

Strategic Planning and its Relationship to Competitive Advantage (A Case Study of Pinar Company)

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Abstract: This study investigated the relationship between SP (SP) and CA (CA) in Pinar Company in Istanbul city in Turkey. The sample consisted of 289 employees in Pinar company. A questionnaire contained three sections were distributed to the participants. The questionnaire was a 5-Point Likert Scale. The data were analyzed quantitatively by using SPSS. The findings of the study revealed that there is a positive correlation between SP and CA in Pinar Company. The study also found that there is a positive relationship between operational efficiency, capacity building and CA of Pinar Company. The study recommended conducted further studies that articulate the relationship between SP and CA in other companies in Turkey.

Keywords: strategic planning, competitive advantage, Pinar Company.

1. INTRODUCTION

Strategic planning has become an unavoidable necessity in this era of rapid change, as it allows officials to direct the organization by moving beyond daily administrative processes and crisis management to a different vision of internal and external dynamic factors capable of achieving change in the surrounding environment, which is considered an important stage. And, because it reflects a style of thinking and distinguishing between methods and work methods, it is a fundamental aspect of the administrative process, to choose the best alternatives suitable for the available capabilities on the one hand, and also the nature of the goals desired to be achieved on the other hand.

Suggested generic strategies for developing a CA and establishing a defendable position. These strategies are cost leadership overall, differentiation, and focus. According to Porter, businesses can gain a significant and long-term CA over their competitors by adeptly pursuing cost leadership, differentiation, or focus strategies.

SP is defined by Mintzberg (1994) as "specific goals that are established and communicated by central leadership and supported by formal controls to ensure their surprise-free implementation in a controlled and practicable environment." SP entails carrying out unique activities that are different from other companies (Porter, 1996). Chandler (1962) defines strategy as the identification of the firm's primary long-term objectives in addition to the goals, as well as the allocation of critical resources to achieve such goals. Mintzberg (1978) considered a strategy as a type of activity emerging from unintended or intended actions.

According to Christensen (2001), CA is a concept that often induces an idol worship form, i.e., the urge to imitate strategies that contribute to business and companies' success and prosperity. Several scholars (Barney and Hesterly, 2012; Barney, 1991) have regarded CA at the institutional level in which various firms execute strategies that create values and such strategies are not being executed by rival firms at the same time.

1.2. Significance of the problem

The role played by the institution's SP in assisting it in understanding its surrounding external environment and competitors, as well as supporting it in identifying opportunities and threats in the external environment, as well as supporting it in knowing its strengths and weaknesses, to be competitive Before competitors try to take advantage of their weakness company in the market.

- Disclosing the role of SP in generating CA that ensure the company's survival, growth, and stability
- The study's importance highlights the importance of institutions' CA by demonstrating what you get when you have a CA.

Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company?
- ii. What are the effects of operational efficiency and capacity building (CB) on CA of Pinar Company?
- iii. What are the effects of cost advantage, differentiated advantage, and focus advantage on achieving CA of Pinar Company?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background of the Study

Hart (1992) suggests that SP strategies entail the implementation of plans that are produced by systematic procedure and comprehensive analysis. SP consists of three aspects, namely, SWOT analysis, strategic choices, and strategic execution (Wendy & Tushman, 2005).

Korenelius et al. (2020) indicate that the SP process encompasses scanning the external environmental conditions, pinpointing strategy choices, controlling and monitoring, organizing internal strategic issues, setting company objectives, and formulating implementation plans.

SP decisions entail an institution selecting and focusing on the most competitive markets, technologies, products, and resources to achieve the organization's goal through a set of actions known as competitive strategy (Korenelius et al., 2020).

Grant (1991) explains how resources and capabilities serve as the foundation for a firm's strategy. According to him, internal resources and capabilities provide the foundation for a firm's strategy. "The case for making the firm's resources and capabilities the basis for its long-term strategy is based on two premises," he says. When the external environment is changing, the company's own resources and skills can provide a much more secure foundation for defining its identity. Second, the primary source of profit for the firm is its resources and skills.

Moving on now to unravel the relationship between SP and firm performance, there are diverging views regarding this issue. To clarify, a number of scholars (Schwenk & Schrader, 1993; Ansof, 1991; Robinson & Pearce, 1986) posit that SP improves long-term thinking, reduces focus on operational details, and provides a structured method for identifying and estimating strategic alternatives, which may improve the firm's.

According to Johnson and Scholes (1997, p. 10), strategy is defined as "the direction and the scope of an organization over the long term, which achieves an advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a changing environment to meet the needs of markets and to fulfill stakeholder expectations." Mintzberg (1994) defines planning strategy as "specific aims that are established and communicated by central leadership and backed up by formal controls to ensure their surprise-free implementation in a controlled and practicable environment."

2.2 Forms of SP

According to Maleka (2014), there are three types of SP that are essential for every company; including, corporate, business, and functional. To begin, corporate strategy is concerned with the entire organization. Such a form of strategy pertains to market definition. Corporate strategy has four key components. The first component is concerned with the strategic management of the company's present portfolio of companies and the allocation of resources among them. The development of shareholder value through business strategy is considered the second connected component. Third, is the discovery and

management of direct links between businesses, as well as the realization of synergies between enterprises. The fourth factor is the diversification plan, which can be achieved through acquisition or internal development. Secondly, business strategy, which focuses on succeeding in certain markets and concentrates on competitive positioning in order to yield a CA.

2.3 The Importance and Benefits of SP

SP benefits include identifying appropriate strategies to achieve goals, increasing awareness of the external and internal environments, and clearly identifying the CA, increasing managers' commitment to achieving the organization's objectives, promoting coordination of activities, and more efficiently allocating the organization's resources. and enhancing the firm's performance by allowing it to become more proactive rather than reactive (Maleka, 2014).

