

# Employing Human Resources is an Effective Strategy in Enhancing Competitive Advantage

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## Abstract

The research seeks to employ human resources management, as an effective strategy in achieving competitive advantage in the Iraqi private telecommunications sector. The researcher based his work on designing a questionnaire to collect the primary information from the study sample, which consisted of (31) items for the purpose of achieving the research objectives. To achieve these objectives, the researcher collected and analyzed data and tested hypotheses using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research sample consisted of all directors and heads of departments working in (90) companies (ZEN), (Asell and (Kork), who numbered. After conducting the descriptive analysis of the research and the regression analysis of the research hypotheses, the researcher reached a set of results, the most prominent of which was the presence of a statistically significant effect of polarization, selection, and appointment as dimensions of human resources on achieving cost and innovation advantages. As well as the impact of the strategy of human resources management in achieving competitive advantage. The researcher recommended the need to pay attention to selection because of its importance in the work environment, which is characterized by competition and change. As well as staying away from attracting individuals by companies based on unprofessional criteria, and paying attention to all information and data about job applicants from different sources.

**Keywords:** human resource management strategy, competitive advantage, telecommunications sector.

## INTRODUCTION

Companies whose field of work is in the telecommunications sector frequently face challenges and obstacles, and the reason for this is due to the environment characterized by instability and movement due to external and internal factors that surround the companies, and this pushes companies to compete among themselves to obtain a distinguished position in their field of work. This was reinforced by the emergence of globalization as a term in the third millennium, which made companies with various orientations and aspirations subjected to

pressures from the external environment, which imposed on them not to keep their doors closed to what is happening in the surrounding environment.

Therefore, if companies want to avoid collapse and exposure to the virus of bankruptcy, and are close to occupying distinguished positions and advanced ranks, they must follow correct and consistent steps by adopting strategies for human resource management, because the human resource is the real investment for companies because it is not imitable and characterized by extinction. Positive in contrast to other resources that are affected by negative extinction. The future success of companies

depends on the adoption of modern management concepts by its senior management, including the strategy of human resource management to take advantage of the advantages it provides to improve organizational performance and enhance competitiveness. This study came to clarify and clarify the impact of the dimensions of management strategy Human resources to achieve competitive advantage.

## **The first axis: the study methodology and some previous studies**

### **First, the study methodology**

#### **The problem of the study**

The problem of the study crystallizes, which indicates to what extent there is an impact of the strategy of human resources management in achieving competitive advantage? The following questions arise from it:

First: Is there a significant correlation between human resource strategies and achieving competitive advantage?

Second: Is there a significant effect between human resources strategies and achieving competitive advantage?

Third: Is there a significant effect between hiring human resources and achieving competitive advantage through organizational performance as an intermediate variable?

#### **The importance of studying**

The importance of the research is summarized in the following:

- A. Shedding light on the effectiveness of the human resource management strategy in enhancing competitive advantage.
- B. Scales used in measuring the study variables and diagnosing them in the studied area.
- C. Identifying the type of relationship between the human resources management strategy and the competitive advantage, and the extent of its impact on the Iraqi private telecommunications sector.

## **Objectives of the study**

The objectives that the research seeks to achieve are as follows:

- A. Understand the concepts of research, which are represented in the strategy of human resource management, and competitive advantage.
- B. Testing the hypothesis of the study among its variables.
- C. A statement of the proposals that guarantee the success and activation of a strategy for human resources management in the investigated area, in a way that contributes to improving its performance.

## **The hypothesis of the study**

The study outline presents an expressive picture of the idea of the study, and the trends of influence among its variables, and on this basis, the researcher aims by presenting this chart to be comprehensive of all the study's main and sub-variables, as shown in Figure 1.

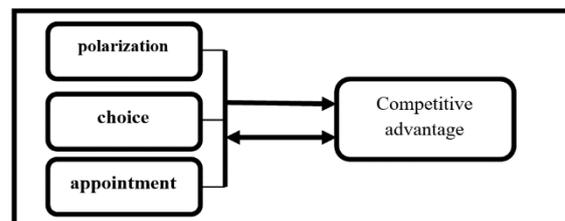


Figure 1. Researcher numbers

## **Study hypothesis**

- A. There is a statistically significant effect of the polarization strategy on the competitive advantage.
- B. There is a statistically significant effect of the selection strategy on the competitive advantage.
- C. There is a statistically significant effect of the recruitment strategy on the competitive advantage.

