.3	Analysis of Survey Data	117
4.3.1	Descriptive Data	118
4.3.1.1	Positions held by the respondents.....	118
4.3.1.2	Respondents' work experiences in companies.....	119
4.3.1.3	Ownership Structures.....	120
4.3.1.4	Age of company (number of working years in food manufacturing).....	122
4.3.1.5	Company size based on the number of employees.....	123
4.3.1.6	Sub-sector of food industry	123
4.3.1.7	Corporate Location	125
4.3.1.8	Exporting activities.....	127
4.3.1.9	Major selling point for company products	128
4.3.1.10	Certifications of responding companies	129
4.3.1.11	Market share in domestic markets	130
4.3.2	Results related to study questions	130

4.3.2.1 The strategic priorities or major focus areas of concern by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies...	132
4.3.2.2 The internal challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals	134
4.3.2.3 The purpose of formulating corporate strategies	135
4.3.2.4 The patterns used in the strategic planning process ...	136
4.3.2.5 The degree of enforcement of the practices of corporate strategies formulation	137
4.3.2.6 The extent are some practices effective in the formulation of corporate strategies	138
4.3.2.7 The level of experience and familiarity of food companies in corporate strategy formulation practices	140
4.3.2.8 Internal factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process	141
4.3.2.9 External factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process	142
4.3.2.10 The possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	143
4.3.2.11 The degree of using strategic analysis tools in formulating corporate strategies	144
4.3.2.12 The time horizon covered by corporate strategy planning.	146
4.3.2.13 The current corporate strategies adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies	147
4.3.2.14 Issues affecting selecting corporate strategies successfully	148
4.3.2.15 Participants in the corporate strategy formulation process	149

4.3.2.16 Summary of results of the study questions.....	150
4.3.3 Results related to Study hypotheses	152
4.3.3.1 Impact the ownership structure on CSFP	155
4.3.3.2 Impact business type (Family business) on CSFP.....	156
4.3.3.3 Impact age of company on CSFP	157
4.3.3.4 Impact the company size on CSFP	157
4.3.3.5 Impact the subsector (key products provided by the company) on CSFP	158
4.3.3.6 Impact certifications on CSFP	160
4.3.3.7 Impact the proportion of market share on CSFP	160
4.3.3.8 Impact usual planning duration for corporate strategies on CSFP	161
4.3.3.9 Interaction effects between internal environment factors and CSFP	162
4.3.3.10 Interaction effects between external environment factors and CSFP	163
4.3.3.11 Interaction effects between the common corporate strategies adopted and CSFP	164
4.3.3.12 Interaction effects between the strategic analysis tools and CSFP	165
4.3.3.13 Interaction effects between the future risk and CSFP	166
4.3.3.14 Interaction effects between the participants of external experts and CSFP.....	166
4.3.3.15 Interaction effects between the adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies and CSFP	167
4.3.3.16 Interaction effects between the obstacles associated with the process and CSFP	168

4.3.3.17 Interaction effects between understanding the procedures adopted and CSFP	169
4.3.3.18 Interaction effects between redefining the strategic priorities and CSFP	170
4.3.3.19 Interaction effects between the ISO Certifications and CSFP	171
4.3.3.20 Interaction effects between flexibility of corporate strategies to be adaptable to future changes and CSFP	172
4.3.3.21 Interaction effects between achieving the competitive advantage and CSFP	173
4.3.3.22 Summary of results of hypothesis testing.....	174
4.4 Chapter Summary.....	176
Chapter Five	179
Discussion and Framework Development	179
5.1 Chapter Overview	179
5.2 Strategic Planning Process	179
5.3 Corporate Strategy Formulation Practices	186
5.4 Factors Affecting Corporate Strategy	191
5.4.1 Internal Factors	192
5.4.2 External Factors.....	193
5.5 Common Corporate Strategies among Palestinian Food Manufacturers	194
5.6 Framework Development.....	198
5.6.1 Framework Design	198
5.6.2 Framework Conceptual Validation	204
5.7 Chapter Summary.....	205
Chapter Six.....	208
Conclusions and Recommendations	208

6.1	Chapter Overview	208
6.2	Conclusions	208
6.3	Research Contribution.....	211
6.4	Research Recommendations	212
6.5	Future Research Directions	214
6.6	Limitations	217
6.7	Chapter Summary.....	217
	References	219
	Appendixes.....	244
	الملخص	ب

List of Abbreviations

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CS	Corporate Strategy
CSFP	Corporate Strategy Formulation Practises
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GDP	the Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross National Product
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
HRS	Human resources strategy
IKSFs	Industry Key Success Factors
IO	Industrial Organization View
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MBV	Market Based View
MoNE	the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy
MOST	Mission, Objectives, Strategies and Tactics
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal, and Environmental
PFI	Palestinian Federation of Industries
PFIU	Palestinian Food Industries Union
PIPA	The Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency
PSI	Palestinian Standard Institution
RBV	Resource Based Theory
SBU	Strategic Business Unit
SCS	Supply Chain Strategy
SMEs	Small to Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TA	Thematic Analysis
TBL	The Triple Bottom Line of Sustainability
TCS	Triangle of Corporate Strategy
U.S	United States
UK	United Kingdom
VRIO	Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Organisation

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Definitions of Strategic Planning.	19
Table 2.2: List of some of the Corporate Strategy Definitions.....	32
Table 2.3 Factors in the Internal Environment.	49
Table 2.4 Factors in the External Environment.	52
Table 2.5 A list of most common corporate strategies used in the food industry field.	55
Table 2.6 Indicators for the Important Food Industries in Palestine (Source: Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency "PIPA", 2017.....	67
Table 3.1: The main criteria used to select the targeted sample.....	87
Table 3.2: Chronapach Alpha Formula for measuring the reliability of the Survey domains and total degree of responses	102
Table 3.3: Steps for conducting thematic analysis (Source: Braun & Clarke, 2006).....	104
Table 3.4 Scale to represent the estimation level of sample responses on the study tool.....	106
Table 4.1 The distribution of the demographic characteristics of the interview participants.....	110
Table 4.2 Emergent themes, sub-themes, and codes based on the process of the thematic analysis.....	111
Table 4.3 Distribution of the sample companies (actual and percentage) according to their subsector of activities	125

Table 4.4 the distribution of sample according to the geographical governorates	127
Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated Level of Strategic Priorities of the Palestinian Food Industry Companies.	133
Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of the frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry.....	135
Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of the purpose of formulating corporate strategies.	136
Table 4.8 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of procedures within corporate strategies formulation process.	138
Table 4.9 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of effectiveness of strategic planning practices in formulating corporate strategies.	139
Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process. .	142
Table 4.11 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of external factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process. .	143
Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.	144
Table 4.13 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food industry.....	148

Table 4.14 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully.....	149
Table 4.15 Normality test of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.	153
Table 4.16 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of ownership structure for the company.	155
Table 4.17 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of Business type (Family business).....	156
Table 4.18 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of age of company.....	157
Table 4.19 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of company size (the number of employees).....	158
Table 4.20 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of subsector (key products currently provided by the company).....	159
Table 4.21 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable having certification.	160
Table 4.22 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.	161

Table 4.23 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of the usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company.....	162
Table 4.24 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and internal environment factors	163
Table 4.25 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and external environment factors.....	164
Table 4.26 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and common corporate strategies adopted by companies	164
Table 4.27 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of strategic analysis tools.	165
Table 4.28 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and future risk.	166
Table 4.29 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and participants of external specialists or experts in the corporate strategies formulation practices	167
Table 4.30 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and there are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies.....	168
Table 4.31 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.....	169

Table 4.32 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and the procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies	170
Table 4.33 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities	171
Table 4.34 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and the ISO Certifications.....	172
Table 4.35 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes.....	173
Table 4.36 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and achieving the competitive advantage of their businesses.....	174
Table 4.37 Summary of the tested hypotheses results	175

List of Figures

Figure 1.1:List of Research Objectives and the Questions and Hypotheses Related to it.....	10
Figure 1.2: Thesis Structure	15
Figure 2.1: Ansoff's Strategy Framework	22
Figure 2.2: Andrews's Strategy Framework	23
Figure 2.3: Mintzberg's Framework	24
Figure 2.4: David's Strategic Formulation Process Framework	25
Figure 2.5: Wheelen et al. Strategic Management Framework	26
Figure 2.6: Grant's framework for strategy analysis	26
Figure 2.7: Barney and Hesterly's Framework for strategy planning	27
Figure 2.8: A Framework for Measuring the Implementation of the Corporate Strategy Formulation Process in companies	29
Figure 2.9: Three Hierarchical Levels of Strategy	35
Figure 2.10: The Triangle of Corporate Strategy	36
Figure 2.11: Typical Groups that Participate in Corporate Strategies Formulation.....	37
Figure 2.12: The Key Elements of Corporate Strategy Formulation Process	41
Figure 2.13: Classification of strategic analysis tools	43
Figure 2.14: Research conceptual framework	72
Figure 3.1: The research methodology process cycle	79
Figure 3.2: The six basic types of mixed methods designs	81
Figure 3.3: Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Emphasis on the Quantitative Phase)	82

Figure 3.4: Flow Chart of the Research Methodology	84
Figure 3.5: Breakdown of number of food companies according to their subsector	85
Figure 3.6: Methods of sampling techniques	86
Figure 3.7: Sources of data collection techniques	91
Figure 3.8: Classification of collection tools in qualitative research	92
Figure 3.9: Outline of the structure of the survey	99
Figure 4.1: Distribution of sample companies according to the position of respondents in the companies' survey.....	119
Figure 4.2: Distribution of sample companies according to their work experience in their current positions	120
Figure 4.3: Distribution of sample companies according to the classification of the companies' registration	121
Figure 4.4: Distribution of sample companies according to ownership structure variable	121
Figure 4.5: Distribution of sample companies according to their number of working years in food manufacturing.....	122
Figure 4.6: Distribution of sample companies according to company size.	123
Figure 4.7: The distribution of the sample according to the corporate location.	126
Figure 4.8: The distribution of the sample companies (percentage) according to their owning export activities	128
Figure 4.9: Distribution of the sample companies (percentage) according to their major selling point.....	128

Figure 4.10: Distribution of sample companies according to certifications .	129
Figure 4.11: Distribution of sample companies according to their market share in domestic markets.....	130
Figure 4.12: Distribution of sample companies according to their patterns used in corporate strategy formulation	137
Figure 4.13: Distribution of a study sample according to the profile of the respondents in the companies' survey.....	141
Figure 4.14: Distribution of sample companies according to their usage rate of strategic analysis tools in corporate strategy formulation...	145
Figure 4.15: Distribution of sample companies according to analytical methods used in strategic analysis.....	146
Figure 4.16: The coverage period for the corporate strategy.....	147
Figure 4.17: Distribution of sample companies according to the level of participation in the corporate strategy formulation process	150
Figure 4.18: Research conceptual framework	154
Figure 5.1: The common corporate strategies in the food manufacturing industry according to their level of application.....	196
Figure 5.2: The Triangle of building a CSFP framework.....	200
Figure 5.3: A Managerial Framework for Formulating Corporate Strategies	201

List of Appendix

Appendix A	The Online Survey Instrument	245
Appendix B	Interview Questions Study Guide.....	270
Appendix C	Interview Consent Form.....	275
Appendix D	Information Sheet for Potential	278
Appendix E	A List of the Members of the.....	283
Appendix F	A five point Likert scale for the responses	284
Appendix G	European Union Definition of Enterprises Size.....	288
Appendix H	List of Interviewees who revised and validated a Conceptual Framework.....	289

**Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework
Development**

By

Rashad Mithqal Ismael Afaneh

Supervisor

Dr. Ayham Jaaron

Abstract

This study aims to explore and assess the process of corporate strategy formulation within the Palestinian food manufacturing companies at the corporate level and to find out the adopted practices and tools, and their level of applicability. Additionally, it is intended to inspect the most influential factors on this process, to gain more understanding about the process and the existing shortcomings in companies.

This study targets the food manufacturing industry companies working in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This study has adopted the mixed methods methodology, which is characterized as a sequential exploratory design. Specifically, it is based on collecting quantitative data and analyzing it in the first phase then collecting the qualitative data to be analyzed in the second phase. Thirteen in-depth interviews were conducted with the senior management of food companies. Seventy-four surveys were collected on the topic of the study. Thematic analysis (TA) has been used to analyze the semi-structured interview data and SPSS software to analyze the collected data.

The results showed that developing the objectives, vision, mission statement, assessing the internal and external environments, assessing the futuristic risks and selecting corporate strategies were the most used practices by the Palestinian food manufacturing companies. As for the

tools and techniques used in the process, the results reflected the usage is medium and limited. In addition, the (SWOT) analysis tool was found to be the most used among these tools.

The results also revealed that the company's size and market share have critical effects on the corporate strategy formulation process. More specifically, the leadership, the human resources, and the financial position were the most influential internal factors in this process. On the other hand, competitors, consumer behavior, and political and economic circumstances were the most influential external factors. Ultimately, the study presented a framework that is intended to help the companies to formulate their corporate strategies. The framework presents strategic areas that the companies are focusing on, which are ignored by other frameworks used previously.

Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the research covered in this study. It starts by describing the problem of this study, which is on formulating a successful corporate strategy in the food processing industry, specifically in the Palestinian food companies.

The research questions are outlined, followed by a brief explanation of the study's purpose and objectives, its scope, its importance on conducting this thesis, and its ethical issues. Finally, the structure of the thesis is presented.

1.2 General Background

The corporate strategy formulation phase is the company's most important component of the entire strategic management process (Wheelen et al., 2015). A company's aspects of the strategic formulation attracted most of the strategic management pioneers. For example, Ansoff (1980), Andrews (1980), Mintzberg et al. (1998), David (2016), Wheelen et al. (2015), Grant (2016), and Barney and Hesterly (2015) have provided major contributions to deal with this aspect. The existence of a successful and strategic formulation in a company reflects positive impacts for its performance enhancement (Auka and Langat, 2016; Babafemi, 2015), financial performance (Ouakouak, 2017), dynamic changes encountered and the competition intensity increase (Wolf and Floyd, 2013). Companies

still lack systematic approaches to their long-term strategic development (Grant, 2016).

Several studies related to strategic planning have been conducted (Rothaermel, 2017; Snell et al., 2015; Odera, 2014; Afonina and Chalupský, 2013) including on its pattern (Bozkurt and Kalkan, 2013; Leitner, 2014) and all its aspects (Majama and Magang, 2017; Waihenya, 2014; Kohtamäki et al., 2008) and influential factors (Carraresi et al., 2015; Kiptoo and Mwirigi, 2014). However, few only focused on the companies working in the food manufacturing industry such as Baker (2003) and Zarei and Paghaleh (2011), which resulted in a lack of information and research related to this industry.

The food manufacturing industry is ranked as the third business importance for the Palestinian economy (Ghattas et al., 2015) and contributes to approximately 9.2% of the Gross National Product (GNP) (PIPA, 2017). With that said, the companies still encounter many challenges (PFI, 2009) including a high level of competition (Migdad and Qafa, 2007), the existence of Israeli products (UNCTAD, 2015) and the set constraints (Isaac et al., 2015), which are reasons for the company to work harder to overcome these obstacles and rise in this sector.

The framework for the strategic management process is used by many researchers (Andrews, 1980; Mintzberg et al., 1998; David, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015; Grant, 2016; Barney and Hesterly, 2015) and it provides practices and steps to be used in various stages of the four strategic management processes (formulation, execution, monitoring, and

evaluation). This study's interest lies in the frameworks and practices under the strategic formulation process. It was used as a verification and assessment framework to assess the strategic formulation practices in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry.

These frameworks also provide many chances to study several aspects of the strategy formulation process, from tools, techniques, participant's nature, and time-frame as well as focusing on the aspects that other researchers disregarded.

This research covers a wide review of the literature on strategic planning and strategy formulation under the frame for verification purposes. Hence, this research handled the existing gaps in knowledge and current studies on the strategic formulation in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry.

1.3 The Problem Statement

The food processing industry is one of the main economic core sectors in Palestine. It supports the Palestinian national economy as a whole. Nevertheless, the Palestinian food manufacturing industry faces many challenges that hinder its performance such as the small size of the market (Ghattas et al., 2015), the lack of export privileges (International Business Publications, 2016), the existence of highly competitive markets (Migdad and Qafa, 2007), and the illegal competition of the Israeli products in the Palestinian market, which illustrates the low quality of Palestinian goods compared to the Israeli and other global products as well as the Israeli restrictions over the Palestinian economic sector (PFIU, 2009).

Additionally, the Palestinian companies suffer from a lack of awareness of the importance of formulating their own strategic policies.

Thus, there is an urgent need to seek ways of enforcing the capabilities of these companies and enhancing their competitive position to guarantee sustainable growth (UNCTAD, 2015).

To overcome these challenges in the food industry companies, they must adopt a clear-cut long-term corporate strategy (UNDP, 2017), which will contribute in fulfilling their goals and future visions by considering the current successful strategies adopted by global food companies.

1.4 The Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study is designed to provide answers to the following main research questions that focus on the research problem summarized above:

RQ1: How can the Palestinian food manufacturing companies create successful corporate strategies?

RQ2: How can the Palestinian food manufacturing companies proceed within a dynamic environment externally and internally?

RQ3: What are the best practices used in selecting the corporate strategies within the Palestinian food manufacturing industry?

RQ4: What are the most important aspects connected to the corporate strategy formulation processes in the Palestinian food manufacturing companies?

RQ5: What are the external and internal environments' key factors for establishing the corporate strategies in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry?

RQ6: What are the current corporate strategies adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies?

All the questions and answers will be consequently linked to each other throughout the data analysis chapter. Furthermore, the following research hypotheses have been proposed to investigate the research questions stated above:

- H1: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the ownership structure for the company.
- H2: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of business type (family business).
- H3: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the age of the company variable.
- H4: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food

industry attributed to the variable of company size (number of employees).

- H5: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of subsector (key products currently provided by the company).
- H6: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of having certification.
- H7: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.
- H8: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company.
- H9: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and internal environmental factors.
- H10: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and external environmental factors.

- H11: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and common corporate strategies adopted by companies.
- H12: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and strategic analysis tools.
- H13: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and future risk.
- H14: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the high level of external specialists or expert involvement in the corporate strategies formulation practices.
- H15: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the company's competences to formulate its strategy.
- H16: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.
- H17: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and understanding the procedures fully by every part who participates in formulating strategies.
- H18: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the company's continuous refinement of its strategic priorities.

- H19: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the ISO Certifications.
- H20: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and flexibility and adaptability for corporate strategies to be adaptable in the future.
- H21: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and achieving the competitive advantage of their businesses.

1.5 The Purpose and Objective of the Research

The main purpose of this study is to explore the current practices related to formulating corporate strategies in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry to assess their effectiveness.

However, the four main objectives of the study have derived from the following research questions:

1. To assess the current corporate strategies and the actions being adopted currently by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies.
2. To examine the ability of the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies to establish their future strategic policy to ensure that chosen strategies are pinpointed and actually put into action.
3. To highlight the best practices and main corporate strategies, and the means of selecting and formulating the proper strategies that suit the company's situation and circumstances.

4. To developing a managerial framework for corporate strategies formulating for Palestinian food manufacturing companies.

Figure (1.1) explains the main objectives of this study and the associated hypotheses and questions to validate the means of achieving study objectives.

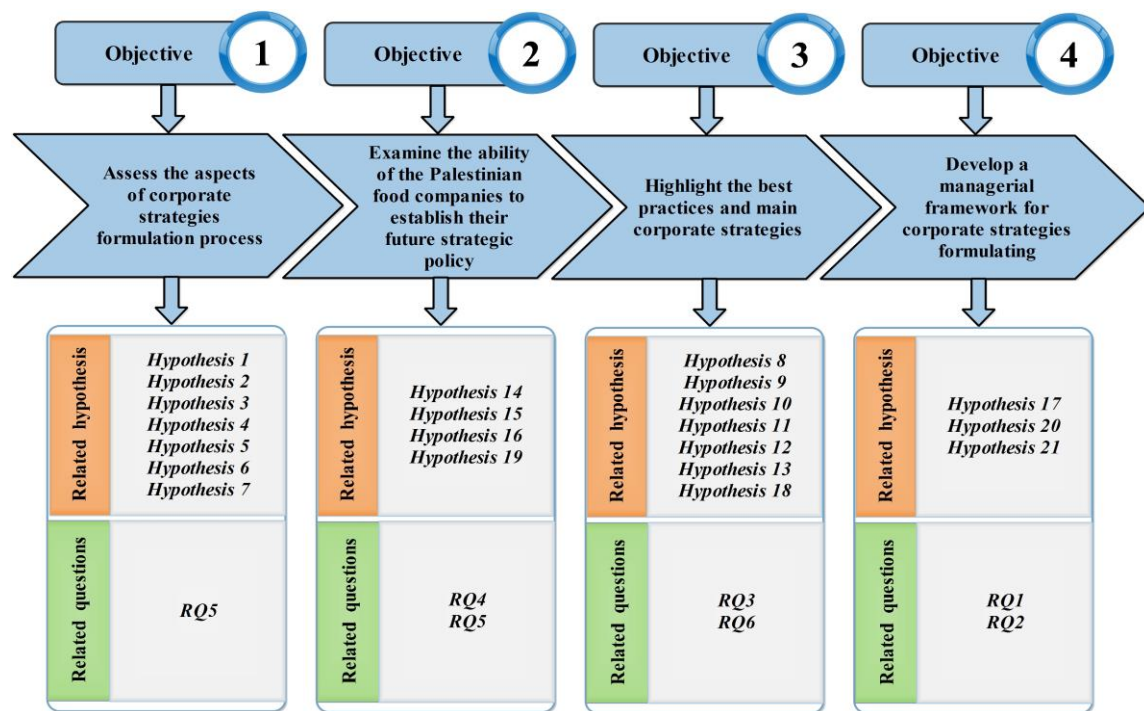


Figure 1.1:List of Research Objectives and the Questions and Hypotheses Related to it

1.6 Scope of the Research

The scope of this study focuses on all Palestinian (West Bank and Gaza Strip area) food manufacturing companies during 2017 regardless of their size and subsector.

The target population in this study includes the food companies, which are registered officially in both the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy

(MoNE) and the Palestinian Food Industries Union (PFIU). The study sample was selected according to the criteria mentioned in Chapter Three.

This study focuses on the corporate strategies formulation process including practices, tools, environmental factors and other aspects of this process to identify the common corporate strategies adopted in this industry, such as innovation and social responsibility. The adoption of these strategies can transform the food companies into successful in their industry.

1.7 The Significance of the Research

Most of the strategic management studies have focused on the development and impact of the corporate-level strategies of the food industry companies and their overall performance, but a few of them attempted to provide screening for strategies concurrently (UNDP, 2017).

Therefore, this study seeks to develop the literature on the corporate strategy formulation in the food manufacturing industry. It will make an important contribution towards the strategic research on corporate strategy in terms of allocating the best corporate strategies that are suitable for the food manufacturing. Ultimately, this research aims to enhance companies' abilities, leading to appropriately responding to the dynamic needs of the food markets and, at the same time, maintaining a profitable operation.

In addition, the promotion of the food manufacturing industry is necessary for the national economy (International Business Publications, 2016) to be able to compete on a local and regional level.

1.8 Ethical Considerations in Research

Kumar (2014) found that there are three main practices that should be considered to comply with ethical considerations during the preparation of the research: a) the ethical aspects related to the university, b) the ethical aspect related to the individuals participating in the research, and c) the ethical aspects related to the researcher himself/herself.

As for the ethical aspects related to the university, the researcher complied with the ethical considerations followed by the Deanship of Graduate studies at An-Najah National University.

Secondly, regarding the ethical aspect related to the individuals participating in the research, it is done by having a comprehensive written document that illustrates everything about the research including its purpose, its target beneficiaries voluntary participation and official approvals, its researcher and personal information, the theme, its aims, its methodology, the expected risks that may be encountered during the implementation, and finally its rights towards the individuals involved remaining all information provided confidential.

In addition, ensuring the companies voluntary participate in the research is vital. This means, there will be no forcing or compelling companies to participate in the study. However, the researcher asked the companies for clearance to interview staff and having clear declarations for very serious questions and to use audio recording devices. These clearances were obtained from the direct senior management.

Finally, as for the ethical aspects related to the researcher himself, the researcher already committed to maintaining secrecy regarding the collected data and the people that gave it. This means nothing should be published directly or indirectly to the public, including the names, addresses, and identities of the participants. Additionally, the researcher also avoided asking any questions that could harm the participants and their companies, benefit the companies' rivals, or exploit or abuse the data and information. It was made clear that the information would just to be used by the researcher for the scientific aims of preparing the research and establishing the results.

1.9 Thesis Structure

This thesis contains six chapters, as shown in Figure (1.2). It is organized as follows:

Chapter One is an introduction which explains the background of the study, the problem statement, the research questions and hypotheses, the purpose and objectives, the scope of research, significance, and the outlines the content of the research.

Chapter Two introduces the pertinent literature associated with the corporate strategies formulation. It includes the concept of the strategic planning process which is addressed and explained, reflecting the most used frameworks in the strategic planning. Second, it explains the concept of the corporate strategy and its levels and main elements as the tools used. Third, the factors that are affecting the corporate strategy, both internal and

external factors, are examined. Fourth, the food industry common strategies and, fifth, a summary about the Palestinian food manufacturing industry is presented.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology used in this thesis. A justification and explanation of the data collection techniques used were also provided. Validity and reliability issues were discussed and sufficient detail about the data analysis tools used was given in this chapter. Thus, this chapter displays helpful information about the methodology to start the process of analysis.

Chapter Four provides the findings of the thesis and the conducted interviews. This chapter includes the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the study data. Various tests such as Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney, and Pearson's correlation were used according to the variables and the study needs.

Chapter Five discusses the results illustrated in Chapter Four and presents the framework development.

Finally, Chapter Six summarizes the main conclusion of the thesis, the contributions, the recommendations, the suggestions for future research, and the current study's limitations.

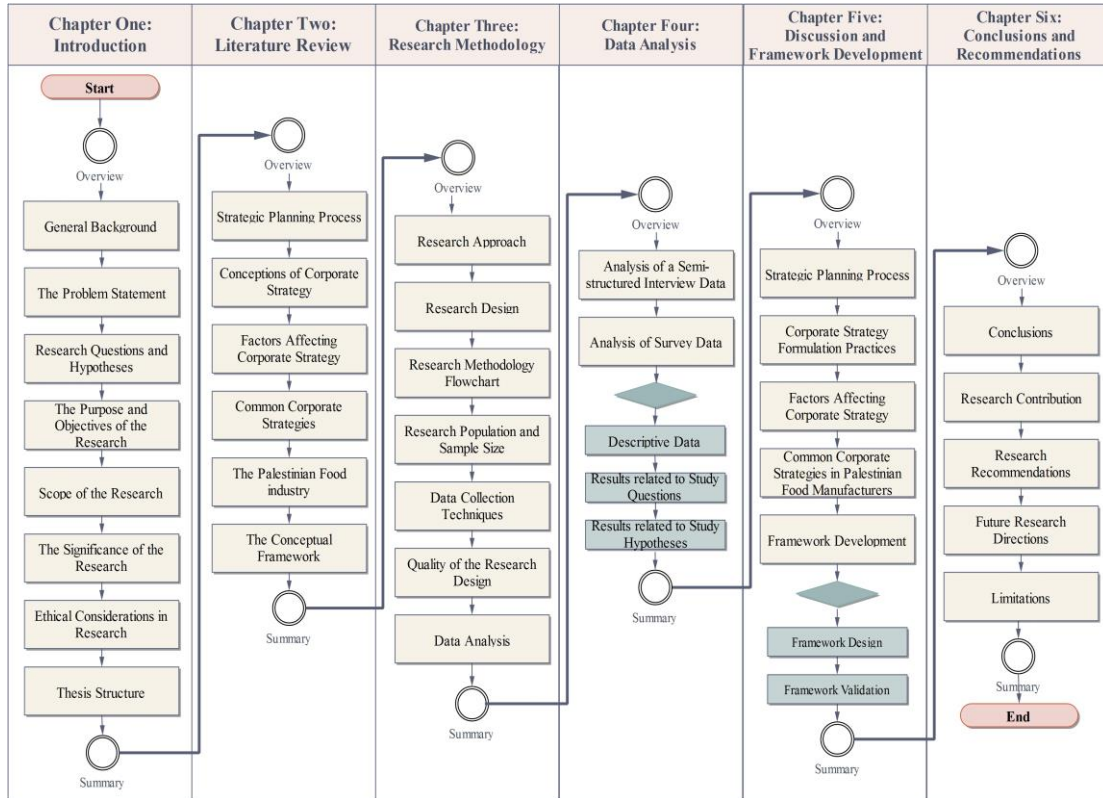


Figure 2.2: Thesis Structure

1.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the background to this study, the problem statement, the research questions and hypotheses, the objectives and purpose, the scope of research, the significance, and an outline of the content of the research are presented.

In the next chapter, the existing literature is reviewed to build the required theoretical framework for this thesis.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter includes the critical reviews of the relevant literature related to this study for the purpose of investigating the research problem and providing potential solutions. This chapter is organized in a way that will reflect all the six sections as follows. First, an explanation of the concept of the strategic planning process will reflect the most used frameworks in the strategic planning process. Second, there will be a presentation of the concept of the corporate strategy, its levels as well as the main elements of establishing a corporate strategy. Third, the internal and external factors that affect the corporate strategy will be defined. Fourth, the common strategies in the food manufacturing industry will be illustrated and revised. Fifth, the current status of the Palestinian food manufacturing industry be explained. Finally, the theory development that clarifies the major concepts and proposes relationships among the concepts in this study will be highlighted.

2.2 Strategic Planning Process

2.2.1 Definitions of Strategic Planning

Having a successful management entails the ability to work in establishing future plans that lead the company towards achieving all its strategic goals. Therefore, the strategic planning has been examined for over the past decades in the strategic management literature and studies are still currently being conducted in this field.

Strategic planning is vital for every company regardless of the size, location or its business field. Although the majority of studies such as Majama and Magang (2017), Waihenya (2014) and Kohtamäki et al. (2008) have focused on the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), studies need more efforts than others to adopt strategic planning activities. This means that many studies confirmed the importance of performing strategic planning.

It could be confused that strategic planning is like strategic management or strategic thinking (Lowder, 2009), but in the literature, it was proven it really isn't, as many scholars differed in defining the strategic planning; some of them considered it the same as strategic management and others didn't agree. The fact of the matter is that strategic planning is different from strategic management; strategic management focuses on the three stages (formulating, implementing and evaluating strategy) while strategic planning focuses on only one stage (formulating strategy) (David, 2016).

This means that strategic planning is an integrated part of strategic management.

Historically, the term strategic planning was first used in the military field (Freedman, 2013). There are many schools of thought regarding the definition of strategic planning. Table (2.1) reflects the most important of these definitions.

Table 2.1: Definitions of Strategic Planning.

	Definition	Author(s)
1	It is a disciplined and well-defined organizational effort aimed at the complete specification of corporate strategy.	(Hax and Majluf, 1984)
2	A formal process in which a given set of steps are taken from the analysis of the company's situation to the exploration of various alternatives to the execution of the strategy it can use to achieve its objectives.	(Mintzberg, 1994)
3	It is a collection of ideas implemented by military organizations to execute desired strategic goals in the long term.	(Johnson et al., 2008)
4	The process by which strategies are produced.	(Grünig and Kühn, 2011)
5	It is a formalized, periodic process that provides a structured approach to strategy formulation, implementation, and control.	(Wolf and Floyd, 2013)
6	It involves a set of procedures for making decisions about the company's long-term goals and strategies.	(Snell et al., 2015)
7	It is a part of the strategic management process that concerns the choice of strategy in terms of where and how to compete it.	(Rothaermel, 2017)

Throughout this study, it is noticed that all these definitions present a whole comprehensive definition of strategic planning, which in this case is the process undertaken by a company for developing, determining and

selecting its strategies to help guide the company from its current point to a future point.

2.2.2 Patterns of Strategic Planning Process

There are various patterns for the strategic planning used by the companies. These patterns have been classified into two styles according to the nature of the strategy formulation (Johnson et al., 2017): the deliberate (planned, intended) and emergent strategic planning of decisions to attain a certain corporate strategy.

O'Regan and Ghobadian (2007) defined the deliberate strategic planning as the approach to use when pursuing action according to certain predefined steps including a written course of action for each step in a systematic way. It is associated with using certain techniques and frameworks for strategic analysis. This approach is increasingly spreading in all the small, medium and large-size companies and was also named as a formal strategic plan, which is usually initiated by a company's top management.

The second style is that of emergent strategic planning: strategy can be described as emergent where consistencies arise in response to unexpected opportunities and challenges over a period of time (Johnson et al., 2017) even though the adoption of such actions was never explicitly intended and were not developed on the basis of planned actions.

Most of the prior studies relied on measures of the strategy's pattern. Bozkurt and Kalkan (2013) studied the strategy's pattern in Turkish manufacturing companies and showed that most of them used the

deliberate pattern in the strategy formation process. On the contrary, Leitner's (2014) study on Austrian SMEs found that the emergent pattern was demonstrated more than the deliberate pattern, which is particularly relevant in the market and innovation scope.

2.2.3 A Frameworks of the Strategic Planning Process

The tools and practices of corporate strategy formulations are still focused upon by all companies in our current generation (Babafemi, 2015). The method of strategic planning differs from the existing various approaches and various authors. Furthermore, the ability to select the best approach was the motivation for authors to keep perusing furtherly. Thus, numerous strategic planning frameworks have been developed over several decades and many of them have been studied about in the best of strategic management books such as Ansoff (1980), Andrews (1980), Mintzberg et al. (1998), David (2016), Wheelen et al. (2015), Grant (2016), and Barney and Hesterly (2015).

In the academic field, the first strategic planning framework was developed by Igor Ansoff (1980) who is known as the father of strategic management. Ansoff developed the framework of strategic decision-making partially based on Alfred Chandler's work.

According to Ansoff (1980), a corporate strategy consists of four key components: Market Penetration, Product Development, Market Development and Diversification, as reflected in Figure (2.1) below.



Figure 2.1: Ansoff's Strategy Framework (Source: Ansoff, 1980)

Ansoff reflected that the corporate strategy captures the essential nature of the economic activity whereby a company conducts what to achieve in the future by identifying four of its components: the couple “product-market”, the vector of growth, the competitive advantage and the synergy.

Andrews (1971; 1980) developed a simple framework which shaped the foundation of the strategy formulation process. This framework includes the steps that lead to the choice of a corporate strategy, ignoring the implementation, control and evaluation phases. In 1971, Andrews (1971) formulated a complete framework that included an implementation phase but ignored strategic control and evaluation, as shown in Figure (2.2).

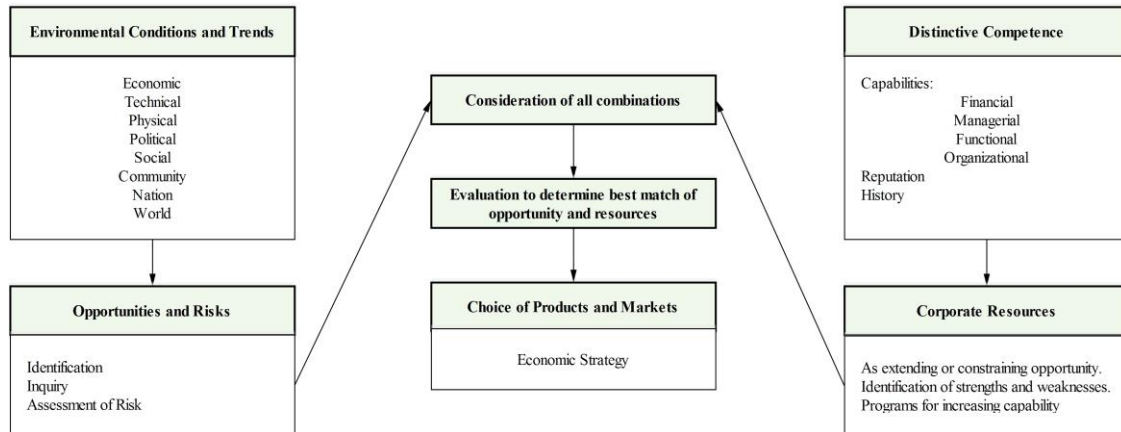


Figure 2.2: Andrews's Strategy Framework (Source: Andrews, 1971; 1980)

Mintzberg (1990) developed a renewed framework of strategy formulation. This framework was developed in the 1980's and is called the “Basic Design School Model”. He attempted to merge the different perspectives of the business schools in his framework. This framework exposes the company's vision, mission, goals, and objectives, and then simultaneously exposes the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, which will assist them to choose the most appropriate strategies. However, Mintzberg indicated that there are other aspects that can be important, namely the social responsibilities and managerial values. However, based on his perspective, it must create the best fit by matching the internal environment to the external environment through using an analysis tool to examine the internal strengths and weaknesses as well as the external opportunities and threats, as illustrated in Figure (2.3).

David (1989; 2016) presented another framework to formulate a strategy as a structured and linear process which requires companies to seek annual objectives, policies, motivated employees and scarce resources so that the formulated strategies can be executed. Figure (2.4) below explains the components of David's framework.

According to David (2016), the process of strategy formulating consists of four steps: developing a vision and mission statement; performing an external and internal audit, establishing long-term objectives, and generating and selecting strategies (Figure 2.4)

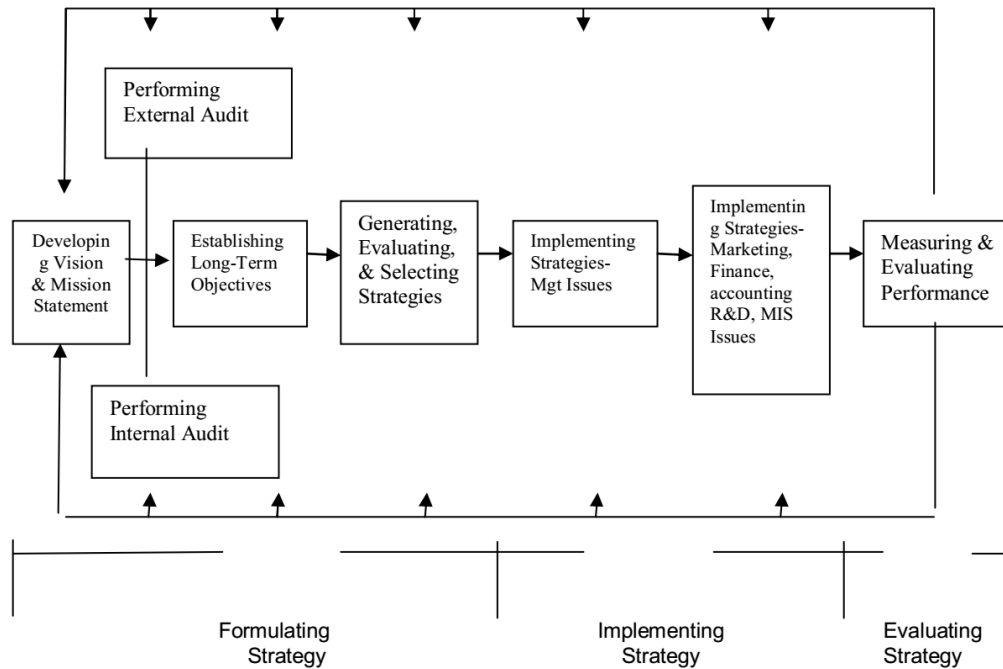


Figure 2.4: David's Strategic Formulation Process Framework (Source: David, 1989; 2016)

Wheelen et al. (2015) clarified that the strategy formulation consists of the same phases adopted by David (1989) but is more focused on the importance of internal and external environment data collection prior to setting the company's mission objective, objectives, strategies and policies, and procedures, as shown in Figure (2.5)

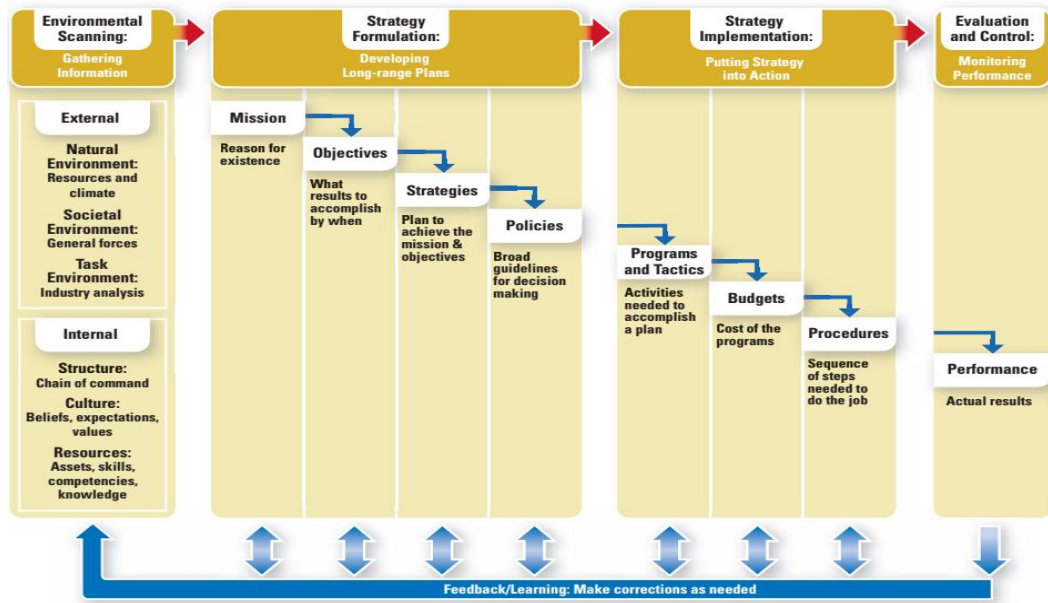


Figure 2.5: Wheelen et al. Strategic Management Framework (Source: Wheelen et al., 2015)

Grant (2016) presented a two-concept principle for the process of strategy formulation, which is used as an analytical tool. These concepts are the industrial sector along with the competitors, consumers and providers and the company's environment along with the objectives, values, resources, capacity, regulations, and structure. Overall, this framework is fully dependent on the concept of achieving strategic compatibility between the company and the industry environment. The framework is shown in Figure (2.6).



