

strategic flexibility and competitive advantage (Case Study of (Al Baskaria Cement company

المرونة الاستراتيجية والميزة التنافسية (دراسة حالة مؤسسة البسكرة للأسمنت)

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Abstract:

In this study, it has been studied to determine the relationship between strategic flexibility in its dimensions (production flexibility, competitive flexibility, and resources flexibility) and competitive advantage of the company , In this context a field study has been conducted in al baskaria cement company using a questionnaire distributed to a convenience sample of 40 employees.

As a result of the study it has been determined that; there is statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility in its dimensions and competitive advantage for the company under study.

keyword: strategic flexibility; product flexibility; competitive flexibility; resources flexibility; competitive advantage.

JEL classification code : M1 ,M2 ,L1.

ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة الى تحديد العلاقة بين المرونة الاستراتيجية بأبعادها (المرونة السوقية، المرونة التنافسية، ومرونة الموارد) والميزة التنافسية للمؤسسة، وفي هذا السياق اجريت دراسة ميدانية في مؤسسة البسكرة للأسمنت، باستخدام استبيان تم توزيعه على عينة ميسرة مكونة من 40 اطارا بالمؤسسة.

وتوصلت النتائج لوجود علاقة ارتباط ذات دلالة احصائية للمرونة الاستراتيجية بأبعادها والميزة التنافسية للمؤسسة محل الدراسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : المرونة الاستراتيجية ؛ المرونة الانتاجية ؛ المرونة التنافسية ؛ مرونة الموارد ؛ الميزة التنافسية.

تصنيف JEL : M1 , M2 , L1 .

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1. Introduction :

The business environment is currently characterized by high uncertainty and constant change, in addition to the intensification of competition and the diversity of its forms. In these circumstances, the continuity of the company survival depends on the acquisition of competitive advantages and their ability to respond to the trends of the environment and the movements of competitors. The presence of the company for a long time in the market does not mean that it will continue, Young companies cannot compete and gain market share. Some company may remain in control of certain sectors, while companies may easily fade despite their competitive weight in a particular sector.

The strategic management literature has shown that the survival and sustainability of companies depends on the extent of their adoption of modern administrative methods and the new scientific entrances that enable them to achieve this. Strategic flexibility is one of the strategic approaches to adapting to environmental developments and developments and responding quickly to competitors' movements. It may even be adopted as a dynamic organizational capacity and a tendency that can be used to build proactive strategies, depending on the resources of the companies and the availability of appropriate regulatory conditions.

The cement industry in Algeria is considered one of the most important industries which have known many transformations in its structure and variety of companies active in terms of size, strategies and enterprise, and Al Baskaria is considered one of the most active companies in this industry which is facing intense competition. However, it has been able to achieve a competitive advantage.

1.1 Main question

the paper tries to answer the following problem:

How does strategic flexibility contribute to achieve competitive advantage of Al Baskaria Cement company?

1.2 Sub-questions

- How does product flexibility contribute to achieve competitive advantage of Al Baskaria Cement company?
- How does competitive flexibility contribute to achieve competitive advantage of Al Baskaria Cement company?

- How does resources flexibility contribute to achieve competitive advantage of Al Baskaria Cement company?

1.3 Research hypotheses

- There is no statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility and competitive advantage for al baskaria Cement Company.
- There is no statistically significant relationship between the productive flexibility and competitive advantage for al baskaria cement company.
- There is no statistically significant relationship between competitive flexibility and competitive advantage for al baskaria cement company.
- There is no statistically significant relationship between resource flexibility and competitive advantage for al baskaria Cement Company.