## **Study tools**

The research relied on dimensional analysis, which is a comprehensive approach and relies on other approaches to reach its goals. Therefore, this approach relies on the

descriptive approach as it studies the opinions and orientations of concerned people through a questionnaire. It also adopts the experimental approach, which is called causation, through the study of cause and effect through Collection of relevant opinions and analysis to test research hypotheses and achieve its objectives.

### **Study questionnaire tests**

For the purpose of the questionnaire fulfilling the approved scientific conditions, it was presented to a group of arbitrators specialized in management sciences, and a modified questionnaire was obtained in its final form after making the necessary modifications to it, and based on the opinions of experts, the apparent validity of the scale was verified. The number of its paragraphs eventually became (31) paragraphs, and Cronbach's Alpha was extracted in order to verify the resolution stability coefficient, whose value reached the paragraphs of the total resolution, which indicates the validity of the scale and the stability of the resolution.

### **Metrics used in the research**

- A. Human resource management strategy scale: It was noted that there is agreement among most researchers in measuring the human resource management strategy through dimensions (polarization, selection, recruitment) based on the scale (Dissler, 2003: 220).
- B. Competitive Advantage Scale: This variable was measured through dimensions based on a scale (Al-Jourani, 2018).

### **Statistical methods used**

For the purpose of analyzing the data for the research variables and testing its hypotheses, a set of statistical methods were used using the statistical program (SPSS), and the arithmetic mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were extracted.

## **The second axis: the theoretical framework**

### **First, human resource management strategies**

The process of polarization, selection and appointment aims to achieve a kind of compatibility and homogeneity between the conditions and requirements of work, and between the specifications and characteristics of the human element in terms of skills, capabilities and others (Al-Faris et al.,2005: 167). The staffing strategy represents the natural extension of the basic planning and management process that can be Through it, the recruitment of individuals and the comparison between applicants according to scientific criteria and the identification of those who meet the necessary conditions to perform the work and assume responsibility to the fullest. The recruitment process includes three basic elements: polarization, selection and appointment (Al-Salem & Saleh, 2000).

1. Polarization: Polarization refers to the process of searching for the human resources that the organization needs in the labor market (Aqili, 2009), while others see it as the process of searching for individuals to fill vacant positions (AlRahman, 2010) and good polarization opens all The doors and sources of work available to the organization, and as the number of applicants increases for work, the options become wide in choosing the qualified and the best among them, in addition to that it represents the first step in building an effective and productive work force (Al-Salem, 2014), and on this basis, the process of polarization acquires its importance In the organization, through its relationship with selection and appointment, one of the functions of human resource management, when the polarization succeeds in attracting a large number of human resources that the organization needs, and the process of polarization is one of the main sources of human resource management in the case of the continuous growth of the organization. When the organization faces a state of continuous downturn when no type of growth or expansion is achieved with it (Al-

Zubaidi, 2018) and it achieves the competitive advantage of the organization by providing the organization with qualified and trained individuals, it is reflected in a positive way. Better on the performance of the organization (Al-Kasasbeh, 2013).

2. Selection: The selection is the selection of the best and most suitable people to fill the job (Kafi, 2014). Modern and successful organizations are concerned with the selection process as a critical process not only in the life and growth of the organization, but also in the life and development of the individual as well, as it is a stage of development and disclosure of qualifications Individuals applying for work, and at the same time an opportunity that both parties (the organization and the individual) can seize to get to know each other (Al-Salam and Saleh, 2000: 146). The selection function is not a marginal function within the framework of the human resource management strategy, as the decisions of this function have future dimensions for the organization, and that is due to three considerations (Berber, 2012):
  - a. The human resource management strategy is linked to the organization's strategic management, and the extent to which the two strategists are integrated with regard to their outlook on the future of the organization's overall performance. Linkage and integration is a fundamental necessity.
  - b. The cost of the selection decision, not the cost to the organization in the event that it selects undistinguished human resources or fails to maintain them as an uneconomic burden.
  - c. The general climate of the organization as a result of the entry and exit of human resources resulting from poor estimates of the management of the selection function.

In order to obtain distinguished and effective strategic performance, an individual must be selected whose abilities and skills are consistent with the specifications of the job he will occupy.