On the other hand, Kawata (2017) suggest that SP is significant in terms of establishing a forum for discussing the organization's mission and the principles that should impact on choices, rather than predicting the future, creating a common vision of the organization's future that can drive present resource allocation by defining the organization's chosen future and establishing a viewpoint that will guide present resolutions, facilitating effective communication and teamwork among the board of directors, personnel, and external stakeholders, and laying the foundation for genuine transformation by promoting forward thinking and focusing attention on.

According to Androniceanu (2017) all lead to better results relating the strategic plan to the budget, using SP to drive the institution's overall performance management system (Poister, Van Slyke, 2002; Poister, Streib, 2005), and using performance measures to monitor the progress of strategic initiatives.

2.4 Obstacles to SP

Putting strategies into action is a far more complex, demanding, and hard task, and hence not as simple as one may think. Aaltonen and Ikavalko (2002) SP entails motivating employees and organizing the firm's resources to meet goals. According to Pearce et al. (2000), one of the components of strategic management is strategy implementation, which refers to a collection of decisions and activities that result in the formation and execution of long-term plans meant to meet corporate objectives. The goal of executing strategies is for management and staff to work together to carry out stated strategic plans. In other words, implementation is the most challenging element in the strategic management process, and it necessitates some self-control as well as a company culture (Pearce et al., 2000).

As Eurido and Santos (2015) put it, one of the key unaddressed management issues is the high failure rate of strategy implementation initiatives, with most writers predicting a failure rate of 30 to 70 percent. Several researchers (Miller et al., 2004; Hickson et al., 2003) maintain that obstacles may obstruct implementation in at least three ways. Obstacles might be accumulated without being related to one another. The continual addition of impediments is referred to as accumulation. Other scholars (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000; Wernham, 1985) indicate that obstacles may interact with one another in which interaction entails reciprocal activity, a bidirectional reciprocal interaction, and maybe even an interconnected relationship with a multiplying impact among barriers. Challenges can induce further challenges, forming causality chains between them. Causality refers to the relationship between barriers in terms of cause and effect (Cândido and Santos, 2015).

2.5 levels of SP

SP can be divided into three levels: corporate strategy, operational and functional strategies, and business strategy. In terms of corporate strategy, it primarily focuses on markets, business, and product selection. A strategic business unit may be a product line, division, geographical location, profit center, or other entity that varies from corporation to corporation or institution to institution. it includes positioning a firm against competitors, adapting to new technology are strategic concerns at the governmental level.

As for functional level strategies, they are concerned with the value chain and business processes. Such strategies encompass manufacturing, finance, research and development, and marketing. As regard operational strategies, they are related to the organization of each part of the business to provide functional strategies, business-unit and corporate level strategic direction. Based on the foregoing, operational strategy concentrates on the matters of financial and human resources, process, and so forth. Such strategies contain decisions made on the shop floor by workers and supervisors, and they contain supply chain management, paying invoices, and the optimal use of assets and other resources, such as personnel, to achieve CA (Cândido and Santos, 2015).

2.6 Challenges Faced by SP

The challenges that face SP are embodied in the fact that “strategic decisions cannot be made at a lower level without risking sub-optimization of resources” (Maleka, 2014, p. 10). According to the World Bank (2011), in some situations, the environment may be so volatile that strategic or long-term planning becomes nearly impossible. The same could be said if the economy deteriorates or a country or economy is taken over by an unfriendly or unresponsive administration. (Kabeyi, 2019) contends that planning is difficult in a crisis, and planning for many years ahead is impractical, unless an organization has some assurance that it will exist next year, and that the majority of its senior personnel and board leadership will remain associated with the organization. It is noteworthy that strategies are sometimes successful, whereas other times they are not successful (Dyer et al., 2016).

2.7 Competitive Advantage (CA)

CA encompasses service differentiation, marketing differentiation, and cost leadership that mediates the competencies, capabilities, and performance of an organization (Mohsenzadeh and Ahmadian, 2016).

A primary concern of managers for attaining CA in complicated environments lies in cultivating supportive and positive employees' behavior (Stewart and Nandkeolyar, 2006; Kane, 1997).

CA encompasses service differentiation, marketing differentiation, and cost leadership that mediates the competencies, capabilities, and performance of an organization (Mohsenzadeh and Ahmadian, 2016).

Berdine et al. (2008) maintain that a company's ability to obtain an advanced competitive position in the market constitutes a CA. According to Barone & DeCarlo (2003), it is the creating and finding unique characteristics of competing products that concern the organization's customers.

Kolter and Turner (1997), moreover, indicate achieving the value for the customers according to the organization's financial abilities, in which the client has the ability and the readiness to pay to receive the obtained value for the purchased commodity. As for Wang and Hong (2011), the CA entails meeting the customer's needs or the value that s/he seeks to obtain from the service or product.

CA is considered a strategic element that enables the organization to succeed. Not to mention that it reflects a distinct competitive situation for the organization in comparison to its competitors by providing high-quality products at lower prices; thus, it provides great and unique value to customers (Oseremen, 2019).

The organization should have distinctive resources that are manifested in applying information and communication technology, followed by strategic competencies; both of these are considered the most important resources in the light of the knowledge economy. Czepiel (1992) opines that achieving superiority and excellence for the organization as opposed to its rivals are considered the most distinctive characteristics of CA. Such characteristics are embodied in its long-term continuum, organizational renewal and development in terms of the external environment's input from one hand and the internal abilities and resources of the organization from the other hand, and the commensurate of using such CA with the objectives and outcomes that the organization seeks to achieve in both short-term and long-term duration.

2.7.1 Conceptual CA

Ansoff (1965) is credited with being the first researcher to define CA as the isolated features or specific properties of distinct product markets that provide a company with a strong competitive position. According to several studies (Baaij et al., 2004; South, 1981), CA is regarded as an important aspect of strategic management since it explains what causes variations in firm performance (Ceccagnoli, 2009). Nevertheless, Porter (1985) posits that a firm's CA derives from its capacity to provide greater value to its buyers. It means according to Sigalas et al. (2013, p.133) "the above industry average manifested exploitation of market opportunities and neutralization of competitive threats."