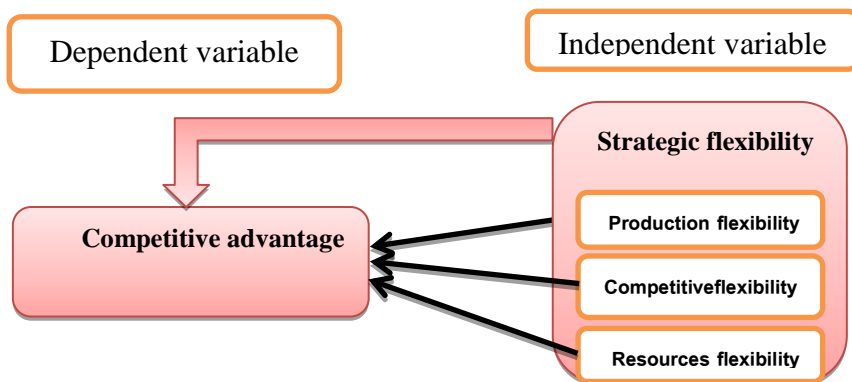
1.4 Research objectives

The aim of the study is to try to determine the role of strategic flexibility in achieving the competitive advantage of the company under study, and how to adopt it as an input to achieve this.

1.5 Research model

Based on the above, in the light of the issue of research and the questions of the study and its objectives, and after reviewing the literature of the study and related research, we developed the study model, which consisted of two variables as shown in the figure below:

Fig.1: research model



Source :Prepared by researchers

2. Conceptual framing of the study:

2.1 Strategic flexibility:

Strategic flexibility is one of the requirements of modern strategic thinking to confront uncertainty and change in the environment of the company's activity. It enables the company to shift from one strategy to another, especially in light of the intensification of the institution and the diversity of its forms. The concept of strategic flexibility was defined as other qualitative concepts after the 1970s across three time periods (abddaoui, 2017, p. 73):

' 1970s era:

Flexibility in this era was described as a method of strategic maneuvering, reflecting the degree to which the strategic behavior of company is manifested, and expressed as an adaptation characteristic that indicates the enterprise 's ability to respond to unexpected changes.

'1980s era:

In which the competitive element is the key assumption for achieving a competitive advantage. Hence, strategic flexibility is linked to the ability of companies to restructure themselves internally and to restructure their relationships with the external environment, including competition mechanisms.

'1990s era until now:

By this era, it was emphasized that strategic flexibility was similar to the concept of capacity and resources, therefore the strategic thinking seeks the best use of human resources and reconsider the relationship between the company and the environment, so that it works to influence its business environment through its innovative behavior, resources and capabilities. However, flexibility as a concept only refers to the enterprise 's ability to adapt, and rapid response to changes in the external environment and reflected in the methods adopted by companies in order to achieve strategic flexibility (Sullaimi & jribi, 2015, p. 85), Flexibility is defined as "the ability of an company to influence and be affected rapidly by changes in competition conditions and thus to develop and maintain a competitive advantage" (Hit.m ,et al, 1998, p. 23), and it was also defined as "the use by the company of the resources and capacities available to it effectively to respond to or adapt in a timely manner to environmental changes through the process of continuous learning (Lim,bensen T.H, et al, 2011, p. 49), Strategic

flexibility is also a feature that enables modern companies to prepare for unpredictable changes in their business environment, and defined as "the extent of adoption and consideration of alternatives in strategic decisions (Combe I.A & Greenley G.E, 2004, p. 14), and researchers consider it as "the strategic choice that enables the company to respond effectively to the changing situations in the environment in which it operates in order to achieve and maintain the competitive advantage" (Al yasiri ,et al, 2015, p. 38)), reflects the enterprise's ability to shift from one strategy to another (Al-najjar, et al, 2008, p. 64), Table 1 presents the views of a number of researchers on the definition of strategic flexibility :