Figure 2.6: Grant's framework for strategy analysis (Source: Grant, 2016)

Barney and Hesterly (2015) have presented a framework for the strategy formulation process. According to them, formulating initiatives strategies involves sequential steps that focus on the VRIO (Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Organization) framework in strategic decision-making. This framework includes the classic steps, as shown in Figure (2.7) below.

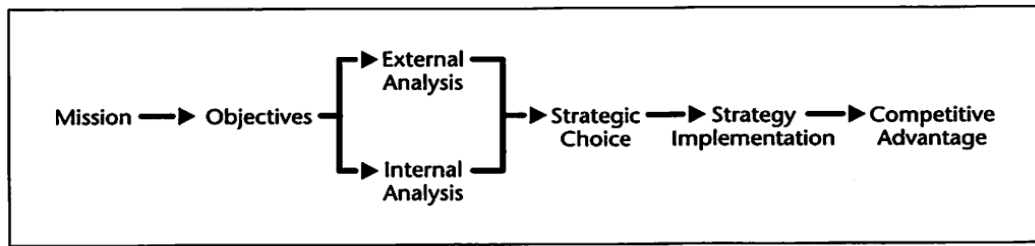


Figure 2.7: Barney and Hesterly's Framework for strategy planning (Source: Barney and Hesterly, 2015)

All the different perspectives about the strategic framework used to formulate a corporate strategy (strategic planning) were presented in the proceeding lines. The important points have been noted in these frameworks, which are summarized in the following points:

First point; most scientists agreed on the key ingredients of the strategic planning framework, such as selecting the corporate mission, vision and major strategic goals (David, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015; Barney and Hesterly, 2015) and environmental scanning procedures (Andrews, 1980; Mintzberg et al., 1998; David, 2016; Wheelen et al., 2015; Barney and Hesterly, 2015). At the same time, they mostly disagreed on the priority of those components. In contrast to Andrews (1980), Mintzberg (1998) and Wheelen et al's. (2015) frameworks concentrate on conducting environmental scanning as the first step.

Second point; the procedures or key components that included these frameworks can be summarized in three major steps:

1. Developing a corporate core value by defining a company's vision, mission, and future objectives.
2. Conducting a comprehensive environmental analysis, which consists of the internal analysis of culture and capabilities within the company and exposing the strengths and weaknesses and the external analysis to identify the opportunities and threats within the company.
3. Formulating suitable strategies for different levels to achieve the goals that fit with the capabilities of the company, existing budgets, and the allocation of resources.

Third point; most of these frameworks adopted a framework style in their practices (Baden-Fuller and Morgan, 2010) and each of these frameworks emphasizes on formulating a strategy process, namely how to gain competitive advantages and how to improve a company's performance without highlighting the ability in accommodating consumer needs. It showed that several aspects are ignored, such as stating a clear role for the parties involved in the strategic planning process or stating a time-frame for the process.

Consequently, these frameworks will be used to explore the current corporate strategy formulation practices within the Palestine food manufacturing industry. Also, in order to explore the relationships found among these practices, and the main aspects that are complementary parts

of these practices and at the same time aren't mentioned within these frameworks.

Baker (2003) also indicated that the strategic planning process can be measured by practices used such as the mission statement, trend analysis, competitor analysis, long-term objectives, annual objectives, short-term action plans, and continuous evaluation.

Therefore, based on the results of Baker's study (2003) and the components that were included in these frameworks, we can assume that all the vision, mission statements, future strategic goals, internal environmental analysis, external environmental analysis, industry analysis and selecting corporate strategies are indicators that reflect the company's degree of enforcement and effectiveness towards the corporate strategy formulation process, as shown in Figure (2.8) below.

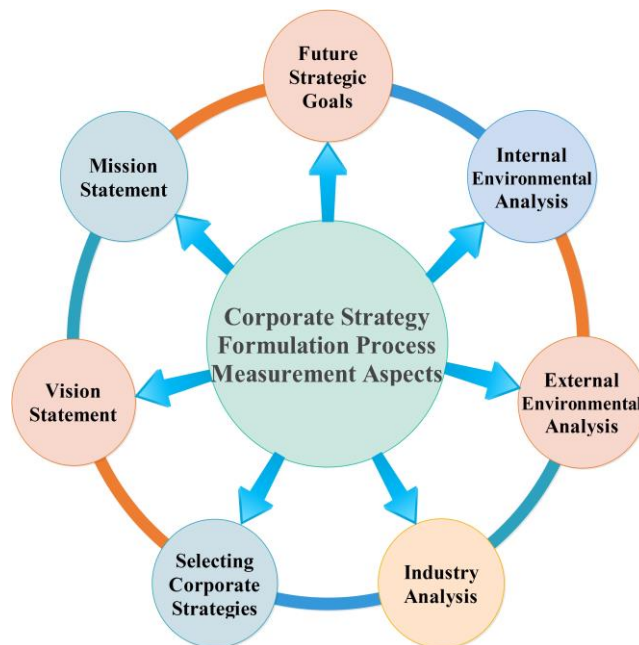


Figure 2.8: A Framework for Measuring the Implementation of the Corporate Strategy Formulation Process in companies (Source: Baker, 2003)

Applying these practices are influenced by the availability of the required information (Dominic, 2015), the involved parties in process, the managerial awareness of these practices (Afonina and Chalupský, 2013), the nature of the national contexts for either the developed or developing countries, and the nature of ownership for either family businesses or public sector organizations (Glaister et al., 2009).

Afonina and Chalupský (2013) outlined that the level of application of strategic management practices is linked to the managerial awareness of these practices.

Odera (2014) indicated that all companies should have a documented strategic plan that includes the vision, the mission statement, and the objectives for all the staff members and stakeholders to refer to. It was reflected in the analysis of the external and internal environment, as indicated by 100% of the respondents and, in some cases, revising the mission statement, as indicated by 86% of the respondents. Some respondents stated that they would choose a specific strategy during the process. Further analysis of the characteristics of the planning process indicated that they were all formal and were budgeted for, with 80% of the respondents indicating that the strategic process was included in their work plans. In all instances, the strategic plan should then be communicated to all the staff and the stakeholders after development.

Vaitkevičius (2007) highlighted the practices and tools used. Based on the results of his study, he found that the mission, vision, strategic objectives, strategic alternatives, and management structure practices are mostly used

and the author confirmed that companies were more familiar with corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) than with strategic analysis tools.

Glaister et al. (2009) found that the UK and Turkish manufacturing companies' highest corporate strategy formulating procedures focus on developing the mission statement, the long-term objectives, identifying opportunities and threats in the external environment, and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the company in the internal environment.

2.3: Conceptions of Corporate Strategy

This subsection introduces the definition of the corporate strategy and highlights corporate strategy levels, key elements, and the tools used.

2.3.1: Definitions of Corporate Strategy

In order to be able to reflect what a corporate strategy is, we must consider several research scholars who conducted interesting research regarding strategic management and its focus on conceptualizing a strategy, from which corporate strategy definitions were derived (Hambrick and Fredrickson, 2005).

Firstly, the word “strategy” is derived from the Greek word “stratēgos”; (read as stratus meaning army) and “ago” (meaning leading/moving) (Hill et al., 2017). The term corporate strategy has been studied and developed by many scholars, but it was first addressed in the scientific literature by Ansoff (1965) in the 1960's. There is no consensus on the definition of corporate strategy. Different researchers have also contributed towards the

evolution of the concept of corporate strategy (CS) through various related concepts. Table (2.2) shows the most important of these definitions.

Table 2.2: List of some of the Corporate Strategy Definitions.

	Definition	Author(s)
1	The determination of the basic long-term goals of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.	(Chandler, 1962)
2	The pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its objectives, purposes, or goals, produces the principal policies and plans for achieving those goals, and defines the range of business the company is to pursue, the kind of economic and human organization it is or intends to be, and the nature of the economic and noneconomic contribution it intends to make to its shareholders, employees, customers. Furthermore, it defines the businesses in which a company will compete, preferably in a way that focuses resources to convey distinctive competences into competitive advantages.	(Andrews, 1980)
3	The overall plan for a diversified company is both the darling and the stepchild of contemporary management practice.	(Porter, 1996)
4	Are a set of procedures creation starts with developing a vision, which is identified as what the company aspires to become in the distant future.	(Collis and Montgomery, 2005)
5	A term used to denote the most general level of strategy in an organization and in this sense embraces other levels of a strategy.	(Johnson et al., 2017)
6	Provides answering several key questions such as: "What business should we be in?" What are the broad ambitions and the concrete goals of the organization and what capabilities and systems are necessary to build and maintain an advanced position?	(Martin, 2010)

Corporate strategy has been considered an important research topic in the area of strategic management, and its relationship to performance has been a focus of interest for academicians and practitioners (Dibrell et al., 2014; Wolf and Floyd, 2013; Andrews et al., 2009).

In this study, a corporate strategy refers to the company's main strategic orientation and long-term priorities, and it represents all the stockholders' interests in the company.

According to the steps proposed in the previous frameworks, the formulation of a corporate strategy is considered as the most important step in the process of strategic management (Hrebiniak, 2008).

According to Martin (2010), a good corporate strategy concerns several main questions: What field of business should a company be in? What are the future goals that the company seeks to achieve in the long term? What is the main outline that should be worked on to achieve these goals?

One of the most concealed characteristics of strategic planning is the ability to foresee the future time-frame. Das (1991) was the first who referred to the time-frame as an important dimension in strategic planning. He defined a time-frame as "the length of the future time period that covered the process of strategic planning". Also, the time-frame is tightly connected to the strategic objectives because all decisions concerning the strategic objectives are linked to the time-frame determined, so the strategic objectives are considered achieved when the outlined tasks in the set time-frame are performed.

A time-frame adopted for strategic planning varies from one company to another since each company has its own circumstances, e.g. size, type, and age of company (Larsen et al., 1998). Some use short-term planning more extensively than long-term ones while others do not use short-term planning but long-term ones. Short-term planning can be preferred by the micro- and small enterprises while the medium-sized and the big enterprises prefer using long-term planning, which is commonly more than 5 years. This is because this time-frame enforces the implementation of decisions related to the strategy on the condition that necessary changes are introduced, resulting from changes in the environment and the company (Hoverstadt and Loh, 2017).

The characteristics of a corporate strategy vary, but Johnson et al. (2017) listed the most prominent characteristics of a corporate strategy as the following: the long-term planning of an company, its overall scope activities, its competitive advantage, its resources and competencies, its values and expectations, its environment changes and forces, its strategic capabilities and its values, and achieving stakeholders expectations.

2.3.2 The Levels of Corporate Strategy

Enterprise strategy alone is not enough to achieve all the company's future objectives. Therefore, strategies exist at several levels in a company according to their occurrence in the number of the existing Strategic Business Units (SBU) (Huff et al., 2009). According to Johnson et al.

(2017), most companies should consider three types of levels, which are reflected in the hierarchy shown in Figure (2.9) below.



Figure 2.9: Three Hierarchical Levels of Strategy (Source: Hax and Majluf, 1984).

The strategy can be formulated on different levels according to different criteria such as the type, size, and nature of business:

1. The first level is the Corporate-level strategy: This is on the top of the pyramid and focuses on the overall purpose and scope of a company and how value will be added to the different parts (business units) of the organization at creating value to the different parts, this is referred to as corporate strategy.
2. The second level, Business-level strategy: This is in the middle of the pyramid and focuses on how to compete successfully in a particular market. This is sometimes called competitive strategy.
3. The third level of strategy is the Operational strategy: This is at the bottom of the pyramid and is concerned with how the component parts of an organization effectively deliver the corporate and

business-level strategies in terms of resources, processes, and people.

In this study, the focus is on the strategies that are used at the corporate level.

2.3.3 Key Elements of a Corporate Strategy

The purpose of the corporate strategy is creating a core value for the company that is consistent with its interests and business (Porter, 1996) by implementing the company's strategic orientation in the form of corporate strategies. The corporate strategy is also concerned with the creation of advantages through the configuration and coordination of its multi-business activities.

Collis and Montgomery (1998) provided an integrated system that arises from the consistency of three critical elements of the strategy, which are all aligned in the shape of a triangle known as the Triangle of Corporate Strategy (TCS), as shown in Figure (2.10).



Figure 3.10: The Triangle of Corporate Strategy (Source: Collis and Montgomery, 1998).

According to the TCS, the corporate strategy is based on the three above mentioned major pillars. When these pillars, along with the company's

vision, goals and objectives are all aligned, the company will possess a corporate advantage that truly leads to the creation of shareholder value from the ownership of multiple businesses.

In addition to Collis and Montgomery's (1998) contributions, Hutzschenreuter and Kleindienst (2006) argued that corporate strategy involved the integration of these three pillars: the strategists (actors), the issue, and the sequence of actions.

Interested parties of an organization are individuals or groups who are involved with the company and that could get affected by it and could affect it as well. According to Gurkov (2009), these parties are the content stakeholders, top staff, the communities, customers, shareholders, suppliers, distributors and agents, government, markets, and competitors. Each of these parties has a direct impact on the process of the strategic decision-making (Shepherd and Rudd, 2014), as shown in Figure (2.11).

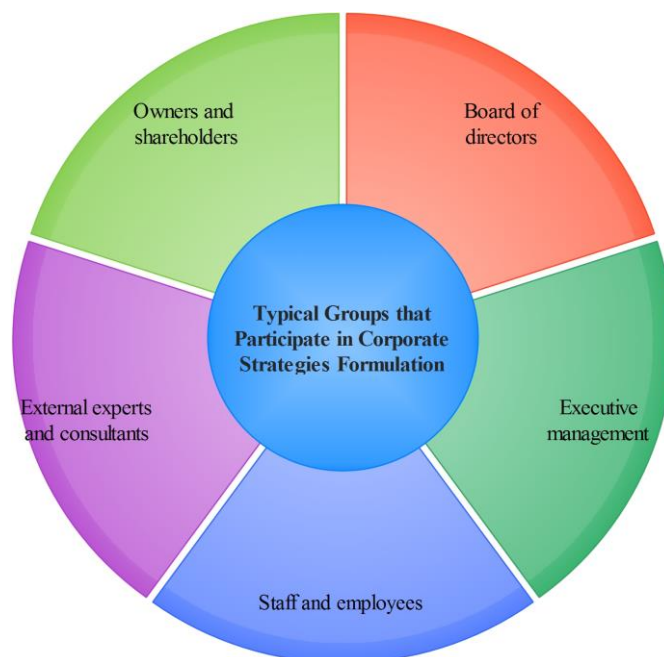


Figure 2.11: Typical Groups that Participate in Corporate Strategies Formulation

The food manufacturing companies' interests rely on the major parts: stakeholders, owners, investors, employees, communities, customers, and suppliers.

The participant's old traditional thinking on this process used to show the top-level management as the only decision-makers and the strategic policy establishers (Collier et al, 2004). But this mentality was overruled by many modern scientific research studies that came afterward, such as Schaefer and Guenther (2016), Paroutis and Heracleous (2013), Wolf and Floyd (2013), to name a few. All these authors reflected the enhancement of the active participation of the entire staff members of the company from juniors to middle and senior managers (Collier et al., 2004; Wolf and Floyd, 2013) since this mechanism reflected positive impacts on the company's strategic planning as well as on the organizational and financial performance.

In addition, O'Reilly et al. (2015) concurred that cascading in strategic decision-making is a successful attempt for these food manufacturing companies. Cascading is making decisions passing from the top of the pyramid way down to the bottom to reach the ideal decision and achieve strategic alignment.

According to Porter (1996), competitive advantage is the prime target that companies seek to achieve their corporate strategies. He described the sources of competitive advantage as making the highest-quality product, providing superior customer service, achieving lower costs than rivals, having a more convenient geographic location, designing a product that

performs better than competing brands, making a more reliable and longer-lasting product, and providing buyers more value for their money.

Similar findings are presented by Swamidass et al. (2001), who identified the critical dimensions that are used as a competitive advantage in manufacturing companies. These dimensions were examined by marketing and manufacturing managers, and its price, lead-time, technological sophistication, product features, delivery performance, quality conformance and flexibility to modify designs to suit customers' needs.

Contradictory to these findings, Thatte (2007) confirmed that the most important elements of top competitors are the product's quality, price, delivery, innovation, and advancement. In which they could be the competitive advantage for these industrial companies, which is the main source every company seeks to get to.

In this context, Notta and Vlachvei (2017) also re-emphasized that the results of their study on Greek food and beverage companies reflected that the highest-quality product, designing new products and creating unique value for customers, having a more convenient geographical location and having advantage in the production specialization were the main sources of competitive advantage.

Another important contribution was further developed by Kachaner et al., (2016). who is working at the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) found that there were four common elements as additional dimensions in the strategic planning of companies, namely time horizons of strategy, the communications, and dialogues related to strategy, engaging the broad

group of stakeholders in developing the strategy, exploring strong strategic options, and making clear choices.

Matin (2014) indicated that the process of a successful developing corporate strategy is realized by determining an integrated set of strategic choices formulated collectively and considering the following elements: the first is a vision and mission statement that sets out a relatively lofty and aspirational goal. The second is a list of strategic choices and the third element is the conversion of these choices into financials that dovetail nicely with the company's budget.

Several researchers were linking their achievement of the strategic goals to a certain timetable (Kachaner et al., 2016). Here, the time horizon was meaning, and the time covered by the strategy from the beginning of the work until the completion of it, without the need to make any major adjustments to it, since corporate strategies take time. Therefore, corporate strategy is made to achieve the long-term activities to realize the company's vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

There is a fallacy regarding the time horizon, which is thought to only connect to the implementation phase of the strategy, but it is also connected with the formulation phase and directly affects the style of the strategy formulated (Sołoducho-Pelc, 2015). In many strategic planning frameworks, the time horizon has been ignored and the focus was solely on how a competitive advantage is achieved through building corporate strategies (Hoverstadt and Loh, 2017).

The time horizon used in corporate strategy formulation has been criticized by researchers. The most common time horizons in planning are three time-frames: 1 - 3 years (Koufopoulos and Chryssochoidis, 2000), 3 - 5 years (Odera, 2014) and more than 5 years (Sołoducho-Pelc, 2015).

Also, the availability of data is an essential element in corporate strategy and it will formulate successful corporate strategies (DalleMule and Davenport, 2017). Thus, data required must be collected at the onset of the process (Mazzei and Noble, 2017) using a set of tools, which will be discussed in the next subsection (2.3.4).

Based on the above mentioned, it can be concluded that practices, actions, tools, strategic options, information, communications, time, participants and competitive advantage are essential elements of corporate strategy, as has been summarized in Figure (2.12) below. The primary purpose of these elements is to help the strategists when formulating corporate strategies.

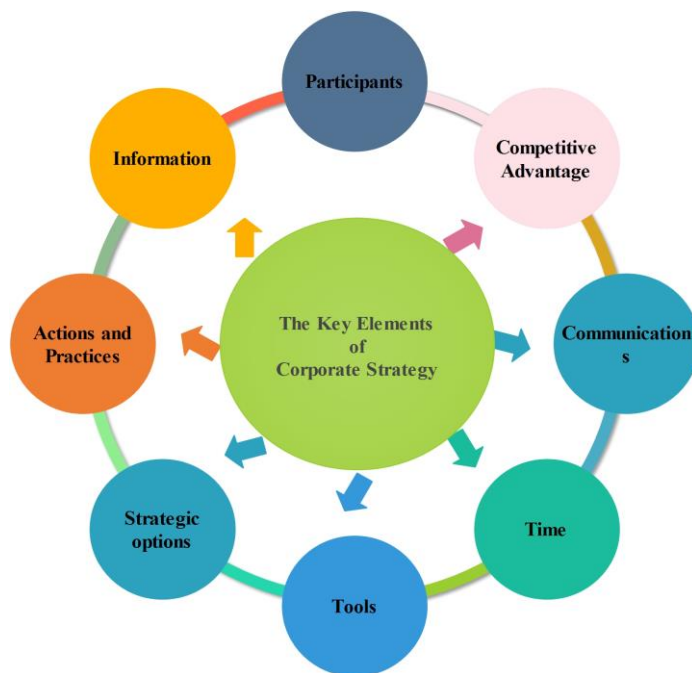


Figure 2.12: The Key Elements of Corporate Strategy Formulation Process

2.3.4 Corporate Strategy Formulation Tools

Vuorinen et al. (2017) defined the strategy tools as the used instruments, frameworks or methods in formulating strategies. They also confirmed that these tools play a major role in providing an understanding of the environment in the company and the company will lead the interaction with its environment, are will lead to improving the decision-making process.

The academic literature indicates the growing number of special tools, which can be used to aid the companies not only in formulating their strategies but in different stages of strategic management. The successful corporate strategies have been created in a systematic way that requires selecting the appropriate analysis tool to extend insights into important issues for the future and for new successes (Boateng et al., 2015).

These tools were seen as an essential content of the formulation process rather than as a source of information. Jarzabkowski and Kaplan (2015) argued that measuring the utilization of these tools is related to the ability to select the adequate tool and knowing how to use it. These tools have been commonly used in the developed countries more than the developing countries (Qehaja et al., 2017), especially large-sized companies since they tend to use these tools more than other companies (Siddique, 2015).

In the literature, these tools have been sorted into two main categories, which are based on the strategy process phase (Johnson et al., 2017) and the kind of factor which measures it (Rudnicki and Vagner, 2014).

Rudnicki and Vagner (2014) stated that the tools used for strategic analysis can be distinguished by the kind of factor that measures it. According to these factors, the tools investigated in the three dimensions are the internal environment, external environment and both the external and internal environments, as depicted in Figure (2.13) below

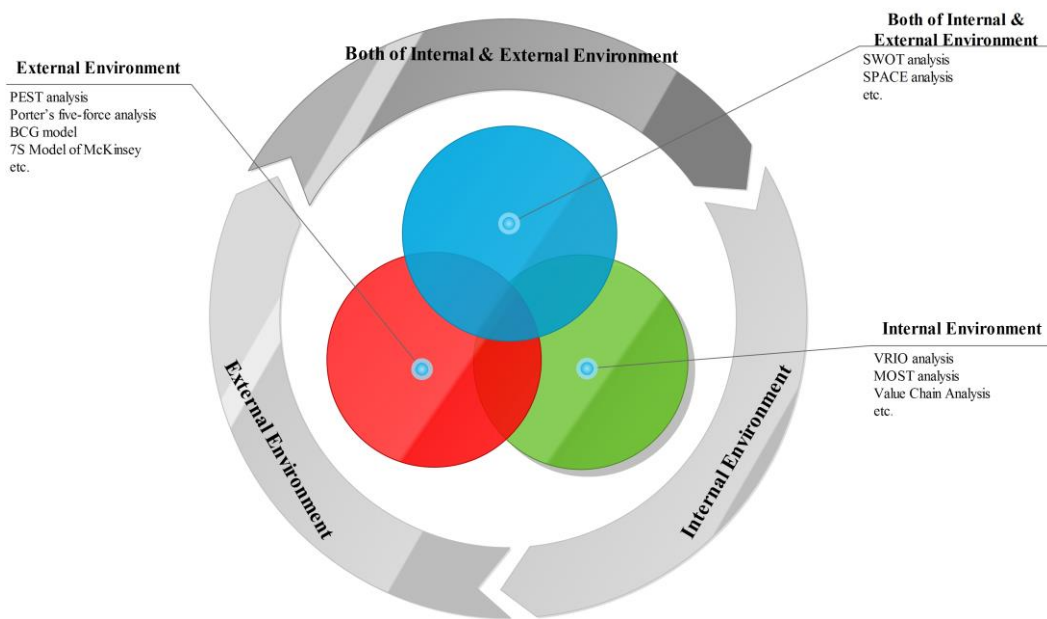


Figure 2.13: Classification of strategic analysis tools (Source: Rudnicki and Vagner, 2014)

Anna (2015) stated that Czech companies used the SWOT analysis as a preferred tool. In addition to using the customer satisfaction analysis, market segmentation, analysis of customers' complaints, Porter's five forces, PEST analysis customer profitability analysis, and the benchmarking and portfolio analysis, they all demonstrate few important priorities of sampled companies, namely, customer satisfaction and interest in external and internal factors of company environments. At Arab World, Siddique (2015) also found an increased attitude toward the use of a strategic technique by the United Arab Emirates companies, but this range

is still limited. Similarly, Aldehayyat and Twaissi (2011) found that the use of strategic tools in Jordanian companies was relatively little limited. Their findings also indicated that the most used tools were financial analysis, PEST, Porter's five-force analysis and the critical success factors analysis. Contradictory to these findings, Vaitkevičius (2007) also found that SWOT is the most frequently used strategic analysis tool.

In this subsection, a brief explanation will be given for each of the commonly used strategic analysis tools such as the SWOT analysis, which is a widely used tool by strategic analysts that exposes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of an organization, in addition to its ability to expose the external and internal factors. Also, another strategic analysis tool commonly used is the PEST or PESTLE analysis is a framework used to analyze the aspects of the external environment that involves political, economic, social and technological elements. Also, Porter's five forces model is another tool that was developed in 1979 by Porter (1979) as a simple framework for assessing and evaluating the competitive strength and position of a company. Another tool, the Industry Key Success Factors (IKSFs), examines the competitive factors that affect an industry member's ability to survive and prosper in the marketplace. Furthermore, the value chain analysis is another tool used in the internal capabilities analysis to provide information on how activities within the organization create value for the customers, which aims to create a competitive advantage. The mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics (MOST) analysis is another tool to analyze the internal environmental

elements, which ensures that the future orientation of the corporation is well-aligned to the four attributes of the tool, which are the mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics. Finally, the value, rarity, imitability, and organization (VRIO) framework is used to analyze the internal factors of the corporation.

These tools were found to supply all information that is needed by any company, which aims at formulating and selecting their corporate strategies. However, all these tools did not take risk assessment into account, which made the situation worse (Lam, 2014). Thus, companies in any industry are required to take their business risks into a strategic plan as well as to enable the mitigation of their effects when occurred (Kaplan and Mikes, 2012).

Therefore, Pavićević et al. (2017) suggested that companies must collect information about all future risks that may be encountered during the strategy formulation process independently of the information received from the internal and external environment analysis. And to reinforce this methodology in the food manufacturing industry companies. In the food manufacturing industry context, Zhang et al. (2017) suggested that the Chinese food companies should specialize a certain budget to develop their human resources and implement their work according to the international standards, e.g. ISO:9000, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), and ISO:14000 to enhance the strategic formulation of these companies.

2.4 Factors Affecting Corporate Strategy

Many of the previous studies have tried to link the strategic planning of companies and their performance throughout the years, which has confirmed a positive relationship between them (Auka and Langat, 2016; Dibrell et al., 2014; Wolf and Floyd, 2013; Andrews et al., 2009). However, the corporate performance and the achievements of its objectives was linked with the formulation of the successful corporate strategies that have fit in with their environment. These can be considered as possible factors that affect the performance of the companies or as factors affecting corporate strategies (Miller and Cardinal, 1994). This requires careful analysis towards the environment of companies in order to reveal the major internal and external factors affecting it (Haase and Franco, 2011). Analyzing both the internal factors and external conditions is vital in order to create an effective corporate strategy (Wheelen et al., 2015).

Nooraie (2012) classified the factors which influenced the corporate strategies formulation process into four groups: 1) Internal environmental characteristics, 2) External environmental characteristics, 3) Decision-specific characteristics, and 4) Management team's characteristics. However, during a search of the literature, it was found that the most common classification was three groups: internal, external and demographical factors.

As mentioned, there are many effective analytical methods used to discuss, measure, and analyze these environmental elements such as SWOT analysis, PEST analysis, Porter's five forces analysis, etc. Also, several

scientific studies such as Mbithi (2016), Dominic (2015), Anna (2015), Afonina and Chalupský (2013) and Gica (2011) explored the effect of demographical trends in corporate strategy formulations such as the business structure, business age, and business size, to name a few. These studies were focused on whether or not to align the corporate strategy formulation practices to demographical factors in a sample of different industries.

Anna (2015) and Afonina and Chalupský (2013) found that the market share had a positive linkage in the formulation of corporate strategies while Mbithi (2016), Dominic (2015) and Gică and Balint (2012) confirmed that the age of a company was a factor that was affected by the formulation of corporate strategies. Mbithi (2016) and Gica (2011) confirmed that there are no statistically significant differences in strategic planning activities in the UK SMEs attributed to the variables of company size, the main field of activity, and company experience; however, Bashir et al. (2013) ensured that the company size definitely affects the corporate strategies.

2.4.1 Internal Factors

The internal environment refers to the factors that exist within the organization that impact its performance and could be controlled by the company (Kuratko et al., 2014). These factors include the organization's structure, policies, corporate culture, management roles, and the dynamic of the management and employees in performing their tasks.

Creating a power of the company's position arises from the concentration in recognizing and utilizing the organizations' resources, which give full support to all the strategic decisions made by the company. There are several studies which upheld this idea – the resource-based view (RBV) being one of the most prominent ones (Barney, 2001).

In the literature, Hidayat et al. (2015) argued that the internal environment is the primary reason that could affect the whole corporate strategy formulation. Therefore, the influence of these factors on the internal environmental analysis process should be demonstrated.

The common internal factors in the manufacturing industry which affect the strategic process have been discussed by several scholars (Kiptoo and Mwirigi, 2014; Odera, 2014; Pournasir, 2013; Bashir et al., 2013; Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011; Carraresi et al., 2015; Suchánek et al., 2015; Duren et al., 2003). Table (2.3) below summarizes the common internal factors that are found in the literature and need to be considered in the strategic planning process.

Table 2.3 Factors in the Internal Environment.

	Factor	Source
1	Corporate leadership	Kiptoo and Mwirigi, 2014; Odera, 2014;
2	Human resource	Kiptoo and Mwirigi, 2014; Fox, 1991;
3	Financial position	Pournasir, 2013; Bashir et al., 2013; Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011
4	Food quality and safety	Suchánek et al., 2015
5	Marketing techniques	Carraresi et al., 2015
6	Manufacturing techniques (the type of technology used)	Odera, 2014
7	Price and cost policy	Duren et al., 2003
8	Corporate culture	Kiptoo and Mwirigi, 2014
9	Organization structure and its infrastructure	Abu Asbah and Abu Nasra, 2013
10	Company resources	Bashir et al., 2013

In order to find how these internal factors affect the food companies, a variation in the perspectives regarding these factors was found, as there is no set of internal factors agreed upon by all researchers (Duren et al., 2003). Also, not all factors are effective in the company's environment. Thus, there are several important factors that influence decision-making such as customer service, product development, quality assurance, market strength, financial position, capabilities, core competencies, culture, structure, firm infrastructure, human resource management, technology, procurement, assets, inventory, and sourcing.

However, in their study on the Canadian food companies, Duren et al. (2003) were able to identify the internal factors that contributed to the success of companies such as product innovation, research and development, price and cost management, customer service, quality

assurance, market niche identification, and flexibility in operations. In addition, Bashir et al. (2013) found that the Pakistani food companies are affected by some internal factors such as a firm's size, financial position, efficient utilization of resources, risk assessment, long-term leverage possession and determinants of a firm's performance and strategic position. What was confirmed for the company to excel in the world, was reflected that the financial resources of any company have significant influences on the strategy formulation (Pournasir, 2013).

In any organizational structure, there is usually a department that does the planning and they are established as an administrative support unit to assist the top management in formulating their strategic plans; their existence is commonplace in large companies.

Kiptoo and Mwirigi (2014) found a link between the company's strategic planning and the company's structure, leadership, organizational culture and human resources. Abu Asbah and Abu Nasra (2013) indicated that the physical infrastructure of food companies was an obstacle to food manufacturing industry development. Löfving et al. (2014) supported these findings. They found that the company's infrastructure not only influences manufacturing strategy formulation but also affects the process of corporate strategy formulations. Similarly, Odera (2014) found that leadership and technological trends were influenced a great degree. Carraresi et al. (2015) highlighted that the internal activities influencing the food companies related to the company's innovation, networking ability, and marketing skills.

Suchánek et al. (2015) studied the correlation between the products quality and performance of food industry companies. They found that the quality affected corporate performance to a high degree.

The organizational size, perceived environmental volatility, level of technology and specific senior level management (owner or manager) characteristics (experience and education) are all significant predictors of SMEs adoption of a specific strategy formulation approach.

2.4.2 External Factors

The external environment refers to the factors beyond the control of a company, which affects the company's performance and its strategic decisions as well as having indirect links with its operations (Otache and Mahmood, 2015).

At the same time, there are several approaches the company could use that support the relationship between these external factors and that play a major role in formulating the corporate strategies of companies (Mbithi, 2016; Dominic, 2015) such as the Industrial Organization (IO) view and Market Based View (MBV). These strategy designs help the company policies and strategy based on the trends and the nature of the industry's environment and the strategic conduct of the competitors.

The external environment is even more diverse and complex than the internal environment. There are many effective models to analyze the external environment such as Porter's Five Force, the SWOT Analysis, PESTLE framework, etc.

The external environment factors have been examined in numerous works. Table (2.4) summarizes the common external factors that are found in the literature and should be considered in the strategic planning process.

Table 2.4 Factors in the External Environment.

	Factors	Source
1	Consumer's behavior	Deng, 2016; Solomon, 2016; Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011
2	Supply chain network	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011
3	Advancement of technology	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011; Aldehayyat and Twaissi, 2011
4	Competitors	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011;
5	Tax rates	Dauda and Ismaila, 2013; Odera, 2014
6	Industry and market structure	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011;
7	Government policies and regulations	Andrews et al., 2009; Aldehayyat and Twaissi, 2011
8	Raw materials	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011
9	Interest rates	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011
10	Global requirements	Zarei and Paghaleh, 2011

All external environmental factors influencing companies are sorted into six main types: political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal (Johnson et al., 2017).

Grant (2016) also explained the five areas as:

1. Markets: The demographic and socio-cultural location that provide the customers all their demands and requirements; the more they purchase, the more the demand.
2. Competition: Knowing who else is competing and how they are strategically operating is also the key to success as well as considering the size, market share, branding strategy, quality, and

strategy of all competitors to ensure a given organization can feasibly enter the market.

3. Technology: Technological methods are also highly relevant to success. Does the manufacturing process of the product have new technologies that are more efficient? Has a disruptive technology filled the need that was currently being filled?
1. The economy: Economic recessions and booms can change spending habits drastically. While most industries suffer during a recession, some industries thrive. It is important to know which economic factors are opportunities and which are threats. These are determined based on the industry.
2. The regulatory environment: Environmental regulations, import/export tariffs, corporate taxes, and other regulatory concerns can poise high costs on an organization. Integrating this into a strategy ensures feasibility and a company's safety.

According to Zarei and Paghaleh (2011), the external environment in the food manufacturing industry has been divided into the following main aspects: competitors, customers, the culture of consumption, raw materials, advancement of technology and new innovations in the markets. Economic conditions such as economic recession, increasing inflation and changes in interest rate and currency exchange. Social aspects, prevailing political conditions, local environmental requirements such as government laws, placement laws, insurance, and taxes etc., global environmental law

requirements, issues of health and safety, the policy of quality, great import from outside and financial facilities provided to the company.

Andrews et al. (2009) emphasized the importance of knowledge of both political and government policy aspects when formulating strategies, as they are essential.

In the Middle Eastern context, Aldehayyat and Twaissi (2011) have provided evidence for the influence both of technology and government laws on the process of strategic planning in Jordanian small manufacturing companies.

In the food industry, the success of any corporate product development is related to consumers' needs and extent of acceptance by the market and consumers that lead to meeting the consumers' orientations tastes. Zarei and Paghaleh (2011) have provided evidence for this, as they confirmed that the food industry is highly susceptible to the factor related to the consumer such as their approach to consumption and changes in consumer preferences. Solomon (2016) also thought that the consumer behavior affected the corporate strategy as well as to their impact on marketing strategy decision-making, which is aligned with the findings reported by Deng (2016) who also confirmed that the study of consumer behavior determined the continuous strategy development in food companies, especially in marketing strategy.

Also, the consumer's behavior confirmed that it influences the social responsibilities of the company, their creativity, and other strategic practices.

Previous studies reflected the importance of the factors related to the food industry and especially towards companies' competitive advantage, which is connected to Porter's famous theory (Porter, 1980) that focuses on grasping the new competitors' entry to the market, strong suppliers, threats and the level of competition to achieve competitive advantage.

2.5 Common Corporate Strategies for Food Manufacturers

In our review, relevant studies published during the past decades will be referred to in order to identify the corporate strategies used in the food industry field. In total, ten types of corporate strategies were found.

We have listed these common corporate strategies in Table (2.5).

Table 2.5 A list of most common corporate strategies used in the food industry field.

#	Name of Strategy	Source
1	Sustainability strategy	Eweje, 2011; Baldwin, 2009; Ross et al, 2015
2	Social responsibility strategy	Akinyomi, 2013; Fontaine, 2013
3	Competitive strategy	Soebandrija et al.,2016
4	Manufacturing strategy	Amoako-Gyampah and Acquah, 2008
5	Growth strategy	Ayupp and Tudin, 2013
6	Human resources strategy	Hamel and Prahalad, 2005; Fox, 1991
7	Innovation strategy	Minarelli et al., 2015; Baregheh et al., 2012
8	Marketing strategy	Belz and Schmidt-Riediger, 2010
9	Financial strategy	Kaličanin and Todorović, 2014
10	Supply chain strategy	Hofmann, 2010; Beske et al., 2014

2.5.1 Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability is “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

Sustainability strategy in the food industry involves the industry’s approach to balancing environmental, economic and social considerations throughout the supply chain. This definition was based on three basic pillars which are social, environmental and economic prosperity, it was called The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) of sustainability that assessment of business results for companies. Nowadays, a sustainability strategy is integral to a company’s strategic plans (Eweje, 2011).

Sustainability in the food industry is a major strategic issue for all stakeholders involved in the food supply chain from agriculture, ingredient manufacturing, product manufacturing, packing, waste management and distribution to the consumers. Baldwin (2009) gathered studies, case studies, and information from practices of sustainability in the food industry that included food processing, distribution, waste management, packaging, life cycle analysis, food safety and health, environmental labeling, consumer insight and market demand, and product development.

Ross et al. (2015) based on corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports for the fourteen U.S. food companies; the study classified the main sustainability approaches are split into five main categories as follows: environmentally friendly, food safety, sourcing and supply chain, corporate governance, new products, and wellness community.

2.5.2 Social Responsibility Strategy

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as “the firm's responsibility in going beyond its usual operations and engages in actions that appear to be more social friendly, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law” (McWilliams and Siegel, 2001) This has become the main priority and the focus of a lot of strategists and it is considered as the third dimension of sustainability.

Corporate social responsibility is one of the most important issues to be considered when the organization's strategy is to develop and has become the main priority and focus of a lot of strategists. A number of studies have confirmed the importance of social responsibility as a strategy that affects society. These studies argue that CSR strategy has played an important and positive role in firm performance (Ağan et al., 2016), consumers' attitudes toward food products (Hartmann, 2011), corporate sustainability (Fontaine, 2013), consumer trust, strengthening brand value, maximizing revenues, conferring competitive advantage, a company's reputation and supply chain.

In the food industry, the focus was on CSR within the supply chain was concerned with customers, suppliers, and distributors. Akinyomi (2013) examined the current CSR practices within 15 Nigerian companies in the food and beverages industry. It was found that education and sports development were the major areas of focus of the CSR activities.

2.5.3 Competitive Strategy

Competitive strategy is a strategy which attains a long-term competitive advantage that is not easily duplicated by competitors (Porter, 1985). There are two perspectives on how a firm could create a competitive edge, mainly the market position approach and the resource-based view approach (Barney, 1991). The three generic strategies (the cost leadership, differentiation, and focus) strategies (Porter, 1998) and hybrid strategies (Bambang Baroto et al., 2012) are considered essential strategies used to gain competitive advantage. The innovation strategy is used to generate competitive edge over competitors. Soebandrija et al. (2016) have investigated categories of competitive strategy activities in the food industry using two general aspects – human resources management and the integration of resource-based view and dynamic capability. They documented that the major activities used are human resources, innovation, and leadership,

2.5.4 Manufacturing Strategy

Manufacturing strategy is an important part of the strategic planning process and is defined as a process of using and developing manufacturing resources, capabilities, and technologies to support the overall strategic objectives, competitive advantages and market requirements of the firms. Hayes and Wheelwright (1984) summarized essential elements of manufacturing strategy as capacity, facilities, equipment and machines, integration, human resource policies, quality systems, production planning

control, new product development processes, performance measurement, and organization.

Manufacturing strategy provides a strategic nexus between the processing approach and corporate strategy. It plays a key role in achieving a firm's objectives (Anderson et al., 1989). Several studies (Amoako-Gyampah and Acquah, 2008) have argued that the manufacturing elements provide a significant contribution to business unit performance.

In the food industry, manufacturing strategy begins with good manufacturing practices (GMP) that are used as a requirement for all activities associated with the production, manufacture, and distribution of foods while manufacturing policies and the infrastructure are considered as a part of manufacturing strategy; all should be consistent with the strategic directions.

2.5.5 Growth Strategy

Growth strategy can be defined as the increase in a firm's core business or a firm's capital or expansion of its size or increase their sales and profits levels and capability (McNamee, 1999). However, there are several business strategies that firms must use for implementing a corporate growth strategy, which is largely dependent on its strategic vision and financial situation. Common growth strategies are divided into three broad categories: intensive growth strategies (market penetration, market development, and product development), integrative growth strategies (vertical and horizontal integration), and diversification growth strategies

(synergistic and horizontal diversification) product expansion and acquisition. The work of Ayupp and Tudin (2013) examined the growth strategy adopted by Malaysian food firms, which mainly consist of small and medium-sized enterprises. The results indicated that the majority of the Malaysian firms adopted a market penetration strategy.