Aharoni (1993) indicates that CA and strategy are inextricably linked. When competitors do not follow a firm's value creation strategy concurrently, it may gain a CA (Barney, 1991). CA refers to a situation in which a company's product or service is deemed superior to that of its competitors. The most common sources of CA are low-cost or unique products/services (Dash, 2013). CA is required for happy consumers who will obtain more value from supplied goods in exchange for the higher revenue that the owners seek from management, and such criteria can be met through production organization, higher application, and as low as possible production costs (Ranko et al., 2008).

Companies gain CA by developing and expanding a set of key competences that enable them to service certain market segments better than competitors. Key competences are distinct characteristics that businesses build in critical areas such as consumer service, offering high quality and dependability, inventiveness, teamwork, flexibility, sensitivity and adaptation to changes in the environment, and others that enable them to outperform competitors (Yuleva, 2019).

2.7.2 Factors Affecting CA

Profits produced by a company may be related to the attractiveness of the industry as well as a CA over competitors (Mukerjee, 2016). Companies that have failed to capitalize on macro-environmental developments have lost their CA (Mukerjee, 2016). Importantly, Grant (1991) indicates that failures are frequently linked to the firm's operations being expanded beyond the extent of its competence. As Leiblein and Miller (2003) maintain, the identification of specific competencies that may be used by the corporation is a vital step in researching corporate scope. As Miles et al. (1978) point out, a corporation should guarantee that it is environmentally conscious and that its strategic decisions permit it to react to external adjustments.

2.7.3 Types of CA

CA is classified into two types: cost leadership and distinctiveness. The two main types of CA, as well as the breadth of operations for which a company strives, result in three broad methods for achieving above-average performance in an industry: cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. There are two types of focus approaches: cost focus and differentiation emphasis. Cost leadership and differentiation strategies seek CA across multiple industry sectors, whereas focus strategies seek cost advantage (cost focus) or distinctiveness (differentiation emphasis) in a single area (Porter, 1985).

The second type of CA is related to the differentiation of the company's proposition based on distinct quality or superior efficiency. This is a circumstance in which the company's proposition better meets user demands or solves customer problems than rivals' offers. In this instance, the options for SMEs to obtain a CA are expanding (Yuleva, 2019).

2.7.4 CA Characteristics

To acquire a CA, there are four basic approaches, namely, differentiation, cost leadership, strategic alliances, and defensive strategies. According to Gupta and Randhawa (2008), competitive characteristics refer to a firm's inherent features that enable it to adapt to market dynamics as they change through inventive and distinguishing solutions.

Competitive characteristics serve as the foundation for a firm's attitude toward competing with other businesses in the business environment, which provides a CA (Swab and Johnson, 2019). Organizations must respect this competitive climate by building competitive traits that impact their capacity to generate value while thriving to attract and keep consumers in the present and future (Payne, 2012). Understanding the firm's competitive characteristics is crucial for gaining a competitive edge over competitors. Understanding the consumer, learning about the customer, and inventing with the customer all contribute to increased value for the customer (Muhonza et al., 2021). Agility, competitive forces, and dynamic capacities were used to assess competitive characteristics. Agility has the greatest impact on CA, followed by dynamic capabilities and, finally, competitive force. Furthermore, the competitive qualities of enterprises are critical in providing a CA for firms in Kenya's financial services market (Muhonza et al., 2021).

2.7.5 Types and Criteria of General CA Strategies

According to Porter (1990), a primary strategy for gaining a CA is to employ generic competitive methods that may be deployed alone or together, hence improving the likelihood of market success. The following research covers three general strategy types for staying ahead of the company's other competitors in the sector. The effective application of these techniques necessitates widespread support and supportive organizational frameworks. The generic methods are techniques for defeating established industry competitors (Porter, 1998). These strategies, which combine cost leadership, unique products and services, and a concentration on specialized products and services, allow organizations to capitalize on CA from three different perspectives. These are what Porter refers to as general tactics, and they will be examined more below.

In terms of cost leadership, Porter (1998) observed that due to the expansion of the experience curve concept, this method became increasingly popular in the early 1970s. It is a method of achieving total cost leadership through a set of functional policies tailored to that end. Cost leadership necessitates the provision of efficient equipment, a concerted effort to reduce

costs through expertise, careful management of expenditure and operating expenses, the avoidance of customer final accounts, and the reduction of costs to the bare minimum (in areas such as research and development, advertising, sales force, and so on). Competitors are important variables in achieving these goals, and they should be focused on the overall strategy, despite the fact that quality, service, and other areas cannot be overlooked.

According to differentiation, it is the company's second generic strategy is to provide various items or services that create a one-of-a-kind circumstance. Differentiation may be created in a variety of ways. Companies should strive to differentiate themselves across several dimensions. It should be emphasized that the differentiation approach does not let the firm overlook expenses, even if these costs are not the primary strategic aim (ibid.).

The fourth generic strategy in terms of focus is to target a specific customer group, product line section, or geographic market. There are numerous methods for achieving differentiation and focus. If the entire industry develops low-cost and differentiation strategies with the goal of achieving the objectives, then the entire focus strategy revolves around achieving a specific goal, with each of the functional policies defined in relation to this goal. The focus strategy is based on the idea that by doing so, organizations will be able to achieve their limited strategic goals more effectively and efficiently than competitors. As a result, the organization achieves distinctiveness, lowers service costs, or both by better meeting the demands of a specified target (Porter, 1996).