Table 1: Highlights of strategic flexibility

<i>researcher</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>Hitm, et al (1998)</i>	The ability of the company to be affected and impact quickly for changes the conditions of competition and then develop and maintain a
<i>Combe I. A (2004)</i>	The extent of adoption and consideration of alternatives in strategic decisions.
<i>Faiz Al-Najar, Faleh Al-Houri (2008)</i>	The ability of the company to shift from strategy to another, especially in case of increasing uncertainty in changing environmental conditions.
<i>Lim,BensonT.H et al (2011)</i>	The enterprise's use of the resources and capacities available to it is an effective form of timely response or adaptation to environmental changes through the process of continuous learning.
<i>Joannaradomska (2011)</i>	A feature that enables modern companies to prepare for variables that are largely unpredictable in their business environment
<i>Akram Mohsin Al-Yasiri et al (2016)</i>	Is a strategic choice that enables the company to respond effectively to the changing situations in the environment in which it operates, thereby helping to achieve and maintain the advantage

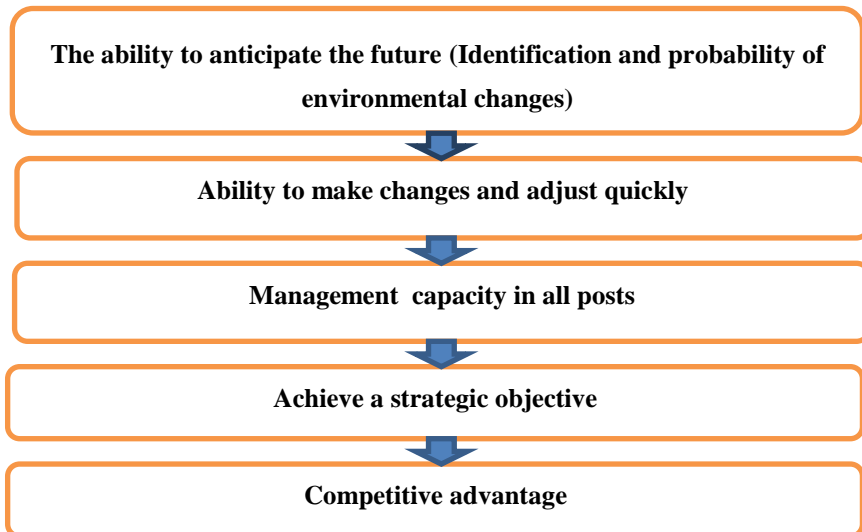
*Bock A. J
.opsahl et al
(2017)*

An advance ability of the enterprise's founders to quickly reallocate and restructure resources, processes and structures in response to external change.

Source: Prepared by researchers based on references approved in the study.

Note through the table and confirmation of the above, although the approaches adopted by the researchers differed in defining the definition of strategic flexibility, most of them considered it a concept that indicates the enterprise's ability to adapt to and respond rapidly to environment variables. From this, strategic flexibility can be defined as the company ownership of management capabilities that enable them to respond quickly to environmental changes and adapt to them and gain competitive advantage and maintain them in the business environment. The dimensions and components of the definition can be illustrated in the following figure:

Fig.2 : Components of the definition of strategic flexibility



Source: Prepared by researchers

In today's business world, businesses have realized that the importance of strategic flexibility stems from being an input that can deliver the right thing at the right time and in a good way. It helps to respond quickly to strategic moves by competitors, and we can

determine the importance of strategic flexibility based on what some scholars and writers have pointed out:

-Strategic flexibility is a condition for increasing the ability of companies to cope with important and rapid environmental changes that occur quickly in the markets efficiently and effectively and enable them to manage their activities under these circumstances and their adoption to manage the state of continuous change in the high-tech products market. Its customers turn their products into competitors' products when the business environment is very competitive.

-Strategic flexibility is linked to creative culture that reduces resistance to change and reduces structural complexity that facilitates attention to new opportunities (Bock.A, 2017, p. 06).

companies can gain competitive advantage by making them more proactive and thus have the ability to analyze the environment and identify opportunities and external threats better than other companies (Al-Shammari, 2017, p. 316).

-Strategic flexibility allows for more rapid response to ever changing technological and market opportunities by producing more new products, offering wider production lines and improving products more quickly (Al-Shammari, 2017, p. 316).