2.5.6 Human Resources Strategy

The human resources strategy (HRS) can be defined as those practices and policies that are used when managing human resources in an organization and are aligned with the overall strategic objectives (Mathis and Jackson, 2011).

Employees' staffing, training, performance evaluating, learning and development, and reward relations are all strategic approaches that can impact the organizational ability to achieve its strategic objectives.

These strategies play a significant role in linking human resources with corporate strategies as well as the competitive capability of firms, and it directly affects overall performance, the attainment of competitive advantage (Hamel and Prahalad, 2005), employee productivity, customer service and quality through the creation of distinctive competencies. Fox (1991) described the strategic human resources practice in the British manufacturing industry, namely Recruitment and Selection, Management Education Development and Training, Performance Appraisal, Rewards and Remuneration and Company Career Planning. According to Fox (1991), these areas were linked to corporate strategy, the size and structure of corporations, and the degree of integration between them.

2.5.7 Innovation Strategy

Innovation is the process of adding new and improved capabilities and increased advantage (Drucker, 2014). In the corporate strategy literature, there has been a stream of studies with a focus on strategic innovation efforts and various aspects of the strategy process. Therefore, innovation needs to be adopted by the companies through creating a corporate strategy. Therefore, successful food and beverage innovation is essential in helping companies to achieve sustainable growth, profitability, and enhancing competitiveness (Capitanio et al., 2010) and financial performance. In as much to the importance of this strategy, companies established a specialized department called Research and Development (R&D) that is considered a part of innovative practices in firms.

Garcia Martinez and Briz (2000) highlighted innovation activities in Spanish food and drink companies by dividing them into three types: combined product-process innovations, product-oriented innovation, and process-oriented innovation. The result revealed that most of the Spanish companies adopted combined product-process innovations that advocate introducing both a new technology and new food products. According to Baregheh et al. (2012), the innovation practices in the UK food industry companies were classified into three types: product, process, position or paradigm innovations. Minarelli et al. (2015) also classified the innovation practices in European food SMEs into four types of innovations, namely the product, the process, the market, and business frameworks, and they

found that the product's innovation strategies were the highest applied type of innovation.

2.5.8 Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategy is defined as a set of planned activities concerned with aspects of the product promotion, pricing and connection with consumers to create value for products, increasing sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage (Baker, 2014).

McDonald (1996) illustrated that the process of formulating a marketing strategy goes through several stages and is the same as the stages of formulating strategies which included mission, corporate objectives setting, and situation review then marketing strategies formulating.

The marketing strategies are effective when considering the environmental impacts and the social surroundings, along with the consumers and studying the market) Belz and Schmidt-Riediger, 2010). Marketing strategy is intimately tied to the process of the strategy formulating.

Belz and Schmidt-Riediger (2010) found five major types of marketing strategies adopted by the German food industry companies: strategic marketing performers, marketing followers, marketing indecisives, and marketing passives according to the area of focus: (1) ecological product quality, (2) social product quality, (3) market segmentation, (4) targeting and (5) positioning.

2.5.9 Financial Strategy

Corporate financial strategy refers to the strategy used in allocating a company's financial resources in order to attain its objectives as a business concern and return maximum value to shareholders and to finance its overall activities (Bender, 2014). This strategy usually is used after the vision, mission statement and goals have been set, and it is integral to an organization's strategic plan, due to that any future activities aligned with to availabilities of funds to execute it.

Strategic financial management involves precisely defining a company's business objectives, identifying and quantifying its resources and devising a plan for utilizing finances and other resources to achieve its goals and establish procedures for collecting and analyzing data, making financial decisions, and tracking and analyzing variance between budgeted and actual results to identify problems and take appropriate corrective actions.

Although the corporate financial strategy has long been recognized, in the literature, this strategy is not often addressed. In this context, Kaličanin and Todorović (2014) proved that there are relationships and interactions between corporate strategy and financial strategies in Serbian food companies.

2.5.10 Supply Chain Strategy

The supply chain strategy (SCS) or supply chain management was described by Mentzer et al. (2001) as a strategy that related to providing the flow of ingredients of the manufacturing process from raw materials to

the company's production line then to distributors, wholesalers and thus to the end consumer.

SCS has become a strategic part of strategy formulation practices and is directly linked to production cost, quality improvement, competitive location and customer service. It affects the companies' performance (Bala, 2014) and competitive strategies (Tham and Dung, 2017). It is a vital strategy in the food manufacturing industry to improve productivity and quality in the manufacturing process (Patel and Deshpande, 2015). The majority of the studies conducted on the supply chain strategy related it to the functional level strategy (Hofmann, 2010). But Hofmann (2010) confirmed that it is located at the corporate level.

Beske et al. (2014) summarized all sustainable supply chain strategy practices used in the food manufacturing industry as found in a literature. They reported that SCM orientation, TBL orientation, long-term relationships, partner development, partner selection, technological integration, logistical integration, joint development, enhanced communication, individual monitoring, pressure group management, standards and certifications, learning, stakeholder management, innovation and life cycle assessment.

2.6 The Palestinian Food industry

This section addresses the history of the Palestinian food industry, the economy, food industry sub-sectors, key success factors in the Palestinian food industry, key challenges facing the Palestinian food processing

industry and the strategic policies development in the Palestinian food processing industry.

2.6.1 History of the Palestinian Food Industry

The food manufacturing industry, one of the oldest manufacturing industries in Palestine, the fourth largest manufacturing industry, has been recognized and operational for a number of decades. The history of the industry goes back to the early years of the 20th century with the establishment of a number of factories and food processing shops. The food manufacturing industry has been one of the most important and most rapidly developing sectors in Palestine (Ghattas et al., 2015). Food manufacturing industry development and growth have been noticeable in the last decade.

2.6.2 Food Industry and the Palestinian Economy

The food manufacturing industry has taken the utmost importance in the process of economic development in Palestine as an important part of manufacturing and mining (PFI, 2009). It is one of the fastest growing industries in Palestine and plays a major role in attracting investments in that industry and contributing approximately 4.8% to the gross domestic product (GDP) (PIPA, 2017). Furthermore, it shaped 24% of production and it employed 8,400 people in the Palestinian market in 2016 (PCBS a, 2017). Moreover, this industry is considered as the largest sector of both import and export sub-sectors (PCBS b, 2017), second only to the stone

and marble export industry. Therefore, the food manufacturing industry is of great importance due to its ability to export and fill a large part of the Palestinian consumer needs.

According to the Palestine Trade Center (2015), similar to other manufacturing industries, the food and beverage manufacturing industry depends on the strength of the local market. About 87.7% of all sales are directed to the West Bank with the remainder going to Gaza. About 89% of exported products are sold in the Israeli market; the rest is sold in the Middle East and Europe (MASSAR Associates, 2002). Table (2.6) shows the sub-sectors of the food industries in Palestine and indicators for the important food industries in Palestine.

Table 2.6 Indicators for the Important Food Industries in Palestine
(Source: Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency "PIPA", 2017).

Sub-sectors	No. of factories	No. of workers	Investment	Local market share	Value of exports
Meat-poultry	17	559	25 \$ Million	90%	6 \$ Million
Fruit and vegetable-pickling canning	18	545	30 \$ Million	20%	21 \$ Million
Oils and fats	13	295	70 \$ Million	20%	31 \$ Million
Dairy and milk	41	1,754	67 \$ Million	45%	5 \$ Million
Grain mills and starch	9	236	45 \$ Million	30%	--
Animal feeds	22	329	35 \$ Million	15%	--
Bread and bakery	1,498	5,848	100 \$ Million	90%	--
Sugar, confectionery and sweet	27	1,213	22 \$ Million	25%	8 \$ Million
Drinks and mineral water	20	978	34 \$ Million	20%	--
Agri-products and pasta	5	89	34 \$ Million	34%	--
Other food products	31	860	12 \$ Million	35%	--

2.6.3 Food Industry Sub-Sectors

The food manufacturing industry has long been a major component of Palestine's economy. It is the second largest manufacturing sub-sector. The food and beverage industry are distributed all over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with major concentrations in Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, and Gaza. The vast majority of the establishments, 71%, are family-owned

enterprises, employing 1-4 persons. About 20% of establishments employ 5-9 people.

According to Palestinian Federation of Industries (2009), there are sub-sectors of food industries in Palestine, most of which are traditional and light industries, as shown in Table (2.6).

2.6.4 Key Success Factors in the Palestinian Food Manufacturing Industry

There are many potential key factors to success in the food industry sector in Palestine. The most prominent factors are:

1. Availability of expertise and educated human resources labor force (MASSAR Associates, 2002).
2. The existence of financial resources and opportunity for investment in this industry (Smirata and Shariff, 2016).
3. For Palestinian food companies, much of them got on international quality standards, such as ISO and HACCP certified, enabling participation in foreign markets. Unfortunately, no records are available regarding the number of standards applied in the food industry (PSI, 2017) and most of the manufacturing plants were semi or fully-automatic control systems (PIPA, 2017).

2.6.5 Key Challenges Facing the Palestinian Food Processing Industry

According to Palestinian Federation of Industries (2009), the Palestinian manufacturing industry faces a number of challenges:

- The major challenge is still the political instability and movement obstacles due to the Israeli restrictions on crossings, which continue to be the most significant impediment to economic growth (Isaac et al., 2015).
- Flooding of Palestinian markets with food imports from Israel (UNCTAD, 2015). Family versus professional management as an obstacle to food manufacturing industry development (Abu Asbah and Abu Nasra, 2013) and settlements.
- Institutionalized problems in terms of administrative and financial management due to family businesses.
- The presence of strong competition from Israeli and other products.
- The appearance of new manufacturing technologies and the need to simulate the rapid development of these technologies.
- Increasing the requirement of quality and global standards in the food field.
- Slow product innovation cycles.
- Increasing competition with imported goods and among local products.
- Global Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) quality standards.
- Barriers to entry into new markets due to the high costs of exporting.
- The major obstacle facing food manufacturing industry is the current local market mechanisms.

Some of the sector branches depend totally on raw materials coming from Israel; others depend partially on Israeli suppliers. Some of the raw

materials are prohibited from entering the country because of security measures; this is a real threat to the industry.

Laboratory testing and facilities are very important for the survival of the industry; it needs high attention and development. Quality management systems, manufacturing systems, and product quality assurance are of great importance to the industry. Promotional campaigns and tools alongside management and technical training will be an important asset to the industry.

2.6.6 Strategic Policy Development in the Palestinian Food Processing Industry

Various Palestinian companies in the food manufacturing industry showed an interest in investment to expand production and their businesses (JICA, 2010). The majority of these companies are small family-owned businesses. Only about 100 of the manufacturing enterprises in the Palestinian Territories have a workforce of more than 100 employees.

Despite the significance of the food manufacturing industry to the Palestinian economy, in terms of job creation and poverty alleviation, and despite the efforts of various stakeholders to support this industry, the legal and administrative developmental framework, as well as supporting policies and programs are still incomprehensive, weak, and unclear in these companies (JICA, 2010).

Industrial and services capacity development include the following: quality standards testing labs, dissemination of information about international

product quality standards, development and enforcement of construction standards, industrial zones, industrial business capacity development, technical assistance for businesses, ICT projects to improve product quality, etc.

2.7 The Conceptual Framework

Based on an extensive literature review that comprised the concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs our research and the results of the quantitative data analysis. A conceptual framework has been proposed to develop the research hypotheses for the study.

This conceptual framework explains variables and the presumed relationships among the variables of this study (Ravitch and Riggan, 2011) due to the need for examining theories and relationships between the corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the related variables of it that appeared in the literature and practice to facilitate the reader's task in understanding assumptions about the topic of study. This provides support for the rest of this study, as shown graphically in Figure (2.14).

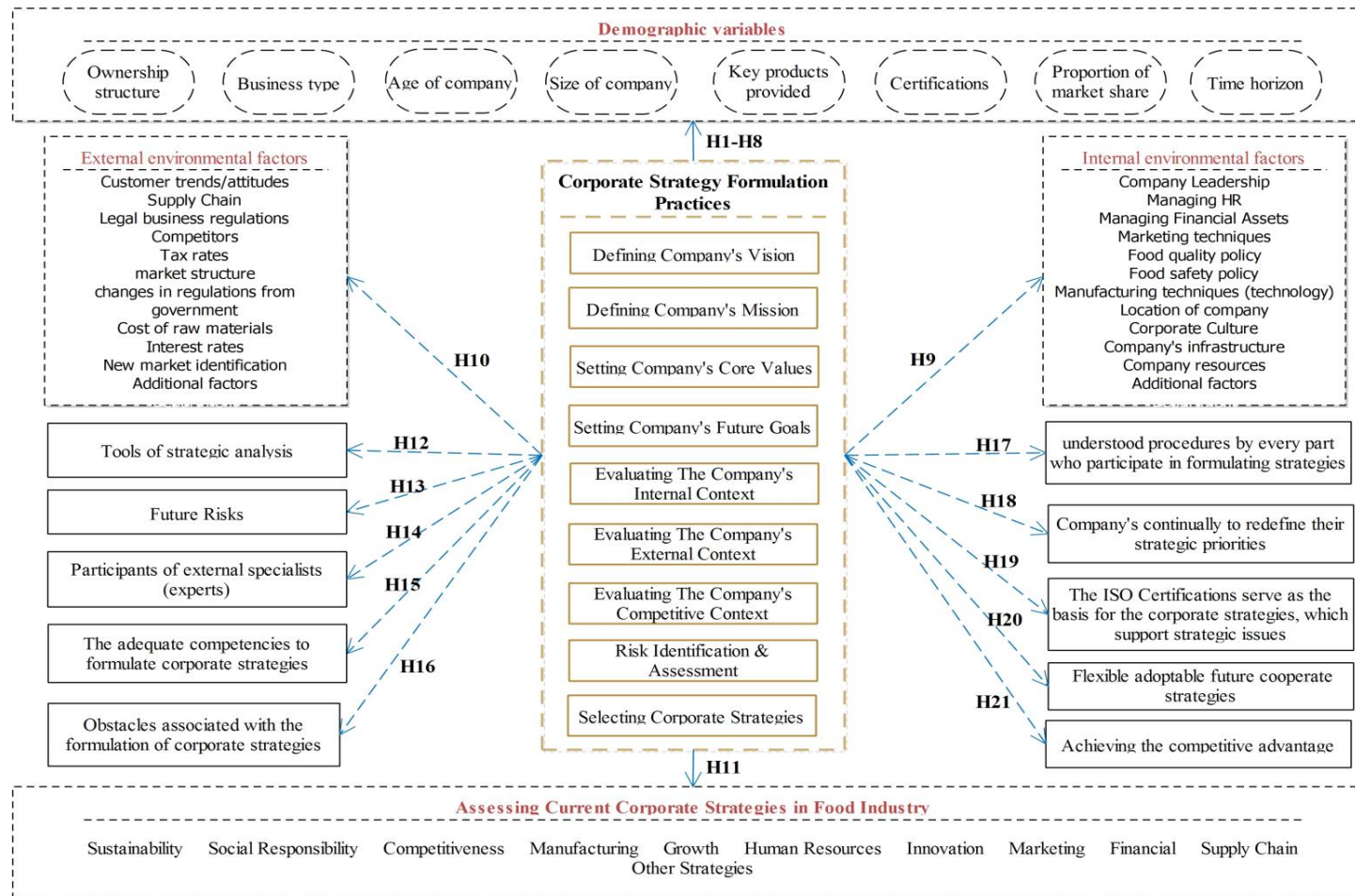


Figure 2.14: Research conceptual framework

The following research hypotheses have been proposed:

- H1: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the ownership structure for the company.
- H2: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of business type (family business).
- H3: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the age of the company variable.
- H4: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of company size (number of employees).
- H5: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food

industry attributed to the variable of subsector (key products currently provided by the company).

- H6: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of having certification.
- H7: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.
- H8: There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company.
- H9: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and internal environmental factors.
- H10: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha = 0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and external environmental factors.

- H11: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and common corporate strategies adopted by companies.
- H12: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and strategic analysis tools.
- H13: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and future risk.
- H14: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the high level of external specialists or expert involvement in the corporate strategies formulation practices.
- H15: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the company's competences to formulate its strategy.
- H16: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.
- H17: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and understanding the procedures fully by every part who participates in formulating strategies.
- H18: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the company's continuous refinement of its strategic priorities.

- H19: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the ISO Certifications.
- H20: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and flexibility and adaptability for corporate strategies to be adaptable in the future.
- H21: There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and achieving the competitive advantage of their businesses.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter included critical reviews of the relevant literature in the field of corporate strategy, the levels of strategy, and the common strategies in the food manufacturing industry. Two main research questions emerged along with four propositions during this chapter; investigating the research problem and a potential solution will be found in the next chapters.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

The methodology approach and applied research design for this research is explained in this chapter. The targeted population, sampling method and techniques for collecting data have all been described. Finally, methods of analyzing the data are presented. In addition, discussing the issues related to validity and reliability are also given.

3.2 Research Approach

Collis and Hussey (2013) defined research methodology as the used approach or strategy in conducting any research, which starts from developing a theoretical framework to performing the research design that includes selecting the mechanism of data collection and accessing the ways of collecting and analyzing data.

According to Creswell (2015a), the essential procedures to conduct the research are shown in Figure (3.1).

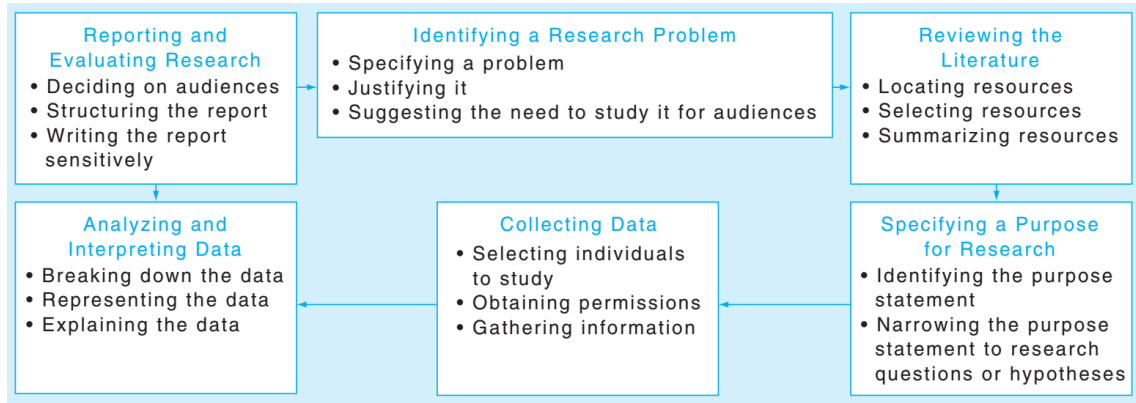


Figure 3.1: The research methodology process cycle (Source: Creswell, 2015a)

According to the exploratory nature of this research, an addressed problem which is associated with discovering and assessing the formulation of the corporate strategies' practices in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry, and the research questions which are arising from it (Creswell and Tashakkori, 2007). In order to get more validity, merging two gathered data forms during the interpretation and analysis process, to gain a more in-depth review and knowledge of these practices (Bowen et al., 2017) led to overcome the emerging restriction, which led to the use of one of the methods alone in research (Turner et al., 2017).

In addition to this, the type of approach that characterized the triangulation principle in the combination of different evidence results that increase findings reliability, credibility through this, by providing all the information required about this phenomenon and the generalization of the study findings could be proposed to a larger sample (Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010).

However, one of the common disadvantages of this triangulation is that it could be time-consuming, due to the requirement of collecting more data,

which entails further planning and resources (McKim, 2017) and deeper analysis and rendition that may be seen very difficult to any researcher to perform (Thurmond, 2001).

Therefore, based on these features, the mixed-research methodology was used as an appropriate research approach, in order to take advantage of using collective researches, to examine aspects research problem (Schoonenboom, 2017) and search for the appropriate solutions to address environmental issues and sustainable management topic as the addressed problem mentioned earlier (Molina-Azorín and López-Gamero, 2016).

The mixed research methodology, as described by Creswell (2015a), is a methodology which combines the quantitative and qualitative forms of researches in the same study, in order to collect data based on theoretical assumptions, thus having a full grasp on issues, through using features of two forms together.

3.3 Research Design

Research design refers to a set of procedures that includes the mechanism used for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting the information, and resulting in using the data for conducting the research (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2010).

In literature, there are various types of mixed methods research designs which led Creswell and Plano Clark (2010) to classify the mixed methods designs into six basic types: 1) the convergent parallel design 2) the explanatory sequential design (starting with quantitative data then

qualitative data) 3) the explanatory sequential design (qualitative data then quantitative data) 4) the embedded design 5) the transformative design 6) the multiphase design. All these designs are shown in Figure (3.2). And each one of these types has its own philosophy in its implementation.

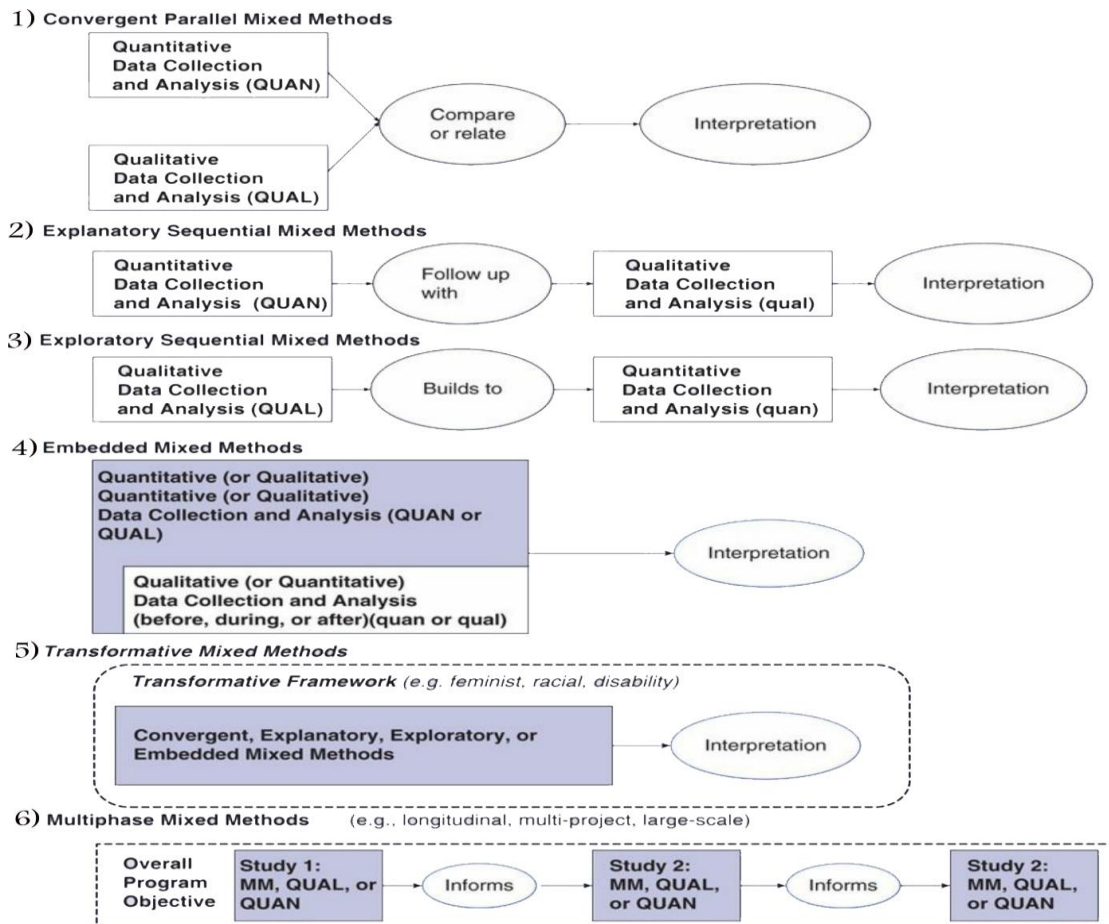


Figure 3.2: The six basic types of mixed methods designs (Source: Creswell, 2015a)

In this study, it is needed to investigate the theoretical framework, by collecting quantitative data firstly and then to execute qualitative data secondly.

An exploratory mixed sequential design is the method which consists of two phases in conducting the search that happens sequentially in different times (Schoonenboom and Johnson, 2017). The first phase involves

collecting the quantitative data, then analyzing and using the results, in order to build the second phase, which involves collecting the qualitative data then analyzing and coming up with the best interpretation of results (Creswell, 2015b).

In this research, the sequential design was adopted, as the first phase is collecting qualitative type of data and then on the basis of results of quantitative data (Hong et al., 2017), the survey was designed as shown in Figure (3.3).

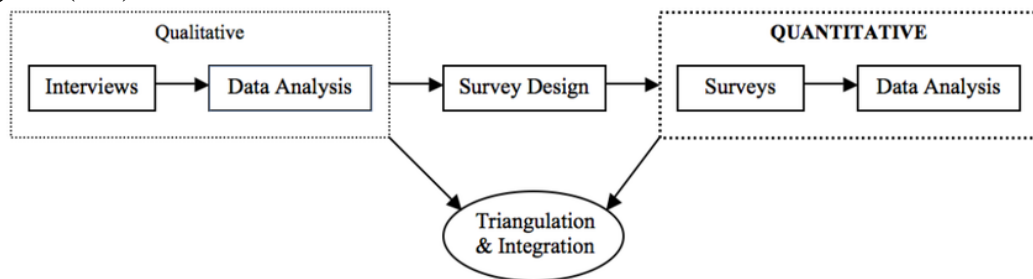


Figure 3.3: Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Emphasis on the Quantitative Phase)

(Source: Creswell, 2015b)

3.4 Research Methodology Flowchart

The research methodology used in this research consists of the following stages, as presented in Figure (3.4):

1. Stage one is identifying the problem of the research, which leads to stating the questions that will get the required data about the adopted corporate strategies in Palestine food firms Industry.
2. Stage two is reviewing all literatures associated with the topic of study, by checking survey books, scholarly articles and any other sources relevant to strategies issues. Also, it includes exploring

critical corporate strategies used of these firms to achieve their directions.

3. Stage three is selecting the research's design, by using mixed methodology approach, which includes selecting the data collection tools for qualitative data then quantitative data, in order to get the required results from this research.
4. Stage four is starting the data collection and analysis to highlight the attention to the major results.
5. Stage five is analyzing and interpreting the data then reporting the results.
6. Stage six is constructing a framework, which entails obtaining the finding of the research and interviews and generalizing the managerial framework that can hold or support the food companies industry in creating the best corporate strategies.
7. Stage seven is concluding the results and providing recommendations which will be obtained from all the previous stages.

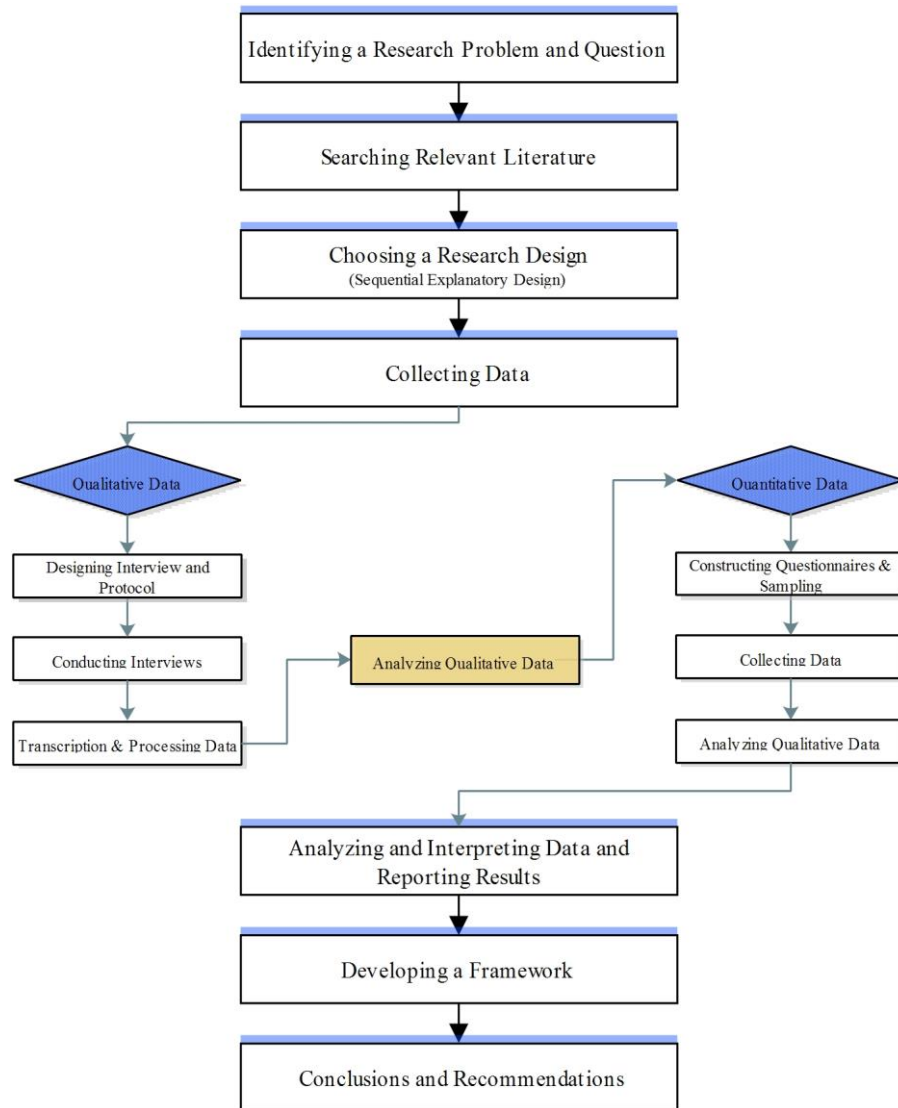


Figure 3.4: Flow Chart of the Research Methodology

3.5 Research Population and Sample Size

The process of collecting data for a population research always starts with determining the population and sample size of this research. So the targeted population in this study included all the food manufacturing companies currently operating in Palestine in the year 2017. A list of food companies has been obtained from the *Palestinian Food Industries Union* (PFIU)

who's ranked (187) companies distributed between the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as shown in Figure (3.5).

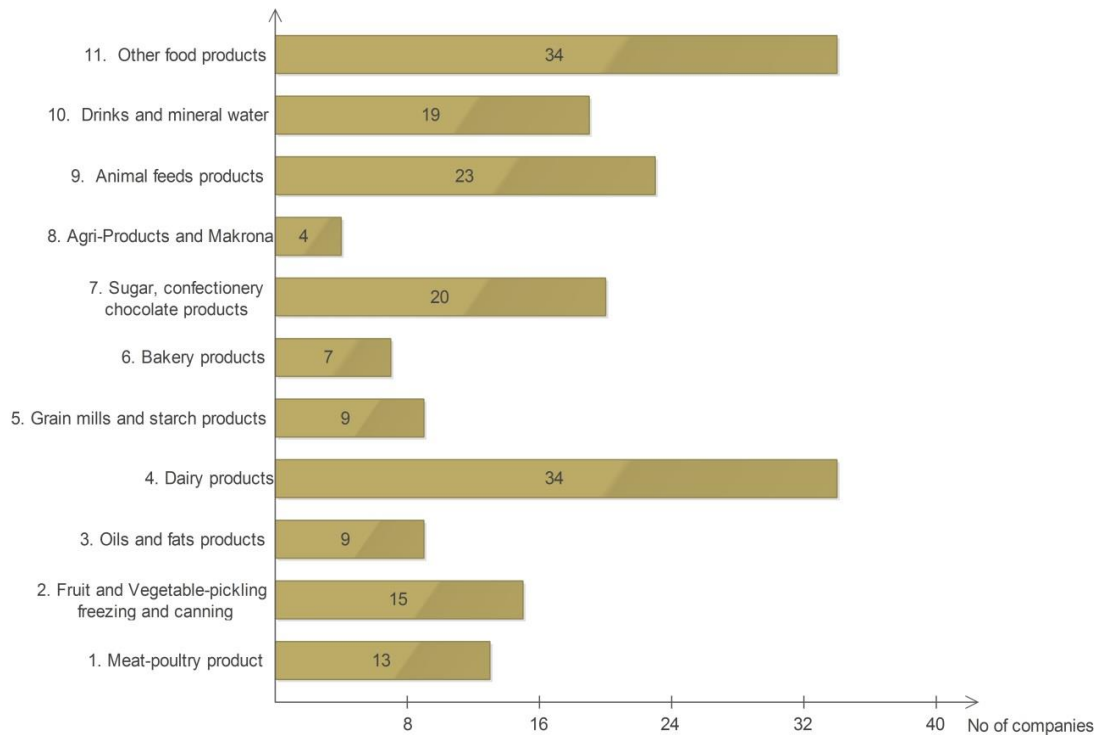


Figure 3.5: Breakdown of number of food companies according to their subsector (Source: PFIU, 2017)

According to Saunders and Lewis (2017), sampling techniques used in research are divided into two main types, based on the way of selecting sample: 1) probability (representative) sampling 2) non-probability (purposive sampling). In the first type, probability sampling refers to sampling techniques in which it works to award fair-chance of selection for every member of the population, to be part of the sample on a random basis, which helps to reduce the possibility of being bias, whereas in the nonprobability sampling type, the population is not given an equal opportunity to belong to the sample and it is done selectively or randomly.

In other words, this sampling method relies on the subjective judgment of the researcher. Figure (3.6) provides an overview of these types.

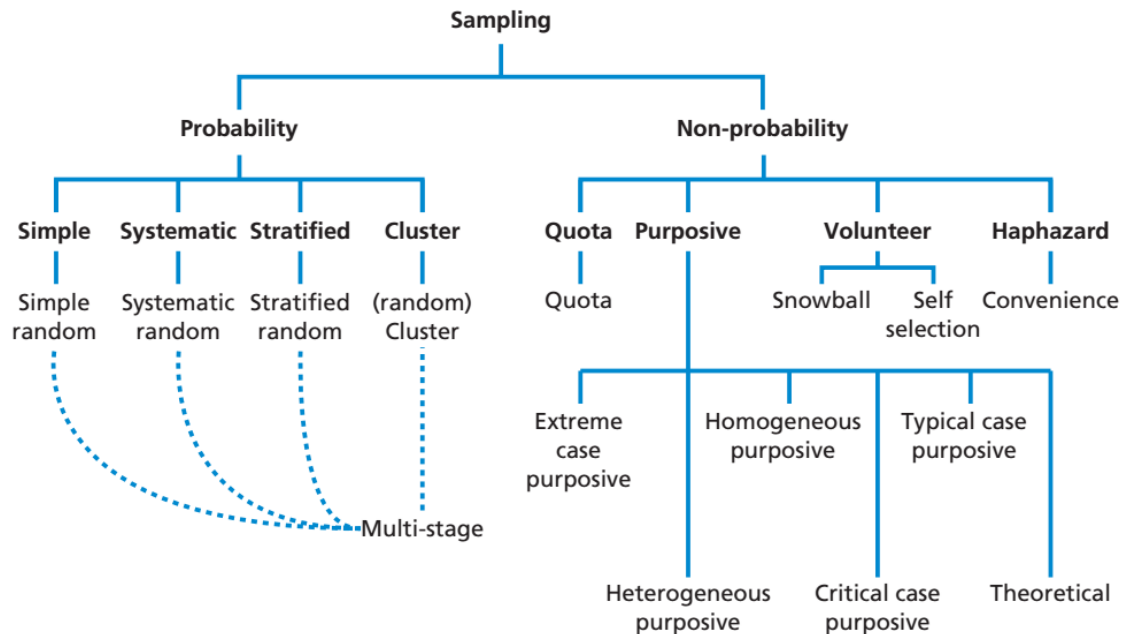


Figure 3.6: Methods of sampling techniques (Source: Saunders and Lewis, 2017)

But, in mixed methods researches, sampling technique procedures starts with determining the appropriate sampling scheme, followed by calculating sample size for both the qualitative and quantitative data of the study (Collins et al., 2007).

Stratified sampling strategy was chosen as a scheme in selecting the sample increasing the degree of representativeness (Collins, 2013). In this case, sampling error (resulting from the selection of a non-representative sample of the population) is reduced to a minimum point (Teddlie and Yu, 2007).

Teddlie and Yu (2007) defined stratified purposive sampling or quota sampling as a common strategy that used mixed methods research, in order to select the sample from a population of study based on random

probability, and to fulfil a specific strata which has been developed by the researcher.

Therefore, in order to ensure a better participation of a representative sample of the population that serves the researches' objectives, a representative sample of the population has been chosen, based on the following criteria (Noordzij et al., 2010; Schulz and Grimes, 2005) which are explained Table (3.1).

Table 3.1: The main criteria used to select the targeted sample

No.	Criteria	Description of the Criteria
1.	Legally registered	<i>Company must be registered at the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy (MoNE) according to the Palestinian Law of Companies.</i>
2.	Membership of the PFIU	<i>Company must be registered at the Palestinian Food Industries Union (PFIU) of the year 2017.</i>
3.	Active Manufacturer	<i>Company must be active and operating in the field of the food product manufacturing, not in the field of product importing.</i>
4.	Active strategic planning functions	<i>The company must possess a corporate strategic plan and carry out strategic planning activities in reality.</i>

In survey case, Thompson's formula was used in order to calculate the adequate sample size of the population under this study. According to Thompson (2012), if the case population size is known, then the sample size is giving by the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N \times P(1-P)}{\left[(N-1) \times \left(\frac{d^2}{z^2} \right) \right] + P(1-P)}$$

Where;

n = the sample size.

N = the population size, (187).

d = the percentage error, (0.05).

P = proportion of the property offers and neutral, (0.5).

z = z value is the upper of the normal distribution (1.96 for 95% confidence level).

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{187 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{\left[(187-1) \times \left(\frac{0.05^2}{1.96^2} \right) \right] + 0.5(1-0.5)} = \frac{187 \times 0.25}{\left[(186) \times \left(\frac{0.0025}{3.8416} \right) \right] + 0.0475} \\ &= \frac{46.75}{0.1210433153 + 0.25} = \frac{46.75}{0.3710433153} = 125.9960712732 \cong 126 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation as explained above, a sample size was (126) respondents out of the entire population, which is in this case (187) food companies. This size is considered the lowest acceptable number of responses in order to maintain a 95% confidence level.

The number of respondents who completed the online surveys were 126 out of the 187 of the entire respondents. Data collected through survey have been filtered, where companies that did not have strategic plans were excluded from analysis process. The survey and key questions were developed based on their initial responses. And this answer was also

reinforced by the same question posed by the researchers' communications and visits conducted by the researcher to the companies.

Thus, the filled surveys are (126), while the final number (sample size) in the survey are (74) companies who have strategic plans. Companies with no strategic plans have been excluded since the strategic plans existence was a compulsory key question.

Responses have been reinforced by questioning the companies, through visits and telephone calls. Key questions and personal connecting increased the questionnaire validity, so the results would be more credible. Accordingly, the total of the survey (sample size) became (74) companies with strategic plan.

In interviews case, several authors (e.g., Emmel, 2013; Dworkin, 2012) believed that there is no reliable rule (no specific formula) to calculate an appropriate sample size required in qualitative research. While some authors (e.g., Mason 2010; Malterud et al, 2015; Bernard, 2011; Flory et al., 2004; Ryan and Bernard, 2003) felt that sample is determined by several factors such as: the sampling technique, sample specificity, quality of dialogue, analysis strategy, sampling size, meeting all of the purposes sampling criteria, redundancy of data, the researcher's experience and access to adequate information. Therefore, choosing the most appropriate sample size was left for the researcher to determine it.

Guest et al. (2006) found that twelve interviews as a minimum sample size are required to meet the research objectives in most qualitative interview studies, these findings confirmed that 92% of the total set of codes which

they have been ultimately developed occurred in the first 12 interviews. As well as Galvin (2015) who confirmed that 12 interviews or more were sufficient. Consequently, 13 interviews were conducted in this study so this number was sufficient to extract the required themes.

Information leaflet (see Appendix D “Information Sheet for Potential Participants in this Thesis Research”) about this research and informed consent form (see Appendix C “Interview Consent Form”) were given to all potential participants, whether their involvement was in the interviews or surveys. These documents are the most effective way of increasing the research participants’ understanding about the purpose of their involvement (Eisenhauer et al., 2017; Flory and Emanuel, 2004), and using them to ensure their consent to the conditions of their participation. Thus, improving their responses and reducing communication time.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

Bernard (2017) divided the data sources used in collecting information into two main categories: primary and secondary data.

The primary data aimed in collecting data, through both qualitative and quantitative data tools, while secondary data was obtained from the published articles and books about the topic of this thesis, which can be found in the references list. The sources of data used in this study are shown in Figure (3.7) below.

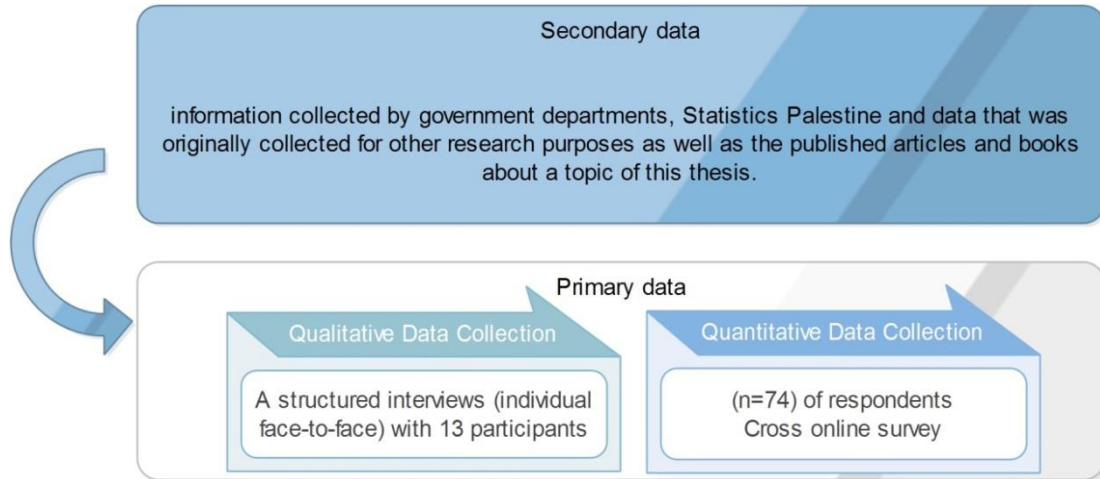


Figure 3.7: Sources of data collection techniques

Both primary and secondary data sources are used for the purpose of gaining information about the problem statement.