In terms of generic CA strategy criteria, the competitive position of an industry or sector is determined by five criteria, and it is their combined action that defines an industry's potential advantage. Entry barriers, supplier power, buyer power, the danger of substitutes, and the intensity of internal rivalry are among these forces. The goal of a company's strategic strategy is to identify a position from which it can better protect itself against these forces or influence them in its favor. Following that, the firm should be positioned to obtain a competitive edge by fortifying itself against competitive pressures or seeking locations within the industry where these forces are weaker. Strategic movements by corporations can change the balance of forces (Porter, 1997).

Cost leadership and differentiation are two general techniques for pursuing a CA in a position. However, another component that defines strategic positioning is the competitive region. The corporation must determine whether to service the entire market or a certain section. Relying on the decision, a third strategic alternative emerges, which consists of employing one of the two basic strategies, costs or differentiation, but in a specific area (Porter, 1997).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The goal of this chapter is to present the tools used in data collection and analysis for this study. This research investigates the impact of SP on achieving CA at Pinar Company in Turkey. Because there have been few studies on the impact of SP and CA in the Turkish context, this study adds new insights to the literature for scholars and researchers.

3.1 Instrument of the study

A questionnaire consists of 30 items are distributed to the employees at Pinar company in Turkey. The items of the questionnaire revolve around SP and CA that are distributed equally. Eight items are classified according to 5-point Likert Scale, namely, strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD), whereas twenty-one items are classified according to other 5-point Likert Scale, namely, not at all, less extent, moderate extent, large extent, and very large extent.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population size of Pinar company accounts for (1163) employees. According to Polit and Hungler (1999) means a totality or an aggregate of all the subjects, objects, or members that commensurate to a set of standards. In this study the population is the employees of Pinar company of all gender, educational status, and age groups.

3.3 Sample of the Study

The study used simple random sampling technique in choosing the employees from Pinar company. Polit and Hungler (1999) indicate that a sample is a sub-group of population chosen to participate. In the present study, a subset of 289 employees are selected out of the entire population. This means 289 have a confidence level of 95% that the real value is

within $\pm 5\%$ of the measured value. To examine the hypothesis at 5% level of significance with the help of Stata 11.0 statistical package, the study used regression analysis. To identify and assess the sample size, the study used the formula of Guilford and Flusher (1973)

$$\frac{N}{1 + \alpha^2 N}$$

N $1 + \alpha^2 N$ in which N stands for the size of the population α is alpha (the level of significance) that amounts to is 0.05.

3.4 Reliability of the Instrument

According to Polit and Hungler (1999) reliability is the extent of consistency in which an attribute is measured by the instrument. Cronbach's Alpha is used for measuring the reliability of the study. Cronbach (1951) maintains that reliability entails the extent in which a measurement included a correct group of items that the researcher can accurately rely on to evaluate a construct. According to the findings of the study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients are further greater than 0.70 (ranges from 0.723 to 0.871).

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

According to Burns and Grove (2001) validity stands for a measure of falsity or truth of the obtained data by using the research tool. This questionnaire is given to a jury of experts including professors at Istanbul Aydin University in business administration department in order to detect the accuracy, clarity, validity, and the appropriateness of the instrument. Then the instrument will be modified according to their recommendation.

3.6 Data Collection

The survey research primarily depends on primary data taken from employees of Pinar Company, Turkey, which constitutes the sample. Data is defined as information elicited in a course of a study (Polit and Hungler, 1999). The study distributes 289 questionnaires to 289 employees at Pinar company in Turkey. The gathered data will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Hence, the research adopts a mixed methods approach. The mixed method provides a stronger understanding of the problem by means of implementing two approaches (Creswell 2014).

The questionnaire to the participants that consists of three sections; the first section encompasses demographic information about the participants, such as age, gender, academic qualifications, and job title, whereas the third-section is pertained to the information related to Pinar company that consists of 4 items, such as the scope of information on Pinar company, ownership structure, the number of years has the company been in existence, the number of employees, and the number of employees, and the products that the company offer in the market.

The fourth section consists of (8) items about the effects of operational efficiency and capacity building SP on CA of Pinar Company. The fourth section consists of (14) items regarding CA at Pinar company; including (4) items for cost advantage, (5) items for differentiated advantage, and (5) items for focus advantage.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed quantitatively using (SPSS) software. After collecting the questionnaire and ensuring its validity, the researcher will encode it by labeling it with specific numbers in order to enter the data into a computer and analyze it in terms of the questionnaire items using a 5-point Likert scale.

Following that, the following values for Likert Scale items will be applied to the provided responses: strongly disagree, disagree, no idea, agree, strongly agree. After that, the MatLab statistical package was used to compute the mean values and SD for each item.

Then, the data will be analyzed qualitatively. The qualitative analysis, which is a form of social inquiry that focuses on people's interpretation of their experiences and the environment surrounding them Wahyuni (2012), will be a helpful tool. The main purpose of which is to give a detailed description of the impact of SP in achieving a CA at Pinar company in Turkey. Along similar lines, Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) explain that qualitative analysis produces a narrative or textual description of the phenomena under study.

In this study, the relationship structure of a number of series equations will be investigated using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis tool. The SEM Equation Model is a statistical technique used to test a series of relationships between variables derived from factor variables or observed variables. "SEM is a powerful technique that can combine complex path models with latent variables," (Hox and Bechger, 1998, p. 1).

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method will be used for statistical verification analysis in the study. Confirmatory factor analysis was used in this research technique to confirm the most dominant factors in a number of variables as well as regression weight in SEM, which will be used in conjunction with the LISREL 9.10 software to estimate structural equation models and examine the relationship between SP and CA variables.

The statistical procedures of the study will be as follows. First, the demographic information of the participants will be analyzed by using SPSS in order to identify the frequencies of age, gender, academic qualifications, and years of experience of the participants. Second, the items of the independent variables i.e. SP that consists of 15 items and the items of the dependent variables i.e. CA will be analyzed by using SPSS in order to determine the redundancy, percentages, arithmetic averages, and SD.