The dimensions and classifications used to express strategic flexibility have varied and varied. In our study, we will draw on the most important dimensions agreed by the researchers:

➤ **Production flexibility:**

Products play a key role in guiding the various activities of companies as they are the main focus in guiding all marketing decisions and maximizing the production required for customers' needs and thus ensuring the sustainability and growth of the company (choukal ,et al, 2010, p. 4).

Therefore, the companies must be flexible in offering its products and speed in converting its operations from the old line products to producing new products, in addition to adapting its production system to environmental changes and changing the demand by increasing or decreasing, which is called the productive flexibility (Al-Atwi, 2012, p. 04).

➤ **Competitive flexibility :**

Competitive flexibility is defined as the ability of an company to respond to customers' changing needs, and diagnose and adapt to business environment changes (abuzaid, 2014, p. 169), then it provides the company with the ability to compete in highly competitive markets, in addition to the ability to exploit opportunities and confront the threats of competitors, and is measured by several indicators, notably competitive moves in international markets, diagnosis of external environment changes, competitive price determination and reduction of production costs (abddaoui, 2017, p. 83).

➤ **Resource flexibility:**

As Hesterly and Berney point out, tangible and intangible assets controlled by the company that can be used to conceptualize and implement their own strategy (Al-yasiri, et al, 2014, p. 257), Thus resource flexibility refers to the ability to use and redeploy internal resources and is measured in three main dimensions (a combination of alternative resource uses, cost, difficulty of resource transfer, and time to shift from one resource to another) (Al-Shammari, 2017, p. 318).

2. Competitive Advantage:

The competitive advantage is an extension of Ricardo's comparative advantage, dating back to the late 1970s through McKinsey Investments, based on the success of the Japanese when they invaded world markets. However, despite the different environmental conditions, they were able to find out where to compete and they have succeeded in finding out the choice of fields of competition that enable them to enter their positions of strength. From the 1980s, the idea of competitive advantage began to spread widely among American companies (Djerbi, 2017, p. 281), and despite the definitions given to the competitive advantage, but all of them in one direction, which distinguish the company to the rest of the competitors who are with them in the market, and according to M.Porter, the competitive advantage arises once the company has discovered new and more effective methods than those used by competitors so that it can embody this discovery on the ground, in other words, create the process of innovation in its broad sense, He also stressed that competitive advantage arises from the value that an company can create for its customers, It can be said that the competitive advantage refers to the

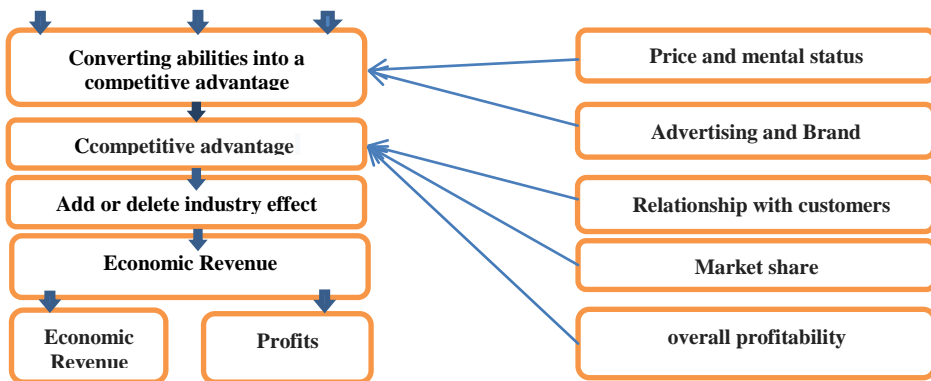
areas that the company can compete more effectively through its activities and operations and its ability to produce and deliver products to customers in a distinct manner as provided by customers and this gives them competitive advantage in the market. In 1985 Porter set competitive advantage with three basic concepts (Al-bakri & beni hamdan, 2013, p. 36):

-The first concept: Competitive advantage is achieved according to specific processes that will increase the time span, and this development is the model of the five forces: competitors in the industry, new entrants to the industry, alternative products, the bargaining power of customers and suppliers.