The choice of the data collection techniques is influenced by the type of used research approach design (Creswell and Poth, 2017). Thus, the data collection techniques have been selected based on the nature of the exploratory sequential method and they appeared in two phases; quantitative and qualitative data (Ivankova et al., 2006), Hence, the primary sources will be collected using semi-structured interviews for the qualitative part and Survey for quantitative part as shown in subsection 3.6.1 and 3.6.2, respectively.

3.6.1 Qualitative Data

Mohapatra et al. (2014) classified the methods that data have been collected in qualitative research into three tools; depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques, as represented in Figure (3.8). All of these tools can be used as part of a mixed methods research strategy.

Qualitative Research Methods

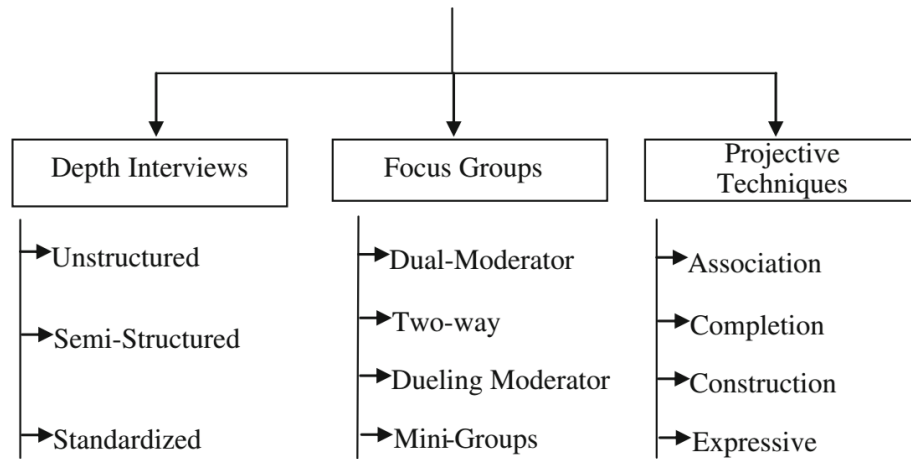


Figure 3.8: Classification of collection tools in qualitative research (Source: Mohapatra et al., 2014)

An individual depth interview can be defined as: *"personal interview which uses extensive probing to get a single respondent to talk freely and to express detailed beliefs and feelings on a topic"*.

A focus group is: *"the process of assembling set of individuals who have specialized knowledge of a particular subject, it could be in a panel discussion or a workshop run by the researcher, in order to discuss and hear their comments, perception and opinions about the research topic"*.

The projective technique is: *"the method that puts respondents in certain positions to uncover their feelings, beliefs, attitudes and motivation, which drives certain behaviours and positions"*. It is somewhat similar to a focus group but the projective technique is an unstructured form of questioning that encourages respondents to answer the questions indirectly, as various scenarios have been asked on the respondents to discover interpretation behind it (Mohapatra et al., 2014).

Depth interviews, focus groups and projective techniques each have their own merits and drawbacks. Individual depth interviews were more effective in generating a sensitive range of information. It is usually faster and cheaper (Guest et al., 2017). The focus groups are used when it is better to obtain information from a group rather than individuals, but this method requires the researcher to use a range of skills more than other methods such as group skills, facilitation, moderation, listening and analysis. The projective technique requires even more skills, a great deal of time and effort to implement, and there is also difficulties to monitor and interpret their results.

According to Bryman (2016), interviews are subdivided into three fundamental types, based on the amount of guidance extended by the interviewer. These types are: unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews and standardized or structured interviews.

Briefly, the first type of interview is called” "unstructured interviews”, which refers to use informal approach in conversation. Here the researcher has no prepared questions beforehand and the questions asked are set during the interview, this type allowed the interviewee to express about their perspective, using their own frame of ideas and meanings that are familiar to them.

In semi-structured interview, the researcher used a list of questions of topics which aims to be covered in the interview, often referred to as an interview guide, there is flexibility on how and when the questions are put and how the interviewee can respond. But instead of using only closed

questions as in structured interviews, semi-structured interviews are used a both of closed-ended and open-ended questions.

In structured interviews, the researcher uses a fixed format called pre-prepared questions, in asking participants about their present lived experience in the topic area of the study.

Therefore, in order to explicate the current practices of the corporate strategies formulation process in the Palestinian food industries and explore the details related with this phenomena, a semi-structured interview was used in collecting the quantitative data. It is the most appropriate kind for this study, since it involves more in-depth of the research problem description and assessment of the content of this process. It helps the researcher in developing ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research, through obtaining various perspectives on the research questions, related to the nature of the research's problem (Edwards and Holland, 2013).

After receiving feedback of the interview protocols by the supervisor and ensuring that the interview questions align with the research questions, an interview protocol has been developed, in order to interview the people who, have knowledge in developing the strategic plans in the food companies, such as the chairman, the general managers and members of the strategic planning committees. This would ensure the accuracy and correctness of the information. The process of establishing corporate strategies is one of the terms of reference for the senior management level in corporates, whereas each interviewee is asked the same sets of questions.

All the eight questions were included in the main domains related with process of corporate strategy formulation (See Appendix B: “Interview Questions Study Guide”) interview protocol used in the interviews conducted by the researcher, with the target respondents in the Palestinian food companies.

Interviews were conducted with the respondent's face-to-face in their offices, to be transcribed later. The procedures for protecting the confidentiality of the participants are described. Their consent to participate has been taken before conducting any of the interviews (See Appendix C: “Interview Consent Form”) and full information about the research is provided with by the information leaflet as it is presented in (Appendixes D “Information Sheet for Potential Participants in this Thesis Research”).

3.6.2 Quantitative Data

Survey is considered a technique of gathering quantitative data, by questioning people who may have desired information (Check and Schutt, 2012). It is mainly developed based on the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses.

In academic researches, there is much confusion about the terms survey and questionnaire. Although both a survey and questionnaire are used in acquiring qualitative data, there is a difference between them. The term survey, is a comprehensive term which includes collecting and analyzing information from large samples of the population (Agnes, 2017; Kelley et al., 2003). However, a questionnaire implies a predefined series of

questions used for collecting information only from small samples of the population. In other words, a survey is a much wider term than a questionnaire (Agnes, 2017).

The survey is conducted in order to collect information, then to use this information for statistical analysis and others form of analysis (Kasunic, 2005) while questionnaire is conducted to provide responses about particular problem but doesn't use the aggregated data for statistical analysis.

Questionnaires are restricted to use a closed-ended questions, but survey used hybrid types of questions (both open-ended and closed-ended questions) that allowed respondents to express their opinion about subject being asked.

In literature, these classifications of the surveys were emerged according to the way of carrying out survey are: (Szolnoki and Hoffmann, 2013), online surveys, paper-and-pencil surveys, and telephone surveys. The online survey or "Web survey" is a method used as an electronic format, which enables the survey to be distributed via email or uploaded on Internet-based programs (Ponto, 2015). Whereas, "paper-and-pencil surveys" are used when involving face-to-face interviews in filling out the printed document. And the last type "telephone surveys" depends on the nature of the direct communication between the researcher and respondent via telephone or other communication devices.

The online survey is administered using <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>. This online survey allows access to the target population who would be

impossible or difficult to reach through paper-based methods (Evans and Mathur, 2005). As in case of the food companies in the Gaza Strip. In addition, these companies are found on the Internet and it is usually less expensive than the other methods. Also, this style has a higher response rate and a greater accuracy compared to telephone or paper surveys (Baruch and Holtom, 2008).

The final draft of the survey was sent to the food companies, the original survey was translated from English to Arabic and the Arabic version was used in this study. The total number collected was 126, but only 74 were analyzed, because the other 52 surveys were excluded since their responses were not matching the key selection criteria.

The online survey was organized into four highly structured sections as presented in Figure (3.9). In addition, to the cover letter that explained the purpose of the study and assuring confidentiality, each section aims to collect specific information about the topic of study as follow:

1. The first section, included (14 items), this section provided some basic information related to the both: the targeted respondents and their companies such as: Leadership positions, years of experience, the ownership structure, year of establishment, size of company, sub-sector of industry, exporting activities, the unique selling proposition (USP), certifications and market share in the Palestinian markets.
2. The Second Section, which included (15 items), respondents were asked to foresee the time the strategy will be implemented. Respondents were asked about strategic priorities and major focus

areas in the corporate strategies formulation. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate whether they have faced specific challenges in achieving their strategic goals.

3. The Third section, which included (65 items), stated the identification and assessment of the corporate strategies formulation practices within the food companies and that have been focused in this section. Respondents were asked about their steps followed in corporate strategies process.
4. The Fourth section, which included (26 items), this section focused on integrated items, to provide the overall assessment on the current corporate strategies in Palestinian food manufacturing industry that adopted by the global food manufacturing industry. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of the issues facing in selecting the appropriate strategies.

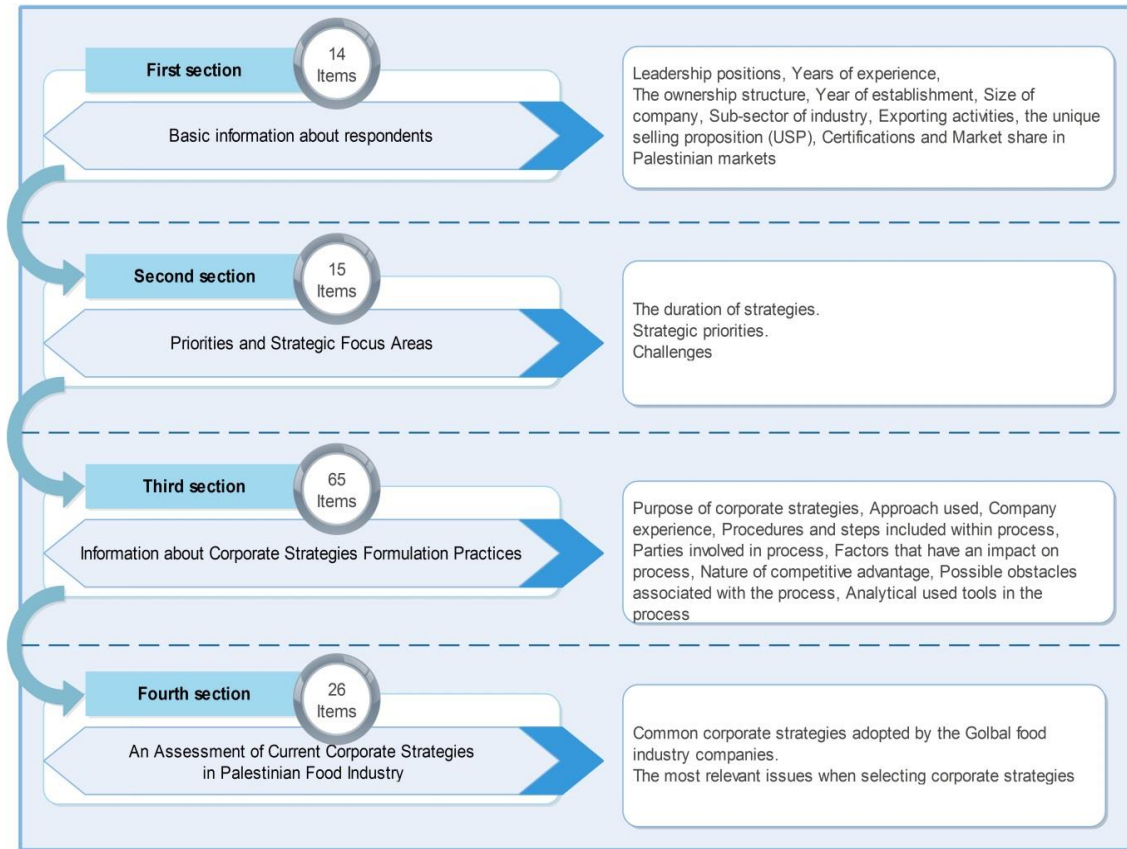


Figure 3.9: Outline of the structure of the survey

3.7 Quality of the Research Design

Validity and reliability are usually presented as the main criteria for assessing the quality of business research. According to Subedi (2016), the major aim of selecting these types, is to add value to research's reliability and validity, and to get the best results of the research. It requires raising the level of validity and reliability from the researcher.

3.7.1 Research Validity

Validity refers to the extent of which a test measures only what is actually required to measure (Blumberg et al., 2008).

3.7.1.1 Validity of Quantitative Data

The respondents from food companies are those who participated in both the qualitative and quantitative phase in the same population.

The interviews were audio recorded, which allowed keeping all interviewees' notes to be revised later. Additionally, using a methodology that is based on data collection from several sources (Triangulation) such as: survey and semi-structured interviews would increase the validity of data findings (Zohrabi, 2013).

3.7.1.2 Validity of Qualitative Data

Three professors and two experts have collaborated as the arbitration committee for the survey, to ensure the validity of the survey. (See Appendix E).

The purpose of the judgement was to determine whether the questions were comprehensible and could be interpreted by the companies as they are intended to be understood. The jury's suggestions and comments were taken into consideration to modify and improve the survey's content and wordings by omitting, adding or rephrasing items bringing the number of items to 108.

3.7.2 Research Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the same answers can be obtained using the same instruments more than one time through an accurate representation of the total population under study (Bernard, 2017).

Reliability is often used to refer to the consistency of survey responses over time.

The survey was electronically designed, using the Survey Monkey website, in order to improve the responses rate and reduce the time constraint and utilize the same form of survey for all sample population.

A primary focus was on the information collected from the company's senior management, to ensure the accuracy and correctness of the information, and being the senior management involved in the corporate strategies.

The reliability of the survey was calculated through the Cronbach Alpha Formula, which is a coefficient and is considered the most common measure of scale to be reliable and is used in determining the internal consistency or average correlation of items in a survey instrument (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011).

DeVellis (2016) indicated that a minimum of 0.70 Cronbach's alpha is generally considered acceptable. Table (3.2) below shows Cronbach Alpha for the survey domains and total degree of responses, they ranged from (0.787) for the sixth domain of (Internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process) and (0.906) for the fourth domain of (Procedures that are included within corporate strategies formulation process).

Cronbach Alpha result for the total degree was (0.865) which is accepted for the study purpose.

Table 3.2: Chronapach Alpha Formula for measuring the reliability of the Survey domains and total degree of responses

No.	Domain	Ite	Cornbach Alpha
1.	Importance as strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food industry companies	9	0.850
2.	Frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals	7	0.888
3.	The purpose of formulating corporate strategies	6	0.824
4.	Procedures that are included within corporate strategies formulation process	12	0.906
5.	company experience with corporate strategies formulation process	18	0.886
6.	Internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	11	0.787
7.	External factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	11	0.859
8.	Possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	8	0.893
9.	Common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies	11	0.887
10.	The importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully	15	0.868
	Total degree	108	0.865

3.8 Data Analysis

Depending on the sequential mixed methods research designs that was adopted in this study, the phases of data analysis also included from two main phases; First phase is qualitative data analysis followed by a phase of quantitative data analysis.

Qualitative data was analyzed by thematic analysis, whereas, the quantitative data was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science software (SPSS), as will be explained below in the subsections 3.8.1 and 3.8.2 of this section.

3.8.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

The aim of analyzing qualitative data was to investigate the practices of the food companies in formulating corporate strategies, which realizes the existing practices in literature. The results of this process in constructing and designing of quantitative data.

Thus, transcripts of interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis approach. From analysis of these transcripts, the food companies' practices in field of corporate strategies were explored.

Thematic analysis is the most common approach used in qualitative research analysis. Braun & Clarke (2013) defined thematic analysis (TA) as *“an approach of qualitative data analysis, which is used for identifying, analyzing and reporting the patterns (themes) within the data”*.

This thesis followed steps developing by Braun & Clarke (2006) in performing the thematic analysis process, each of these steps were provided in little details in Table (3.3) below.

Table 3.3: Steps for conducting thematic analysis (Source: Braun & Clarke, 2006)

No.	Step	Description of the step
1.	Familiarizing yourself with your data:	<i>Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.</i>
2.	Generating initial codes:	<i>Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.</i>
3.	Searching for themes:	<i>Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.</i>
4.	Reviewing themes:	<i>Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.</i>
5.	Defining and naming themes:	<i>Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.</i>
6.	Producing the report:	<i>The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.</i>

Thematic analysis is provided many profits when being involved in researches, flexibility and accessibility are the most prominent features of this approach (Guest et al., 2012). It makes the analysis process easier to understand and to apply than any other qualitative analysis method (Javadi and Zarea, 2016). In addition to this approach, it allowed connecting with the different opinions of respondents and comparing between separate sets of data at same time (Alhojailan, 2012). Although reliability issues have

aroused controversy among the critics, monitoring themes and codes tables was utilized to improving reliability of results analysis (Guest et al., 2012).

3.8.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

The data collected from survey (quantitative data) were analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23; to provide the description, explanation, prediction and answer of the questions of the study (Kpolovie, 2017). Means, frequencies, standard deviations, Normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk) for measuring normal distribution of the responses, Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Test were used to find out the descriptive statistical analysis and Pearson correlation test was used to explore the relationships between the variables.

To analyze the findings, the researcher used the following scale to present the estimation level of sample responses. In order to limit the length of the cells of the five-point Likert scale (minimum and maximum limits , range has been calculated $(5-1=4)$, divided on the correct length of the cell $(4/5=0.80)$ and added to the lowest value of the scale (1) in order to reach the highest limit of this cell . Cell limits became as in Table (3.4).

Table 3.4 Scale to represent the estimation level of sample responses on the study tool.

Mean	Percentage	Estimation level
4.20 and more	84.0% and above	Very High
3.40-4.19	68.0 – 83.8%	High
2.60-3.39	52.0 – 67.8 %	Moderate
1.80- 2.59	36.0 – 51.8 %	Low
Less than 1.80	35.9% and less	Very Low

3.9 Chapter Summary

Previous sections have discussed the chosen methodology in conducting this research, and provided a detailed overview of the procedures of the research design. A justification and explanation of the data collection techniques used were also provided. Validity and reliability issues were discussed, sufficient detail about the data analysis tools used was given in this chapter. Thus, this chapter was helpful in giving information about the methodology to start the process of analyzing, processing and interpreting data as will focus it in next chapter.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis in two main sections. The first section presents the results and discussions analyzed from the qualitative data “*extracted from the semi-structured interviews*” whereas the second section highlights the analysis resulted from the quantitative data “survey”, which also included the answers related to the research questions.

4.2 Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interview Data

The interviews (13 interviewees from 13 companies) occurred within a 4-month period from February 1, 2017, to April 1, 2017. All these interviews lasted about 10 hours with an average of 45 minutes for each interview. While the longest interview time was for 80 minutes, the shortest was for 30 minutes. In all of these interviews, the researcher asked the senior management members about whoever has knowledge and experience regarding the strategy formulation process. The interviewers asked eight questions about the corporate strategies regarding the Palestinian food manufacturing industry (See Appendix B:” Interview Questions Study Guide”). Each answer given by the interviewee was recorded and

transcribed into an answer sheet that was earlier prepared via the researcher to be used in the analysis process.

The demographic characteristics of each of the interviewees and their companies were taken into consideration before the interview began. These characteristics included sub-sector, years of experience, company size, company structure, job title, years of experience in the company, and qualifications. All these characteristics are presented in Table (4.1) below.

Table 4.1 The distribution of the demographic characteristics of the interview participants.

Code	Job description for interviewee	Years of experience within his company	Qualification	Sub-sector	Years of Co. experience	Company size
1-A	Executive director	10	Master's degree	Other food products	22	Small-sized
2-B	Chairman & Executive director	12	Master's degree	Sugar, confectionery and chocolate products	12	Medium-sized
3-C	Executive director	16	Bachelor's degree	Drinks and mineral water	19	Large-sized
4-D	Executive director	5	Bachelor's degree	Agri-Products & Makrona	7	Medium-sized
5-E	Executive director	3	Master's degree	Grain mills and starch products	22	Medium-sized
6-F	Chairman & Executive director	10	Bachelor's degree	Oils and fats products	64	Medium-sized
7-G	Chairman & Executive director	32	Secondary and less	Other food products	32	Small-sized
8-H	Chairman & Executive director	19	Secondary and less	Bakery products	19	Small-sized
9-I	Executive director	5	Bachelor's degree	Fruit and Vegetable-pickling and canning	25	Large-sized
10-J	Executive director	28	Master's degree	Dairy products	35	Large-sized
11-K	Chairman	11	Master's degree	Dairy products	67	Medium-sized
12-L	Chairman & Executive director	28	Bachelor's degree	Animal feeds products	28	Small-sized
13-M	Executive director	20	Bachelor's degree	Other food products	97	Medium-sized

Based on the phases of the thematic analysis, which was developed by Braun and Clarke (2006), a semi-structured interview style was adopted.

Nine themes aimed to identify the interviewer's attitudes toward the study subject and had pinpointed. Table (4.2) reflects the results:

Table 4.2 Emergent themes, sub-themes, and codes based on the process of the thematic analysis.

No	Codes	Issues Discussed		Central Themes
Theme 1	Internal party	The board members Chief Executive Officer (CEO) General Manager Employees The family members		The participants handling the crafting corporate strategies
	External party	External experts Customers		
Theme 2	Including the best practices in the framework for corporate strategy formulation	Strategic goal setting Developing a vision statement Corporate environment Appraisal Mission statement Competitor analysis Choosing corporate strategies		Corporate strategy formulation practices
	Other practices	Risk Identification & Assessment Quality certification Procedures		
Theme 3	The intuitive approach.	Company vision, mission and value etc.		Practice approaches in the decision-making process
	The heuristic approach.	Quality certification without method		
Theme 4	Internal factors	Qualified Human Resources Organizational Structure and Core circuits Financial position Leadership		Key factors to

			consider when formulating the strategies
	External factors	Consumer behavior Consumer tastes Political conditions Economic and tax policies Competitors Competing products Natural resources and raw materials Manufacturing technologies Global and foreign markets	
Theme 5	Analytical tools	SWOT analysis Risk assessment	Tools used in capturing the information related to the strategy formulations
	Non-analytical tools	Market studies and surveys Consumer Tastes	
Theme 6	Ability	Weakness in dealing with strategies Inaccurate information from studies and research Infrastructure problems Hesitation in decision- making	The major challenges
	Situations	Economic and political situations Price changing Customer behavior competition	
	Resources	Natural resources	
Theme 7	Source related to product	Quality Packaging Price	Sources of competitive advantage
	Source related to services	Providing service Social liability Credibility in giving service	

Theme 8	Strategies related to product development	Innovation Marketing Production development Quality Expansion and spreading Geographical growth Competition	The current strategies adopted by the food companies
	Strategies related to community and human resources	Social liability Human resources development	
Theme 9	Strategies related to product development	Quality Innovation Marketing Production development Building new participations Universality direction	The future corporate strategies which will be adopted
	Strategies related to community and human resources	Human resources development	

4.2.1 Theme 1: The different participants in crafting corporate strategies

This theme determines the participants' parties and their role in the strategic decision-making in the company.

The results reflected that the senior management (the board of directors and general managers) are the strategic decision-makers in the company. On the other hand, the family company itself is responsible for making strategic decisions, that is, the family are the decision-makers, as reflected by the interviewees' responses.

Most of the food companies stated that the senior management tends to involve the other levels of employees in the strategic decision-making. A small margin reflected the involvement of the client in making decisions

parallel with the needs of the employees and clients as well and minimizing the decisions that would cause a negative impact.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Corporate strategy formulation practices

This theme attempts to explore the current practices used by companies and compare them with the existing practices in the strategic frameworks.

Most interviewees assured that there should be an organized process that the strategic decision goes through, starting from the strategic objectives, mission statement, values, and vision, which leads the right thinking towards future strategies.

Despite the fact that all the companies already have a vision, mission, and values in place, it was found that some food companies in Palestine do not go through an organized process in a strategic decision. They only rely on achieving quality certifications and the existence of their accreditation procedures.

However, many interviewees agreed on the importance of the internal and external environment assessment, which is the essential part of the strategy formulation.

The final step in the process is selecting the most appropriate strategy for the company. Most interviewees mentioned that the action plan and the expected risk study for each strategy are considered in order to choose the best one. +

4.2.3 Theme 3: Practice approaches used in the decision-making process

Most companies follow their set of procedures that are documented in writing, which will make the process of strategy formulation easier and controllable. However, few companies don't have their procedures for document writing, which is troublesome when making any decisions, as there will be no written reference to return back to.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Key factors to consider when formulating strategies

There are key factors that need to be considered while structuring and developing company strategies: internal factors, e.g. human resources infrastructure, resources and the work environment; and external factors, e.g. political factors, market needs, customers, and competitors. The results reflected that the internal factors are more focused on the decision-making process than the external factors. However, the results reflected that some aspects of the external factors are not disregarded: customers' behaviors, market needs, and competition. A few refer to the raw materials and production technology as being more important.

4.2.5 Theme 5: Tools used in capturing the required information

Companies need analytical tools to capture all the information needed to formulate their strategies. This was the case for the Palestinian companies, as the interviews reflected that the SWOT analysis and risk analysis are the most commonly used tools by the Palestinian companies. Others

considered the risk analysis to be an additional tool to have but not essential. In addition, it was indicated that the market surveys and the consumer's requirements are considered as non-analytical tools used in collecting and evaluating all the relevant information for the strategy formulation process.

4.2.6 Theme 6: The major challenges and obstacles encountered during the structuring of company strategies

It was shown that the economic and political situations are the most common challenges and obstacles encountered when structuring company strategies. There are others, but they are not considered as massive challenges and obstacles such as natural resources, infrastructure, price changing, customer behavior, inaccurate information and hesitant decision-making are other obstacles that hinder structuring company strategies.

4.2.7 Theme 7: Competitive advantage

It was reflected in the results that 10 companies out of 13 highlighted that the quality, price, and service provided are the primary resources for gaining competitive advantage for corporate businesses.

Other interviewees were asked about other vital resources to gain a competitive advantage, and they reflected the importance of having it as a business by formulating strategies. Ten companies responded that the product quality, price, and after-sale services are considered the main resources for gaining this competitive advantage. Nevertheless, few of

them indicated that wrapping, packaging and the company's social responsibility are strong resources for achieving a competitive advantage.

4.2.8 Theme 8: The current corporate strategies of the food companies

Currently, the corporate strategies in Palestinian food companies are expansion, spreading, marketing, social liability, geographical growth, developing production plans, human resources, innovation, and competition. The results reflected that social responsibility and innovation are focused on by these companies; however, there is a lower focus on spreading. Also, they ensured they are committed to following the footsteps of the international and regional companies working in the food manufacturing industry.

4.2.9 Theme 9: The expected future corporate strategies that will be adopted

After the interviews, it was highlighted that product development, quality, innovation, marketing, and human resources development are the corporate's expected future strategies to adopt. Some answers referred to reaching the international markets as a future strategy. One indicated that staying with the same current strategy is the best way to go.

4.3 Analysis of Survey Data

The data collected from all 74 companies have been analyzed using SPSS v23 software. This section consists of 3 subsections;

- 1) The surveyed companies' results on the demographic data.

- 2) The answers to all research questions.
- 3) The tested hypotheses.

4.3.1 Descriptive Data

The aim of the following descriptive data is to explore the research variables that may affect corporate strategy formulations. The researcher used in developing and testing research hypotheses.

A representative sample consisted of 74 companies, which referred to the Palestinian food manufacturing industry in 2017. Those companies were varied in terms of the current position, the number of years' experience of respondents, company ownership structure, size of company, years of food manufacturing industry, number of employees, their sub-sector in the industry, location, company address, having exporting activities, selling points, having any certifications and the proportion of overall market share currently in the Palestinian market.

Descriptive statistics were also used in these subsections in order to describe the basic characteristics and findings of the qualitative data. These characteristics have been put into figures and tables for easy illustration.

4.3.1.1 Positions held by the respondents

The profiles of the respondents in the companies' survey is the basic information required in the research as it provides information about respondents and their traits.

Figure (4.1) shows that 59.3% of the respondents were senior managers (board of directors 10.8%, general managers 36.4%, and both of them 12.1%), 37.8% of the respondents were from the middle managers or department managers, and 2% of the respondents were managers from other functional departments.

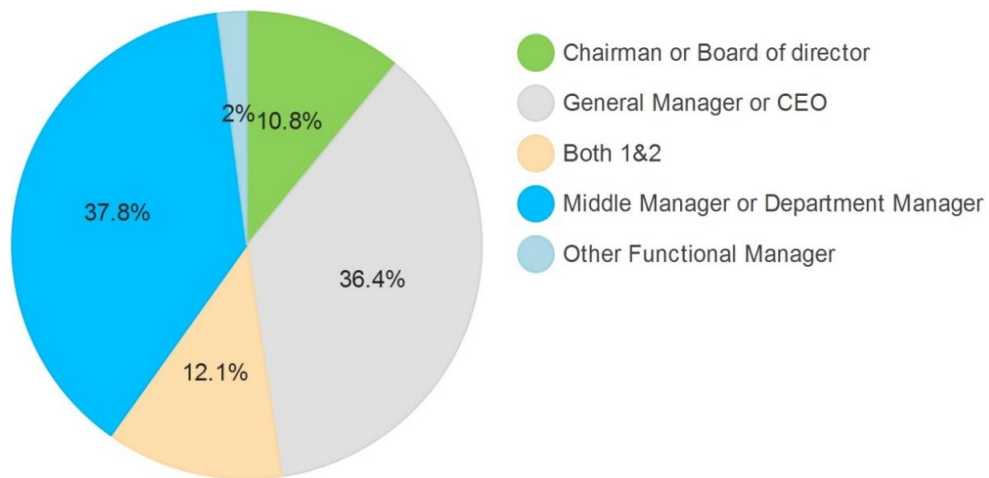


Figure 4.1: Distribution of sample companies according to the position of respondents in the companies' survey

4.3.1.2 Respondents' work experiences in companies

Figure (4.2) shows that 33.8% of the respondents have experience of 5 years or below, 28.4% have over 15 years of experience, 25.7% have 6-10 years of experience, and only 12.2% have 11-15 years of experience.

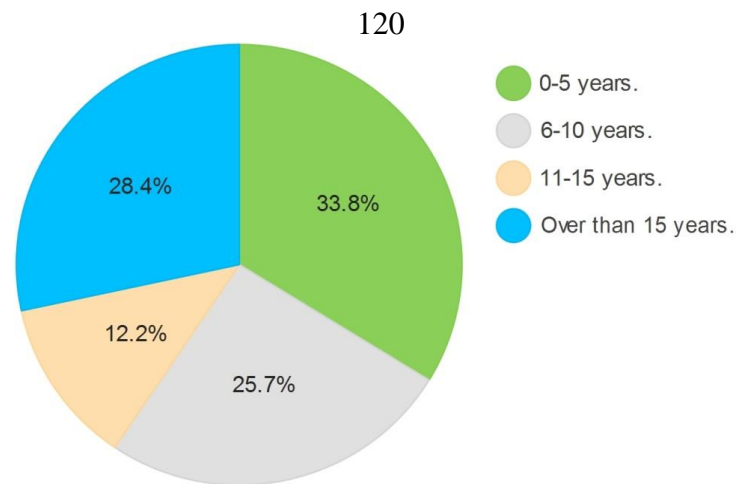


Figure 4.2: Distribution of sample companies according to their work experience in their current positions

4.3.1.3 Ownership Structures

The ownership structure is necessary information that has an important influence on the corporate strategy formulation process; since this kind of information could affect the composition of the participants in this process. This study adopted the classification of companies' registration according to the Palestinian Law of Companies No. 6 of 2008 (MNE, 2017).

Figure (4.3) clarifies that 68.92% of the companies' respondents were from a private limited shareholding, 14.86% of the companies were average companies, 9.46% of the companies were private average companies, and 6.76% were public shareholding companies.

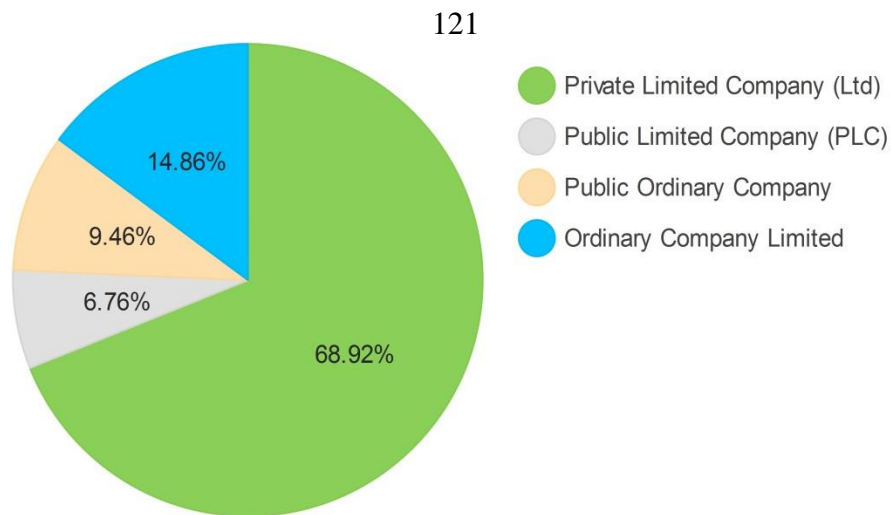


Figure 4.3: Distribution of sample companies according to the classification of the companies' registration

Figure (4.4) illustrates that more than half of the companies in the explored sample (66.22%) were recognized as a family-owned business. As for the remaining companies, 33.78% were non-family-owned businesses. Family-owned businesses are recognized as important and dynamic participants in the Palestinian economy.

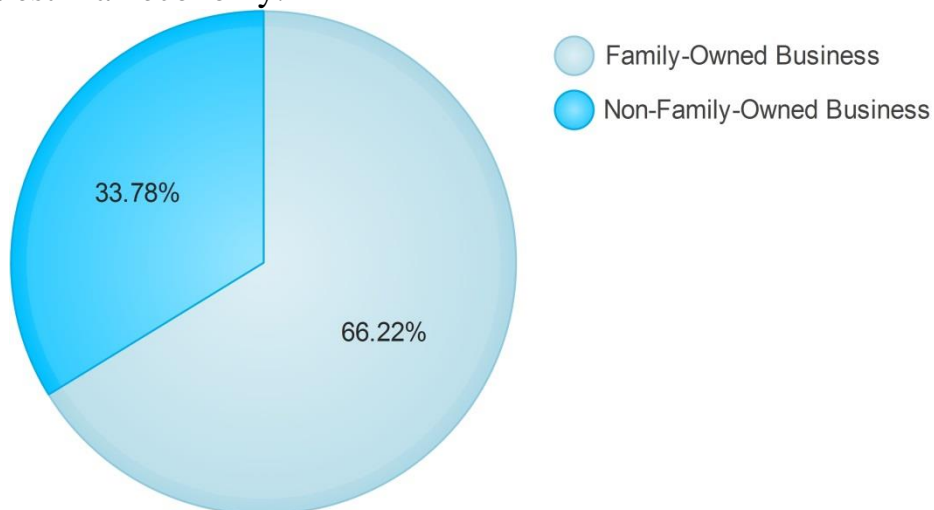


Figure 4.4: Distribution of sample companies according to ownership structure variable

4.3.1.4 Age of company (number of working years in food manufacturing)

The years of experience element is vital, especially in the field of food manufacturing. It is one of the most important characteristics of a company, which indicates the extent to which a company has gained massive experience and knowledge in guiding their future businesses.

Figure (4.5) shows that 50%, half of the companies' respondents, have over 20 years of experience in food manufacturing, 14.86% of the respondents have between 16 and 20 years of experience, 14.86% have experience between 11 and 15 years, 9.46% have experience between 6 and 10 years, and 10.81% reflected having less than six years of experience.

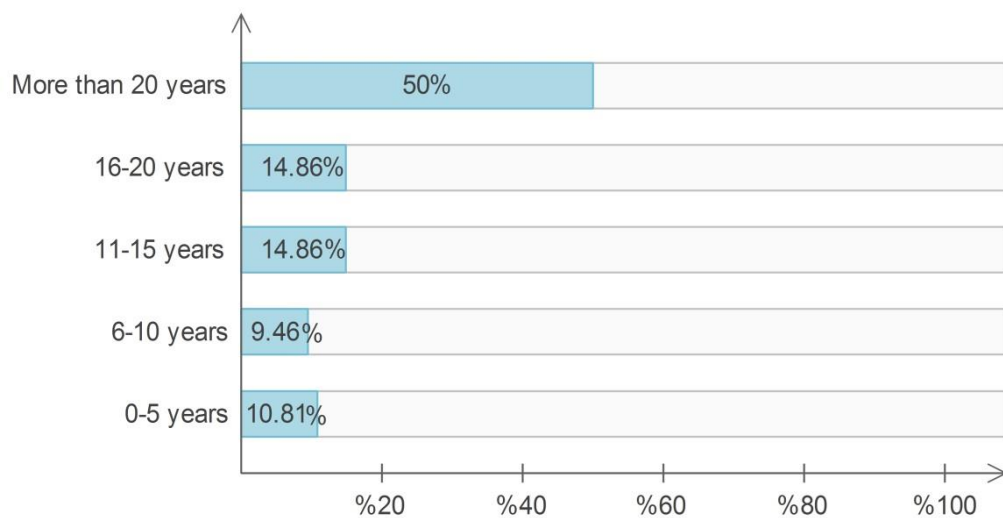


Figure 4.5: Distribution of sample companies according to their number of working years in food manufacturing

4.3.1.5 Company size based on the number of employees

This study adopted the classification of the European Commission (2015) for the criteria of the company size, which is measured by the number of employees (See Appendix G: “European Union Definition of Enterprises Size”). Figure (4.6) reflects that the majority of respondents (41.89%) were categorized as small-sized companies with 10-49 employees, 35.14% of companies were categorized as medium-sized companies, which are companies with 50-249 employees, 13.51% of the respondents were categorized as micro-sized companies (less than 10 employees), and 9.46% of the respondents were categorized as large-sized companies (over 250 employees).

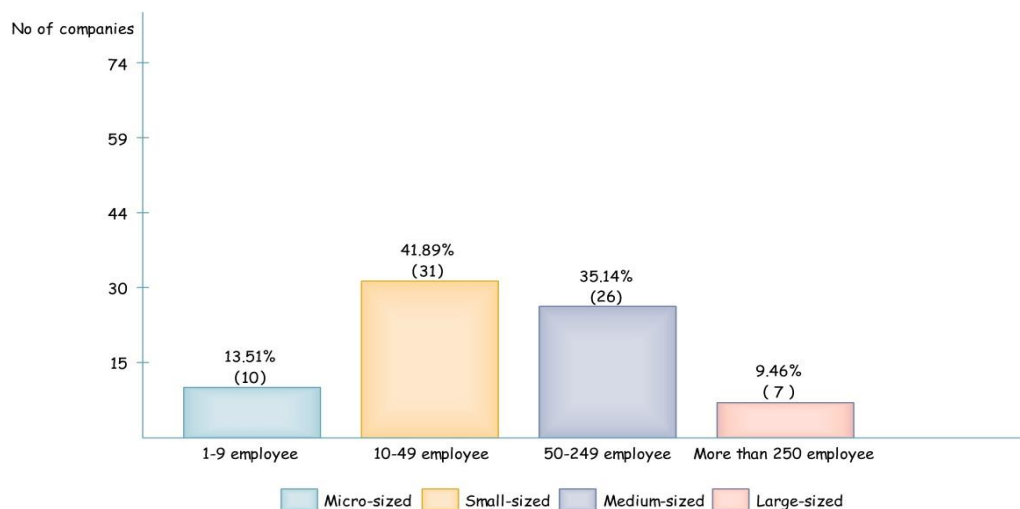


Figure 4.6: Distribution of sample companies according to company size.

4.3.1.6 Sub-sector of food industry

The Sub-sector of food manufacturing industry in Palestine refers to the key products provided by the company, according to the Palestinian Food

Industries Union (PFIU) classification which is consisted of the eleven sub-sectors (PFIU, 2017).

Table (4.3) below includes all subsectors existing of food manufacturing industry, Table (4.3) shows that (16.22%) of study respondents were from both dairy and other food products sub sector, (10.81%) of respondents were from drinks and mineral water sub sector, (9.46%) of respondents were from oils,fats products,sugar, confectionery and chocolate products sub-sector, (8.11%) of respondents were from grain mills and starch products and animal-fed products sub sector, (6.76%) of respondents were from meat,poultry products,fruit and vegetable-pickling, freezing and canning sub sector, (5.41%) of respondents were from agri-Products & spaghetti and pasta sub sector, and (2.70%) of respondents were from bakery products sub sector.

Table 4.3 Distribution of the sample companies (actual and percentage) according to their subsector of activities

	Sub-sector	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Meat-poultry products	5	6.76
2	Fruit and Vegetable-pickling, freezing and canning	5	6.76
3	Oils and fats products	7	9.46
4	Dairy products	12	16.22
5	Grain mills and starch products	6	8.11
6	Bakery products	2	2.70
7	Sugar, confectionery and chocolate products	7	9.46
8	Agri-Products & spaghetti	4	5.41
9	Animal feeds products	6	8.11
10	Drinks and mineral water	8	10.81
11	Other food products	12	16.22
		74 companies	100%

4.3.1.7 Corporate Location

A company's location refers to the geographic area or place where a company manufactory exists. In Palestine, there are two levels of regional administration. The first level is divided into two main areas – the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the second level of regional administration is divided into 16 governorates distributed between the two main areas.