After that, the hypotheses of the study, such as there are no relationship between the internal and external environmental obstacles that prevent the implementation of SP on Pinar Company, there are no impacts of gaining a CA in Pinar Company in facing the current challenges, and there are no effects of the components of applying SP and the availability of these components in the Pinar Company will be tested by using a simple regression analysis in order to either accept or reject the null hypothesis of the study.

3.8 Variables of the study

1. **The Independent variable:** which is depicted in the planning strategy, as represented by its dimensions in the external and internal environments, as well as the mission, objectives, and goals.

2. **The dependent variable:** a CA (CA).

4. RESULTS

The purpose of the chapter is to present the findings of the study concerning SP and its relationship with CA among the employees in Pinar. The participants were given five questionnaires; the first two questionnaires were demographic information about the participants, while the other questionnaires investigated the operational efficiency and capacity building SP on CA of Pinar Company, the extent of SP, and the degree of CA in Pinar company. The questionnaires are provided in Appendixes A, B, C, D and E. This chapter articulates the relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company in Turkey that is influenced by employee behavior and the organizational structure.

4.1 Demographic Information about the Participants

The study sample consisted of (289) employees in Pinar company. Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample depending on the Demographic information variables.

Table 1: distribution of the sample according to the personal and functional variables

gender		Frequency	Percent
Categories	male	174	60.21
	female	115	39.79
	Total	289	100.00
age		Frequency	Percent
Categories	20-30 years	98	33.91
	30-40 years	127	43.94
	40- 50 years	7	2.42
	50-60 years	26	9.00
	Over 60 years	31	10.73
	Total	289	100.00

Level of education			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	Lower than High School	18	6.23
	Master	188	65.05
	Bachelor Degree	37	12.80
	High school	27	9.34
	Ph.D.	19	6.57
	Total	289	100.00
Which position they are working?			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	Manager	209	72.32
	Operations and production	80	27.68
	Total	289	100.00
experience			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	less than one year	108	37.37
	1-5 years	66	22.84
	5-10 years	91	31.49
	More than 10 years	24	8.30
	Total	289	100.00
Marital Status			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	Single	106	36.68
	Married	43	14.88
	Widow/widower	123	42.56
	Divorced	17	5.88
	Total	289	100.00
How many children ?			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	None	58	20.07
	One	140	48.44
	More than one	91	31.49
	Total	289	100.00
How many salary			
		Frequency	Percent
Categories	less than 800	40	13.84
	800-1000	4	1.38
	1000-1200	150	51.90
	1200-1400	75	25.95
	more than 1400	20	6.92
	Total	289	100.00

As shown in Table (1) above, the percentage of males' employees in Pinar company were higher than the percentage of females' employees with the percentage (60.21%) for males and (39.79%) for females', respectively. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 60 and above. The highest percentage was for the participants aged between 30-40 years with the percentage (43.94%), followed by the participants aged between 20-30 with the proportion (33.91%), subsequent by the participants over 60 years (10.73%). The least percentage was for the employees aged between 50-60 that amounted to (9%), followed by those aged between 40-50 that accounted for (2.42%). The level of education of the participants varied from high school to doctorate. The highest percentage was for master participants with the percentage (65.05%), followed by bachelor participants with the proportion (12.80%), subsequent by high school participants (9.34%). The least percentage was for Ph.D. students that amounted to (6.57%), followed by lower than high school students that accounted for (6.23%).

The job position of the participants varied from managers to operations and production. The highest percentage was for managers with the percentage (72.32%). However, the lowest percentage was for operations and production with the percentage (27.68%).

As for the years of experience, it varied from less than one year to more than five years. The highest percentage was for the participants with less than one-year experience with the percentage (37.37%), followed by the participants whose experience ranged from 5 to 10 years with the proportion (31.49%), subsequent by the participants whose experience ranged from 1 to 5 years that accounted for (22.84%). However, the lowest percentage was for the participants whose experience were more than ten years that amounted to (8.30%).

Regarding the marital status of the participants, it varied from single, married, widow, widower, and divorced. The highest percentage was for widow/widower participants with the percentage (42.56%), followed by single participants with the proportion (14.88%). However, the lowest percentage was for divorced participants that amounted to (5.88%).

In respect of the number of children of the participants, it varied from none to more than one. The highest percentage was for the participants who have one child with the percentage (48.44%), followed by the participants who have more than one child with the proportion (31.49%). However, the lowest percentage was for the participants who do not have a child that amounted to (20.07%).

With regard to the amount of salary of the participants varied from less than 800 to more than 1400. The highest percentage was for the participants whose salary ranged from 1000 to 1200 with the percentage (51.90%), followed by the participants whose salary ranged from 1200 to 1400 with proportion (25.95%), subsequent by the participants whose salary were less than 800 that accounted for (13.84%). Only (6.92%) of the participants received more than 1400 salary. However, the lowest percentage was for the participants whose salary ranged from 800 to 1000 that amounted to (1.38%).

4.2 Operational Efficiency and Capacity Building SP on CA of Pinar Company

The section presents the findings related to the 'operational efficiency and capacity building' questionnaire. It demonstrates the effects of operational efficiency and capacity building SP on achieving CA of Pinar Company according to the employees' perspectives.

Table 2: Operational Efficiency and Capacity Building SP on CA of Pinar Company

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	2	There is manpower efficiency in Pinar Company.	3.64	1.12	Medium
2	1	Pinar company has enhanced operational efficiency towards achievement of CA	3.53	1.24	Medium
3	3	Pinar Company has realized productivity efficiency over years hence resulting to achievement of CA.	3.42	1.06	Medium
4	5	Pinar Company has conducts employees performance review with aim of conducting training and development.	3.28	1.51	Medium
5	4	Pinar Company produces goods and services at the most effective means and efficiency.	3.25	1.44	Medium
6	8	Capacity building enhances employees' performance hence achievement of CA.	2.51	1.15	Medium
6	7	Through management development, Pinar Company has gained CA over competitors.	2.51	1.15	Medium
8	6	Pinar Company attracts and retains the most effective employees towards gaining CA.	2.47	1.01	Medium
-	Total Means		3.08	0.73	Medium

Table 2 shows that the highest means reached (3.64) out of (5) for item (2) " There is manpower efficiency in Pinar Company " by medium agreement degree, then for item (1) " Pinar company has enhanced operational efficiency towards achievement of CA ", by Medium agreement degree (means 3.53), And the lowest means was (2.47) for item (8) " Pinar Company attracts and retains the most effective employees towards gaining CA " by medium agreement degree.