-The second concept: the competitive strategies adopted by the company, which is led by the total cost, leadership of differentiation, focus, is adopted on the basis of the target market, while the market was large or narrow.

- The third concept: Value chain analysis, which is based on two types of activities carried out by the company main activities, and supporting activities, and there are many areas and sources adopted in creating a competitive advantage for the company, but this requires steps which can be explained in the following form:

Fig. 3: Steps to build the competitive advantage of an company



Source: Thamer Bakri & Khalid Bani Hamdan, 2013, p. 7.

The researcher in the literature related to the subject, can find a difference about the classification of the dimensions of competitive advantage or indicators of measurement and sources and we will review the most important dimensions agreed by the researchers:

- Cost control: the ability of an enterprise to provide a commodity or service at a lower cost than its competitors (Al-Khuzami, 2008, p. 302), In other words, the company's ability to produce and market its products at a price lower than the average price of the competing companies, this does not mean that products are offered at less than their cost levels, and each of the chain's internal rings makes it possible to do so.
- Quality of the products: the concept of quality is presented in different definitions, based on the background of the writer or the researcher on the one hand and according to the concept seen by the producer or the customer on the other. Quality means the ability of the company to display products with distinct and unique characteristics (Dawood & jawad, 2016, p. 70), Quality from the point of view of the producer is the predefined specification, so the producer must pre-determine the quality of the product as accurately as possible and then seek to achieve it.
- Flexibility in responding to customer requirements: It is the foundation of the competitive advantage of the company through rapid response to the changes that may occur to products, and in line with the needs of customers, known as "the ability to produce a wide range of products, introduce new products and modify existing products quickly as well as respond to the customer's needs (Boubaker, 2017, p. 63), As for the sources of competitive advantage, it is the property, processes and organizational capabilities that all improve the efficiency of the company, and the study of (vogel) (Ben ahmed, 2017, p. 160), provides competitive advantage sources as follows:
 - Low cost: providing products at low costs.
 - Added cost: creating products that provide the desired and distinct aspects of customers.
 - Speed: the ability of the production system to provide products and services faster than competitors.
 - Flexibility: the ability to adapt products with innovations.
 - Creativity: the process of continuing to change the characteristics of the product and provide high value to the customer.
 - Customer service: a high response to the customer's wishes, and there is a range of other sources, notably the following:

- Internal resources: associated with tangible and intangible institutional resources such as the basic factors of production, energy, raw materials, distribution channels... and the competitive advantage can also come from the developed management systems used, the methods of management enterprise, the ways of motivation, the output of research and development, creativity and knowledge.
- External resources: they are many and multiple and are composed of external environment variables that enable the creation of opportunities and features that can be exploited by the enterprise and benefit from them, such as supply and demand conditions for raw materials, and qualified human resources.

3. strategic flexibility and competitive advantage of the company:

As the strategic flexibility mentioned above refers to adapting to the environment in case of uncertainty, and results from the accumulation of resources, which are exploited only in the case of accidents not monitored by the company, but can be in the service of offensive strategies, by presenting a wide range of products compared to competitors, rapidly renewing products, allowing them to change the industry's rules of the game and to achieve competitive advantage, highlighting the importance of strategic flexibility in achieving competitive advantage through:

- Strategic flexibility: A requirement to increase the capacity of enterprises to meet important and rapid environmental changes efficiently and effectively, and enable them to manage their activities under these circumstances and to adopt them to manage the state of continuous change in the high-tech product market.
- Enhance the susceptibility of companies and their abilities to respond to change customer's changing needs and desires, and to disclose any details to customers, and interest in the company marketing abilities through the process of interaction between them and their customers.