It is evident from Figure (4.7) that the percentage of food companies located in the West Bank region was 78.4% of the entire sample while the remaining percentage (21.6%) of food companies was located in the Gaza Strip.

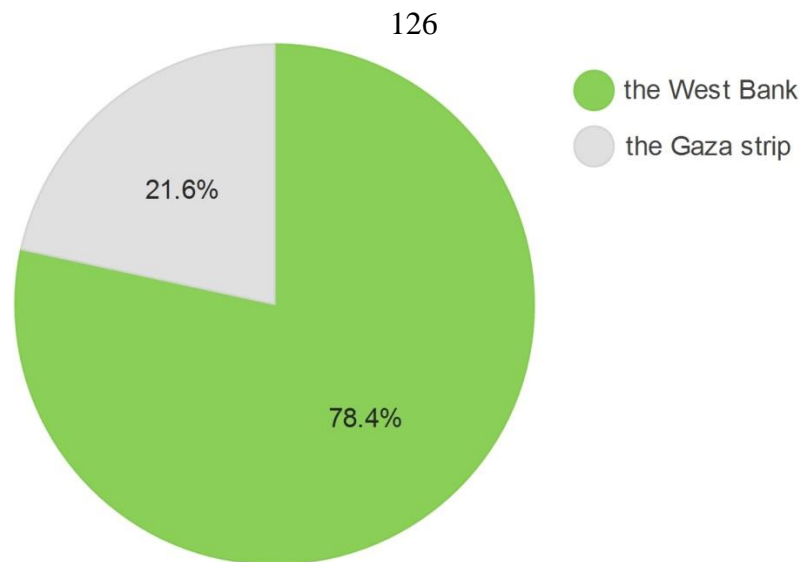


Figure 4.7: The distribution of the sample according to the corporate location.

In a related context it has been illustrated by Figure (4.7), Table (4.4) that the geographical distribution of food companies according to the second level of regional administration (governorates of Palestine).

Table 4.4 shows that the percentage of the West Bank companies working in food manufacturing was including (Ramallah 24.3%, Nablus 13.5%, Hebron 9.5%, Nablus and Jericho 8.1% for each, Jenin and Jerusalem 4.1% for each, Salfit 2.7% and Bethlehem, Qalqilya and Tubas 1.4% for each)

On the other hands, the percentage of the Gaza Strip companies was (21.6%) from entire sample including (Gaza city and Deir Al Balah 8.1% for each, North Gaza 5.4%, Rafah and Khan Yunis 0%).

Table 4.4 the distribution of sample according to the geographical governorates

	Address of corporate location		Address of corporate location	Frequency	Percentage %
1	West Bank	1	Jenin	3	4.1
		2	Tubas	1	1.4
		3	Tulkarem	6	8.1
		4	Nablus	10	13.5
		5	Qalqilya	1	1.4
		6	Salfit	2	2.7
		7	Ramallah	18	24.3
		8	Jericho	6	8.1
		9	Jerusalem	3	4.1
		10	Bethlehem	1	1.4
		11	Hebron	7	9.5
2	Gaza strip	12	North Gaza	4	5.4
		13	Gaza city	6	8.1
		14	Deir Al Balah	6	8.1
		15	Rafah	0	--
		16	Khan Yunis	0	--
				74	100%

4.3.1.8: Exporting activities

Figure (4.8) shows that 56.76% of the tested companies do not export their products while 43.24% have exporting channels for their products. It was noted that the Gaza Strip food companies do not have any export channels at all due to the blockade imposed by Israel.

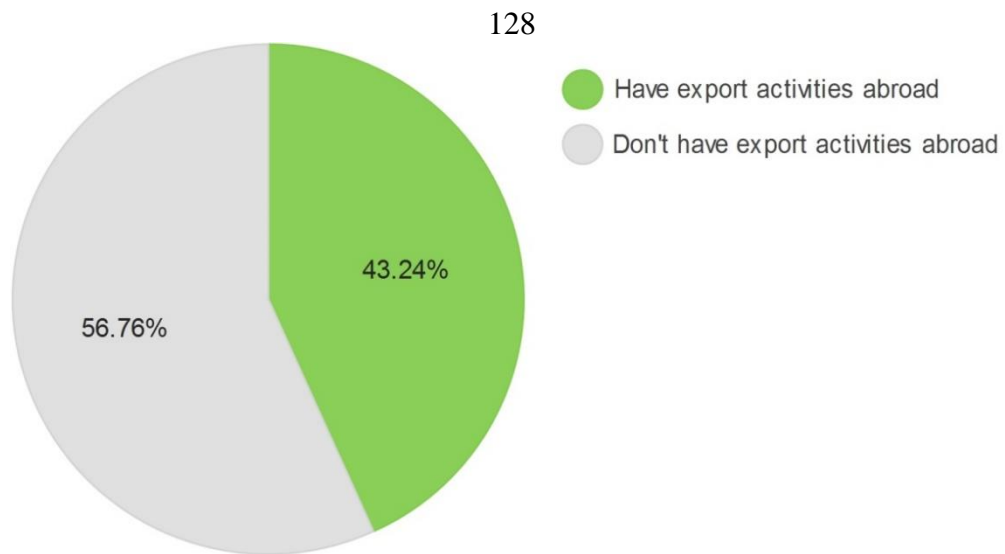


Figure 4.8: The distribution of the sample companies (percentage) according to their owning export activities

4.3.1.9 Major selling point for company products

Figure (4.9) shows that the majority of the companies (70.27%) refer to their major selling points are in local markets.

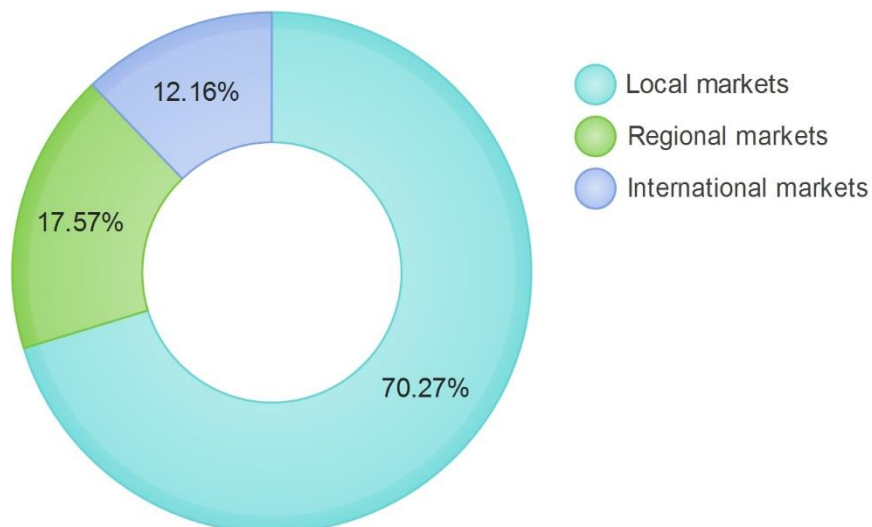


Figure 4.9: Distribution of the sample companies (percentage) according to their major selling point

4.3.1.10 Certifications of responding companies

Figure (4.10) below shows that 51.35% of the tested sample was awarded certifications for their food quality. These certifications were distributed among several classifications: Palestinian certifications including Palestinian quality and supervision certificates and a Palestinian Halal standards certificate; and global certifications including ISO 22000:2015 "Food Safety Management Systems", ISO 9001:2015 "Quality Management", FSSC 22000 "The Food Safety System Certification", ISO 14001:2015 "Environmental Management Systems", HACCP Certificate "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points", Global GAP Certification, and the OHSAS 18001 "Occupational Health & Safety" certification.

On the contrary, 48.65% of the tested sample was not granted any certification for their work quality.

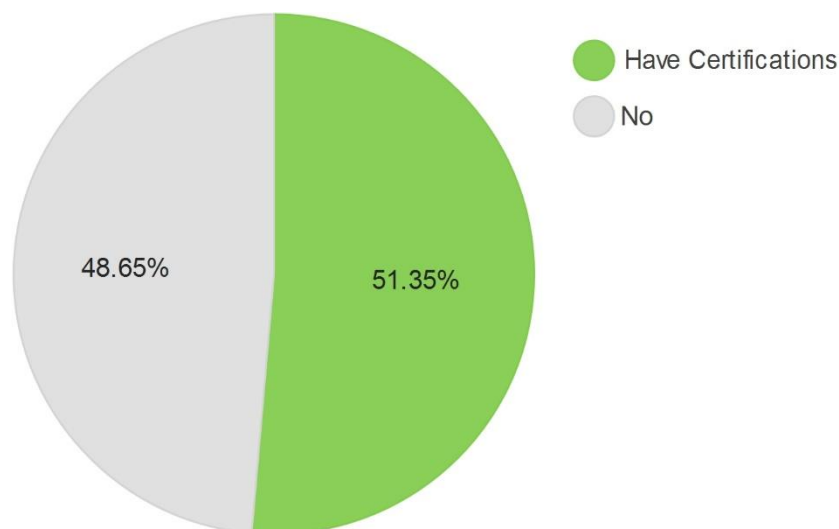


Figure 4.10: Distribution of sample companies according to certifications

4.3.1.11 Market share in domestic markets

Market share is the percentage of a market (defined in terms of the number of products sold) accounted for by a specific company and indicates how many of the company's target sales are being sold in the marketplace compared to its competitors. The market share is used as a measurement of the business performance and a key indicator of market competitiveness.

Figure (4.11) shows that 25.68% of the Palestinian food companies have more than 25% market share domestically, 21.62% have 21-25% market share, 13.51% have 16-20% market share, 20.27% have 11-15% market share, and 18.92% have less than 10% market share.

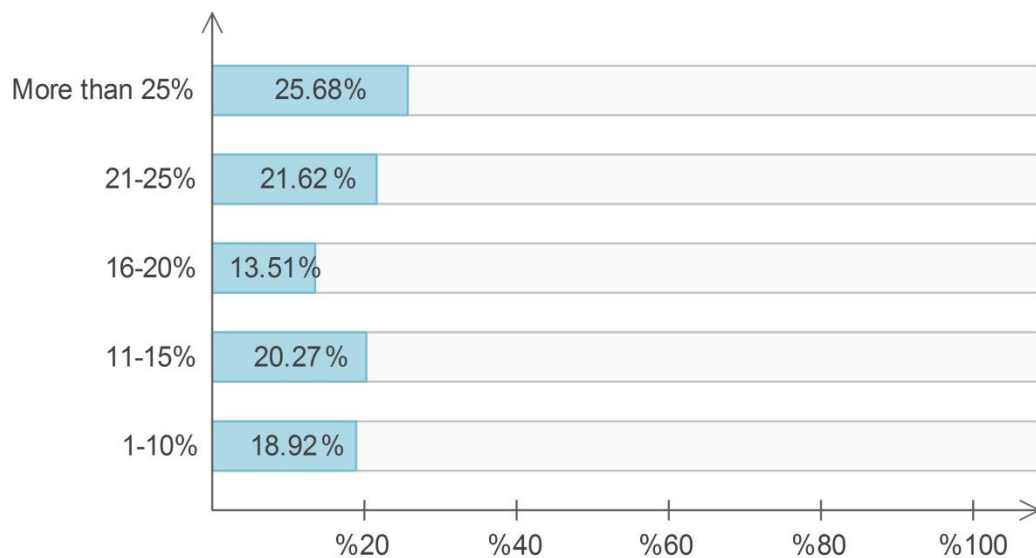


Figure 4.11: Distribution of sample companies according to their market share in domestic markets

4.3.2 Results related to study questions

The performed statistical analysis has answered a wide variety of questions related to the process of corporate strategy formulation in the Palestinian

food manufacturing industry. In an endeavor to understand the entire aspects of the process, a five-point Likert scale was used for fifteen questions in the survey to evaluate the range of the scores of responses for each item. The responses are shown in Appendix F (“A five-point Likert scale for the responses on the study domains”). These questions were analyzed according to the study objectives. These questions are:

- What are the strategic priorities or major focused areas of concern in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies?
- What are the internal challenges facing the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies in achieving their strategic goals?
- What is the main purpose of formulating corporate strategies?
- What are the patterns used in the strategic planning process by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies?
- What is the degree of enforcement of the practices of corporate strategy formulations, which are situated in strategic planning frameworks?
- To what extent are some issues effective in the formulation of corporate strategies?
- To what extent do food companies have experience in the process of corporate strategy formulations?
- What are the factors of the internal environment which may affect the corporate strategy formulation process?
- What are the factors of the external environment which may affect the corporate strategy formulation process?

- What are the possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies?
- What are the strategic analysis tools used in formulating corporate strategies?
- What is the best time horizon that corporate strategies cover?
- What are the current corporate strategies adopted by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies for achieving their strategic goals?
- What are the issues that influence the success of selecting corporate strategies?
- Who is involved in the corporate strategy formulation process?

To provide the answers to these study questions, the researcher has used the means, standard deviations and estimation level, as shown in the following sub-sections.

4.3.2.1 The strategic priorities or major focus areas of concern by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies

This question aims to find the companies' focus areas, which are considered the foundation of their corporate strategies. In this question, investigated companies were asked about the degree of importance the following priorities as major focus areas of concern by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies.

Table (4.5) below reflects the total degree of the strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies

was (89.8%) which suggest very high level of estimation. The mean of the item “Food quality & safety standards” is (4.77), “Meeting consumer requirements” is (4.72), “Maintaining the current market position of the company” is (4.70), “Brand recognition, positioning, improving profitability and reducing costs” is (4.52) for each, “Sales growth” is (4.44), “Marketing techniques” is (4.36) and “Searching for new market opportunities” is (4.29). All the items above have a very high degree effect, including the item “Full capacity of production”.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated Level of Strategic Priorities of the Palestinian Food Industry Companies.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	2	Food quality & safety standards	4.77	0.51	95.4	Very High
2	1	Meeting consumer requirements	4.72	0.53	94.4	Very High
3	4	Maintaining the current market position of the company	4.70	0.51	94.0	Very High
4	9	Brand recognition and positioning	4.52	0.62	90.4	Very High
5	8	improving profitability and reducing costs	4.52	0.60	90.4	Very High
6	7	Sales growth	4.44	0.66	88.8	Very High
7	3	Marketing techniques	4.36	0.65	87.2	Very High
8	5	Searching for new market opportunities of the company	4.29	0.73	87.2	Very High
9	6	Full capacity of production	4.05	0.93	81.0	High
Total			4.49	0.41	89.8	Very High

4.3.2.2 The internal challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals

This question aims to explore the most prominent internal challenges that the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies are facing in achieving their strategic goals.

In this question, companies' respondents were asked about the challenges faced by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies in achieving their strategic goals.

Table (4.6) below reflects the ratio of the challenges faced by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies in achieving their strategic goals was (68.6) which suggests high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (Competition from other food companies).The lowest was for the item (Issues related with leadership in companies).

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of the frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	2	Competition from other food companies	3.89	0.91	77.8	High
2	5	Issues related with raw materials supply	3.70	1.14	74.0	High
3	4	Keeping pace with advances in technologies and innovation in manufacturing process	3.58	1.11	71.6	High
4	3	Changes in consumer's behavior.	3.43	0.96	68.6	High
5	7	Lack of finance	3.27	1.19	65.4	Mode rate
6	1	Issues related with human resources in companies (recruiting, training ...).	3.14	0.88	62.8	Mode rate
7	6	Issues related with leadership in companies	3.02	1.27	60.4	Mode rate
Total			3.43	0.78	68.6	High

4.3.2.3 The purpose of formulating corporate strategies

This question aims to identify the main purpose of the strategy formulation process from the perspective of the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies. In this question, companies's respondents were asked about the degree of the purpose of formulating corporate strategies.

Table (4.7) below shows that the total degree of the the purpose of formulating corporate strategies was (84.2) which suggest very high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (To gain a competitive advantage). The lowest was for the item (To attract new consumers).

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of the purpose of formulating corporate strategies.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	4	To gain a competitive advantage	4.43	0.66	88.6	Very High
2	1	To guide company businesses	4.36	0.56	87.2	Very High
3	2	To improve allocation of resources	4.13	0.64	82.6	High
4	5	To meet the stakeholders expectations	4.10	0.60	82.0	High
5	3	To attract the new consumers	4.01	0.88	80.2	High
Total			4.21	0.47	84.2	Very High

4.3.2.4 The patterns used in the strategic planning process

Results related to the corporate strategy formulation patterns, which are dominant within the companies are shown in Figure (4.12). It is found that the vast majority (91.8%) of all surveyed companies are using the deliberate approach in formulating their corporate strategies and only 8.2% are using the emergent approach.

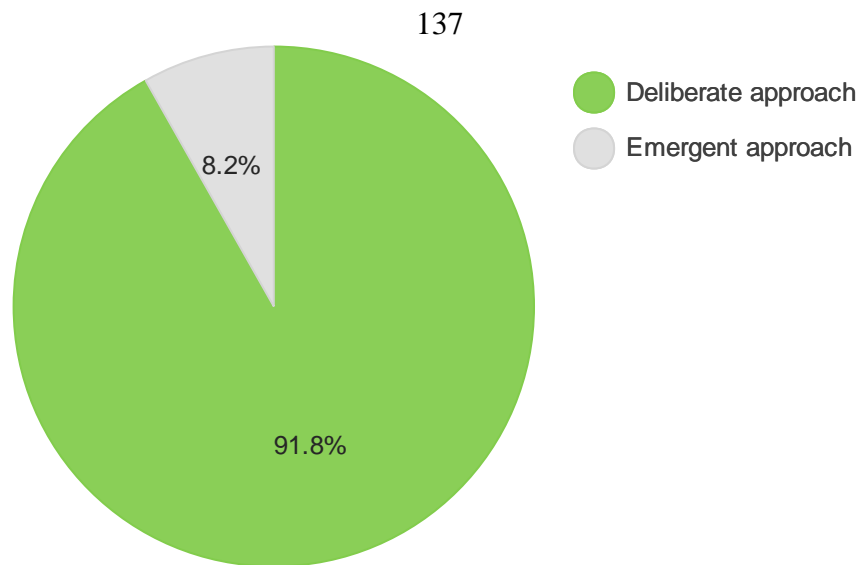


Figure 4.12: Distribution of sample companies according to their patterns used in corporate strategy formulation

4.3.2.5 The degree of enforcement of the practices of corporate strategies formulation

This question aims to explore the practices applied by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies in formulating their corporate strategies, and the degree of application of these practices. The respondents were asked to indicate which practices are currently being used in their companies on a five-point scale.

Table (4.8) below shows that the total degree of procedures that are followed within corporate strategies formulation process was (87.0) which suggest very high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (Goals setting). The lowest was for the item (Industry analysis).

Table 4.8 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of procedures within corporate strategies formulation process.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	4	Goals setting	4.55	0.68	91.0	Very High
2	1	Vision statement	4.54	0.62	90.8	Very High
3	5	Internal corporate environment appraisal	4.45	0.62	89.0	Very High
4	11	Risk Identification & Assessment	4.43	0.72	88.6	Very High
5	6	External corporate environment appraisal	4.39	0.69	87.8	Very High
6	2	Mission statement	4.37	0.67	87.4	Very High
7	9	Competitor analysis	4.35	0.76	87.0	Very High
8	12	Selecting corporate strategies	4.35	0.65	87.0	Very High
9	10	Company core competences setting	4.29	0.75	85.8	Very High
10	7	Organization structure	4.27	0.66	85.4	Very High
11	3	Core values	4.12	0.79	82.4	High
12	8	Industry analysis	4.06	0.83	81.2	High
Total			4.35	0.47	87.0	Very High

4.3.2.6 The extent are some practices effective in the formulation of corporate strategies

This question aims to explore the practices applied by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies in formulating their corporate strategies, and what is the degree of application of these practices.

Table (4.9) below shows that the total degree of company experience with corporate strategies formulation process was (78.2) which suggests high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (a list of

company's Strategic goals have been developed).The lowest was for the item (Participants of external specialists and experts in the corporate strategies formulation practices) is high.

Table 4.9 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of effectiveness of strategic planning practices in formulating corporate strategies.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	5	You have developed a list of company's strategic goals.	4.17	0.68	83.4	High
2	17	Statements of company's vision, mission and values are powerful tools for defining and guiding your company's team to create their future strategies	4.08	0.71	81.6	High
3	6	You have developed a list of internal factors that are affected corporate strategies formulation process.	4.08	0.61	81.6	High
4	9	Company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities	4.06	0.66	81.2	High
5	18	The ISO Certifications serve as the basis for the corporate strategies, which support strategic issues specific to improve quality and develop plans to achieve it.	4.04	0.81	80.8	High
6	15	The Company's Management fully considers risks in formulating their corporate strategy.	4.02	0.68	80.4	High
7	8	Food companies review its environmental risks (both external and internal) annually	4.02	0.72	80.4	High
8	16	Corporate strategies are appropriately communicated as it relates to objectives targeted by the different company departments.	4.01	0.58	80.2	High
9	13	Strategic analysis tools such as SWOT analysis are helpful and direct the company to formulate its future strategies	4.01	0.76	80.2	High

10	14	Corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes	3.97	0.66	79.4	High
11	7	You have developed a list of external factors that are affected corporate strategies formulation process	3.97	0.82	79.4	High
12	2	Corporate strategies formulation process involves numerous participants at only top and middle levels of your company.	3.93	0.83	78.6	High
13	11	Strategic decisions are reached based on circumstances as they arise.	3.91	0.65	78.2	High
14	10	There are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies	3.82	0.72	76.4	High
15	12	We frequently adjust corporate strategies to adapt them to changing condition	3.81	0.75	76.2	High
16	4	The procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies	3.81	0.71	76.2	High
17	1	Written guidelines exist to structure corporate strategies formulation	3.52	0.95	70.4	High
18	3	Participants of external specialists (experts) in the corporate strategies formulation practices is high.	3.20	1.22	64.0	Moderate
Total			3.91	0.43	78.2	High

4.3.2.7 The level of experience and familiarity of food companies in corporate strategy formulation practices

This question aims to examine the extent of the experience and knowledge of these companies in implementing corporate strategy formulations.

Figure (4.13) below reported that 58.11% of food companies have a moderate experience of the process of corporate strategy formulations, 37.84% of companies have a long experience, and only 4.05% of companies have a low experience.

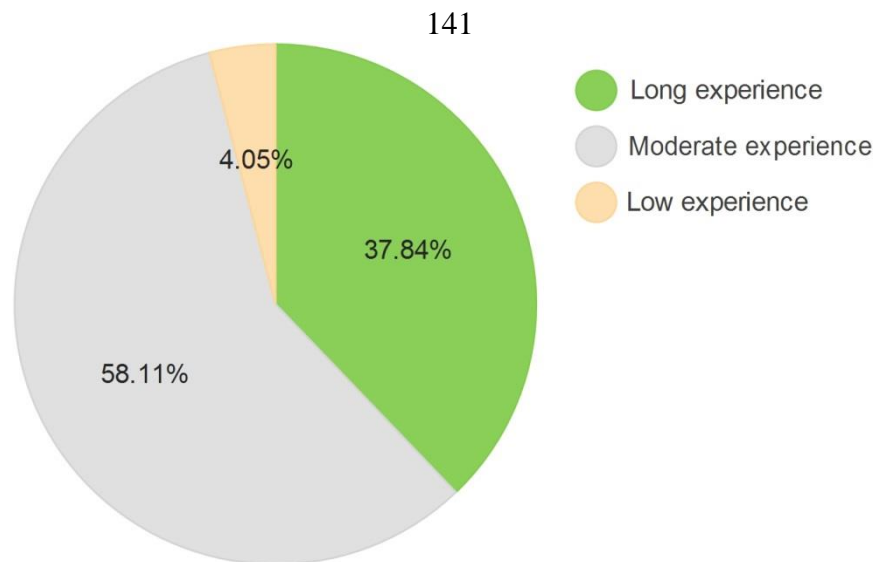


Figure 4.13: Distribution of a study sample according to the profile of the respondents in the companies' survey

4.3.2.8 Internal factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process

Identification of strategic internal factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process was the aim of this question. In this question, the tested company were asked to rate the effected level of the internal factors on corporate strategies formulation process using a five-point scale.

Table (4.10) below shows that the total degree of internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process was (80.8%), which suggests a high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (Company Leadership) and the lowest was for the item (price and cost management).

Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	1	Company Leadership	4.33	0.66	86.6	Very High
2	5	Food quality and safety policy	4.32	0.72	86.4	Very High
3	9	Company's infrastructure	4.18	0.71	83.6	High
4	4	Marketing techniques	4.17	0.76	83.4	High
5	6	Manufacturing techniques (technology)	4.13	0.74	82.6	High
6	10	Company resources	4.12	0.68	82.4	High
7	3	Financial position	4.02	0.79	80.4	High
8	8	Corporate Culture	3.83	0.81	76.6	High
9	2	Managing HR	3.75	0.88	75.0	High
10	7	price and cost management	3.50	0.99	70.0	High
Total			4.04	0.42	80.8	High

4.3.2.9 External factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process

The identification of the strategic external factors affecting corporate strategies formulation process was the aim of this question. In this question, the investigated companies were asked to rate the effected level on the external factors on corporate strategies formulation process using five point scale.

Table (4.11) below shows that the total degree of the external factors which may affect the corporate strategies formulation process was (79.2%) which suggest high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item

(changes in government regulations) and the lowest was for the item (Interest rates).

Table 4.11 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of external factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	7	Changes in government regulations	4.37	0.80	87.4	Very High
2	8	Availability of raw materials	4.25	0.82	85.0	Very High
3	3	Advancement of technology	4.14	0.78	82.8	High
4	1	Consumer's Behavior and trends	4.14	0.77	82.8	High
5	4	Competitors	4.12	0.81	82.4	High
6	2	Supply chain network	3.95	0.80	79.0	High
7	6	Market structure (industry)	3.87	0.73	77.4	High
8	5	Tax rates	3.79	0.96	75.8	High
9	10	Global requirements	3.74	0.86	74.8	High
10	9	Interest rates	3.18	1.18	63.6	Moderate
Total			3.96	0.54	79.2	High

4.3.2.10 The possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies

This question aimed to investigate the obstacles affecting the corporate strategies formulation process, by indicating the degree of frequency to the possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies also using the five-point scale.

Table (4.12) below shows that the total degree of possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies was (65.4%), which suggests a moderate level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the

item Market uncertainty). The lowest was for the item (Resistance to change by top management).

Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	2	Market uncertainty	3.62	0.94	72.4	High
2	1	Time constraints	3.56	0.82	71.2	High
3	4	Budget constraints	3.41	1.09	68.2	High
4	7	Government polices	3.39	1.08	67.8	Moderate
5	8	Changes in technology	3.32	0.95	66.4	Moderate
6	3	Lack of expertise	3.10	1.09	62.0	Moderate
7	5	Resistance to change (by staff)	2.95	0.98	59.0	Moderate
8	6	Resistance to change (by top management)	2.77	1.06	55.4	Moderate
Total			3.27	0.72	65.4	Moderate

4.3.2.11 The degree of using strategic analysis tools in formulating corporate strategies

This question aims to find out the top strategic analysis tools used in formulating the corporate strategies.

Figure (4.14) shows that the companies with the highest usage rate of tools were large companies (more than 250 employees) with a 100% rate of usage followed by medium-sized companies (50-249 employees) with an 85% rate of usage. Micro-sized companies (1-9 employees) had a 60% rate of usage and small-sized companies (10-49 employees) had a 48% rate of usage.

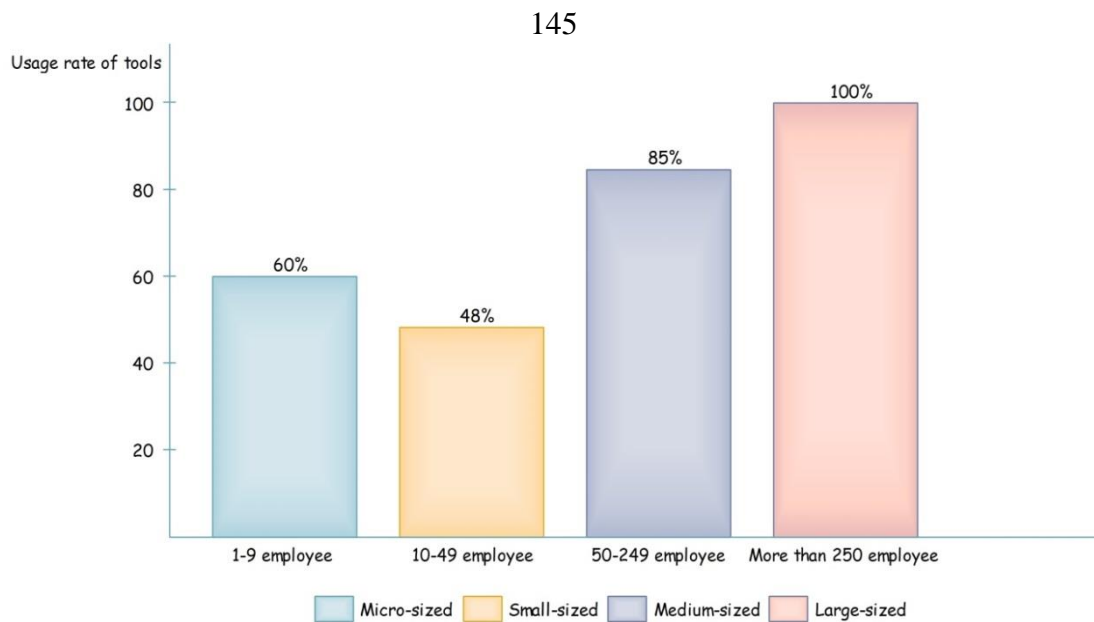


Figure 4.14: Distribution of sample companies according to their usage rate of strategic analysis tools in corporate strategy formulation

The most commonly used strategic analysis tools in the Palestinian companies is the SWOT analysis tool. Figure (4.15) shows that 75% of the companies surveyed use this tool. Moreover, 8% of the companies use a PEST analysis, 5% of the companies use Porter's five forces model, and 12% of the companies use a mixture of these tools as well as other tools such as a risks matrix as well as a market, and financial analysis. This does not mean that other tools are not used. The main focus was to find the most commonly used tools; not which of them are not used.

The results showed that there are large gaps in the use of tools between large, small and medium-sized (SMEs) companies. It is noted that all the big-sized companies use a wide range of these tools in the process of corporate strategy formulation while the small and medium-sized (SMEs) companies use a few of these tools. In addition, there are companies that have never used any of these tools at all.

Figure (4.15) show the tools which are commonly used in food companies for decision-making strategies.

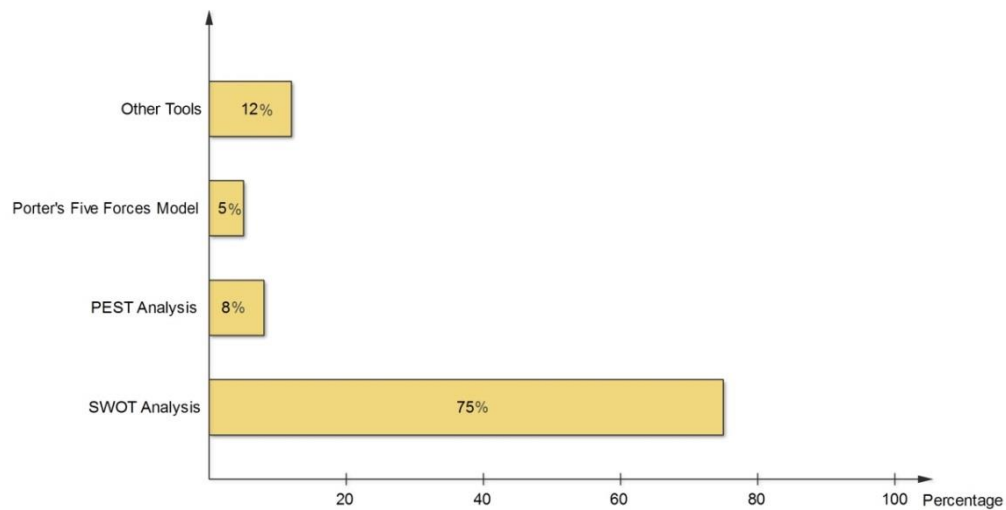


Figure 4.15: Distribution of sample companies according to analytical methods used in strategic analysis

4.3.2.12 The time horizon covered by corporate strategy planning

Figure (4.16) below summarizes the covered time horizon that is used in the food companies for corporate strategies. The majority of the food companies (50%) indicated that the time horizon covered were up to 1 to 3 years, (37.04%) some of the companies were up to 4 to 5 years and (4.05%) of other companies were up to 6 to 10 years and even more than 10 years for each.

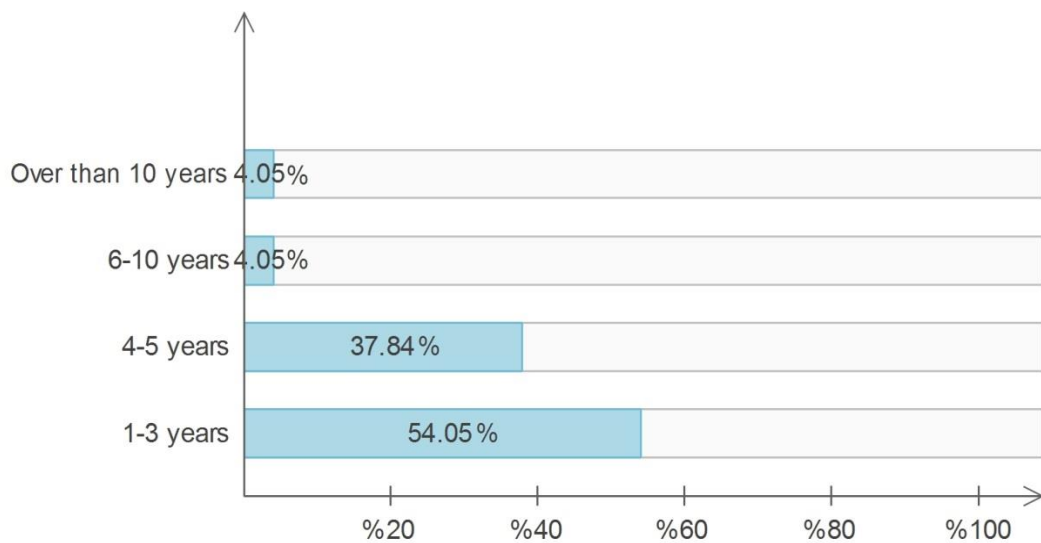


Figure 4.16: The coverage period for the corporate strategy

4.3.2.13 The current corporate strategies adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies

Investigated companies were asked to respond to this question by indicating their level of applying of these corporate strategies that are considered the adopted current corporate strategies by the global food manufacturing industry companies as captured in the previous studies.

Table (4.13) below reflects that the total degree of corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies was (82.0%), which suggests a high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (Growth and expansion Strategy), the lowest was for the item (Social Responsibility Strategy).

Table 4.13 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food industry.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	5	Growth and expansion Strategy	4.40	0.59	88.0	Very High
2	3	Competitiveness Strategy	4.35	0.65	87.0	Very High
3	8	Marketing Strategy	4.27	0.78	85.4	Very High
4	4	Manufacturing Strategy	4.22	0.65	84.4	Very High
5	9	Financial Strategy	4.12	0.85	82.4	High
6	7	Innovation Strategy	4.01	0.88	80.2	High
7	6	Human Resources Strategy	3.98	0.71	79.6	High
8	1	Sustainability Strategy	3.91	0.98	78.2	High
9	10	Supply Chain Strategy	3.87	0.81	77.4	High
10	2	Social Responsibility Strategy	3.63	0.82	72.6	High
Total			4.10	0.64	82.0	High

4.3.2.14 Issues affecting selecting corporate strategies successfully

This question aims to clarify the effect of some items in selecting the corporate strategies, according to the study sampled for the Palestinian food companies.

Table (4.14) below illustrates that the total degree of importance for each issue below for any company to select corporate strategies successfully was (82.4%) which suggest high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the item (Quality control).The lowest was for the item (Global food company's corporate strategies).

Table 4.14 Descriptive Statistics and Estimated level of importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully.

No.	No. in the Survey	Item	Means	standard deviations	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	5	Quality control	4.67	0.55	93.4	Very High
2	1	Analysis of competitors	4.36	0.69	87.2	Very High
3	4	External environment analysis	4.33	0.64	86.6	Very High
4	14	Adopts corporate strategy that creates competitive advantages for its core business.	4.28	0.65	85.6	Very High
5	3	Internal environment analysis	4.27	0.68	85.4	Very High
6	12	Future risks	4.27	0.70	85.4	Very High
7	11	Changes in markets	4.13	0.66	82.6	High
8	7	Staff development	4.13	0.74	82.6	High
9	13	The corporate strategies are regularly updated	4.08	0.65	81.6	High
10	8	Research and development	4.08	0.77	81.6	High
11	2	Food industry analysis	4.02	0.73	80.4	High
12	6	Long range planning	3.82	1.20	76.4	High
13	9	Relations with other industry (e.g agricultural industry)	3.67	0.96	76.4	High
14	10	Global food company's corporate strategies	3.60	0.88	72.0	High
Total			4.12	0.44	82.4	High

4.3.2.15 Participants in the corporate strategy formulation process

This question aims to identify the parties that are directly or indirectly involved in the corporate strategy formulation process according to the Palestinian food companies sampled.

Figure (4.17) below summarizes the main results of the study questions. All the surveyed companies confirmed the level of participation in the formulation of strategic decisions as follows: board of directors (81.08%),

executive managers (75.68%), department managers (52.7%), managers of different divisions (37.84%), external experts and consultants (29.73%), and external parties such as customers and suppliers (2.7%).

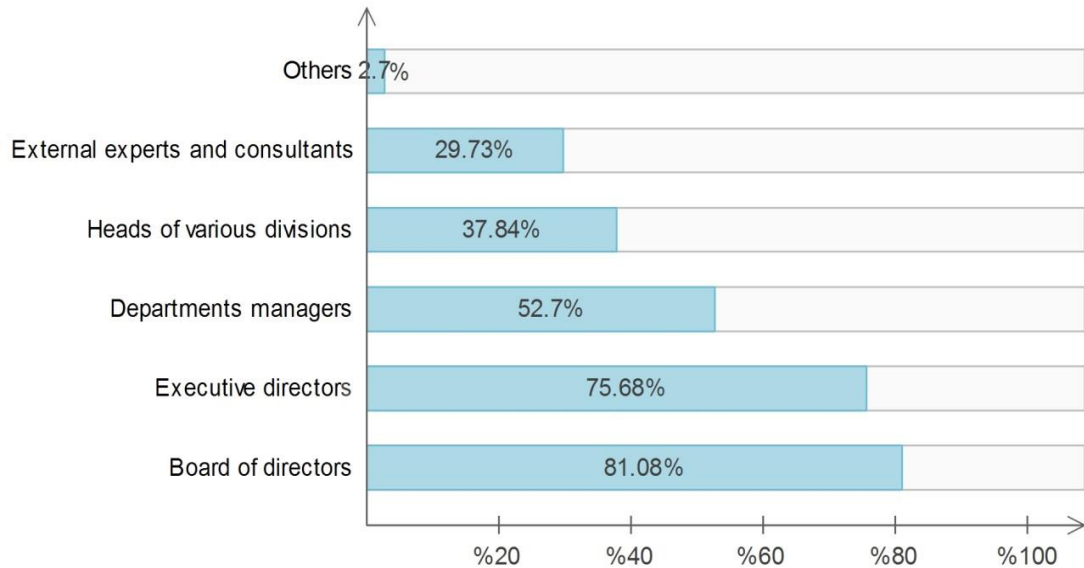


Figure 4.17: Distribution of sample companies according to the level of participation in the corporate strategy formulation process

4.3.2.16 Summary of results of the study questions

The main results of the study questions are:

- Half of the companies' respondents (50%) have been in operation for more than 20 years.
- There is no existing specific functional unit related to strategic planning. The top-level management and/or board members were the main participants in the corporate strategy formulation practices in the companies' respondents.

- The majority of the food companies in Palestine confirmed that the corporate strategy formulation practices are more deliberate than emergent in nature.
- From all the investigated companies, only 9.46% used a strategic analysis tool to assist them in formulating their corporate strategies.
- A third (75%) of the surveyed companies used the SWOT analysis tool to evaluate their business environment.
- The most common time horizon of the corporate strategies was one to three years from the Palestinian investigated companies' point of view.
- The following stated are the most implemented practices in the company's strategic formulation: Preparing the strategic objectives, vision, internal and external assessment, risk assessment, external environment assessment, mission statement, competitors exploration, selecting the appropriate strategies, and setting the qualifications.
- More than half of the company respondents (58.11%) indicated that they possess intermediate expertise in formulating their strategies and the remaining 37.84% indicated possessing massive expertise in it.
- The internal factors that affect the strategy formulation process are the company's leadership, quality policy, product safety, infrastructure, marketing techniques, manufacturing techniques, and the financial status of the company.
- The external factors that affect the strategy formulation process are the changes in the governmental laws and regulations, the availability of the

raw materials, the technology advancement, the customer's attitude and behavior, and the competitors.

- The constraints that affect the strategy formulation process are markets, time-frame, and the budget constraints.
- The most common time horizon is 1-3 years for the selected companies; the time horizon 4-5 years is the intermediate most common time.
- The most applied strategies were growing and expansion strategies, competitiveness, marketing, and manufacturing. The least applied strategies are financial, innovation, human resource, sustainability, and social responsibility.
- The most considered during strategy formulation process are products qualities, competitive analysis, external factors towards the markets, competitive advantage, internal factors of the company, and the risks.