The total means for "**Operational efficiency**" domain reached (3.08) by medium agreement degree.

4.3 Strategic Planning

This section presents the nature of SP in Pinar company from 2012 till now according to the perspectives of its employees.

Table 3: the nature of SP in Pinar company from 2012 till now

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	a5	Working time is spent in the SP process when the strategic plan is being prepared.	3.26	1.19	Medium
2	a2	Adequate financial resources are allocated to the SP process.	3.19	1.08	Medium
3	a3	All departments and autonomous sections are involved in the SP process.	3.11	1.05	Medium
4	a1	A formal and systematic SP is practiced in the form.	3.05	1.27	Medium
5	a4	Management is involved in the SP process.	3.03	1.45	Medium
6	a7	The strategic plan is formally written and approved by the board of directors.	2.02	1.17	low
7	a6	The time management devotes in SP process is adequate.	1.96	1.22	low
Total Means			2.80	0.72	Medium

Table 3 shows that the highest means reached (3.26) out of (5) for item (5) " Working time is spent in the SP process when the strategic plan is being prepared " by medium agreement degree, then for item (2) " Adequate financial resources are allocated to the SP process " by medium agreement degree (means 3.19), And the lowest means was (1.96) for item (6) " The time management devotes in SP process is adequate " by low agreement degree.

The total means for "**SP process** " domain reached (2.80) by medium agreement degree.

4.4 The Competitive Advantage in Pinar Company

This section presents the CA in Pinar company according to the employees' perspectives. Table (6) presents the findings of the study.

Table 4: The CA in Pinar Company

Rank	No	Domain	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	1	Cost Advantage	3.46	0.61	Medium
2	3	Focus Advantage	2.88	0.80	Medium
3	2	Differentiation Advantage	2.77	0.70	Medium
-	Total Means		3.04	0.58	Medium

Table 4 shows that the highest means reached (3.46) out of (5) for domain (1) " Cost Advantage " by medium agreement degree, then for domain (3) " Focus Advantage ", by medium agreement degree (means 2.88), and the lowest means was (2.77) for domain (2) " by medium agreement degree.

The total means for "**CA** " reached (3.04) by medium agreement degree.

4.4.1 Cost Advantage in Pinar Company

It provides the results of cost advantage as one of the means that can be used to achieve CA in the company. Table (5) illustrates the findings related to cost advantage.

Table 5: Cost Advantage in Pinar Company

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	b1	The company is a low cost producer.	4.19	0.80	High
2	b4	The company enjoys economies of scale in its production capacity.	3.34	0.80	Medium
3	b2	The company has a unique and efficient production line.	3.30	0.95	Medium
4	b3	The company has a high market share.	3.26	0.96	Medium
5	b5	The company has retained its customers for extended periods.	3.23	0.82	Medium
-	Total Means		3.46	0.61	Medium

Table 5 shows that the highest means reached (4.332) out of (5) for item (1) " The company is a low cost producer " by high agreement degree, then for item (4) " The company enjoys economies of scale in its production capacity ", by medium agreement degree (means 3.34), And the lowest means was (3.23) for item (5) " The company has retained its customers for extended periods " by medium agreement degree.

The total means for "Cost Advantage " domain reached (3.46) by medium agreement degree.

4.4.2 Differentiation Advantage

The section presents the findings of differentiated advantage as one of the approaches that can be used to increase CA among the employees of Pinar company as illustrated in Table (8) below.

Table 6: Differentiation Advantage and CA in Pinar Company

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	c1	The company is insulated from competitive rivalry in the industry.	3.13	1.34	Medium
2	c2	The company has built a strong brand reputation for its products and services.	3.12	1.37	Medium
3	c5	The company has been able to increase its market share.	2.76	0.86	Medium
4	c3	The company has built a pool of loyal customers.	2.43	0.92	Medium
5	c4	The customers are satisfied with the company's products and services.	2.39	0.92	Medium
Total Means			2.77	0.70	Medium

Table 6 shows that the highest means reached (3.13) out of (5) for item (1) " The company is insulated from competitive rivalry in the industry " by medium agreement degree, then for item (2) " The company has built a strong brand reputation for its products and services ", by medium agreement degree (means 3.12). And the lowest means was (2.39) for item (4) " The customers are satisfied with the company's products and services " by Medium agreement degree.

The total means for "Differentiation Advantage " domain reached (2.77) by medium agreement degree.

4.4.3 Focus Advantage

It provides the results of focus advantage as one of the strategies that is used to achieve CA as illustrated in Table (7) below.

Table 7: Focus Advantage and CA in Pinar Company

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard. Deviation	Agreement Degree
1	d2	The company enjoys high prices for its products and services.	3.28	1.51	Medium
2	d1	The company serves a special market segment(s)	3.25	1.44	Medium
3	d5	The company has used its distinctive assets to create new markets.	2.89	1.09	Medium
4	d4	The company has utilized its distinctive competencies to create new market.	2.51	1.15	Medium
5	d3	The company offers products specially made for a particular segment of customers or users.	2.47	1.01	Medium
Total Means			2.88	0.80	Medium

Table 7 shows that the highest means reached (3.28) out of (5) for item (2) " The company enjoys high prices for its products and services " by medium agreement degree, then for item (1) " The company serves a special market segment(s)", by medium agreement degree (means 3.25), And the lowest means was (2.47) for item (5) " The company offers products specially made for a particular segment of customers or users " by medium agreement degree.