Contributing to increasing the enterprise's ability to offer its products and services in several markets, increasing its ability to generate real value for customers, and making it responsive to any change in changing customer demands, so it is important for it to grow and

survive, as well as generating opportunities to improve its competitive position.

4. Study Methodology :

4.1 model end Study Method :

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the descriptive model was adopted, which is considered the dominant and most widely used in the science of the company, which is based on the development of a number of realistic hypotheses, relying on the method of (hypothetical-deductive approach) in the theoretical explanation of the variables of the study and the development of hypotheses based on previous studies in the subject and test. In the applied side, the quantitative approach and the questionnaire were adopted as a method of study and data collection.

The questionnaire was used to collect information about the relationship between strategic flexibility and competitive advantage of the company, which was designed based on previous studies. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first was devoted to the personal data of the sample (gender, age, academic qualification, functional specialization, and years of experience). The second part relates to the competitive advantage and includes 12 words. The second part relates to the strategic flexibility and contains 12 words. The "Lycarte" scale has been used to measure the interviewees' response to the paragraphs of the questionnaire.

4.2 Study community and its sample :

To learn about the relationship between strategic flexibility and competitive advantage of the company, we chose Al-Baskria Cement company as a study society, because the topic is related to the strategic aspects and in order to obtain more realistic and reliable results, it was based on a random sample of the company's estimated 129 employees (according to human resources), 40 questionnaires were distributed and 39 were retrieved, and after examining them, none of them ruled out the fulfillment of the conditions of the answer.

5. Study Results :

After collecting the questionnaire distributed to the sample of the interviewees, then they were coded and entered into the computer, in order to answer the research questions and test the validity of the hypotheses, and then the SPSS program was used to extract the different ratios, averages, frequencies and standard deviation, as well as the Alpha Cronbach's persistence coefficient, the validity coefficient of the test, Pearson correlation coefficient and finally the coefficient of determination.

➤ **reliability and consistency of the study instrument:**

Table 2: Reliability and consistency of the study instrument

<i>The questionnaire topics</i>	<i>Phrasing</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Reliability coefficient</i>
<i>Competitive advantage</i>	(1 12)	0.826	0.908
<i>Strategic flexibility</i>	(13 24)	0.783	0.884

Source: Prepared by researchers based on SPSS outputs.

To measure the validity and stability of the study instrument, the researchers adopted the Alpha Cronbach's scale to measure internal coherence, which is acceptable and appropriate if the scale is greater than or equal to 0.707, and through the results shown in the table above demonstrating that the value of the Cronbach coefficient was high for the dependent variable "competitive advantage" at 0.826, while the value of the Cronbach coefficient of the independent variable "strategic flexibility" was 0.783, and it is his an acceptable value. On this basis, it is possible to say that the axes of the questionnaire have a high degree of stability, which would give the same results if they were redistributed under similar conditions. The same is true for the honesty coefficient which reached (0.908) and (0.884) respectively, The same is true for the honesty coefficient which reached (0.908) and (0.884) respectively, which are high values indicating the validity of the study instrument.

➤ **Presentation and statistical analysis of a sample study response on the study axes:**

Table 3: Arithmetic average and standard deviation of study variables

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Arithmetic average</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Direction</i>
<i>Competitive advantage</i>	3,8056	0,2982	approved
<i>Productive flexibility</i>	3,8846	0,4546	approved
<i>Competitive flexibility</i>	3,7244	0,4926	approved
<i>Resource flexibility</i>	3,9295	0,3190	approved
<i>Strategic flexibility</i>	3,8462	0,2747	approved

Source: Prepared by researchers based on SPSS output.

The data of Table (3) indicate the approval of the target research sample to the terms indicating the competitive advantage with an arithmetic average (3,8056) with standard deviation (0,2982).