4.3.3 Results related to Study hypotheses

Shapiro-Wilk, Kolmogorov-Smirnov, and Lilliefors tests were considered the most common statistical tests for checking the normality assumption, especially, in a case like this study where the sample size was greater than 30 (Razali and Yap, 2011).

Therefore, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests have been used to detect whether the collected data followed the normal distribution. These tests were chosen for their power in detecting non-normality compared to the other tests (Ghasemi and Zahediasl, 2012), as is presented in Table (4.15) below.

Table 4.15 Normality test of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.

Total degree	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S)			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	0.087	74	0.200	0.947	74	0.004

*** The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.**

It is evident in Table (4.15) that the significance for the Shapiro-Wilk test, “known as the p-value” (0.004), listed in the above output is less than 0.05, which indicates that the data is not normally distributed since there is no significant difference between the data and the normally distributed data. Also, the significant value for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is 0.200, which is more than 0.05. This indicates that nonparametric tests (Kruskal-Wallis Test and Mann-Whitney Test) should be used instead of parametric ones (two independent sample t-tests and a One-Way ANOVA Test).

In this study, Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney Tests were used for hypotheses H1 to H8 to examine the relationship assumed between demographic variables and the formulation process for the corporate strategies in the Palestinian food industry.

A Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to assess the relationship between some independent variables and the formulation process of corporate strategies. The test was executed for hypotheses H9 to H26. This test is based on assuming the null hypothesis (H_0) – the existence of no significant relationship between the different groups. The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and it is significant when it is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. H1 indicates Hypothesis 1, H2 indicates Hypothesis 2, and so on. Figure (4.18) below shows the hypotheses tested in this study.

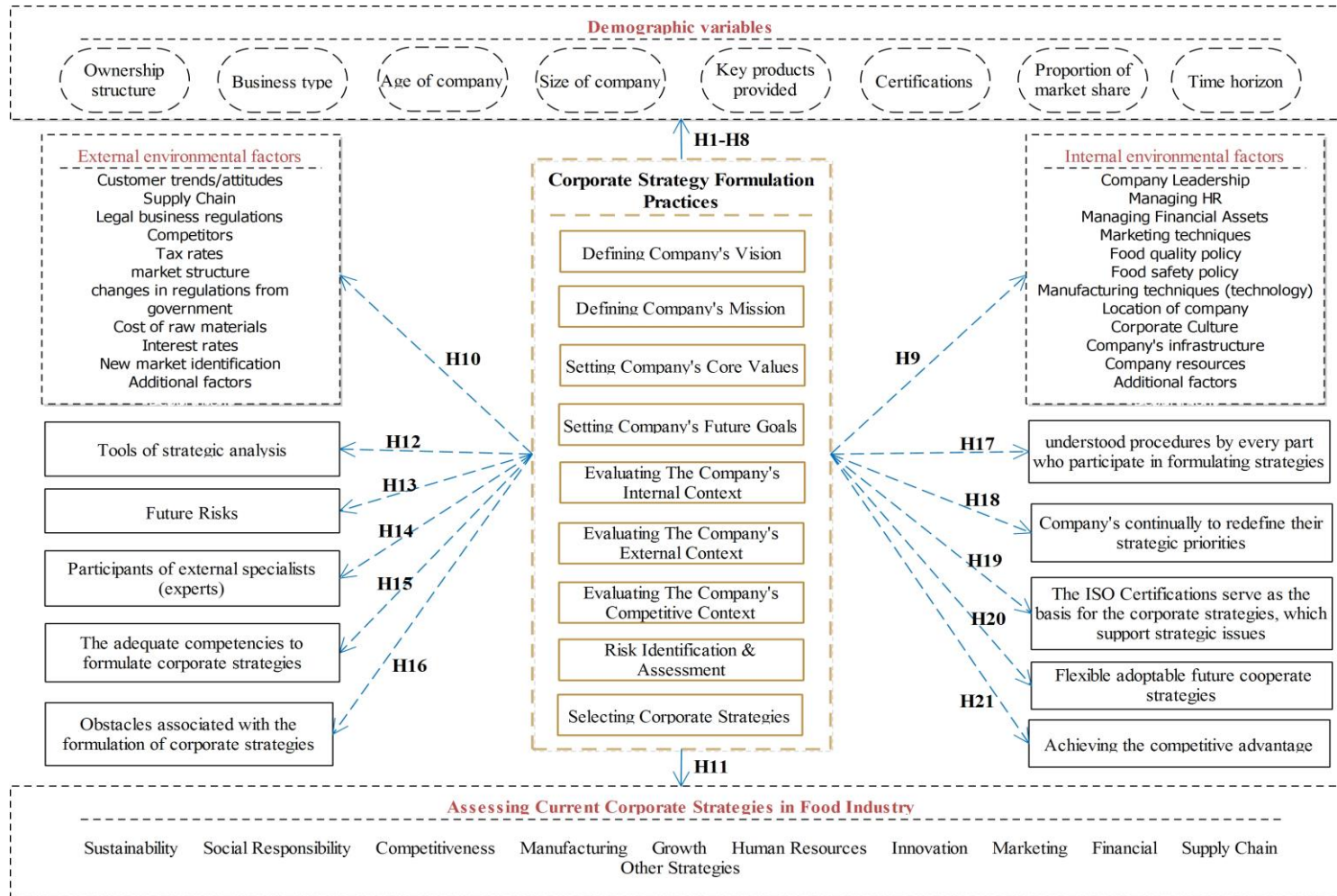


Figure 4.18: Research conceptual framework

The following subsections will contain the hypotheses that have been tested and the results are the following:

4.3.3.1 Impact the ownership structure on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the ownership structure for the company.

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.16) below show the results:

Table 4.16 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of ownership structure for the company.

Ownership structure for the company		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Private limited company	51	37.12	3.800	3	0.284
	Public limited company	5	53.80			
	Public ordinary company	7	38.21			
	Ordinary company limited	11	31.41			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.16) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) about the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of ownership structure

for the company. The significant value was (0.284) which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.2 Impact business type (Family business) on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of business type (family business).

To investigate this hypothesis Mann-Whitney test was used, and Table (4.17) below shows the results:

Table 4.17 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of Business type (Family business).

Business type (Family business		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.*
Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry	Yes	25	38.24	956.00	594.000	-0.212	0.832
	No	49	37.12	1819.00			
	Total	74					

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.17) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) test about the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of business type (Family business). The significant value was (0.832) which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.3 Impact age of company on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the age of the company variable.

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.18) below shows the results:

Table 4.18 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of age of company.

Age of company		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	0-5 years	8	33.31	6.909	4	0.141
	6-10 years	7	44.43			
	11-15 years	11	23.36			
	16-20 years	11	42.95			
	Over than 20 years	37	39.68			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.18) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) test, on the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of the company experience. The significant value was (0.141) which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.4 Impact the company size on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation

practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of company size (number of employees).

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.19) below shows the result:

Table 4.19 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of company size (the number of employees).

Company size (number of employees)		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	1-10 employee	10	25.10	11.233	3	0.011*
	11-49 employee	31	32.45			
	50-249 employee	26	44.08			
	More than 250 employee	7	53.14			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.19) shows that there are statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) test, on the corporate strategies formulation practices in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of the company size (number of employees) to the favour of more than 250 employees. The significant value was (0.011) which is less than (0.05).

4.3.3.5 Impact the subsector (key products provided by the company) on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha =0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation

practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of subsector (key products currently provided by the company).

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.20) below shows the result:

Table 4.20 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of subsector (key products currently provided by the company).

Subsector (key products currently provided by the company)		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Meat – poultry products	5	33.00	5.793	10	0.832
	Fruit and vegetable - pikling, freezing and canning	5	43.20			
	Oils and fats products	7	38.36			
	Dairy products	12	41.04			
	Grain, mills and starch products	6	34.08			
	Bakery products	2	18.00			
	Sugar, confectionary and chocolate products	7	40.86			
	Animal feeds products	4	48.75			
	Drinks and mineral water	6	26.00			
	Agri-Products & Dates & Makrona	8	36.19			
	Other food products	12	38.83			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.20) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) test, on the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of subsector (key

products currently provided by the company). The significant value was (0.832) which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.6 Impact certifications on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of having certification.

To investigate this hypothesis Mann-Whitney test was used, and the Table (4.21) below shows the results:

Table 4.21 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable having certification.

Having certification		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	No	36	35.44	1276.00	610.000	0.000	0.422
	Yes	38	39.45	1499.00			
	Total	74					

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.21) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) test, on the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of having certification. The significant value was (0.422), which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.7 Impact the proportion of market share on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation

practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.22) below shows the results:

Table 4.22 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.

The proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets.		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	1-10%	14	39.64	12.781	4	0.012*
	11-15%	15	35.70			
	16-20%	10	35.05			
	21-25%	16	24.22			
	Over than 25%	19	49.82			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.22) shows that there are statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$), on the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of the the proportion of market share currently in Palestinian markets to the favour of over than 25%. The significant value was (0.012) which is less than (0.05).

4.3.3.8 Impact usual planning duration for corporate strategies on CSFP

There are no significant differences ($\alpha=0.05$) between the response's degree of the study sample regarding the corporate strategies formulation practices

(CSFP) in the Palestinian food industry attributed to the variable of usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company.

To investigate this hypothesis, Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the Table (4.23) below shows the results:

Table 4.23 Kruskal-Wallis test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of the usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company

Usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company		N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	1-3 years	40	35.69	2.516	3	0.472
	4-5 years	28	38.71			
	6-10 years	3	32.83			
	Over than 10 years	3	55.00			
	Total	74				

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table (4.23) shows that there are no statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) test, on the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry, attributed to the variable of usual planning duration for corporate strategies in the company. The significant value was (0.472) which is more than (0.05).

4.3.3.9 Interaction effects between internal environment factors and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and internal environmental factors.

In order to test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.24).

Table 4.24 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and internal environment factors

Variable	Internal environment factors	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.526*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.24) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian Food Industry and internal environment factors. The correlation was (0.526) at significant level of (0.000), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.10 Interaction effects between external environment factors and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and external environmental factors.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.25).

Table 4.25 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and external environment factors

Variable	External environment factors	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.281*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.25) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices and external environment factors. The correlation was (0.281) at significant level of (0.015), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.11 Interaction effects between the common corporate strategies adopted and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and common corporate strategies adopted by companies.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used and the results are showed in Table (4.26).

Table 4.26 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and common corporate strategies adopted by companies

Variable	Common corporate strategies adopted by companies	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.26) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices and common corporate strategies adopted by companies. The correlation was (0.476) at significant level of (0.000), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.12 Interaction effects between the strategic analysis tools and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and strategic analysis tools.

To investigate this hypothesis Mann-Whitney test was used, and the Table (4.27) below shows the results:

Table 4.27 Mann-Whitney Test about CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry attributed to the variable of strategic analysis tools.

Strategic analysis tools		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Sig.*
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Yes	30	27.75	832.00	594.000	-3.230	0.001*
	No	44	44.15	1942.00			
	Total	74					

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.27) shows that there is statistical significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) about the corporate strategies formulation practices (CSFP) in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry attributed to the variable of strategic analysis tools. The significant value was (0.001), which is less than (0.05).

4.3.3.13 Interaction effects between the future risk and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and future risk.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.28).

Table 4.28 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and future risk.

Variable	Future risk	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.303*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.28) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices and future risk. The correlation was (0.303) at significant level of (0.009), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.14 Interaction effects between the participants of external experts and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the high level of external specialists or expert involvement in the corporate strategies formulation practices.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.29).

Table 4.29 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and participants of external specialists or experts in the corporate strategies formulation practices

Variable	Participants of external specialists or experts in the corporate strategies formulation practices is high	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.271*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.29) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between risk in the surrounding environment and risk identification & assessment in the Palestinian food companies. The correlation was (0.271) at significant level of (0.020), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.15 Interaction effects between the adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the company's competences to formulate its strategy.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.30).

Table 4.30 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and there are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies

Variable	There are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.351*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002
	N	74

**** The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

Table (4.30) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and there are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies. The correlation was (0.351) at significant level of (0.002), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.16 Interaction effects between the obstacles associated with the process and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.31).

Table 4.31 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies

Variable	Obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.017*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.887
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.31) shows that there is no significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies. The correlation was (0.017) at significant level of (0.887) which means there is a weak relationship between the two variables but not significant.

4.3.3.17 Interaction effects between understanding the procedures adopted and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and understanding the procedures fully by every part who participates in formulating strategies.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.32).

Table 4.32 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and the procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies

Variable	The procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.302*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.32) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies. The correlation was (0.302) at significant level of (0.009), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.18 Interaction effects between redefining the strategic priorities and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the compnay's continuous refinement of its strategic priorities.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.33).

Table 4.33 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities

Variable	Company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.304*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.008
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.33) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities s. The correlation was (0.304) at significant level of (0.008), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.19 Interaction effects between the ISO Certifications and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the ISO Certifications.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.34).

Table 4.34 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and the ISO Certifications.

Variable	The ISO Certifications serve as the basis for the corporate strategies, which support strategic issues specific to improve quality and develop plans to achieve it.	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.370*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.34) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the ISO Certifications serve as the basis for the corporate strategies, which support strategic issues specific to improve quality and develop plans to achieve it.. The correlation was (0.370) at significant level of (0.001), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.20 Interaction effects between flexibility of corporate strategies to be adaptable to future changes and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and flexibility and adaptability for corporate strategies to be adaptable in the future.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.35).

Table 4.35 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes.

Variable	Corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.469*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	74

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table (4.35) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.01$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes. The correlation was (0.469) at significant level of (0.000), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.21 Interaction effects between achieving the competitive advantage and CSFP

There is a statistical relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$) between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and achieving the competitive advantage of their businesses.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson correlation matrix has been used, and the results are showed in Table (4.36).

Table 4.36 Pearson correlation matrix for the relationship between CSFP and achieving the competitive advantage of their businesses.

Variable	achieving the competitive advantage of their bussineses	
CSFP in the Palestinian Food Industry	Pearson Correlation	0.421 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	74

*** **The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

Table (4.36) shows that there is significant statistical positive relationship at ($\alpha=0.05$), between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes. The correlation was (0.421) at significant level of (0.000), which means a positive relationship between the two variables.

4.3.3.22 Summary of results of hypothesis testing

As explained elsewhere (in Figure 4.18 at section 4.3.3.1), the proposed research hypotheses in a conceptual framework for this study were all tested in previous sections. The result of the tested hypotheses have been presented separately. A short overview of the tested hypotheses results are presented below in Table (4.37) as the follow:

Table 4.37 Summary of the tested hypotheses results

Hypothesis No.	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Type of test	Path Coefficient Direct Effect			Result
				Chi-Square z	df	Sig.*	
1	CSFP^	Ownership structure for the company	K-W	3.800	3	0.284	Rejected
2	CSFP^	Family business	M-W	-0.212	--	0.832	Rejected
3	CSFP^	Age of company	K-W	6.909	4	0.141	Rejected
4	CSFP^	Company size (number of employees)	K-W	11.233	3	0.011 *	Accepted
5	CSFP^	Subsector (key products currently provided by the company)	K-W	5.793	10	0.832	Rejected
6	CSFP^	Having certification	M-W	0.000	--	0.422	Rejected
7	CSFP^	The proportion of market share	K-W	12.781	4	0.012 *	Accepted
8	CSFP^	Usual planning duration for corporate strategies	K-W	2.516	3	0.472	Rejected
9	CSFP^	Internal environment factors	PC	0.526*	--	0.000	Accepted
10	CSFP^	External environment factors	PC	0.281*	--	0.01	Accepted
11	CSFP^	Common corporate strategies adopted by companies	PC	0.476*	--	0.000	Accepted
12	CSFP^	Strategic analysis tools	M-W	-3.230	--	0.001 *	Accepted
13	CSFP^	Future risk	PC	0.303*	--	0.009	Accepted
14	CSFP^	Participants of external specialists or experts in the corporate strategies formulation practices is high	PC	0.271*	--	0.020	Accepted
15	CSFP^	there are adequate competencies to formulate	PC	0.351*	--	0.002	Accepted

		corporate strategies					
16	CSFP^	obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	PC	0.017	--	0.887	Rejected
17	CSFP^	The procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies	PC	0.302*	--	0.009	Accepted
18	CSFP^	Company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities	PC	0.304*	--	0.008	Accepted
19	CSFP^	The ISO Certifications serve as the basis for the corporate strategies, which support strategic issues specific to improve quality and develop plans to achieve it.	PC	0.370*	--	0.001	Accepted
20	CSFP^	Corporate strategies are flexible to be adaptable to future changes	PC	0.370*	--	0.000	Accepted
21	CSFP^	Competitive advantage	PC	0.421*		0.000	Accepted

**** The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.**

Abbreviations: ^ CSFP indicates to the corporate strategies formulation practices, df, Degree of freedom; (K-W), Kruskal-Wallis test; M-W, Mann-Whitney test; PC, Pearson correlation.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter included the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected data. Various tests such as Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney, and

Pearson's correlation were used according to the variables and to the study needs. Each of these findings will be discussed in specific detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Framework Development

Chapter Five

Discussion and Framework Development

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the discussion on the research' results, which were extracted from the data analysis within the five main sections. In the first section, the strategies formulation phase is elaborated on by covering the purpose, the pattern used and the target beneficiaries. The second section involves discussing the implemented practices in the process of formulating strategies. In the third section, the affecting elements towards formulating strategies are presented. The fourth section includes reflecting the currently implemented strategies by the Palestinian companies. The fifth section presents the managerial framework that was concluded based on the data analysis and results.

5.2 Strategic Planning Process

The findings explored in this study indicated that the vast majority (92%) of the Palestinian food manufacturing industries embraced the deliberate strategies rather than the emergent strategies. But simultaneously, they were able to develop the company's vision, mission statement and strategic goals and objectives, even in the case of emerging strategies. Bozkurt and Kalkan (2013) presented similar results, which reflected the Turkish manufacturing companies adopting the deliberate pattern in their strategy formulation process unlike the results of Leitner (2014), which reflected

that the emergent pattern was demonstrated in the Austrian SMEs context. These results can be attributed to the rapid spread of concepts of strategic planning in developing countries.

According to the surveys performed in this study, the vast majority of the Palestinian food companies were categorized as small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which means these companies employ less than 250 workers. The results obtained for Hypothesis 4 (see subsection 4.3.3.4 in Chapter Four) indicated that there is an existence of a strong positive correlation between the company size and of the corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP). Majama and Magang's (2017) and Waihenya (2014) and Kohtamäki et al's. (2008) respective results supported the argument that SMEs needs to strengthen their strategic planning concepts and activities.

Another result this study revealed is that the majority of the Palestinian food companies are dominated by family-owned businesses (66%). The interviews revealed that the family members are the decision-makers in the company; consequently, they have a large influence on shaping the strategies, which did not support hypothesis 2 (see subsection 4.3.3.2 in Chapter Four), which posed a relation between the family-own companies and the company's strategies formulation process since the majority of the companies that were exposed to the interviews are family-owned. Thus, the ratio balance compared with the companies that are not owned by a family led to rejecting the hypothesis.

However, all the variables presented reflect the ownership structure, company's experience, their lifespan, main field of activity (subsector), certifications, location, exporting activities, selling points, and usual planning duration; however, none had an impact on the formulation of the corporate strategies, as shown by the hypotheses tested – 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8 (see subsection 4.3.3 in Chapter Four). On the contrary, Mbithi (2016) and Gică and Balint (2012) confirmed that there is a relationship between the company's lifespan and the formulation of corporate strategies. Also, the company's size and proportion in the market share had a positive link in the formulation of corporate strategies (see subsection 4.3.3.4 and 4.3.3.7 in Chapter Four), as found by Anna (2015), Afonina and Chalupský (2013), and Bashir et al. (2013). Gică's (2011) study found there are no differences in strategic planning activities in United Kingdom SMEs attributed to the variables of company size, the main field of activity and the company's experience.

The interviews, on the other hand, confirmed the results linkage existence between the aggregate indicator of the strategic planning and written plans development whereby the firms develop their written plans, which go through a more rigorous and comprehensive strategic planning process.

Both the interview and survey results evaluated the purpose of formulating corporate strategies from the Palestinian food manufacturing companies' perspectives. These results matched with Collis and Montgomery (1998) and Porter (1996) who stated that the gaining a sustainable competitive advantage is a first indicator towards the process of formulating corporate

strategies whereas establishing the company's businesses guides is considered a second indicator, and the improvement in the allocation of resources, reaching the fulfilment the all stakeholders' expectations, leading towards attracting new consumers for this process. This result supported hypothesis 21 (see subsection 4.3.3.21 in Chapter Four), which reflected that the Palestinian companies are seeking to enhance their competitive status among other companies through formulating distinguished strategies. The purposes of the companies formulating their strategies varied, pinpointing that the competitive advantage was considered the most vital purpose to shape the appropriate strategies by referring to Porter's Generic Competitive Strategy, since it has a relationship with the corporate strategy formulation practice (CSFP) and this was reflected under result hypothesis 21 (See subsection 4.3.3.21 in Chapter Four). Based on the studies' results, the company's mandate works towards the future through possessing this competitive advantage for maintaining survival and ensuring the customer's demands are met. Therefore, all the companies' interest is creating a competitive advantage. Most of these companies focus on making the product itself a competitive advantage then shedding their focus on the product's quality, afterward the service before and after selling, finally focusing on the markets' variables quick responsiveness.

In this study, many important elements were highlighted, which are not available in any other study e.g. communication channel within the company's different management levels, the commitment of the higher management and their experience in the corporate strategy frameworks.

Sołoducho-Pelc (2016) agrees with the interviews' result, which indicates for being the time horizon a very important factor to be in the strategic formulation process. Nevertheless, the result of Hypothesis 8 (See subsection 4.3.3.8 in Chapter Four) indicated the total opposite, namely that there was no statistically significant relationship between corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP) and the usual planning duration for strategies in the company.

The interviews confirmed that the time-frame used to determine the period of updating strategies is three years. It is also used as a measuring tool of the strategic plans' implementation and progress as well as for rescanning the environment. In a similar way, the survey results indicated that the food companies must re-examine their environment status annually in order to become acclimatized to the changes anticipated in the short term. Not doing so could lead companies' corporate strategies towards failure. In addition, to match the needs in this process and to be flexible enough with the re-formulation of the strategic objectives and priorities regularly and continuously.

The time horizon was defined as the companies that lasted for more than five years. More than half of the Palestinian companies have declared that their corporate strategies last a relatively short time period, from one to three years (since a coverage period for the strategy lies between one to three years), reiterating the results of Koufopoulos and Chryssochoidis's (2000) and Glaister et al's. (2009) research. On the contrary, Odera (2014)

and Sołoducho-Pelc (2015) confirmed that a horizon of the corporate strategies could cover more than three years.

The results of the data analysis are extracted from two main sources of information gathering: interviews and surveys. Both incorporate the parties involved in the process of corporate strategies into the following key parties: the owners of companies, either family members or shareholders, senior management (board of directors and executive management), functional management (the heads of various divisions or departments led by the senior management), employees, external experts and consultants, and consumers.

The results of interviews indicated that the company's owners and the senior management are involved in the process of strategic decision-making along with functional management and staff, but with a lower degree of participation. However, there is the involvement of the external experts and consultants, and some successful attempts to engage customers as well. The senior management and functional management (the board of directors and executive managers) are major parties in contracting external consultants and involving customers. Both of them adopted the style of a top-down approach, which means that the senior management is responsible for inviting other participants and determining their role in the process of formulating a corporate strategy.

The results of the study concurred what was stated by Wolf and Floyd (2013). They explained that participation expansion in decision-making enhances the company's abilities and its strategy success. However,

including the external consultants and experts are a weakness being external parties not inside the company, which requires the necessity to include the team that exists in the company to participate in the strategic formulation.

As for the challenges that are encountered during the strategic formulation process, the current political and economic circumstances have influenced all the respondents' responses in the interviews.

The surveys covered a more in-depth aspect which included the fierceness of the competition existing in the food manufacturing industry business, the raw materials, technological improvements, creativity in manufacturing and the changing consumer behavior. All these scored the highest rates thus are the most internal obstacles, especially for the Palestinian companies during the strategy formulation process. That means that becomes a weakness. Nonetheless, the lack of funding, human resources availability and the higher management role scored the least rates thus are the most internal obstacles affecting the Palestinian companies. Furthermore, the questionnaires reflected the external obstacles, reflecting that constraints related to the dynamic market and constraints related to the budgets and time are the most influential.

The results found that the Palestinian market is filled with product competitiveness – Israeli product versus imported product versus local products. This adds to the compulsory constraints enforced by the Israeli occupation, which controls the borders and the raw material entrance.

5.3 Corporate Strategy Formulation Practices

Identification and assessment of the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies' adopted practices were one of the most important objectives the study highlighted and focused on. The results of the interviews show that the basic practices all companies follow are setting a vision and mission statement as well as strategic objectives, then screening the internal and external environment. Following this, the appropriate strategies for the company are selected. Some companies go the extra mile by performing an assessment and evaluation of the potential risks. However, the interviews reflected that the strategic analysis tools and obtaining quality certifications are additional factors to enhance the formulation of the strategies.

The same practices were highlighted in the surveys to determine the level of application in the Palestinian companies. The results reflected the compatibility of the findings to what was presented in the interviews. Wheelen et al. (2016) and David (2016) developed a strategic framework that was able to pinpoint the application of these practices in the companies working in the food manufacturing industry.

Furthermore, the results reflected the lack of empirical studies that clarify the required procedures or steps to be followed in applying formulating strategy practices in the food companies. The followed steps are approved and announced by the board of directors and the senior management (such as setting a vision and mission statement and strategic objectives, then screening the internal and external environment, etc.).

The same practices that are within the strategy formulation frameworks were followed for years until the researchers Andrews (1980), Mintzberg et al. (1998), Wheelen et al. (2016) and David (2016) reflected some practices that are not within the common framework such as risk assessment, especially for companies in the food manufacturing industry.

One of the main purposes of this study was to explore the level of application of the assigned strategies in food manufacturing companies. David (2016) and Wheelen et al. (2015) highlighted that the practices such as the vision, mission, goals and environmental scanning, and selecting strategies are fully executed in these companies, as explained in Table (4.8).

All the findings extracted from all the interviews and surveys supported the need for having risk assessment as a basic practice in corporate strategy formulation practices. This finding was supported by the results of Hypothesis 13 (See Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.13), which confirmed a strong positive statistical relationship between the corporate strategy formulation practices and the risk assessment practices. Since food companies are exposed to risks, their increased focus on risk assessment improved their corporate strategy formulation practices significantly along with positively influencing the corporate strategy formulation practices of food companies in Palestine. These results can be imputed to the existing large size of risks in Palestine and developing countries and, for this reason, it provides a strong justification for the need of risk assessment as one of the basic practices in the strategy formulation as well as the results

of the hypothesis tested 13 (See Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.13) was provided the statistical proof and basis for this justification.

These findings agree with Pavićević et al's. (2017) study, which emphasized that the inclusion of strategic risk management as an important practice of the strategy formulation process is necessary for all companies to be successful. This practice has not been indicated by the previously mentioned strategic planning and management such as David's framework (2016) and Wheelen et al's. framework (2016).

Based on the study results, all indicated that risk assessment is very important to assess the risk of other company, especially the ones in unstable countries, such as Palestine. Thus, Palestinian companies should consider risk assessment as an important practice prior to formulating their corporate strategies, which will help them indicate any future risks to be taken into consideration and minimize their impacts.

The results confirmed that the companies are compliant with the vision, mission statement and strategic objectives that are stated in the strategic plan, but variances appear in the steps that come afterward. More than half the companies analyzed their surrounded environment using strategic planning tools and the remaining companies used very primary tools that were dependent on the companies' departments point of views.

The result of this study's interviews and surveys jointly confirmed the necessity of using the strategic tools and techniques in corporate strategy practices. Hypothesis 12 (see Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.12) found a

strong relationship between the positive correlation with the corporate strategies practices, as found by Jarzabkowski and Kaplan (2015).

The findings reflected a high degree of use of strategic analysis tools in large and medium-sized companies but reflected a moderate degree of use in small and micro companies. Furthermore, the results of this study revealed that there was a moderate use of the strategic analysis tools towards evaluating and analyzing a company's environment. This result supported the findings of Siddique (2015) who showed that SMEs tend to use a limited number of strategic planning tools.

As for the analytical tools commonly used during the strategy formulation process, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis tool was found to be the most widely used. In the findings of previous studies such as Anna (2015) and Afonina and Chalupský (2013), they concurred that SWOT analysis was the most frequently used strategic analysis tool in their studies. But, there is still a gap in utilizing other analytical tools. Moreover, the results indicated that small companies limit their use of tools compared to the large and medium-sized companies. Yet, several other tools were not used at all, which indicates these companies' inability to use such tools and leading to become with a strong weakness. This could be related to the extent of the company's experience in developing strategic plans, which played an important role. The results of the survey indicated 58.11% of the food companies have modest experience in this regard compared to 4% of food companies, which have

low experience in these categories are expected to be micro and small sized.

The results also found that the tools used for strategy formulation differ from company to company. But in case of the food manufacturing industry, the consumer's behavior studies and market surveys appeared as the essential strategic tools that influence the formulation of strategies. This work is often not referred to as the practice of the strategy formulation. Both the sample of interviews and surveys in the study were unanimous on this point. Similarly, Deng (2016) confirmed that study of a consumer's behavior determined the continuous strategy development in the food companies.

The process starts with preparing the company's vision, mission statement and strategic objectives. Following this, the company must set meetings and sessions to determine the purpose of the strategic formulation, which confirms this study the framework's necessity used.

The study illustrated that there are several frameworks to be adopted and used internationally to handle a successful strategic management, setting the company's vision, mission statement and strategic objectives followed by screening the internal and external environment. After that, selecting the senior management the appropriate strategies for the company. But this is the Palestinian companies' point of view; these practices are considered newly known and their implementation will be new for the organizational culture, knowing that it is implemented highly.

The study here has shown that pinpointing, assessing and analyzing the future risks for the company's operations and strategies is very vital for the company's plan, which should be done before drafting the final form of the strategy. This is just as important as the international frameworks used for formulating strategies.

David (2016) and Wheelen et al. (2016) reflected in their studies that the senior management of any company should have the final say in regard to making the final decision. Formulating the strategies is in the hands of the board of directors as well as updating the vision and mission statement based on the analysis outcomes. There is a minimal role of participation by the executive management and other departments. However, the study indicated here that it is an important factor, as there is a negative impact since the companies do not rely on the in-house component, but they seek external consultants to provide this service in formulating the strategies.

Some companies use the experiences of the staff working in the company itself, combining with the results from formalized corporate tools and techniques in developing corporate strategies or plans that are in alignment with the vision and mission statement of the companies.

5.4 Factors Affecting Corporate Strategy

The process of formulating a strategy should focus on the internal and external factors in the Palestinian companies working in the food manufacturing industry since both factors have a strong influence, as

evidenced by the results of the interviews and testing Hypotheses 9 and 10 (see Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.9 and 4.3.3.10).

Preliminary results of this study supported all international economic theories, e.g. resource-based view (RBV), the industrial organization view (IO) and the market-based view (MBV). These results were comparable to these theories, which are the most important metrics for the corporate strategy.

Since the relationship between the corporate strategy formulation practices and both internal and external environment factors were confirmed by the results of testing both Hypotheses H9 and H10 (See Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.9 and 4.3.3.10), the specific factors in the environment have been searched.

There are several effective factors appearing across results of the study, which are discussed in detail in the following two subsections (5.4.1 and 5.4.2).

5.4.1 Internal Factors

The results concurred with the resource-based view (RBV) theory. It also supported the findings by Hidayat et al. (2015) who found that the internal environmental factors are critical links to strategy formulation practices, which means that corporate strategy formulation practices are strongly influenced by the internal environment factors in all companies.

The interviews indicated that the internal capabilities of these companies in human resources, infrastructure, the environment of the workplace, and

financial status all influence the strategy formulation process. The interviews confirmed that the companies believed these internal capabilities are their only concern to improve the companies' strategic capabilities. Also, the surveys concurred the results of the interviews, namely that the leadership skills and the company's senior management are very influential factors in formulating the strategic decisions followed by the quality management, food safety, the infrastructure of the company, marketing, manufacturing techniques, and the basic resources including the human resources, assets, and equipment. In addition, it was reflected that the company's most important internal factors influencing the strategy formulation are the financial status, culture, human resource management, pricing policy and costs management, as based on the respondents on the surveys. Bashir et al. (2013) discovered that the financial position of companies affected the strategy formulation practices, which the Pakistani food companies reflected. Also, the study by Pournasir (2013) reflected that the financial status of the company is an essential element.

In conclusion, the internal factors are as important as the external ones.

5.4.2 External Factors

In the external factors and influence degree, the findings in this study appeared harmonious with Mbithi's (2016) findings. This researcher found that there is strong influence between the external environment factors and corporate strategy formulation.

Overall, this research and the other previous literature studies such as Solomon (2016), Zarei and Paghaleh (2011), Dauda and Ismaila (2013), and Odera (2014), Competitors and the economic conditions both have a large impact on the process of the corporate strategy formulation. Other factors were less influential in the Palestinian context due to their indirect impact on the effective implementation.

The surveys and interviews reflected that the political circumstances in Palestine are considered the most influential force on the Palestinian company's strategy formulation process. After that comes the consumer's behavior as the second influential force. Also, the competitors considered another influential factor as well, although many companies argued on the degree of its influence. Some considered this to be a positive influence that motivates them to improve their capabilities and others considered it to be a negative influence that affects their products.

Applying different integrated quality management systems and meeting the requirements and standards of it will provide a level of improvement in food manufacturing industry strategies. Furthermore, it affects the corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP), as shown by the results of testing Hypothesis H19 (see Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.1.19).

5.5 Common Corporate Strategies among Palestinian Food Manufacturers

The companies that participated in the survey have been asked about the most important issues that are important for selecting suitable corporate

strategies. The results showed that no one issue dominates the companies concern. The companies declared a variety of issues during the selection of the corporate strategies. The high rated response indicated quality control, analyzing the internal environment, the external environment market competitors, the competitive advantages, and all the future risks, precautions, and control.

During this study, there were no study references available addressing all of the adopted corporate strategies being pursued by the global food manufacturing industry companies. On the contrary, each of the studies dealt with the corporate strategy on one side. Therefore, these adopted corporate strategies in the food manufacturing industry field have been restricted in this study to inspect the extent to which Palestinian food companies applied it.

Both the interviews and surveys aimed at covering the answers to be related to the current strategies adopted by the Palestinian food companies. The interviews' results confirmed the companies' dependency on these strategies' components: expansion and spreading strategy, marketing, social responsibility, creativity, human resources, and competitive strategies. These are the main strategies in their plans and it was obvious that all the companies' answers revolved around the expansion and spreading strategy, marketing, and social responsibility components. As for the survey results, they concurred that the results were diverse. Each answer was based on the focus degree of the respondent whereby the survey focused on the expansion and spreading strategy, competition,

marketing, and manufacturing. However, the financial strategies, creativity, human resources, sustainability, expansion ability, and social responsibility scored fewer rates.

This result also reiterates the importance of adopting financial, innovations, human resources, sustainability, a supply chain and social responsibility as major corporate strategies. But surprisingly, the social responsibility scored the lowest points in the Palestinian food companies. Figure (5.1) below illustrates the major finding of the level of adoption of the corporate strategies in the food manufacturing industry as a tree diagram according to the level of application.

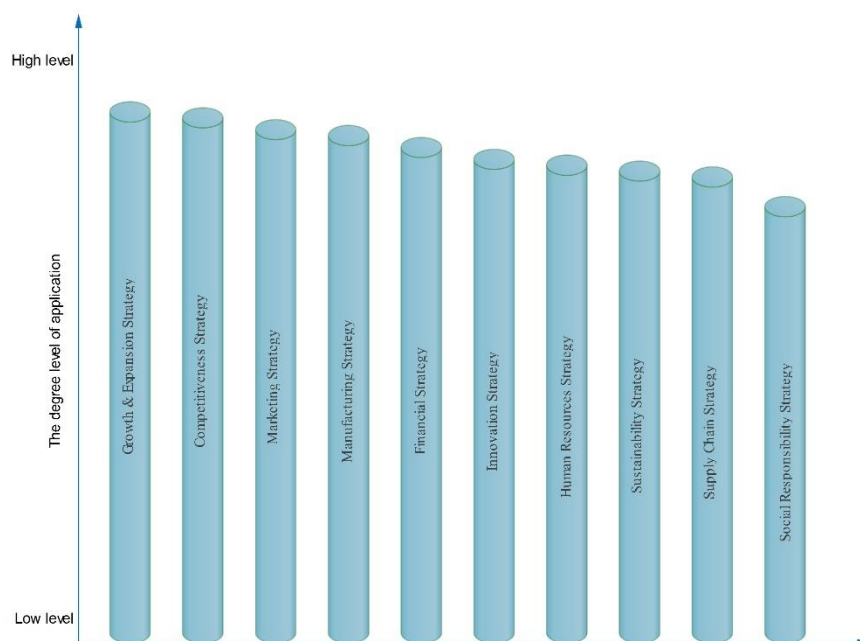


Figure 5.1: The common corporate strategies in the food manufacturing industry according to their level of application.

From the viewpoint of the Palestinian companies, it seemed obvious that growth, expansion, competitiveness, marketing, and manufacturing strategies are not the most common corporate strategies. For example, the

Malaysian companies adopted the forms of the growth and expansion strategies as part of their corporate strategies (Ayupp and Tudin, 2013). Also, Soebandrija et al. (2016) reflected that competitiveness and competitive strategy are mainly focused on in the food manufacturing industry.

The results of this study revealed that there is a strong link between corporate strategy formulation practices and the corporate strategies that are adapted, since the competitive advantage acquisition as was investigated through hypotheses 21 (see Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.21). The study also addressed the common sources of the competitive advantage in the food manufacturing industry while a high quality was the largest source beside the lowest price. These findings were consistent with Notta and Vlachvei's (2017) and Thatte's (2007) results. Moreover, innovation, human resources, sustainability, supply chain and social responsibility strategies were all also presented, but to a lesser degree. The lowest degree was for the social responsibility strategy. But the revelation was that the marketing strategy for food companies was more crucial than others and had a high degree of application among the Palestinian food companies as a major corporate strategy. Furthermore, to meet the trends of the specific market segment, the company served and the customers' needs, these must all constantly change.

To ensure the practices preceded, the stage of selecting appropriate corporate strategies were all structurally appropriate and relevant. The relationship between these practices and the common corporate strategies

adopted by the international food companies were investigated through Hypothesis 11 (See Chapter Four, subsection 4.3.3.11), which proposed a strong relationship between the corporate strategy formulation practices and those commonly adopted by the global food companies. There is also evidence that proves the relationship between the corporate strategies adopted by the global food companies and the current ones chosen by the Palestinian companies. In other words, *the adoption of these corporate strategies must pass through the stages of the corporate strategy formulation practices (CSFP).*

5.6 Framework Development

In this subsection, the suggested framework is presented with all its components and design mechanism. It has been reviewed by six senior managers working in six Palestinian companies to validate the components and concur if this framework is applicable.

5.6.1 Framework Design

The corporate strategy formulation is a constant and continuous process that should be updated to aid and support companies in performing steps the right way to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and formulate and organize the strategy formulation process.

Its success depends on several aspects, most importantly:

- Providing sufficient and necessary information (inputs) to the decision-makers in these companies to complete every step of this process.
- Grasping and supporting the company's leadership, keeping in mind the necessity to improve and provide potentials and possessions towards the company as well as providing qualified staff in the strategic formulation, thus leading to the process and increasing their knowledge.
- Providing the required flexibility for the process, which will enhance and advance the process. This will also fit the company's current circumstance of the suitability should be of the environment and expect a better future.

The study then recommended constructing a cascading structure with the purpose of clarifying the steps taken by the company for all of its employees in the different departments. This will lead to engraving the values of the strategic planning into the core of the company's and staff's culture. Furthermore, this will motivate every single employee to participate in the corporate strategy formulation in the future, which will help keep the process clear and successful.

In order to achieve this study's purpose, and according to Baden-Fuller and Morgan (2010) who confirmed that the framework is the best and commonly used tools to summarize the results and conclusions of studies. Therefore, a framework was developed that consists of the major components, which sets to be a comprehensive manual that represents a written procedure. Thus, this framework was developed to assist the

companies in formulating their corporate strategies in the future, which could be helpful to achieve the company goals.

This framework aimed to establish the written procedures documents that directly lead to the process of corporate strategy formulation activities.

The framework was built on a shape of a triangle, depending fully on its three angles, each of which represents a basic component. The components are as follows: the period of coverage practice (which allows the required flexibility for each of the practices and techniques used in the framework and subsequently facilitates the process of a follow-up and update for these practices); the practices (which are the main contained elements); and the techniques and tools used for implementing practices (which leaves a margin of freedom for the company to select their own techniques that are suitable with their environment and abilities), as labeled in Figure 5.2 below.