2. Appointment: This step aims to achieve the principle of placing the right person in the right

place (Hariri, 2014). (Al-Salem, 2014) From another point of view, recruitment is defined as the process of empowering the individual in the appropriate job, which provides the individual with feelings of satisfaction due to its compatibility with his abilities and potentials (Masouda and Safia, 9: 2013). And the appointment decision is a contract between the organization and the individual that cannot be It is rescinded, except in the event of a specific breach of its conditions, and it is usually issued by an official appointment decision signed by the head of the organization and informs the concerned department, the human resources department and the person concerned (Al-Ta'i et al., 217:2006). On the one hand, and the profits of organizations on the other hand (Harel & Tzafir, 1999). Al-Salam identified four main points included in the appointment, which are (Al-Salam, 189: 2014):

- A. Issuance of the appointment decision by the competent authority: We find in this decision the amount of salary and benefits that he will receive. Usually, new people are appointed under probation for a year or less, and it may be extended for another period if it is proven that the employee is incompetent in his work.
- B. Initial preparation: that is, informing the employee of the responsibilities and powers of the job in which he will work, his relations with others, the organization's objectives, its main policy, and his work relationship with it.
- C. Follow-up and evaluation of the individual during the probationary period: It was previously said that the individual is appointed under probation for a period of up to a year, and during this period the employee remains under probation and observation by his direct superior. It contains his perception of fixing it, dismissing it, or transferring it to another job.
- D. Recruiting the employee: After the new employee successfully passes the trial period specified for him and proves his competence, and the report of his direct supervisor states that he is good at his job, the probationary period ends and he is finally appointed.

### Third, the competitive advantage

#### 1. Concept and importance

Many researchers in the field of strategic management have tried to develop a specific concept of competitive advantage and defined it as the organization's ability to formulate and implement strategies that make it in a better position in relation to other organizations working in the same activity and is achieved through the best utilization of technical, financial, material and organizational capabilities and resources in addition to capabilities and competencies. The knowledge and other capabilities of the organization that enable it to design and implement its competitive strategy. Achieving competitive advantage is linked to two basic dimensions, namely the perceived value of the customer, and the organization's ability to achieve excellence (Abu Bakr, 13:2008). Competitive advantage cannot be understood unless we look at the organization as a single unit. The organization establishes within it many separate activities, including product design, manufacture, marketing, and delivery to the buyer, and each of these activities carried out by the organization can create a competitive advantage for the organization in terms of cost. Minimum or differentiation and therefore the activities carried out by the organization in a scientific way, and looking at how these activities interact with each other is very necessary to analyze the sources of competitive advantage (Porter, 1985: 33). During:

- A. It gives the organization a qualitative and quantitative advantage over competitors, thus allowing it to achieve high performance results.
- B. It makes the business organization superior in performance or in the value of what it provides to customers, or both.
- C. It contributes to the positive impact on the perceptions of customers and the rest of those who deal with the organization and motivates them to continue, develop and prolong the dealings.

#### 2. Indicators of competitive advantage

There are many indicators that are used to indicate the organization's possession of a competitive advantage, such as profitability, market share, sales volume, consumer satisfaction, market value, product diversity, export ability and effectiveness (Silva & Tadahsi, 2005:76), and it was shown (Best, 1997: 86). The cost advantage does not mean that goods and services are provided at the lowest cost levels, but rather that they be at a cost that has a quality effect, which makes those goods and services attractive in the market to give an acceptable return on investment. Three different types of different advantages can be achieved. Less variable cost, lower level of marketing expenses, or lower level of operating and administrative expenses, and each of these types can be a competitive advantage. As for the innovation advantage, it comes from looking at the unexpected and moving on. With steps that go beyond experience, and this can only be done by the human element (Haten & Hatem, 1997: 254). It is about introducing a new element, in a new place, to perform a new job, with the aim of obtaining better results, and it needs an innovative manager who has the audacity to make the decision to put innovations into practice, achieving a competitive advantage by finding new ways of production or distribution (Brien, 1990: 45).

#### The third topic

#### Presentation, analysis and interpretation of research data

This section deals with the presentation and analysis of the results of the research variables through the descriptive analysis of these variables. And then test the impact models among them:

#### First: Presentation and analysis of the results of the descriptive analysis of human resource management strategies

Table (1) shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations in connection with recruitment strategies, as the answers reflected a total arithmetic mean of (3.58), indicating its

high level, confirmed by the high consistency in the answers of the sample members, which was reflected by the standard deviation of (0.75), which is a low value, as it is located The level of the arithmetic mean within the third category for the distribution of the scale categories according to the arithmetic mean represented by high agreement, and it is clear from Table (1) the polarization, selection, and determination were at an arithmetic mean of (3.73) (3.66) (3.36), respectively, which are high values and with high consistency In the answers reflected by the standard deviation (0.82) (0.77) (0.93), respectively.