The results also showed that the phrases (the management uses the available resources economically and rationally to reduce the cost), (the price is a key factor in the management of the company in the process of competition with other companies) (the company is committed to the continuous delivery of products to its customers, (the company has the ability to deliver orders to multiple customers at the same time), (the company has the ability to adjust its products according to the requests of its customers) is the one that received high approval ratios with an arithmetic average respectively (4,08), (4, 00), (4,15), (4,05), (4,13), indicating that the company relies on cost lead and flexibility in responding to customers as a source of competitive advantage.

➤ **Testing the hypotheses of the study:**

-To validate the model the main hypothesis test: the variance regression analysis was used to confirm the validity of the proposed model to test the main hypothesis and adopt the simple linear

regression feature to test the main hypothesis as well as its sub-hypotheses, then we have adopted the following decision rule:

- Acceptance of the null hypothesis H 0: which provides that there is no statistically significant relationship if the value of the significance level is greater than ($\infty \geq 0.05$).
- Rejection of the null hypothesis H1: which provides for a statistically significant relationship if the value of the level of significance less than or equal to ($\infty \leq 0.05$).

Where the validity test of the model is linked to the availability of statistical conditions of:

- Overall intangible of the regression model: the intangible value of the model is represented by the value of F.
- Partial intangible of the model: the intangible value of the constant T.

Table 4: validate the model the main hypothesis testing

<i>Model</i>	<i>Total squares</i>	<i>Degree of liberty</i>	<i>Average squares</i>	<i>(F) Calculation</i>	<i>Significance level Sig</i>
Regression	0.693	1	0.693	9.540	0.004
Error	2.687	37	0.073		
Total	3.380	38			
<i>Correlation coefficient: (R = 0.682)</i>					
<i>Determination coefficient: (R² = 0.465)</i>					
<i>Dependent variable: competitive advantage</i>					

Significance level (0.05) ***F tabular = 6.314**

Source: Prepared by researchers based on SPSS output.

From the results of Table (4) it is clear that the calculated value of F is 9.540 which is greater than the value of F tabular value with a probability value of Sig (0.004), and it is less than the significance level (0.05), which proves the validity of the model the main hypothesis test as shown from the same table that the correlation coefficient between the two variables was (R = 0.682), and this indicates a positive correlation between them, as was the coefficient of determination (R²= 0.465), this means that approximately 46.5% of the changes in competitive advantage are due to changes taken place in strategic flexibility.

➤ **The main hypothesis testing:** that there is no statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility and competitive advantage for the company at the level of significance ($\alpha \geq 0.05$), "The results are shown in the table below:

Table 5: Simple regression analysis results for the main hypothesis testing.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Calculation (t)</i>	<i>Significance level Sig</i>
<i>Constant</i>	1.915	0.613	0.453	3.122	0.003
<i>Strategic flexibility</i>	0.491	0.159		3.089	0.004

Correlation coefficient: (R = 0.682)
Determination coefficient: (R2 = 0.465)
Dependent variable: competitive advantage

Significance level (0.05)

***t tabular = 6.314**

Source: Prepared by researchers based on SPSS output

Through the results shown in the table above we conclude that there is a statistically significant role for strategic flexibility in achieving a competitive advantage for the enterprise, as the value of t calculated is (3.089), which is greater than the tabular value of t, with a level of significance (0.004), "and it is below the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), and therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis as follows: "There is a statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility and competitive advantage for the company at the significance level (0.05)"

➤ **Testing and interpreting sub-hypotheses:**

The following table reviews the results of the simple regression analysis the sub-hypotheses testing at the significance level (0.05):

Table 6: The results of the simple regression analysis the sub-hypothesestesting.