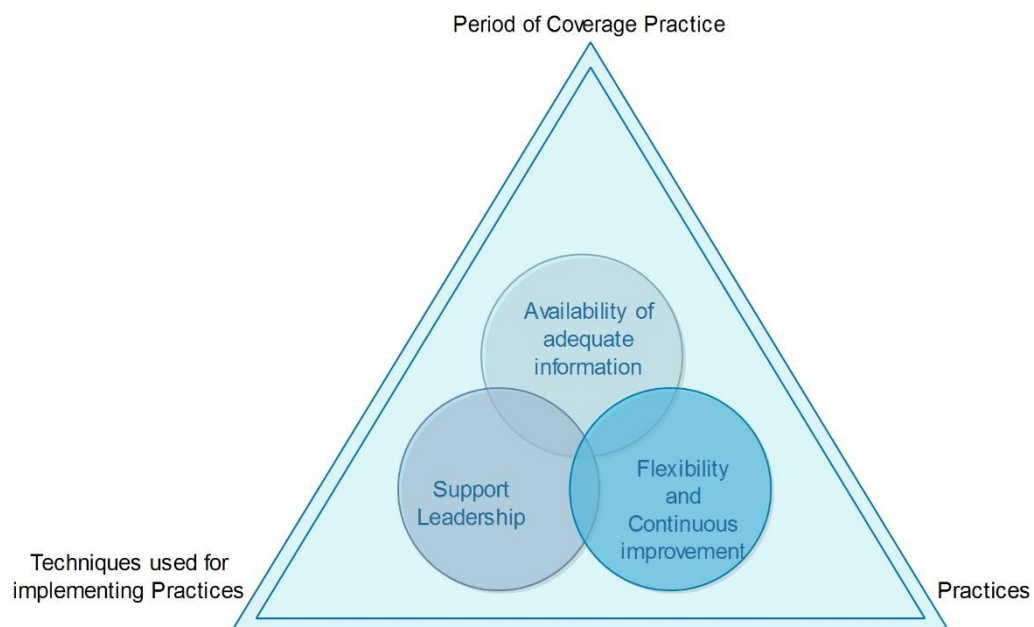


Figure 5.2: The Triangle of building a CSFP framework

This framework consists of three main stages achieved through a seven-step process that is handled, supervised and monitored by the senior management if there is no specialized department following these practices. Figure 5.2 reflects this framework's components.

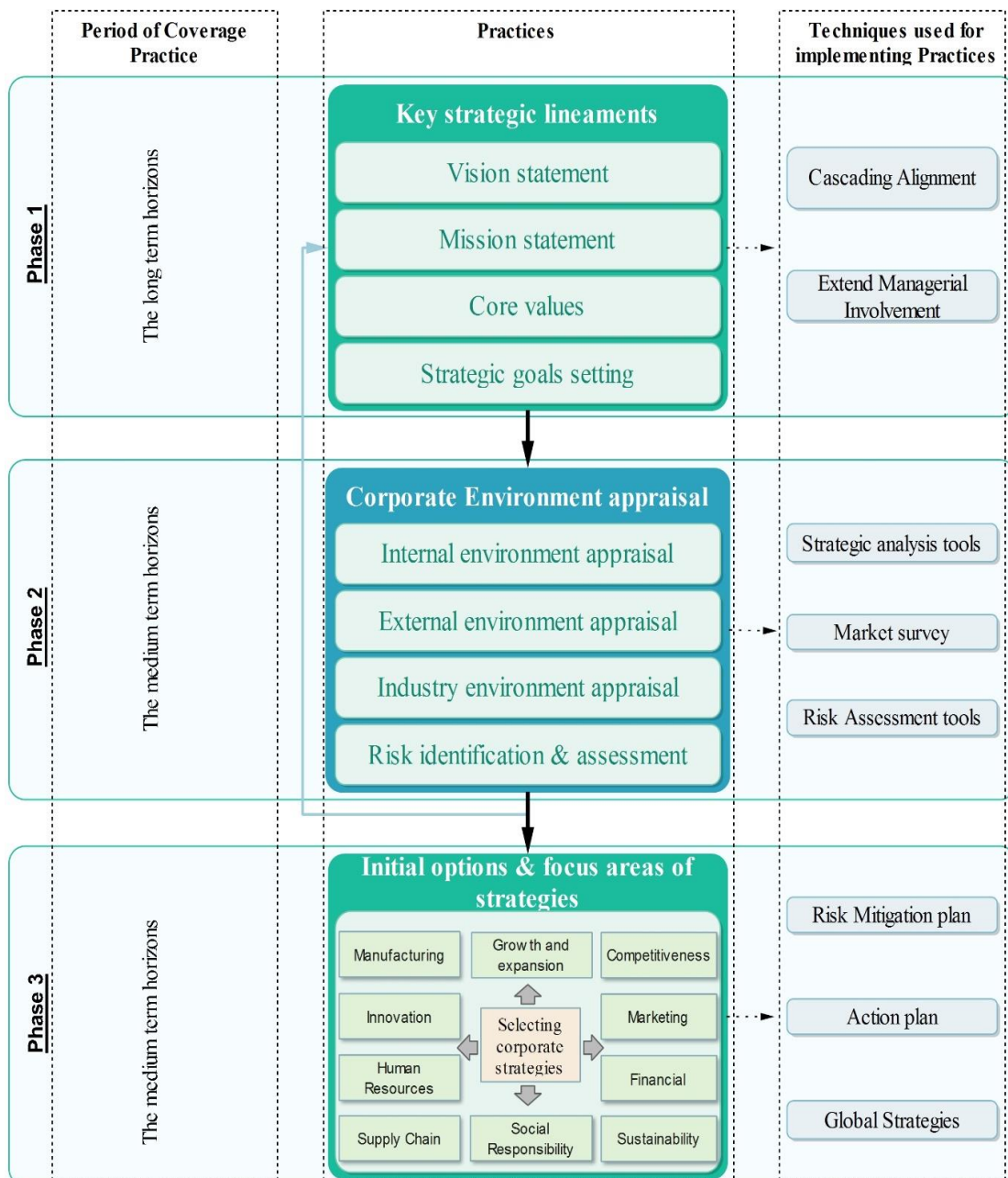


Figure 5.3: A Managerial Framework for Formulating Corporate Strategies

The first phase is establishing the key strategic lineaments, which are the core phases of the managerial framework for formulating corporate strategies, consisting of the four practices that will steer the company towards success and accomplishment. These practices are the vision, mission statement, core values, and strategic goal setting. These practices are implemented through two techniques: cascading alignment and extended managerial involvement. All these lead to establishing the organizational structure of the company.

Phase two is performing the corporate environmental appraisal, which is the main source of information that shapes the corporate strategy formulation. They are achieved through conducting four specific appraisals: the internal environment appraisal, the external environment appraisal, the industry environment appraisal, and risk identification and assessment. The techniques used for implementing these four practices are the strategic analysis tools, market survey, and the risk assessment tools. All these actions will expose the corporate environment around the company, enabling them to make strategic decisions accordingly.

In this study, two methodologies were used: the tools and techniques of the strategic analysis mentioned in the literature and the research that included the scanning of the market. Afterward, these two methodologies were finalized by relying on senior management and expert s' brainstorming that provides a full description that exists in the internal and external environment. The results of the study have confirmed the existence of the external and internal environment, which were taken into consideration

prior to making any strategic decision. After the completion of the second phase, a quick review was required by the companies to update their strategy shaping and to match with the results of the second phase to concur on the financial ability to practically implement these strategies.

The company's focus on determining and assessing the risks that could potentially arise will allow them to set a plan to minimize the risks as well as set the company's plan including the procedures, budget allocation, materials, and task delegation among the company's departments, which is needed to complete the entire process.

The third phase is obtaining the company's initial options and focus areas of strategies, making the company's job easier when selecting the appropriate strategies based on concrete information as well as the company's ability to make a rational decision that is suitable for the environment and matches the company's strategic surface.

The results of both studies concurred the two previous steps, which both are insufficient to make a strategic decision without setting the main requirements that are clear to make decisions in the company. These are determining and assessing the risks that could potentially arise, setting a plan to minimize the risks, and setting the company's plan including the procedures, budget allocation, materials, and task delegation among the company's departments.

Since the dangers are determined, which will threaten the company's future and the work they seek to achieve, and after exploring the environment

analysis results, there should be a minimizing plan to shrink or fully remove the impact of risks encountered.

The final phase requires the selection of the appropriate strategy, which needs to be suitable for the environment and match the company's strategic surface.

The framework requires the company's financial ability to be implemented practically, or the entire framework will not be used at all.

5.6.2 Framework Conceptual Validation

After the formulating of the framework, the conceptual validation has been conducted to obtain the companies perspectives about this framework. This validation leads to:

1. Obtaining the feedback and additional information on the correctness of the framework from the study group and assessing its practical application.
2. Verifying and inspecting the theoretical assumptions and the results concluded by the researcher to seek rational and realistic solutions for the research issues that the researcher referred to in the hypotheses used.
3. Verifying the final form of the managerial framework to ensure this framework provided a useful and logical solution for companies.

Therefore, in order to achieve this step, the developed framework was revised and reviewed by six interviewees who are working in senior management in the food manufacturing industry companies (See Appendix H). After the framework readiness, the framework was shared with the

interviewees who referred to them in Appendix H to provide their comments and feedback on the possibility of their company practically implementing this framework as well as addressing the strengths and weaknesses that it contains.

The notes of six senior managers were documented, which reflected positive responses and reactions regarding the possibility of implementing this framework in their companies since the strategy formulation process was linked with the company's targeted areas. It was shown as a commonly used strategy within the food industries. In addition, the responses reflected the framework's comprehensiveness and clarity in the procedures of the Palestinian food companies to achieve their objectives.

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the discussion on the research results, which were extracted from the data analysis within the five main sections. In the first section, we discussed the strategy formulation, its purpose and whether it involves the participants. The second section involved discussing the implemented practices in the process of formulating strategies. In the third section, the affecting elements towards formulating strategies were presented. The fourth section included reflecting on the currently implemented strategies by the Palestinian companies. The final section included presenting the managerial framework that based on the current data analysis and results.

This chapter reflected the study's results through the data analysis and comparison with the previous studies. Overall, a framework that reflects the summary of these results follows in the conclusions and recommendations chapter.

Chapter Six

Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter Six

Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter reports the conclusions, which reflect the study's recommendations that the researcher reached through reading the in-depth results. In addition, it provides contributions and highlights the constraints that were found during the research execution. Moreover, consequential recommendations and further suggestions that could be implemented in the future are presented.

6.2 Conclusions

The conduction of this thesis has led the researcher to conclude the following:

The process of a corporate strategy formulation in the developing country context needs to be further studied due to the limited research on this topic, especially in the food manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the research drew attention to the lack of specialized functions in the organizational structure in companies. Therefore, there is a need to create a specialized support unit or team in the companies whose responsibility is to follow up and supervise the process of strategic planning and allocating human resource professional for these tasks.

The research results concurred with the required practices needed to formulate strong corporate strategies for these companies. These practices

represent the constitutions that run the process of strategy formulations. However, since the difference was obvious regarding the factors impacting the strategy building among the spreaded companies within both levels, with some similarity in some factors, companies should consider these factors to know how to encounter them and minimize their impact when setting the strategies; not just when expected to happen.

The study's results proved that the food companies are using international practices and research-based to set its strategies. However, these companies lack the required experience in setting the strategies, as the Palestinian companies fully depended on hiring external experts to perform their strategic formulations. This is a weak point for these companies because they could improve their staff by relying on them to shape the strategies without referring to external experts.

The study's results met with what other researchers have reached about the main purpose of strategy formulation. This purpose was to create a competitive advantage among the companies. This study has indicated that studying the consumer's behavior is the basic rule to build a strong competitive advantage for the company.

The process of corporate strategy formulation is a continuous and flexible process, one that needs to be monitored and evaluated constantly. The findings of previous market studies and competing products' studies as well as the quality development research orientate the companies towards shaping strong corporate strategies that enable the companies to develop and grow.

The results confirmed the essential practices mentioned in the strategic frameworks. However, there are complementary steps. For example, the results confirmed that a risk assessment and minimizing the impact of risks is an essential step in the strategic formulation process, especially in the developing countries, which are filled with many risks that do not exist in the developed countries.

As for the developing countries in general, and Palestine in particular, the study detected that there is a strong bond between determining the risks and confronting them along the companies' strategies. Therefore, the researcher recommends the need to determine all risks that may occur in the future and are expected to happen, and when they do, they will impact negatively. Thus, complementary plans have to be set to confront these risks and minimize the damaging impact, especially with the company's future strategies.

Furthermore, there are several influential factors on corporate strategy formulation. Apart from them are internal, that lie on the companies' management responsibilities and theirs to solve. However, in the Palestinian context, there are also external factors that the governmental organizations need to come up with new solutions. For example, the constant electricity blocks out, which lasts for too long, will affect the companies negatively, especially the ones in Gaza. And with the research efforts given on the techniques and tools used for formulating the strategies, which fits the Palestinian companies' environment and exploring

the reasons the lack of use for the wide ranges of these tools and their motive behind it.

6.3 Research Contribution

The study has presented several contributions to the existing literature about the process of corporate strategy formulation. These research contributions are as follows:

Firstly, this study provided a comprehensive assessment of the corporate strategy formulation process in the food manufacturing industry in Palestine, which is a developing countries context. This included assessment of the practices, tools used and the influence of the environmental factors as well as highlighting the obstacles and challenges these companies encounter. This information will be useful for any company in the food manufacturing industry in Palestine to obtain since it was not provided in studies before.

Secondly, the study has presented a wide range of empirical results regarding the relationships among the current practices and different variables. In other words, this study provided the empirical evidence relative to the effects of these relationships, as the results confirmed the major impact of company size, the proportions of market share, strategic analysis tools, and environmental factors on the practices of corporate strategy formulations.

Thirdly, the study exposed and summed up the main corporate strategies adopted and the level of implementation of these strategies by companies in

the food manufacturing industry in one study; the previous studies have addressed each corporate strategy in-depth separately. In addition, this study showed some corporate strategies that the literature considered as business-level strategies such as marketing, manufacturing and supply chain strategies.

Fourthly, this study also contributes to the literature of pro-introduction of a managerial framework for corporate strategies in the food manufacturing industry in content challenges as a developing country context. This framework provided a logical, comprehensible and simplified written format of the procedures that could be adopted by companies. This framework has considered the time-frame of the included procedures of it. In addition to this, the framework revealed some practices used as a core practice such as risks assessment, which did not already exist in the previous strategic frameworks.

Finally, the study contained many results, recommendations, notes and point-outs that could be very useful for researchers to steer their future studies.

6.4 Research Recommendations

Referring to this study and its results, it presented several recommendations related to the food manufacturing industry, prospective and current researchers, funding agencies, policymakers and the other stakeholders, as follows:

1. Enhancing the capacity of the human resources in the companies, in which the employees become capable of supervising the strategy formulation process practices. As the human resources in these companies play a vital role in formulating the strategies and dealing with the techniques and tools adapted, this will minimize the dependency on external experts and consultants as well as minimize company costs.
2. There is a need to raise the companies' interests in strategic management, strategic planning process development, and senior management commitment, which are all essential strategic planning methodologies. This can occur by creating a department specialized in following up the implementation of this assignment.
3. Ensuring the involvement of all decision-makers in developing the objectives and the strategic plans of the company.
4. Obtaining the international certifications ISO 22000:2015 "Food Safety Management Systems", ISO 9001:2015 "Quality Management", FSSC 22000 "The Food Safety System Certification", ISO 14001:2015 "Environmental Management Systems", HACCP Certificate "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points", Global GAP Certification, and OHSAS 18001 "Occupational Health & Safety". Such certifications have a strong impact in formulating the strategies and improving the competitive advantage of the companies, which will also improve their operations and performance, leading to opening new markets at the international level.

5. Constantly updating the company's strategies that could fit in both internal and external environments to achieve the company's objectives, requirements, and customers' needs and maintaining the company's competitive status.
6. Finally, the researcher recommends adapting the framework as a guide for the companies to formulate their strategies successfully, which maintains their sustainability under a highly competitive environment and unstable markets and environments, especially in the developing countries.

6.5 Future Research Directions

The findings might not be transferable to all small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Palestine. Thus, it is recommended that further research is conducted on the Palestinian SMEs particularly, in addition to focusing on different cities and countries for the generalization of findings and for needed strategy formulation practices.

The researcher believes that through this circumstance the companies work in, that there is a huge difference in the environment the food companies exist in West Bank or Gaza Strip. It should be highlighted that the working companies in the Gaza Strip exist in a geographical area which is considered to have a massive population. Thus, it has a huge market that needs coverage through these products. In addition to the permanent siege the Palestinians are undergoing there, in which the company's growth is necessary in so many ways, it minimizes unemployment, having local

products in a siege that controls and prevents any of the West Bank products from going through and gives them an edge to enter the competition towards the Israeli products.

Individually focusing on the branched food industry sectors, e.g. the grains subsector, and knowing how to rise in the sector is very important and has a connection with the economic sector, such as the agriculture sector, which is under the food supplies as well.

Focusing on future research regarding how to support the strategy formulation process will enable them to build strategies similar to the pioneer strategies being used in the food industry markets. In addition, it is important to research the best tools and techniques that will help them execute the strategies formulation.

Focusing on implementing the strategies in SMEs since the results of the study reflect that the large companies possess qualifications and material and human potentials, plus the required experience for this process.

The results of the study proved the main practices used in formulating company strategies, but the focus must be more in-depth on the ways, tools, and techniques to implement these practices.

Specializing and performing scientific research on the risks that have strong impacts in making strategies could be destructional for the company's plans. In addition, the environment that the Palestinian companies work in needs many plans to overcome the risks and minimize the impact. This attitude should be reinforced as mandatory to ensure the

success of the company's strategies and especially the unstable environments.

The study's results showed that the consumers' expectation and attitude are an influential external factor in the company's decision-making and adopted strategies. This aspect needs more studies to identify the influencing elements and taking them into consideration while formulating the company's strategies. The study highlighted the results of the consumer's behavior and attitude as a main external factor that affects the decision-making and strategies processes. This aspect needs more studies and identifying the effect of direct impacts while formulating the strategies of the company.

Also, there needs to be a focus on the new issues regarding manufacturing processes used by the food companies, e.g. using clean energy to produce and develop the technology of manufacturing and other manufacturing operations that are considered essential strategies. This could lead to massive leaps in company productions and open new markets that could help bring the consumers new products.

Enhancing companies' methodologies through the participation of their employees and consumers in their strategies formulation. They are considered active parties and beneficiaries for these strategies.

Also, the research specialization on strategies, creativity, and quality are for the purpose of improving the Palestinian companies, especially the Palestinian companies that own capital, human resource and the required

funding, to exploit these strategies to develop the business and products of these companies.

6.6 Limitations

As any other scientific research, there are several limitations that the researcher has encountered. The most important one was that the Palestinian companies are family-oriented businesses, thus, the family makes the decision that determines its fate. This limitation had a negative impact on the data collection process, thus delaying the data collection, as some companies totally refused to participate in the study at all.

The companies in Gaza are occupied in dealing with the external factors, which distracts their focus on formulating successful strategies since the strategy effects will be useless when there are factors that are out of their control, e.g. the Israeli occupation and the constraints the companies are exposed to as well as the electrical bock outs.

The minimal research available on the Palestine food manufacturing industry, in general, were insufficient in performing a full study on all the aspects of company strategies. Also, the researcher needed more time to prepare and collect the data (survey).

6.7 Chapter Summary

This final chapter reports the conclusions that reflect the study's recommendations, concluded by the researcher through reading the in-depth results, in addition to the strong contributions presented in this

research and the constraints that were found during the research execution. It also sheds light on the future recommendations that could be implemented and the new markets that could be opened for the Palestinian companies.

References

- Abu Asbah, K. and Abu Nasra, M. (2013). *Factors and Obstacles Impeding Economic Development within Palestinian Localities in Israel: The Case of the Food Industry*. In: N. Khattab and S. Miaari, ed., **Palestinians in the Israeli Labor Market: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.213-239.
- Afonina, A. and Chalupský, V. (2013). *Investigation of strategic management tools and techniques*. **Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis**, 61(4), pp.833-840.
- Ağan, Y., Kuzey, C., Acar, M. and Açıkgoz, A. (2016). *The relationships between corporate social responsibility, environmental supplier development, and firm performance*. **Journal of Cleaner Production**, 112, pp.1872-1881.
- Agnes, M. (2017). *Webster's New World College Dictionary*. 5th ed. New York: Webster's New World.
- Akinyomi, O. (2013). *Survey of corporate social responsibility practices in Nigerian manufacturing sector*. **International Journal of Research Studies in Management**, 2(1), pp.33-42.
- Aldehayyat, J. and Twaissi, N. (2011). *Strategic Planning and Corporate Performance Relationship in Small Business Firms: Evidence from a Middle East Country Context*. **International Journal of Business and Management**, 6(8), pp.255-263.
- Alhojailan, M. (2012). *Thematic analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation*. **West East Journal of Social Sciences**, 1(1), pp.39-47.
- Amoako-Gyampah, K. and Acquah, M. (2008). *Manufacturing strategy, competitive strategy and firm performance: An empirical*

study in a developing economy environment. International Journal of Production Economics, 111(2), pp.575-592.

- Anderson, J., Cleveland, G. and Schroeder, R. (1989). *Operations strategy: A literature review. Journal of Operations Management*, 8(2), pp.133-158.
- Andrews, K. (1971). *The concept of corporate strategy*. Homewood, Ill.: Dow Jones-Irwin.
- Andrews, K. (1980). *The concept of corporate strategy*. Homewood, Ill.: R.D. Irwin.
- Andrews, R., Boyne, G., Law, J. and Walker, R. (2009). *Strategy Formulation, Strategy Content and Performance: An empirical analysis. Public Management Review*, 11(1), pp.1-22.
- Anna, A. (2015). *Strategic Management Tools and Techniques and Organizational Performance: Findings from the Czech Republic. Journal of Competitiveness*, 7(3), pp.19-36.
- Ansoff, H. (1965). *Corporate Strategy*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Auka, D. and Langat, J. (2016). *Effects of Strategic Planning on Performance of Medium Sized Enterprises in Nakuru Town. International Review of Management and Business Research*, 5(1), pp.188-198.
- Ayupp, K. and Tudin, R. (2013). *Malaysian Food Processing Industry: Strategies for Growth. International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(16), pp.172-180.
- Babafemi, I. (2015). *Corporate Strategy, Planning and Performance Evaluation: A Survey of Literature. Journal of Management Policies and Practices*, 3(1), pp.43-49.
- Baden-Fuller, C. and Morgan, M. (2010). *Business Models as Models. Long Range Planning*, 43(2-3), pp.156-171.

- Baker, G. (2003). *Strategic Planning and Financial Performance in the Food Processing Sector*. *Review of Agricultural Economics*, 25(2), pp.470-482.
- Baker, M. (2014). *Marketing Strategy and Management*. 5th ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bala, K. (2014). *Supply Chain Management: Some Issues and Challenges - A Review*. *International Journal of Current Engineering and Technology*, 4(2), pp.946-953.
- Baldwin, C. (2009). *Sustainability in the food industry*. Ames, Iowa: Wiley-Blackwell/IFT Press.
- Bambang Baroto, M., Bin Abdullah, M. and Wan, H. (2012). *Hybrid Strategy: A New Strategy for Competitive Advantage*. *International Journal of Business and Management "IJBM"*, 7(20), pp.120-133.
- Baregheh, A., Rowley, J., Sambrook, S. and Davies, D. (2012). *Food sector SMEs and innovation types*. *British Food Journal*, 114(11), pp.1640-1653.
- Barney, J. (2001). *Is the Resource-Based "View" a Useful Perspective for Strategic Management Research? Yes*. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), p.41.
- Barney, J. and Hesterly, W. (2015). *Strategic Management and Competitive Advantage: Concepts and Cases*. 5th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Baruch, Y. and Holtom, B. (2008). *Survey response rate levels and trends in organizational research*. *Human Relations*, 61(8), pp.1139-1160.
- Bashir, Z., Abbas, A., Manzoor, S. and Akram, M. (2013). *Empirical Investigation of the Factors Affecting Firm's Performance: a Study*

Based on Food Sector of Pakistan. International SAMANM Journal of Finance and Accounting, 1(2), pp.11-23.

- Belz, F. and Schmidt-Riediger, B. (2010). *Marketing Strategies in the Age of Sustainable Development: Evidence from the Food Industry. Business Strategy and the Environment*, 19(7), pp.401-416.
- Bender, R. (2014). *Corporate Financial Strategy*. 4th ed. London: Routledge.
- Bernard, H. (2011). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 5th ed. Lanham: AltaMira Press.
- Bernard, H. (2017). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 6th ed. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Beske, P., Land, A. and Seuring, S. (2014). *Sustainable supply chain management practices and dynamic capabilities in the food industry: A critical analysis of the literature. International Journal of Production Economics*, 152, pp.131-143.
- Blumberg, B., Cooper, D.R. & Schindler, P.S. (2008). *Business Research Methods*: Second European edition, Maidenhead, McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Boateng, P., Amponsah, E., Akafo, V. and Yamoah, P. (2015). *Strategic Planning Process Formality: A Model. European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(26), pp.52-64.
- Bowen, P., Rose, R. and Pilkington, A. (2017). *Mixed Methods: Theory and Practice. Sequential, Explanatory Approach. International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, 5(2), pp.10-27.
- Bozkurt, Ö. and Kalkan, A. (2013). *Strategic Focus in Turkish SMEs: Emergent or Deliberate Strategies?. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 99, pp.929-937.

- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp.77-101.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. 1st ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Business Research Methods*. 4th ed. London: Oxford University Press.
- Capitano, F., Coppola, A. and Pascucci, S. (2010). *Indications for drivers of innovation in the food sector. British Food Journal*, 111(8), pp. 20-38.
- Carraresi, L., Mamaqi, X., Albisu, L. and Banterle, A. (2015). *Can Strategic Capabilities Affect Performance? Application of RBV to Small Food Businesses. Agribusiness*, 32(3), pp.416-436.
- Chandler, A. D., Jr. (1962). *Strategy and structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Check, J. and Schutt, R. (2012). *Research Methods in Education*. 1st ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Collier, N., Fishwick, F. and Floyd, S. (2004). *Managerial Involvement and Perceptions of Strategy Process. Long Range Planning*, 37, pp.67–83.
- Collins, K. (2013). *Sampling: Mixed Methods*. In: C. Chapelle, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, 1st ed. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Collins, K. M., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Jiao, Q. G. (2007). *A Mixed Methods Investigation of Mixed Methods Sampling Designs in Social and Health Science Research. Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(3), pp.267-294.

- Collis, D. and Montgomery, C. (1998). *Creating Corporate Advantage*. **Harvard Business Review**, 76(3), pp.70–83.
- Collis, David J., and & Montgomery, Cynthia A. (2005). *Corporate Strategy: A Resource-Based Approach*. 2nd ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Collis, J. and Hussey, R. (2013). *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students*. 4th ed. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Creswell, J. (2015a). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. 5th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.
- Creswell, J. (2015b). *Revisiting Mixed Methods and Advancing Scientific Practices*. In: S. Hesse-Biber and R. Johnson, ed., **The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry**, 1st ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, pp.57-71.
- Creswell, J. and Plano Clark, V. (2010). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J. and Poth, C. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th ed. SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Tashakkori, A. (2007). *Exploring the Nature of Research Questions in Mixed Methods Research*. **Journal of Mixed Methods Research**, 1(3), pp.207-211.
- DalleMule, L. and Davenport, T. (2017). *What's Your Data Strategy?*. **Harvard Business Review**, MAY–JUNE 2017, pp.113-121.
- Das, T. (1991). *Time: The Hidden Dimension in Strategic Planning*. **Long Range Planning**, 24(3), pp.49-57.

- Dauda, A. and Ismaila, M. (2013). *Influence of Technological Environmental Factors on the Strategic Choice of Quoted Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria's Food and Beverage Industry*. **International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology**, 3(8), pp.159-169.
- David, F. (1989). *How Companies Define their Mission*. **Long Range Planning**, 22(1), pp.90-97.
- David, F. and David, F. (2016). *Strategic Management: A Competitive Advantage Approach, Concepts & Cases*. 16th ed. Boston: Prentice Hall.
- Deng, X. (2016). *Marketing Strategy for Food Enterprise Based on Consumer's Behavior*. **Advance Journal of Food Science and Technology**, 10(1), pp.22-25.
- Dess, G., McNamara, G. and Eisner, A. (2016). *Strategic Management: Creating Competitive Advantages*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- DeVellis, R. (2016). *Scale Development: Theory and Applications*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Dominic, T. (2015). *Assessment of Strategic Management Practices in Small Agribusiness Firms in Tanzania*. Ph. D. degree in. Georg-August-University Germany: Göttingen.
- Drucker, P. (2014). *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Kindle Edition. Routledge.
- Dworkin, S. (2012). *Sample Size Policy for Qualitative Studies Using In-Depth Interviews*. **Archives of Sexual Behavior**, 41(6), pp.1319-1320.
- Edwards, R. and Holland, J. (2013). *What is Qualitative Interviewing?*. London: Bloomsbury Academic Publishing.

- Eisenhauer, E., Tait, A., Rieh, S. and Arslanian-Engoren, C. (2017). *Participants' Understanding of Informed Consent for Biobanking: A Systematic Review*. **Clinical Nursing Research**, pp.1-29..
- Emmel, N. (2013). *Sampling and Choosing Cases in Qualitative Research : A Realist Approach*. 1st ed. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- European Commission, (2015). *User guide to the SME definition*. [online] **Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union**, p.11. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/15582/attachments/1/translations/en/renditions/native&prev=search> [Accessed 4 Apr. 2017].
- Evans, J. and Mathur, A. (2005). *The value of online surveys*. **Internet Research**, 15(2), pp.195-219.
- Eweje, G. (2011). *A Shift in corporate practice? Facilitating sustainability strategy in companies*. **Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management**, 18(1), pp. 125–136.
- Flory, G., Bunce, A., and Johnson, L. (2004). *How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability*. **Field Methods**, 1(1), 1st February, pp 59–82.
- Flory, J. and Emanuel, E. (2004). *Interventions to Improve Research Participants' Understanding in Informed Consent for Research*. **American Medical Association**, 292(13), pp.1593-1601.
- Fontaine, M. (2013). *Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability: The New Bottom Line?* **International Journal of Business and Social Science**, 4(4), pp.110-119.

- Fox, S. (1991). *Human Resources Management, Corporate Strategy and Financial Performance in British Manufacturing*. **Management Research News**, 14(7/8/9), pp.66-68.
- Freedman, L. (2013). *Strategy: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Galvin, R. (2015). *How many interviews are enough? Do qualitative interviews in building energy consumption research produce reliable knowledge?* **Journal of Building Engineering**, 1, pp.2-12.
- Garcia Martinez, M. and Briz, J. (2000). *Innovation in the Spanish food & drink industry*. **The International Food and Agribusiness Management Review**, 3(2), pp.155-176.
- Ghasemi, A. and Zahediasl, S. (2012). *Normality Tests for Statistical Analysis: A Guide for Non-Statisticians*. **International Journal of Endocrinology and Metabolism**, 10(2), pp.486-489.
- Ghattas, R., Dabouqi, A., Khalil, M. and Khalifeh, I. (2015). *Food Production-Consumption Assessment to Improve Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in the West Bank- Palestine / FPCA project: final technical report* (April 2014 - April 2015). **The Food Industry Sector in the West Bank**. [online] Bethlehem, Palestine: The Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ), pp.52-60. Available at:
http://www.arij.org/files/arijadmin/IDRC/finalceremony/2015_05_06_-_Booklet_-_FPCA_project_-_English_final_-_March_2015-_not_for_IDRC.pdf [Accessed 7 Mar. 2017].
- Gica, O. (2011). *Strategic Management Process in Small and Medium sized Enterprises*. Doctoral Thesis. Babeş-Bolyai University.

- Gică, O. and Balint, C. (2012). *Planning Practices of SMEs in North-Western Region of ROMANIA: An Empirical Investigation*. **Procedia Economics and Finance**, [online] 3, pp.896-901.
- Glaister, K., Dincer, O., Tatoglu, E. and Demirbag, M. (2009). *A comparison of strategic planning practices in companies from the UK and Turkey*. **Journal of Management Development**, 28(4), pp.361-379.
- Grant, R. (2016). *Contemporary strategy analysis: Text and cases*. 9th ed. Chichester, West Sussex, United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Grünig, R. and Kühn, R. (2011). *Process-based Strategic Planning*. 6th ed. Berlin: Springer.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., and Johnson, L. (2006). *How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability*. **Field Methods**, 1(1), 1st February, pp. 59–82.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. and Namey, E. (2012). *Applied Thematic Analysis*. 1st ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Guest, G., Namey, E., Taylor, J., Eley, N. and McKenna, K. (2017). *Comparing focus groups and individual interviews: findings from a randomized study*. **International Journal of Social Research Methodology**, 20(6), pp.693-708.
- Gurkov, I. (2009). *Strategy process as formulation and realization of corporate goals: The synthesis of surveys in Russian firms*. **Journal of East European Management Studies**, 14(1), pp.48-64.
- Haase, H. and Franco, M. (2011). *Information sources for environmental scanning: do industry and firm size matter?*. **Management Decision**, 49(10), pp.1642-1657.

- Hambrick, D. and Fredrickson, J. (2005). *Are you sure you have a strategy?* **Academy of Management Executive**, 19(4), pp.51-62.
- Hamel G., and Prahalad C.K. (2005). *Strategic Intent*. **Harvard Business Review**, Vol. July-August, pp.66-68.
- Hartmann, M. (2011). *Corporate social responsibility in the food sector*. **European Review of Agricultural Economics**, 38(3), pp.297-324.
- Hax, A. and Majluf, N. (1984). *The Corporate Strategic Planning Process*. **Interfaces**, 14(1), pp.47-60.
- Hayes, R. and Wheelwright, S. (1984). *Restoring our Competitive Edge: Competing Through Manufacturing*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hidayat, R., Akhmad, S. and Alim, M. (2015). *Effects of Environmental Factors on Corporate Strategy and Performance of Manufacturing Industries in Indonesia*. **Journal of Industrial Engineering and Management**, 8(3), pp.763-782.
- Hill, C., Schilling, M. and Jones, G. (2017). *Strategic Management: Theory & Cases: An Integrated Approach*. 12th ed. Boston: South-Western College Pub.
- Hitt, M., Ireland, R. and Hoskisson, R. (2016). *Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases: Competitiveness and Globalization*. 12th ed. Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Hofmann, E. (2010). *Linking corporate strategy and supply chain management*. **International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management**, 40(4), pp.256-276.
- Hong, Q., Pluye, P., Bujold, M. and Wassef, M. (2017). *Convergent and sequential synthesis designs: implications for conducting and*

reporting systematic reviews of qualitative and quantitative evidence. Systematic Reviews, 6(1), pp.1-14.

- Hoverstadt, P. and Loh, L. (2017). *Patterns of Strategy*. 1st ed. New York: Routledge.
- Hrebiniak, L.G. (2008). *Making Strategy Work: Overcoming the Obstacles to Effective Execution*. *Ivey Business Journal*, 72(2), pp.1-6.
- Huff, A., Floyd, S., Sherman, H. and Terjesen, S. (2009). *Strategic Management: Logic and Action*. 1st ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hutzschenreuter, T., & Kleindienst, I. (2006). *Strategy-process research: What have we learned and what is still to be explored*. *Journal of Management*, 32(5), pp 673–720.
- International Business Publications “IBP”, U. (2016). *Palestine (West Bank and Gaza) Business Law Handbook. Volume 1 Strategic Information and Basic Laws*. Washington, USA: IBP, Inc.
- Isaac, J., Khalil, M., Rishmawi, K., Dabouqi, A. and Marinelli, L. (2015). *The Economic Cost of the Israeli Occupation of the occupied Palestinian Territories*. Jerusalem: The Applied Research Institute (ARIJ), pp.35-37.
- Ivankova, N., Creswell, J. and Stick, S. (2006). *Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice*. *Field Methods*, 18(1), pp.3-20.
- Jarzabkowski, P. and Kaplan, S. (2015). *Strategy Tools-In-Use: A Framework for Understanding ‘Technologies Of Rationality’ In Practice*. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36(4), pp.537-558.
- Javadi, M. and Zarea, K. (2016). *Understanding Thematic Analysis and its Pitfall*. *Journal of Client Care*, 1(1), pp.33-39.

- JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency, (2010). ***Preparatory Survey for Assistance to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. Final Report.*** [online] Tokyo: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Available at: http://open_jicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/11989423_01.pdf [Accessed 15 Apr. 2017].
- Johnson, G., Whittington, R., Scholes, K., Angwin, D. and Regnér, P. (2017). ***Exploring Strategy: Text and Cases.*** 11th ed. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited.
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A., & Turner, L. (2007). ***Toward a definition of mixed methods research.*** *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1, pp.112-133.
- Kachaner, N., King, K. and Stewart, S. (2016). ***Four best practices for strategic planning.*** *Strategy & Leadership*, 44(4), pp.26-31.
- Kaličanin, D. and Todorović, M. (2014). ***Interactions between business and financial strategies in Serbian companies.*** *Economic Annals*, 59(203), pp.55-74.
- Kaplan, R. and Mikes, A. (2012). ***Managing Risks: A New Framework.*** *Harvard Business Review*, 90(6), pp.48–60.
- Kasunic, M. (2005). ***Designing an Effective Survey.*** [online] Hanscom: The Software Engineering Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, pp.4-10. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/b662/00939fd63e277f293dabd4e2f48e285ec464.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jun. 2017].
- Kelley, K., Clark, B., Brown, V. and Sitzia, J. (2003). ***Good practice in the conduct and reporting of survey research.*** *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, 15(3), pp.261-266.

- Kiptoo, J. and Mwirigi, F. (2014). *Factors That Influence Effective Strategic Planning Process in Organizations*. **IOSR Journal of Business and Management**, 16(6), pp.188-195.
- Kohtamäki, M., Kraus, S., Kautonen, T. and Varamäki, E. (2008). *Strategy in Small Growth-Oriented Firms in Finland: A Discourse Analysis Approach*. **The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation**, 9(3), pp.167-175.
- Koufopoulos, D. and Chryssochoidis, G. (2000). *The effects of an uncertain country environment upon leadership and strategic planning practices*. **Strategic Change**, 9(6), pp.371-395.
- Kpolovie, P. (2017). *Statistical Analysis with SPSS for Research*. **UK: European Centre for Research, Training and Development (ECRTD) Publications**.
- Kumar, R. (2014). *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. 4th ed. Cornwall: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Kuratko, D., Hornsby, J. and Covin, J. (2014). *Diagnosing a firm's internal environment for corporate entrepreneurship*. **Business Horizons**, 57(1), pp.37-47.
- Lam, J. (2014). *Enterprise Risk Management: From Incentives to Controls*. 2nd ed. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Larsen, P, Tonge, R and Ito, M. (1998). *The Strategic Planning Process in Growing Companies*. **Journal of General Management**, 24(1), pp.53-68.
- Leitner, K. (2014). *Strategy formation in the innovation and market domain: emergent or deliberate?* **Journal of Strategy and Management**, 7(4), pp.354-375.

- Lowder, B. (2009). *Strategic Thinking and Strategic Planning: Two Pieces of the Same Puzzle*. SSRN Electronic Journal. [online] Available at:
http://papers.ssrn.com.https.sci-hub.tw/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1418793# [Accessed 5 Apr. 2017].
- Majama, N. and Magang, T. (2017). *Strategic Planning in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A Case Study of Botswana SMEs*. *Journal of Management and Strategy*, 8(1), p.74.
- Malterud, K., Siersma, V. and Guassora, A. (2015). *Sample Size in Qualitative Interview Studies: Guided by Information Power*. *Qualitative Health Research*, pp.1-8.
- Martin, Roger L. (2010). *Five Questions to Build a Strategy*. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(5), pp.3-8.
- Martin, Roger L. (2014). *The Big Lie of Strategic Planning*. *Harvard Business Review*, 92(January–February 2014), pp.79-84.
- Mason, M. (2010). *Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews*. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11(3), Article 8, pp.1-19.
- Massar Associates (2002). *Sector Report on the Palestinian Food and Beverage Manufacturing Industry in West Bank and Gaza*. [online] **Virginia: The Services Group TSG, USA: USAID**. Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnacu076.pdf [Accessed 13 Mar. 2017].
- Mathis, R. and Jackson, J. (2011). *Human resource management*. 13th ed. Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Mazzei, M. and Noble, D. (2017). *Big Data Dreams: A Framework for Corporate Strategy*. *Business Horizons*, 60(3), pp.405-414.

- Mbithi, M. (2016). *Effects of Strategy Choice and Performance on Sugar Companies in Kenya*. Phd Business Administration. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya: Nairobi.
- McDonald, M. (1996). *Strategic marketing planning: Theory, practice and research agendas*. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 12(1-3), pp.4-27.
- McKim, C. A. (2017). *The value of mixed methods research: A mixed methods study*. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 11(2), pp.202-222.
- McNamee, P. (1999). *Developing Strategies for Competitive Advantage. Best of Long Range Planning Series*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- McWilliams, A. and Siegel, D. (2001). *Corporate Social Responsibility: A Theory of the Firm Perspective*. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), p.117.
- Mentzer, J., DeWitt, W., Keebler, J., Min, S., Nix, N., Smith, C. and Zacharia, Z. (2001). *Defining Supply Chain Management*. *Journal of Business Logistics*, 22(2), pp.1-25.
- Migdad, M. and Qafa, B. (2007). *The Developmental Horizons for the food Industries Sector in Palestine: A case study for the food industries in the Gaza Strip*. *IUG Journal of Humanities Research*, 15(2), pp.727-777.
- Miller, C. and Cardinal, L. (1994). *Strategic Planning and Firm Performance: A Synthesis of More Than Two Decades of Research*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(6), pp.1649-1665.
- Minarelli, F., Raggi, M. and Viaggi, D. (2015). *Innovation in European food SMEs: determinants and links between types*. *Bio-based and Applied Economics*, [online] 4(1), pp.33-53. Available at:

<http://www.fupress.net/index.php/bae/article/view/14705/15179>

[Accessed 15 Apr. 2017].