The total means for "Focus Advantage " domain reached (2.88) by medium agreement degree.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

It provides the results of the study hypotheses as indicated below:

4.5.1 First Hypothesis

H1: There is no relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company.

To test this hypothesis, and to detect the relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company, the (Pearson Correlation) analysis was used.

Table 8: correlation between SP and CA at Pinar Company

Pearson Correlation	0.871**
Sig. (2- tailed)	0.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Table (8) shows the correlation coefficient between SP and CA of Pinar Company. It was found (0.871) which is significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), Sig (0.000). This means that there are Significant positive relationship at significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between SP and CA of Pinar Company.

4.5.2 Second Hypotheses

H2: There is no relationship between operational efficiency, capacity building and CA of Pinar Company.

To test this hypothesis, and to detect the relationship between operational efficiency as well as capacity building and CA of Pinar Company, the (Pearson Correlation) analysis was used; table (9) shows that.

Table 9: correlation between operational efficiency and CA at Pinar Company

Pearson Correlation	0.929**
Sig. (2- tailed)	0.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) .**

Table (9) shows the correlation coefficient between operational efficiency and CA of Pinar Company. It was found (0.929) which is significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), Sig (0.000). This means that there are Significant positive relationship at significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between operational efficiency, capacity building and CA of Pinar Company.

4.5.3 Third Hypotheses

H3: There are no effects of cost advantage, differentiated advantage, and focus advantage on achieving CA in Pinar Company.

To test this hypothesis, and to detect the effect cost advantage, differentiated advantage, and focus advantage on achieving CA of Pinar Company, the (linear Regression) analysis was used.

Table 10: result of the (Linear Regressions) analysis of the operational efficiency on CA of Pinar Company

Independent variable	"t" value	"t" sig	B	R	R²	"f" value	"f" sig
operational efficiency	42.461	0.000	0.737	0.929	0.863	1802.941	0.000

* **Dependent variable: CA**

- Table (10) shows that:

There are a statistically a significant at significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of operational efficiency on CA of Pinar Company, where "f" value reached (1802.941) by statistically significant (0.000). (R) value reached (0.929), (R²) value reached (0.863).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion

The main findings of the research are provided in eight different sections: operational efficiency and capacity building SP on CA of Pinar Company,

5.1.1 The Relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company?

The first research question examined the relationship between SP and CA of Pinar Company. First of all, the operational efficiency and capacity building effects on CA of Pinar Company were investigated. It is worth to mention that operational efficiency entails the implementation of SP. According to Cândido and Santos (2015), operational strategies focuses on the issues of human and financial resources and processes; such strategies include decisions made by supervisors and workers; and they include supply chain management, along with the optimal use of resources to achieve CA.

The findings of the study revealed that there is a manpower efficiency in Pinar Company. Possibly, employees play a pivotal role in achieving CA by giving creative ideas for new services or products and creative solutions. This finding is in line with various studies (Stewart and Nandkeolyar, 2006; Kane, 1997) that were conducted for achieving CA in complicated by cultivating positive and supportive employees' behavior.

Another interesting finding was that Pinar Company enhanced operational efficiency towards achievement of CA. Possibly, the employees of Pinar Company keen on improving the quality of the product because it plays a pivotal role in identifying the success or failure of a firm in a global market place. In this regard, Singh, Clements, & Sonwaney (2018) indicate that there is a strong relationship between the quality of the product and the success of company. Interestingly, the study indicated that Pinar Company has realized productivity efficiency over years hence resulting to achievement of CA. This result might be explained by the fact that the employees in Pinar Company seek to improve their productivity efficiency over the course of years not only to differentiate themselves from their rivals but also to achieve CA.

Besides, the findings revealed that Pinar Company seeks to achieve CA by reviewing the employees' performance for carrying out training and development. This finding could be attributed to the fact that performance evaluation leads to firm's CA, along with praising high levels of performance and evaluating employees equally as well as determining their needs for giving them sufficient training. In this regard, Obisi (2011) indicated that organizational might be attained when workers are constantly evaluated and appraised.

Additionally, Pinar Company produces goods and services at the most effective means and efficiency. In this respect, Liu, Dutta, and Park (2019) indicated that the integration and the development of productivity and innovation lead to company's effectiveness. Moreover, the study found that capacity building improves the performance of employees and thus the achievement of CA. According to Shams (2016), capacity building is an ongoing process to improve innovative capacities in socio-economic settings by continuous adaptation and development of strategies and processes that enable obtaining greater advantage in individual and collective levels opposed to the previous strategies and processes to improve socio-economic development. Capacity building entails high physical, monetary, and intellectual investments.

Another significant finding was that management development enabled Pinar Company to gain CA. Possibly, the constant development of management in terms of corporate vision and strategy, knowledge, learning, and skills that improve the performance of the company, which in turn, enables it to achieve CA. This finding is in keeping with Aun (2008) that there are three aspects of the management development, namely, learning, knowledge, and skills, and corporate strategy that lead to CA.

It is clearly obvious from the findings of the study that Pinar Company attracts and keeps its effective employees towards achieving CA. Possibly, Pinar company is completely aware that manpower plays a key role in gaining a CA because such types of employees are more effective and creative, which in turn, leading to a CA. It is reinforced by (Larisa and Codreanu, 2021) that employee development might become a source of CA provided applying think-talk-act strategy.

To summarize, the findings of the first research questions revealed that there is a strong relationship between SP; including, manpower efficiency, operational efficiency, productivity efficiency, performance appraisal and evaluation, capacity building, management development and CA in Pinar Company. This result is in accordance with (Kawata, 2017; Maleka, 2014) that SP leads to CA in terms of increasing managers' commitment, enhancing the firm's performance, and achieving the company's objectives.