Significance level (0.05) ***t tabular = 2.021 ***
Source: Prepared by researchers based on SPSS output.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Calculated (T)</i>	<i>Correlation coefficient</i>	<i>The coefficient of determination</i>	<i>Sig Significant level</i>
<i>Productive flexibility</i>	0.504	0.127	0.379	3.418	0.739	0.447	0.010
<i>Competitive flexibility</i>	0.216	0.093	0.357	2.324	0.657	0.417	0.026
<i>Resource flexibility</i>	0.434	0.168	0.428	3.012	0.478	0.216	0.036

From the results shown in Table (6), it is clear that there is a statistically significant relationship between productive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company, where the calculated value of t (3.418) is greater than the tabular value of t, at a significant level (Sig0.010), which is a value less than the significance level (0.05), and the correlation coefficient R indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent variable and the productive flexibility and the dependent variable the competitive advantage, where its value was (R = 0.739), and the determinant coefficient ($R^2 = 0.447$) was interpreted after the productive flexibility 44.7% of the variation in the competitive advantage, and therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the absence of a statistically significant relationship between productive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company and accept the alternative hypothesis as follows:

There is a statistically significant relationship between productive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company at the significance level (0.05), and this can be explained by the fact that the

company has the speed in the transformation of its operations across the production lines and its ability to control the amount of production as the customers' requests.

It 's also clear from the same table that there is a statistically significant relationship between competitive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company as the calculated value of t (2.324) which is greater than the value of tabular t , at a significant level (Sig 0.026), and it is a value less than the significance level (0.05), and the correlation coefficient R indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent variable competitive flexibility and the dependent variable the competitive advantage, where its value was ($R = 0.657$), and the determination coefficient ($R^2 = 0.417$) was interpreted after the competitive flexibility 41.7% of the variation in the competitive advantage, and therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the absence of a statistically significant relationship between competitive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company and accept the alternative hypothesis as follows:

There is a statistically significant relationship between competitive flexibility and competitive advantage for the company at the significance level (0.05), this can be attributed to enabling the company to reduce production costs and competitive movements in international markets after moving to export its products.

As regards the resource flexibility, the results of Table (6) show that there is a statistically significant relationship between resource flexibility and competitive advantage for the company, where the calculated value of t (3.012) is greater than the value of tabular t , at a significant level (Sig 0.036) which is a value below the significance level (0.05), and the correlation coefficient R indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent resource flexibility variable and the dependent variable the competitive advantage, where its value was ($R = 0.478$), and the determination coefficient ($R^2 = 0.216$) was interpreted after the productive flexibility of 21.6% of the variation in the competitive advantage, and therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the absence of a statistically significant relationship between resource flexibility and competitive advantage for the company and accept the alternative hypothesis as follows:

There is a statistically significant relationship between the resource flexibility and competitive advantage for the company at the significance level (0.05), perhaps the main reason for this is the large resources owned by the company as an company within an industrial complex characterized by the ability to use alternative resources, and the ease of transition from one resource to another.

6. Conclusion :

The results of the study confirmed the existence of a statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility in its three dimensions and competitive advantage for the company from the perspective of its employees. The same results also showed that the company relies on cost reduction and rapid response to the demands of its customers as a source of competitive advantage, confirming what has been mentioned in the theoretical aspect of the study, the rapid response of customers requires flexibility in all production activities of the company, depending on the resources of the company flexible, both tangible and intangible. The following suggestions can be made:

- The company may be in trouble when trying to reduce the different forms, types and features of the product in order to reduce costs, which may lead to the absence of elements on which the company can build the product differentiation in the industry, especially since the products of the competing companies are characterized by quality, the company should focus more on the quality of products with the provision of price reductions according to the volume of orders or in the form of advantages to its customers, in addition to the optimal exploitation of the various material and human resources owned by the company.

- In order to respond quickly to customers and embodying the foundations of strategic flexibility, the company must rely on handling in its various forms (production handling, competence handling, national and international handling), in addition to relying on handling in distribution and trying to achieve front integration by setting up points of sale across the national territory to facilitate access to the products of the company in the fastest time and the lowest cost for customers of the company.

- To achieve competitive flexibility, a specialized information system is required in all areas, especially strategic information systems that enable the achievement of strategic adjustment, improve production

efficiency, support innovation in the company, and build strategic information sources that allow following the movements of competitors.

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