- Ministry of National Economy MNE. (2017). ***Companies Registration***. [online] Available at:
<http://www.mne.gov.ps/compreg.aspx?lng=2&tabindex=100>
[Accessed 4 Jul. 2017].
- Mintzberg, H. (1990). ***The Design School: Reconsidering The Basic Premises of Strategic Management***. *Strategic Management Journal*, 11(3), pp.171-195.
- Mintzberg, H. (1994). ***The rise and fall of strategic planning***. *Harvard Business Review*, 72(1), pp.107-114.
- Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B. and Lampel, J. (1998). ***Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour through the Wilds of Strategic Management***. New York: Free Press.
- Mohapatra, S. Sreejesh, S. and Anusree, M. (2014). ***Business Research Methods: An Applied Orientation***. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Molina-Azorín, J. and López-Gamero, M. (2016). ***Mixed Methods Studies in Environmental Management Research: Prevalence, Purposes and Designs***. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 25(2), pp.134–148.
- Nooraie, M. (2012). ***Factors Influencing Strategic Decision-Making Processes***. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 2(7), pp.405-429.
- Noordzij, M., Tripepi, G., Dekker, F., Zoccali, C., Tanck, M. and Jager, K. (2010). ***Sample size calculations: basic principles and common pitfalls***. *Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation*, 25(5), pp.1388–1393.

- Notta, O. and Vlachvei, A. (2017). *Competitive Strategies and Managers' Perceptions in Greek Food Manufacturing Firms*. In: A. Kavoura, D. Sakas and P. Tomaras, ed., **Strategic Innovative Marketing, Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics**. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp.245-251.
- Odera, P. (2014). *Factors influencing strategic planning process by major sugar producing firms in Kenya*. MSc degree in of Business Administration. University of Nairobi.
- O'Regan, N. and Ghobadian, A. (2007). *Formal strategic planning: annual raindance or wheel of success?* **Strategic Change**, 16(1-2), pp.11-22.
- O'Reilly, S., Kumar, A. and Adam, F. (2015). *The role of hierarchical production planning in food manufacturing SMEs*. **International Journal of Operations & Production Management**, 35(10), pp.1362-1385.
- Otache, I. and Mahmood, R. (2015). *The Role of External Environment and Organizational Culture: A Proposed Framework*. **Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences**, 6(4), pp.524-531.
- Ouakouak, M. (2017). *Does a strategic planning process that combines rational and adaptive characteristics pay off? Evidence from European firms*. **Australian Journal of Management**, pp.1-22.
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics "PCBS" a. (2017). *Labour Force Survey - Annual Report: 2016*. Ramallah: Palestine: PCBS.
- Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics "PCBS" b. (2017). *Registered Foreign Trade Statistics Goods and Services- Main Results: 2016*. Ramallah: Palestine: PCBS.

- Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency PIPA. (2017). *Food and beverage industry*. [online] **Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency PIPA**. Available at:
<http://www.pipa.ps/page.php?id=1ab350y1749840Y1ab350> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2017].
- Palestinian Standard Institution "PSI" (2017). *Impact(s) of the Absence of the PSI Institute on Food Industries in Gaza*. [online] **Ramallah: Palestine: Palestine Trade Center**. Available at:
<https://www.paltrade.org/upload/multimedia/admin/2017/12/5a38b204099d0.pdf> [Accessed 21 Feb. 2017].
- Paroutis, S., & Heracleous, L. (2013). *Discourse revisited: Dimensions and employment of first-order strategy discourse during institutional adoption*. **Strategic Management Journal**, 34, pp 935–956.
- Patel, N. and Deshpande, V. (2015). *Supply Chain Management for Food Processing Industry: A Review*. **International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology**, 4(12), pp.12107-12112.
- Pavićević, S., Živković, V. and Stanković, T. (2017). *Risk Management and Strategic Planning*. **International Journal of Advanced Quality**, 44(4), pp.37-41.
- PFI, Palestinian Federation of Industries. (2009). *The Current Status of the Industrial Sector in Palestine... A Three-Year Outlook Based on Economic Indicators*. [online] **Washington, D.C: USAID**, pp.66-97. Available at:
<https://www.ppu.edu/ppuittc/sites/default/files/The%20Current%20Status%20of%20the%20Industrial%20Sector%20in%20Palestine.pdf>
[Accessed 16 Sep. 2017].

- Ponto, J. (2015). *Understanding and Evaluating Survey Research*. **Journal of the Advanced Practitioner in Oncology**, 6(2), pp168-171.
- Porter, M. (1998). *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance: with a new introduction*. New York: The Free Press.
- Porter, M. E. (1996). *What Is Strategy?* **Harvard Business Review**, 74, (6), pp. 70–83.
- Pournasir, S. (2013). *Key Success Factors of Strategic Managemnt Implementation in SMES in Iran*. **Journal of International Studies**, 6(2), pp.65-78.
- Qehaja, A., Kutllovci, E. and Pula, J. (2017). *Strategic Management Tools and Techniques: A Comparative Analysis of Empirical Studies*. **Croatian Economic Survey**, 19(1), pp.67-99.
- Ravitch, S. and Riggan, J. (2011). *Reason & Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*. 1st ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Razali, N. and Yap, B. (2011). *Power Comparisons of Shapiro-Wilk, Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Lilliefors and Anderson-Darling Tests*. **Journal of Statistical Modeling and Analytics**, 2(1), pp.21-33.
- Ross, R., Pandey, V. and Ross, K. (2015). *Sustainability and Strategy in U.S. Agri-Food Firms: An Assessment of Current Practices*. **International Food and Agribusiness Management Review**, 18(1), pp.17-48.
- Rothaermel, F. (2017). *Strategic Management*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Rudnicki, W. and Vagner, I. (2014). *Methods of strategic analysis and proposal method of measuring productivity of a company*. **The**

Malopolska School of Economics in Tarnów Research Papers Collection, 25(2), pp.175-184.

- Ryan, G. and Bernard, H. (2003). *Techniques to Identify Themes. Field Methods*, 15(1), pp.85-109.
- Saunders, M. and Lewis, P. (2017). *Doing Research in Business & Management: An Essential Guide to Planning Your Project*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson.
- Schaefer, T. and Guenther, T. (2016). *Exploring strategic planning outcomes: the influential role of top versus middle management participation. Journal of Management Control*, 27(2-3), pp.205-249.
- Schoonenboom, J. (2017). *A Performative Paradigm for Mixed Methods Research. Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, July 2017. pp.1-17.
- Schoonenboom, J. and Johnson, R. (2017). *How to Construct a Mixed Methods Research Design? KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 69(S2), pp.107-131.
- Schulz K., Grimes D. (2005). *Sample size calculations in randomised trials: mandatory and mystical. Lancet*, 365 pp. 1348-1353.
- Shepherd, N. and Rudd, J. (2014). *The Influence of Context on the Strategic Decision-Making Process: A Review of the Literature. International Journal of Management Reviews*, 16(3), pp.340-364.
- Siddique, C. (2015). *A Comparative Study of Strategic Planning Practices of SMEs and Large-Sized Business Organizations in Emerging Economies: The Case of UAE. Strategic Change*, 24(6), pp.553-567.
- Smirata, I. and Shariff, M. (2016). *Mapping the Market Success for Family Micro and Small Food Producers in Palestine: A Qualitative*

Study. In: **ISSC International Conference on Soft Science.** [online] Future Academy, pp.212-219. Available at:
<http://www.futureacademy.org.uk/files/images/upload/ISSC%202016%2030.pdf> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2017].

- Snell, S., Morris, S. and Bohlander, G. (2015). ***Managing Human Resources***. 16th ed. Mason: Cengage Learning.
- Soebandrija, K., Aprillia, D., Ho, F. and Suwignyo, J. (2016). ***Competitive Strategy and Case Study in Food Industry: Perspectives of Industrial Engineering (IE) and Doctor of Research in Management (DRM)***. **International Business Management**, 10(2), pp.62-66.
- Sołoducho-Pelc, L. (2015). ***Planning Horizon as a Key Element of a Competitive Strategy***. **Journal of Economics, Business and Management**, 3(2), pp.161-166.
- Solomon, M. (2016). ***Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being***. 12th ed. New York: Pearson.
- Subedi, D. (2016). ***Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Design as the Third Research Community of Knowledge Claim***. **American Journal of Educational Research**, 4(7), pp.570-577.
- Suchánek, P., Richter, J. and Králová, M. (2015). ***Customer Satisfaction, Product Quality and Performance of Companies. Review of Economic Perspectives***, 14(4), pp.329-344.
- Swamidass, P., Baines, T. and Darlow, N. (2001). ***The role of manufacturing and marketing managers in strategy development***. **International Journal of Operations & Production Management**, 21(7), pp.933-948.

- Szolnoki, G. and Hoffmann, D. (2013). *Online, face-to-face and telephone surveys: Comparing different sampling methods in wine consumer research*. **Wine Economics and Policy**, 2(2), pp.57-66.
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (2010). *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*. 2nd ed. California: SAGE Publications.
- Tavakol, M. and Dennick, R. (2011). *Making sense of Cronbach's alpha*. **International Journal of Medical Education**, 2(1), pp.53-55.
- Teddlie, C. and Yu, F. (2007). *Mixed Methods Sampling: A Typology with Examples*. **Journal of Mixed Methods Research**, 1(1), pp.77-100.
- Tham, T. and Dung, T. (2017). *Evaluating the impact of supply chain capabilities to the business success: A case study in small and medium food companies in Mekong Delta*. **Can Tho University Journal of Science**, 05, pp.114-121.
- Thatte, A. (2007). *Competitive advantage of a firm through supply chain responsiveness and SCM practices*. Published PhD Dissertation in Manufacturing Management. University of Toledo.
- The Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency "PIPA". (2017). *Food and beverage industry*. [online] Available at:
<http://www.pipa.ps/page.php?id=1ab350y1749840Y1ab350> [Accessed 21 May 2017].
- Thompson, S. (2012). *Sampling*. 3rd ed. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Thurmond, V. (2001). *The Point of Triangulation*. **Journal of Nursing Scholarship**, 33(3), pp.253-258.

- Turner, S. F., Cardinal, L. B., & Burton, R. M. (2017). *Research design for mixed methods: A triangulation-based framework and roadmap*. **Organizational Research Methods**, 20(2), 243-267.
- UNCTAD, T. (2015). *The besieged Palestinian agricultural sector*. In: **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**. Geneva: United Nations.
- UNDP "United Nations Development Programme" (2017). *Three Years After the 2014 Gaza Hostilities - Beyond Survival: Challenges to Economic Recovery and Long-Term Development*. [online] Gaza Office, pp.39-43. Available at:
[https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/5ba47a5c6cef541b802563e000493b8c/53790dcd5ba871d585258169005c5e9e/\\$FILE/UNDPRPT_120717.pdf](https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/5ba47a5c6cef541b802563e000493b8c/53790dcd5ba871d585258169005c5e9e/$FILE/UNDPRPT_120717.pdf) [Accessed 16 Jun. 2017].
- Vaitkevičius, S. (2007). *Application of Strategic Management Tools in Lithuania: Managers' Knowledge and Experience*. **Engineering Economics**, 4(54), pp.70-77.
- van Duren, E., Sparling, D., Turvey, C. and Lake, L. (2003). *An Assessment of the Strategies and Strengths of Medium-Sized Food Processors*. **Agribusiness**, 19(1), pp.115-132.
- Vuorinen, T., Hakala, H., Kohtamaki, M. and Uusitalo, K. (2017). *Mapping the landscape of strategy tools: A review on strategy tools published in leading journals within the past 25 years*. **Long Range Planning**, 50, pp.1-20.
- Waihenya, J. (2014). *Factors affecting adoption of strategic planning by SMEs: a case of hardware shops in Nakuru town*. MSc degree in Business Administration. Kenyatta University, Nairobi.
- Wheelen, T., Hunger, J., Hoffman, A. and Bamford, C. (2015). *Strategic Management and Business Policy: Globalization,*

Innovation and Sustainability: 14th ed "Global Edition". Pearson Higher Education.

- Wolf, C. and Floyd, S. (2013). ***Strategic Planning Research: Toward a Theory-Driven Agenda***. **Journal of Management**, 43(6), pp. 1754-1788.
- World Commission on Environment and Development, (1987). ***Our common future***. **Oxford paperbacks**. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zarei, M. and Paghaleh, M. (2011). ***Strategic Management of Business in Food Industry: By an Integrated Deployment of AHP and Freeman Model***. **Business Management Dynamics**, 1(3), pp.47-52.
- Zhang, D., Morse, S. and Li, B. (2017). ***Risk management of Chinese food companies; a management perspective***. **Journal of Risk Research**, 20(1), pp.118-134.
- Zohrabi, M. (2013). ***Mixed Method Research: Instruments, Validity, Reliability and Reporting Findings***. **Theory and Practice in Language Studies**, 3(2), pp.254-262.

Appendixes

Appendix A The Online Survey Instrument

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

MSc in Engineering Management (MSEM) program



Survey Instrument Sheet

(Private and Confidential)

Survey about Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry

Date: 01-03-2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you very much in advance for taking the time to participate in this survey. I am currently conducting an MSc project research on "Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry". The main purpose of this study is to provide guidance and support to food companies on how to set up corporate strategies for successful compliance with the global strategic directions for the international food processing sector.

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete, and your participation is vital to the success of this research.

Once again, we respect your privacy, and want to assure you that your responses are both anonymous and confidential. If you have any queries or require further information please don't hesitate to contact me at:

Jawwal: 0599-333622, Email: rashad.afaneh2014@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



RashadAfaneh

Master of Engineering management Student

First: General Information

(The following questions seek information regarding respondents and their companies)

1...Name of your company.

.....

2...Please select the position you currently hold within your company.

☐

1 Chairman or Board of director

☐

2 General Manager or CEO

☐

3 Both 1&2

☐

4 Middle Manager or Department Managers

☐

5 Other (if you selected "other" please specify)

3... Please indicate the number of years' experience in your current position.

☐

1 0-5 years.

☐

2 6-10 years.

☐

3 11-15 years.

☐

4 Over than 15 years.

4... Which of the following best describes ownership structure for your company?

☐

1 Private Limited Company (Ltd)

☐

2 Public Limited Company (PLC)

☐

3 Public Ordinary Company

☐

4 Ordinary Company Limited

5...Does your company is a family business?

☐

1 No

☐

2 Yes

6...Please indicate the number of years your company has been in food industry OR

(Date established of the Company).

☐

1 0-5 years.

☐

2 6-10 years.

☐

3 11-15 years.

☐

4 16-20 years.

☐

5 Over than 20 years.

7...Please indicate the number of employees in your company or (department):

☐

1 1-10 employee

☐

2 11-49 employee

☐

3 50-249 employee

☐

4 More than 250 employee

8...Please indicate the key products currently provided by your company: (sub-sector of food industry)

☐

1 Meat-poultry products

☐

2 Fruit and Vegetable-pickling, freezing and canning

☐

3 Oils and fats products

☐

4 Dairy products

- ☐
- 5 ☐ Grain mills and starch products
- 6 ☐ Bakery products
- 7 ☐ Sugar, confectionery and chocolate products
- 8 ☐ Animal feeds products
- 9 ☐ Drinks and mineral water
- 10 ☐ Agri-Products & Dates & Makrona
- 11 ☐ Other food products

9... Where is your corporate headquarters located?

- ☐
- 1 ☐ the West Bank
- 2 ☐ the Gaza Strip

10... Address of your corporate located?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Jenin | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Jerusalem |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Tubas | 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Bethlehem |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Tulkarm | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Hebron |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Nablus | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> North Gaza |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Qalqiliya | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Gaza |
| 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Salfit | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Deir al Balah |
| 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Ramallah | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Khan Yunis |
| 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Jericho | 16 <input type="checkbox"/> Rafah |

11...Does your company currently have any exporting activities?

☐

1 ☐ No

☐

2 ☐ Yes

12...Which among the following is an important selling point for your company:

☐

1 ☐ Local markets

☐

2 ☐ Regional markets

☐

3 ☐ International markets

☐

4 ☐ Other (if you selected "other" please specify)

13...Does your company currently have any certifications (i.e. ISO certification,

etc.)?

☐

1 ☐ No

☐

2 ☐ Yes (if you selected "Yes" please specify)

14...Please identify the proportion of your overall market share currently in

Palestinian markets?

☐

1 ☐ 1-10%

☐

2 ☐ 11-15%

☐

3 ☐ 16-20%

☐

4 ☐ 21-25%

☐

5 ☐ Over than 25%

Second: Strategic Directions of Food Industry Companies

(The following questions associated to the main strategic goals of Food Companies within the Palestinian food industry)

15...Do you have a strategic plan for your company business? [The key question]

☐

1 ☐ No

☐

2 ☐ Yes

16...Please indicate the usual planning duration for corporate strategies in your company (i.e. the amount of time into the future the strategy cover)

☐

1 ☐ 1-3 years.

☐

2 ☐ 4-5 years.

3 ☐ 6-10 years.

4 ☐ Over than 10 years.

17...Please rate each of the following in order of its importance as strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food industry companies, on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important and 1 is the least important:

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all	Little of	Moderate	Important	Very
		important	importance	important		important
1	Meeting consumer requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Food quality & safety standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Marketing techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Maintaining the current market position of the company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Searching for new market opportunities of the company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Full capacity of production	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Sales growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	improving profitability and reducing costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Brand recognition and positioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18... Please rate each of the following in order of its frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals, on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the most frequency and 1 is the least frequency:

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequen tly	Very freque ntly
1	Issues related with human resources in companies (recruiting, training ...).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Competition from other food companies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Changes in consumer's behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Keeping pace with advances in technologies and innovation in manufacturing process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Issues related with raw materials supply.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Issues related with leadership in companies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Lack of finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Third: Corporate Strategies Formulation Practices

(The following questions associated to the corporate strategies formulation practices within the Palestinian food companies)

19... Please rate the purpose of formulating corporate strategies:

#	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	To guide company businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	To improve allocation of resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	To attract the new consumers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	To gain a competitive advantage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	To meet the stakeholders expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Other (if you selected "other" please specify)					
					

20...Please rate each of the following procedures that are included within corporate strategies formulation process; on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important and 1 is the least important:

#	Step	1	2	3	4	5	
		Not at all	Little of	Moderate	Important	Very	
		important	importance	ly important		important	
		t	e			t	
1	Vision statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Mission statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Core values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Goals setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Internal corporate environment appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	External corporate environment appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Organization structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Industry analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Competitor analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Company core competences setting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Risk Identification & Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Selecting corporate strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21...Please indicate the approach to corporate strategy formulation which is dominant within your company (Please choose the one that most applies to your company):

- ☐
- 1 The business environment (both internal and external) is analyzed, and vision, mission and objectives are determined, following which a corporate strategy is worked out by senior management which is then passed down for implementation.
- ☐
- 2 Corporate strategy is not planned before the event but emerges over time, therefore may appear to have little structure.

22...Which one of the following best characterizes your company experience with corporate strategies formulation process (Please choose the one that most applies to your company):

- ☐
- 1 Company has no experience of corporate strategy formulation at present, and it is not deemed necessary.
- ☐
- 2 Practices and procedures for conducting corporate strategy formulation are just beginning to emerge.
- ☐
- 3 Long history of corporate strategy formulation practices.

23...Please indicate how strongly your answer of agreement/disagreement with each statement below:

#	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	Written guidelines exist to structure corporate strategies formulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Corporate strategies formulation process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

involves numerous participants at only top and middle levels of your company.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 | Participants of external specialists (experts) in the corporate strategies formulation practices is high. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | The procedures are fully understood by every part who participate in formulating strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | You have developed a list of company's strategic goals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | You have developed a list of internal factors that are affected corporate strategies formulation process. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | You have developed a list of external factors that are affected | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

corporate strategies

formulation process.

- | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8 | Food companies review its environmental risks (both external and internal) annually | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Company seeks continually to redefine their strategic priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | There are adequate competencies to formulate corporate strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Strategic decisions are reached based on circumstances as they arise. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | We frequently adjust corporate strategies to adapt them to changing condition. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Strategic analysis tools such as SWOT analysis are helpful and direct | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

the company to
formulate its future
strategies

14 Corporate strategies are ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

flexible to be adaptable
to future changes

15 The Company's ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Management fully
considers risks in
formulating their
corporate strategy.

16 Corporate strategies are ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

appropriately
communicated as it
relates to objectives
targeted by the different
company departments.

17 Statements of company's ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

vision, mission and
values are powerful
tools for defining and
guiding your company's
team to create their
future strategies.

18 The ISO Certifications ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

serve as the basis for the
corporate strategies,
which support strategic
issues specific to
improve quality and
develop plans to achieve
it.

24...Please identify which of the following parties are participating in formulating a corporate strategy process; (you can select allow more than one answer).

- ☐
- 1 ☐ Boards of directors.
- 2 ☐ CEO
- 3 ☐ General managers
- 4 ☐ Senior managers (departments managers)
- 5 ☐ Experts and External consultants
- 6 ☐ Other (if you selected "other" please specify)

25...Please rate the following internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process; on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is very strong effect and 1 is no effect; you can identify additional factors in the text box provided.

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		No effect	Minimal effect	Moderate effect	Strong effect	Very Strong effect
1	Company Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Managing HR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Financial position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Marketing techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Food quality and safety policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Manufacturing techniques (technology)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	price and cost management,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Corporate Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Company's infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Company resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Additional factors (please specify)					
					
					
					
					

26...Please rate the following external factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process; on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is very strong effect and 1 is no effect; you can identify additional factors in the text box provided.

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		No effect	Minimal effect	Moderate effect	Strong effect	Very Strong effect
1	Consumer's Behavior and trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Supply chain network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	advancement of technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Tax rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	market structure (industry)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	changes in government regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Availability of raw materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Interest rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Global requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Additional factors (please specify)					

27...Please identify the main source to gaining competitive advantage from

building competitive strategy in your company:

- ☐
- 1 ☐ Price of product
- ☐
- 2 ☐ Quality of products
- ☐
- 3 ☐ Product innovation
- ☐
- 4 ☐ Services
- ☐
- 5 ☐ Fast responses to market changes
- ☐
- 6 ☐ Others (please specify)

28...The following are possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies:

(Please indicate the degree of frequency with which each has been experienced by your company)

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		Never	Rarely	Occasion	Frequen	Very
				ally	tly	frequently
1	Time constraints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Market uncertainty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Lack of expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Budget constraints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Resistance to change (by staff)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Resistance to change (by top management)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Government polices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Changes in technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29...Does your company use one of the tools of strategic analysis to identify internal and external factors or formulate future strategies:

- ☐
- 1 ☐ No

2 Yes (if you selected "Yes" please move to Q30)

30...Please identify the analytical tools used for performing an assessment of the internal and external factors impacting strategic decisions in your company:

- ☐
- 1 ☐ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats "SWOT" Analysis
- ☐
- 2 ☐ Political,Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal "PESTEL" or "PEST" Analysis

- 3 Porter's Five Forces Model Analysis
- 4 Others (please specify).....

31... Please identify other issues related to the formulating corporate strategies of your company which you believe are important, yet not addressed in the Survey.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Fourth: Assessing Current Corporate Strategies in Palestinian Food Industry

32...Please rate each of the following common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies; on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important and 1 is the least important; you can identify additional corporate strategies in the text box provided:

#	Corporate Strategy	1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very important
1	Sustainability Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Social Responsibility Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Competitiveness Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Manufacturing Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Growth and expansion Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Human Resources Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Innovation Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Marketing Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Financial Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Supply Chain Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1 Other (if you selected "other", Please identify others corporate strategies that adopted in
1 your company which you believe are important, yet not addressed in the Survey)

33... Please indicate the degree of importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully; on a rating scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the most important and 1 is the least important; you can identify additional corporate strategies in the text box provided:

#		1	2	3	4	5
		Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very impor tant
1	Analysis of competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Food industry analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Internal environment analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	External environment analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Quality control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Long range planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Staff development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Research and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Relations with other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

industry (e.g

agricultural

industry)

1 Global food ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

0 company's

corporate strategies.

1 Changes in markets. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

1

1 Future risks. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2

1 The corporate ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3 strategies are

regularly updated.

1 Adopts corporate ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4 strategy that creates

competitive

advantages for its

core business.

1 Other (if you selected "other", Please identify others corporate strategies that adopted in

5 your company which you believe are important, yet not addressed in the Survey)

.....
.....
.....
.....

34... What recommendations do you have for better corporate strategies
formulation
process?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

-----**Thank you for your participation**-----

Appendix B Interview Questions Study Guide

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

MSc in Engineering Management (MSEM) program



A Interview Questions Study Guide

Research Project Title: Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework Development

Interview Profile			
Name of Company:		Company Address:	
Place of interview:		Language of interview	
Style of the Interview:		Date of Interview:	
Duration of Interview:		Time of interview:	

Interviewee Profile			
Name of interviewee:		Position Title:	
Education Qualifications:		Years of Experience:	
Telephone:		E-mail:	
Other experiences:			

Company Profile			
Date of establishment: (No. of years in operation):		Ownership Structure: (Owned by)	
Sub-Sector: (Products)		Registration as: (Company Type)	
No. of employees in company:		Main departments in company:	
Website:		E-mail:	
Telephone number:		Fax number:	

Interview Introduction

...

Full transcript of the interview

Time start		(Start of the Interview)
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q1:	First of all, can you describe for me the nature of the strategic decision-making process in the food industry companies? (The nature of role for stakeholders, policymakers, purpose of this process, tools used...)
	A1:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q2:	What are strategic priorities and future directions of the food industry companies? What are the tools used to determine strategic priorities, and How?
	A2:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q3:	What are the major activities or formal procedures that should be used to formulate corporate strategies in the food industry companies? Describe your company's experience in this field?
	A3:	
	Intro	When company makes their corporate strategies, they need to then identify the critical factors that are taken as success factors or failure of strategic plans.

		(In the academic context, these factors are classified into: internal factors (under the control and responsibility of the company) and external (outside the control of the company))
00:00:00	Q4:	<p>What are the key drivers or factors that should be considered when formulating the corporate strategies?(in external, internal and competitive context)</p> <p>Please explain the degree of effect of each these factors on the process of formulating strategies.</p> <p>And what are tools/techniques used in assessing these factors?</p>
	A4:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q5:	<p>What do you believe to be the key challenges in formulating the food industry company's corporate strategies? How are you going to address these challenges?</p>
	A5:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q6:	<p>State the current corporate strategies that adopted by the food industry companies? And the main aims of them? And what were the criteria used for selecting these corporate strategies? And how these strategies suitable with future changes in the industry?</p>
	A6:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q7:	<p>What are the future trends for each of the food businesses that are to be achieved by adopting the corporate strategies? How do you deal</p>

		<p>with it?</p> <p>(The needs of the food industry, the changes that happen in markets, consumer's behavior)</p>
	A7:	
	Intro	
00:00:00	Q8:	<p>What corporate strategies do you expect to conduct over the next years that will fit with the future trends in industry, from your perspective?</p>
	A8:	

Thank you very much for your time,

Appendix C Interview Consent Form

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

MSc in Engineering Management (MSEM) program



Interview Consent Form

Research Project Title: Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework Development

Interviewee part:

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project.

Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken from An-Najah National University require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used.

This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

1. I agree to participate in a research project conducted by Rashad Afaneh from An-Najah National University in Nablus, Palestine.
2. I understand that the research is designed to gather information about Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry. I will be one of the people being interviewed for this research.

3. I have been given sufficient information about this research project. The purpose of my participation as an interviewee in this project has been explained to me and is clear.
4. Participation involves being interviewed by researcher. The interview will take approximately 40-55 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview. An audio tape of the interview and subsequent dialogue will be made. If I don't want to be taped, I will not be able to participate in the study.
5. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure.
6. The transcript of the interview will be analyzed by researcher, and all or part of the content of your interview may be used to form part of my thesis and will potentially be published in academic articles.
7. I have the right not to answer any of the questions. If I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to withdraw from the interview.
8. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name of interviewee: **Position/ Job title:**

.....

Signature of the interviewee: **Date:**

Interviewer part:

I have explained the nature of research project and the implications of being interviewed to the interviewee and I have confirmed to participant that names will be kept anonymous and that information will be used for the sake of academic research

only and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of interviewer: RashadAfaneh

Signature of the interviewer:

.....

For further information, please don't hesitate to contact me at:

Jawwal : 0592-333622, Email: rashad.afaneh2014@gmail.com

Appendix D Information Sheet for Potential Participants in this Thesis Research

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

MSc in Engineering Management (MSEM) program



Information Sheet for Potential Participants in this Thesis Research

This Participant Information Sheet will help you decide if you'd like to take part. It sets out why we are doing the study, what your participation would involve, what the benefits and risks to you might be, and what would happen after the study ends. We will go through this information with you and answer any questions you may have. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in this study. Before you decide you may want to talk about the study with other people.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign the Consent Form on the last page of this document. You will be given a copy of both the Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form to keep.

This document is three pages long, including the Consent Form. Please make sure you have read and understood all the pages.

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project as described below. Before you decide if you want to take part or not, I want to inform you why the research is being done, and what you can expect if you do take part. Please read what I have to say carefully and ask us if there is anything that is not clear.

Introduction,	My name is Rashad Afaneh. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study. I am conducting this research as part completion and requirements for a completed master's degree in Engineering Management at An-Najah National University.
Research Project,	Corporate Strategies in the Palestinian Food Industry: A Framework Development
The Purpose of Research,	This research seeks to explore and assess practices adopted by Palestinian manufacturing companies to formulate their corporate strategies at top level management. The collected data will be provided key information for developing a framework for company's assistance in construct their strategic plan.
Participants,	<p>The target population this study is restricted to food manufacturing enterprises which working in the Palestine, regardless of subsector, which belong him.</p> <p>Therefore, our focus will be on the board members, senior managers, CEOs and relevant parties in relation to the strategic planning process within these companies.</p> <p>The researcher would like to get more feedback about your experiences within formulating your corporate strategies. Your responses in this research will help us evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic planning in your company so that we can design better framework and improve the</p>

process of building the strategies in dynamic environment.

Participant

As a participant in a research study, you have the right:

Rights,

- To have enough time to decide whether or not to be in the research study and to make that decision without any pressure from the people who are conducting the research.
- You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation.
- Also, if you wish to receive results of this research,
- Maintain the confidentiality of study participants.
- Keep a copy of the consent form for your records.
- The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you
- Your data will be anonymised.

Confidentiality

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual and personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data, and no identified by name in any publication of the results.

& Anonymity,

Mechanism of

The data collection process will be conducted through two stages:

Data Collection,

Phase One: conducting interviews with the top management team of the food companies (members of boards of directors, general managers, factories managers), and the adoption of the selected companies for interviews was based on their history and experience of these companies in the food industry.

	<p>Phase Two: distributing Surveys to all food processing companies which registered by the Ministry of National Economy.</p> <p>With regard to the food companies in the Gaza Strip, the data collection process will be conducted by using telephone for interviews, and by using online Surveyfor the survey.</p>
Time	Participants will be asked to take part in a 35 minutes interview.
Commitment,	<p>And the survey is very brief and will only take about 10 minutes to complete.</p> <p>The Surveywill take approximately 10 minutes to complete</p>
The Expected Risks of Research	<p>We don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.</p>
Research Funding,	<p>This research is not funded by any entity, whether governmental or private entity, and all expenses and costs of this research rest within the student himself only.</p>
Approval,	<p>This research has been approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies Board at An-Najah National University. (Approval Date 01/09/2016)</p>
For Further Inquiries,	<p>If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact us:</p>

Contact details of the researchers:

Supervisor:

Dr. AyhamJaaron

Asst. Prof. in Industrial Engineering

An-Najah National University

P.O.Box 7

Nablus, West Bank

Palestine (Occupied Territories)

97200

Tel. +97092345113 Ext.4534

Email: ayham.jaaron@najah.eduWeb: <http://staff.najah.edu/ayham>Researcher:

Mr. RashadAfaneh

Undergraduate student, An-Najah National

University

MSc in Engineering Management

(MSEM) program

Salfeet, West Bank

Palestine (Occupied Territories)

Jawwal. +972-592-333622

Email: rashad.afaneh2014@gmail.com

Thank you for reading this far. If you are still interested in taking part in the study, please look at [Interview Consent Form](#). When I receive your approval and permission to conduct a research study at your company. I will contact you so we can arrange to meet at a time that is convenient for you. I can then visit and hold the short interview.

Please click on the link below to access the [Survey Instrument Sheet](#) (or copy and paste the link into your Internet browser) and then enter the personal code to begin the survey.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/Rashad>

Yours sincerely,

RashadAfaneh

Appendix E A List of the Members of the Arbitration Commission for Survey

List of the Members of the Arbitration Commission for a Survey Study

No.	Name	Position
1	Dr. AyhamJaaron	Assistant Professor at An-Najah University
2	Dr. YahyaSaleh	Assistant Professor at An-Najah University
3	Dr. Mohmmad Othman	Assistant Professor at An-Najah University
4	Mr. NaserAtyani	(Experts) General Manager of PFIU
5	Mr. Bassam Walweel	(Experts) Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Palestinian Federation of Industries and the Palestinian Food Industries Union
6	Eng. Imad Al-Hindi	(Experts) CEO of National Beverage Company

Appendix F A five point Likert scale for the responses

To evaluate the range of the scores of responses to each item were calculated according to a five-point Likert scale for the responses as shown below:

The key correction according to a five-point Likert scale for the responses on the study tool domains

No.	The domain title	Five-point Likert scale for the responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Importance as strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food industry companies	Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very important
2.	Frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
3.	The purpose of formulating corporate strategies	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
4.	Procedures that are included within corporate strategies formulation process	Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very important
5.	company experience with corporate strategies formulation process	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

No.	The domain title	Five-point Likert scale for the responses				
		1	2	3	4	5
6.	Internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	No effect	Minimal effect	Moderate effect	Strong effect	Very Strong effect
7.	External factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	No effect	Minimal effect	Moderate effect	Strong effect	Very Strong effect
8.	Possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
9.	Common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies	Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very important
10.	The importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully	Not at all important	Little of importance	Moderately important	Important	Very important

Means, Standard Deviations and estimated level of the main domains of survey questions in descending order according to the mean.

No.	No. in the	Item	Means	standard	Percentage %	Estimated level
1	1	Importance as strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food industry companies	4.49	0.41	89.8	Very High
2	4	Procedures that are included within corporate strategies formulation process	4.35	0.47	87.0	Very High
3	3	The purpose of formulating corporate strategies	4.21	0.47	84.4	Very High
4	10	The importance of each issue below for your company to select corporate strategies successfully	4.12	0.44	82.4	High
5	9	Common corporate strategies that may be adopted by the Palestinian food industry companies	4.10	0.64	90.0	High
6	6	Internal factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	4.04	0.42	80.8	High
7	7	External factors which may affect corporate strategies formulation process	3.96	0.54	79.2	High
8	5	Company experience with corporate strategies formulation process	3.91	0.43	78.2	High
9	2	Frequency as challenges facing the Palestinian food industry companies in achieving their strategic goals	3.43	0.78	64.6	High
10	8	Possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies	3.27	0.72	65.4	Moderate
Total			4.09	0.34	81.8	High

Table shows that the total degree of the he main domains of survey questions was (40.9) which suggest high level of estimation. The highest mean was given to the domain (Importance as strategic priorities and a major focus area in the Palestinian food manufacturing industry companies). The lowest was for the domain (Possible obstacles associated with the formulation of corporate strategies).

Appendix G European Union Definition of Enterprises Size

The most recent studies in this field have built their results upon companies' size. Therefore, it is necessary to use the size classification for its importance in comparing studies in the discussion chapter.

Regards to the sorting of company size used, and according to [the European Union \(2015\)](#), enterprise size is usually determined by a number of criteria, such as the staff head count and financial ceilings, as shown in Table below (3.3). Therefore, a proper diversification of large, medium-sized, small and micro companies have been adopted by researcher.

Table Definition of Enterprises Size according to European Union standards
(Source: [European Commission, 2015](#))

Enterprise Category	Number of employees	Annual turnover	Annual balance sheet
Large-sized	≥ 250	> 50 million €	> 43 million €
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ 50 million €	≤ 43 million €
Small-sized	< 50	≤ 10 million €	≤ 10 million €
Micro-sized	< 10	< 2 million €	< 2 million €

Appendix H List of Interviewees who revised and validated a Conceptual Framework

The most recent studies in this field have built their results upon companies' size. Therefore, it is necessary to use the size classification for its importance in comparing studies in the discussion chapter.

List of the Members of the Interviewees for Conceptual Framework Validation

No.	Code of Iner	Current Position	Years of experience	Sub-sector
1	A	Executive director	10 years	Drinks and mineral water
2	B	Chairman & Executive director	15 years	Dairy products
3	C	Executive director	9 years	Sugar, confectionery and chocolate products
4	D	Executive director	13 years	Meat-poultry products
5	E	Executive director	5 years	Agri-Products and Pasta
6	F	Executive director	10 years	Fruit and Vegetable-pickling, freezing and canning

جامعة النجاح الوطنية
كلية الدراسات العليا

استراتيجيات الشركات في قطاع الصناعات الغذائية الفلسطينية: تطوير إطار عمل

إعداد

رشاد مثقال اسماعيل عفانه

إشراف

د. أيهم جعرون

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في الإدارة الهندسية
بكلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية نابلس، فلسطين.

2018

ب

استراتيجيات الشركات في قطاع الصناعات الغذائية الفلسطينية: تطوير إطار عمل

إعداد

رشاد مثقال اسماعيل عفانه

إشراف

د. أيهم جعرون

الملخص

في ظل ارتفاع حجم التحديات والتغيرات الديناميكية وازدياد شراسة المنافسة التي يشهدها القطاع الصناعي الغذائي العالمي بشكل عام والقطاع الصناعي الغذائي الفلسطيني بشكل خاص، فإن كافة المنظمات والشركات تسعى إلى تبني استراتيجيات ناجحة وقوية وقادرة على مواجهة هذه التحديات وتصل بالشركات إلى مرحلة (بر الأمان) الذي تتحقق فيه أهداف الشركات وطموحاتها الاستراتيجية التي أنشئت من أجلها، لذا فإن جوهر نجاح استراتيجيات الشركات يتمثل في نجاح عملية صياغة هذه الاستراتيجيات داخل الشركات.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف وتقييم عملية صياغة الاستراتيجيات داخل شركات الصناعات الغذائية الفلسطينية من خلال تسليط الضوء على هذه العملية وما تتضمنه من ممارسات متبعة وأدوات وتقنيات مستخدمة وتقييم درجة مدى تطبيقها في هذه الشركات، وفحص أهم الجوانب المرتبطة بهذه العملية وتحديد أهم العوامل المؤثرة عليها في بيئات الشركات الداخلية والخارجية، كما ركزت الدراسة على الخيارات الاستراتيجية الأساسية للشركات والتي تم دراستها على شكل استراتيجيات شائعة ووضحت علاقتها بهذه العملية وتقييم درجة مدى تطبيقها.

استهدفت هذه الدراسة الشركات العاملة في قطاع الصناعات الغذائية في دولة فلسطين (الضفة الغربية، قطاع غزة) خلال العام 2017، واستخدمت منهج البحث المختلط (Method Mixed Research) ذو التصميم التفسيري المتتابع (Sequential Explanatory Design) القائم على جمع بيانات الدراسة الكمية (Quantitative) و تحليلها في المرحلة الاولى من ثم يليها جمع البيانات النوعية (Qualitative) و تحليلها في مرحلة ثانية من هذه الدراسة، حيث تم إجراء 13 مقابلة معمقة مع الإدارات العليا بالشركات وتحليل هذه المقابلات ثم استخدام نتائجها كمدخل لوضع وتصميم الاستبيانات التي جمعت آراء 74 شركة حول موضوع هذا البحث،

ج

وقد تم استخدام التحليل الموضوعي (Thematic Analysis) في تحليل المقابلات وبرنامج الحزمة الاحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS) في معالجة وتحليل الاستبيانات.

كشفت الدراسة مجموعة كبيرة من النتائج والحقائق الهامة، فيما يتعلق بالممارسات الأساسية المتبعة فان الدراسة أظهرت ان وضع الرؤية والرسالة والاهداف الاستراتيجية والتحليل البيئي الداخلي والخارجي، ودراسة وتقييم المخاطر المستقبلية وتكوين الخيارات الاستراتيجية واختيار الاستراتيجيات التي تناسب الشركات هي أبرز الممارسات التي تتبعها شركات قطاع الصناعات الغذائية في عملية صياغة استراتيجياتها، وهي متبعة بدرجة عالية من قبل شركات قطاع الصناعات الغذائية الفلسطينية. اما الادوات والتقنيات المستخدمة في العملية، فقد أكدت النتائج على أهميتها وضرورة استخدامها ولكنها مستخدمة بدرجة متوسطة ومحدودة حيث كانت اداة SWOT الاداة الاكثر استخداماً.

وأكدت النتائج وجود ارتباط قوي بين ممارسات عملية صياغة الاستراتيجيات وكل من الادوات والتقنيات المستخدمة في العملية، وخلق وتحسين الميزة التنافسية لأعمال الشركة، والمرونة والتطوير المستمر لاستراتيجيات الشركة لكي تتناسب مع التغيرات في البيئات، وتحديد وتقييم المخاطر، وشهادات الجودة الخاصة بالشركات، ومشاركة المستشارين والخبراء الخارجيين، ووضوح هذه الممارسات لكافة أعضاء فريق صياغة الاستراتيجية.

وكان حجم الشركة ونسبة الحصة السوقية لمنتجاتها من العوامل الديمغرافية ذات التأثير القوي على ممارسات عملية صياغة الاستراتيجيات، وكان دور الادارة العليا والموارد البشرية والوضع المالي للشركة أبرز العوامل الداخلية ، في حين كان المنافسين وسلوك المستهلكين والظروف السياسية والاقتصادية أبرز العوامل الخارجية المؤثرة على هذه العملية.

وأيضاً الدراسة قدمت مودل مقترح لشركات الصناعات الغذائية يعمل كدليل ارشاد وتوجيه ومساعدة للشركات في صياغة استراتيجياتها بحيث تحقق أهدافها الاستراتيجية وتحسن الميزة التنافسية لها، كما ان المودل يقدم المجالات الاستراتيجية التي تركز عليها الشركات ويوضح بعض الجوانب التي كانت مهمة في المودلات السابقة.

واخيراً، قدمت الدراسة مجموعة من التوصيات والاستنتاجات للباحثين وللشركات بخصوص تطوير ممارسات عملية صياغة الاستراتيجيات في الشركات.