Table 1.0 *Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the dimensions (polarization, selection, designation)*

Dimensions	mean arithmetic	standard deviation
Polarization	3.73	0.82
Choice	3.66	0.77
Designation	3.36	0.93
Total	3.58	0.75

### Second: Presentation and analysis of the results of descriptive analysis, competitive advantage

Table (2) shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations regarding the competitive advantage, as the answers reflected a total arithmetic mean of (3.68), indicating its high level, confirmed by the high consistency in the answers of the sample members, which was reflected by the standard deviation of (0.63), which is a low value, as it is located The arithmetic mean level within the third category for distributing the scale categories according to the arithmetic mean represented by the high agreement. Table (2) shows that the cost and innovation were at an arithmetic mean of (3.58) (3.78), respectively, which are high values and in high harmony in the answers that reflected them. The standard deviation is (0.78) and (0.66), respectively.

Table 2.0 *Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the competitive advantage dimension*

Dimensions	mean arithmetic	standard deviation
Cost	3.58	0.78
innovation	3.78	0.66
Total	3.68	0.63

### Third: Testing the research hypotheses

This paragraph aims, through some statistical methods, to test the expected impact models among the research variables. With the same level of significance, either about accepting or rejecting the hypothesis, it is done by calculating the number of intangible models as a percentage out of all models. search:

#### 1. The correlation between human resource management strategies and competitive advantage

The first main hypothesis started from the expectation (that there is a significant correlation between the dimensions of human resource management strategies and competitive advantage), and three sub-hypotheses are branched from it to check the relationships presented by Table (3), which expresses the correlation matrix between the two variables to create clarity about the availability of results to support the hypothesis or not. If the hypothesis is supported, the percentage of support for it is determined, and the results in the table are as follows:

- A. Polarization as one of the dimensions of human resource management strategies achieved (3) significant correlations with competitive advantage from the total relations, and all relations were significant at the level (0.01), which at the same time provides strong support to support the first sub-hypothesis of the first main hypothesis ( There is a significant correlation between polarization and competitive advantage.
- B. B - Selection as one of the dimensions of human resource management strategies achieved significant correlations with competitive advantage from the total relations, and all relations were significant at the level (0.01), which at the same time provides strong support to support the second sub-hypothesis of the first main hypothesis (there is a correlation

- relationship significant difference between choice and competitive advantage).
- C. Recruitment as one of the dimensions of human resource management strategies achieved significant correlations with competitive advantage out of the total of (3) relationships, and all relationships were significant at the level (0.01), which at the same time provides strong support to support the third sub-hypothesis of the main hypothesis The first (there is a significant correlation between recruitment and competitive advantage).
  - D. The total employment strategy showed (3) significant correlations with the competitive advantage out of the total relations, which amounted to (3) relationships and all relationships were significant at the level (0.01), and in light of this, the second main hypothesis is accepted at the total level.
  - E. The relationship between the total strategies of human resource management and competitive advantage was high, as the correlation coefficient was (0.59), which is significant at the level of significance (0.01), and these results provide strong support to prove the validity of the first main hypothesis at the individual and total levels.

Table 3.0 *Correlation factors between recruitment strategy and competitive advantage*

Dimensions	innovation	Cost	Total competitive advantage
Polarization	.287**	.483**	.453**
Choice	.469**	.495**	.557**
Designation	.441**	.536**	.568**
Total Recruitment Strategy	.447**	.566**	.590**

**2. The relationship of influence between human resource management strategies and competitive advantage**

The second main hypothesis stated that (there is a significant effect of human resource

management strategies on competitive advantage) and from the models that appear in Table (4), which shows the moral and intangible models among the research variables, the following shows us:

- A. Polarization showed as one of the dimensions of human resource management strategies (3) significant impact models with competitive advantage from a total of (3) models, that is, a percentage of (100%), and it is noted that the value of the interpretation coefficient (R2) has reached (0.20), which means The polarization explains the percentage (0.20) of the total changes that occur in the competitive advantage, and the value of  $\beta$  indicates that the change in polarization by one unit will lead to a change of (0.45) in the competitive advantage, and these results allow the acceptance of the first sub-hypothesis of the fifth main (there is A significant effect of polarization on competitive advantage).
- B. Selection was shown as one of the dimensions of human resources management strategies (3) significant impact models with competitive advantage from a total of (3) models, that is, a percentage of (100%), and it is noted that the value of the interpretation coefficient (R2) has reached (0.31) and this means The polarization explains the rate of (0.31) of the total changes that occur in the competitive advantage, and the value of  $\beta$  indicates that the change in selection by one unit will lead to a change of (0.31) in the competitive advantage, and these results allow the acceptance of the second sub-hypothesis of the fifth main (there is A significant effect of choice on competitive advantage).
- C. Appointment was shown as one of the dimensions of human resources management strategies (3) significant impact models with competitive advantage from a total of (3) models, that is, a percentage of (100%), and it is noted that the value of the interpretation coefficient (R2) has reached (0.32) and this means The assignment explains the rate of (0.32) of the total changes that occur in the competitive advantage, and the value of  $\beta$  indicates that the change in the assignment by one unit

will lead to a change of (0.56) in the competitive advantage, and these results allow the acceptance of the third sub-hypothesis of the fifth main (there is Significant effect of recruitment on competitive advantage).

- D. The impact models for the total removal of human resources management strategies with the exclusion of the competitive advantage were (3) models, all significant at the level of (0.01), which constitutes a percentage of (100%).
- E. In general, the impact models showed between the dimensions of human resource management strategies and competitive advantage (12) a moral model out of (12) an impact model between them, i.e. (100%). It is noted that the value of the interpretation coefficient (R2) has reached (0.34), which means The removal of human resource management strategies explains a percentage (0.34) of the total changes that occur in the competitive advantage, and the value of  $\beta$  indicates that the change in human resource management strategies with one unit will lead to a change of (0.59) in the competitive advantage and the above results provide strong support for acceptance The second main hypothesis, which states (there is a significant effect of the dimensions of human resource management strategies in competitive advantage) at the individual and overall levels.

Table 4.0 *R,  $\beta$  and F values for the effect of hiring strategy on competitive advantage*

	Co st		Innov ation		Total compe titive advant age	
Polariz ation	0.4 8	0.2 3	0.28	0.1 0	0.45	0.2 0
	46. 44	mo ral	13.68	mo ral	39.54	mo ral
Choice	0.4 9	0.2 4	0.46	0.2 2	0.55	0.3 1
	49. 62	mo ral	43.05	mo ral	68.75	mo ral
Design	0.5	0.2	0.44	0.1	0.56	0.3

ation	3	8		9		2
	61. 70	mo ral	36.90	mo ral	72.87	mo ral
Total Recruit ment Strateg y	0.5 6	0.3 2	0.44	0.1 9	0.59	0.3 4
	72. 22	mo ral	38.12	mo ral	81.67	mo ral

**Conclusion**

- 1- Confirm the validity of the hypothesis that indicates the existence of a significant correlation between human resource management strategies and competitive advantage.
- 2- The statistical methods used, specifically the multiple regression analysis, proved that there is an effect of human resource management strategies on the competitive advantage.
- 3- The telecommunications sector is considered the most important of the pioneering and developing sectors in Iraq, given the size of its contribution to the gross national product, and the direct and indirect job opportunities that this sector provides.
- 4- It turns out that human resource management strategies play a crucial role in building competitive advantage, as it provides human resources with the skills, capabilities and knowledge necessary to accomplish their tasks, and it can also be a social role, enabling employees to form friendships that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences.
- 5- It has been proven that investing in creativity and innovation is one of the main ways to create and create new knowledge. The intensity of research and development activities creates and creates a wealth of knowledge, how inherent in individuals.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

- 1- The necessity of paying attention to the dimension of creativity and innovation on

the part of the telecommunications sector in Iraq, because this leads to obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage, which is positively reflected on its performance in general.

- 2- Attention to the selection strategy by the senior administrations in the telecommunications sector in Iraq, by providing support and finding new standards in the selection process and using modern methods.
- 3- Increasing the intellectual interest in the employees in the telecommunications sector under study by providing them with continuous and continuous support by motivating the creative and talented and working to market their scientific output to the markets interested in the telecommunications sector.
- 4- The need to pay attention to selection because of its importance in the work environment, which is characterized by competition and change.
- 5- Staying away from attracting individuals by companies on the basis of non-professional criteria, and paying attention to all information and data about job applicants from different sources.

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