Also, the findings of the second research question revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between operational efficiency, capacity building and CA of Pinar Company. Possibly, capacity building develops innovative capacities by ongoing adaptation of processes and strategies as well as ongoing development leading to a higher advantage (Shams, 2016). Besides, CA creates customer value in a sustainable and efficient manner, while operational efficiency means a ratio between an input to run a business and the output obtained from the business; the more operational efficiency is improved, the more the ratio between the input and output is improved, which in turn, leads to CA.

5.1.2 The CA in Pinar Company

It provides the results related to the ways of achieving CA in Pinar Company; including cost advantage, differentiated advantage, and focus advantage. The findings revealed that cost advantage, followed by differentiated advantage, and then focus advantage were commonly practiced in the company.

5.1.2.1 Cost Advantage

To answer the first part of the third question regarding the effect of cost advantage on achieving CA in Pinar Company, the study found that the low cost in Pinar Company enables it to achieve a CA. Perhaps, Pinar Company produces its products at a lower cost than its rivals to achieve a CA.

Another interesting finding was that the company enjoys the economics of scale in its production capacity. Possibly, the effectiveness of the products in Pinar company, which enables its costs to be distributed over a large amount of products, which means that such company has higher production levels and more cost savings.

Besides, the study indicated that Pinar Company has its efficient and unique production line. Possibly, the sequential operations in the company in which the products undergo through a refining process to produce and import its products are effective and organized beginning with assembling the products, managing the machinery related to industry, and then using the raw material to create its products. Accordingly, the efficient and unique production line in Pinar Company enables it to achieve CA. This finding is in line with Abubakar and Mohammad (2019), that there is a strong correlation between product line strategies and CA of companies.

The findings also revealed that the high market share leads to a CA in Pinar Company this could be due to the fact that such increase in the market share might allow the company to operate on a higher scale, which in turn, increases company's profitability and strengthen its reputation.

Also, the findings further indicated that Pinar company retained its customers for extended period were all achieved in Pinar Company. As far as this study is concerned, the retention is advantageous and profitable for the company because loyal employees are more profitable than new employees. In this regard, Nasir (2017) points out that loyal customers are the most significant assets in the company. Besides, they are trained; thus, they have a solid knowledge and experience regarding the job nature in Pinar company. More importantly, they are cheaper than new employees.

Generally speaking, the findings revealed a strong correlation between the cost advantage and the CA in Pinar Company. This section presents an answer to the first part of the third research question regarding the effects of cost advantage in Pinar Company in achieving its CA. The study indicated that cost advantage played a pivotal role in achieving CA in Pinar Company. The finding of this study are in line with Kimiti, Muathe, and Murigi (2020), who concluded that cost leadership strategy had a significant and positive impact on the performance of milk firms in Kenya with a CA.

5.1.2.2 Differentiated Advantage

To answer the second part of the third question concerning the effect of differentiated advantage on achieving CA in Pinar Company, the study found that Pinar Company is insulated from the competitive rivalry in the industry. Possibly, the company takes the lead and become the only company that provides milk, cheese, and meat products; thus, it becomes unique and on the spotlight. This finding is consistent with Lisawat (2021) study, which concluded that the uniqueness of resources adds the value of the institution and enables it to achieve a CA.

Another interesting finding was that the company has built a strong brand reputation for its products and services. This finding might be explained due to the fact that building a strong brand reputation might be resulted in more profits and higher sales, along with increasing customers' beliefs that the brands are desirable and valuable, along with building relationships with the customers who become loyal customers. According to Kay (1995), reputation might be costly to

build; however, once established, it might achieve substantial added value, especially in markets in which the quality of the product is observable. This finding is in line with Shrestha (2021) study that brands which have high reputation are inclined to become better financially and they cannot be easily collapsed and if they collapse, their brand can be easily revitalized due to their past reputations.

Moreover, the study found that Pinar Company was able to increase its market share. This result is likely to be related to the fact that such company operates a greater scale and increases profitability, which makes it innovative and have a good reputation, which in turn, enables it to achieve a CA and increased its productivity. This finding lends tremendous support to the study of Szegedi and Korom (2010) that raising market share increased company's productivity.

In addition, the study found that the customers are satisfied in Pinar Company. It seems possible that such result is due to the fact that Pinar Company maintains its high reputation by providing products that meet customers' needs, which in turn, increases their satisfaction and loyalty. Besides, it is possible that such company receives feedback from the customers, which enables it to improve their products and to achieve a CA. This finding agrees with the study of Suchánek and Králová (2015) that customers' satisfaction influences the company's performance.

To conclude, the findings of this section showed a strong correlation between the differentiated advantage and the CA in Pinar Company. This section presents an answer to the second part of the third research question regarding the effects of differentiated strategy in Pinar Company in achieving its CA. According to Porter (1996), differentiation is one of the main generic strategies that can assist a company management with the five forces of competition and beat its competitors in the market.

5.1.2.3 Focus Advantage

To answer the third part of the third question concerning the effect of focus advantage on achieving CA in Pinar Company, the study found that Pinar Company enjoys high prices for its products and services. Possibly, high prices might attract better quality customers who become loyal to the company. High prices is considered as one of the strategic choices, which lead the company to gain a CA. This finding is consistent with McGee and Sammut-Bonnici (2015) study that strategic choices are resource decisions that enable the company to create a CA that is peculiar to itself and taking the advantages of its status in creating CA in which the company can take advantage of this position in raising its costs.

Another interesting finding was that the company serves a special market segment. This finding might be explained due to the fact that market segmentation in Pinar Company is allocated for particular customers by producing certain products to them that meet their demands, which in turn, enables the company to achieve a CA. This finding is in line with Hunt and Arnett (2004) study that companies should determine segments of demands to gain a CA.

Moreover, the study found that Pinar Company has used its distinctive assets to create new markets. This result is likely to be related to the fact that Pinar Company use its distinctive assets that differentiates it from other companies by using particular slogans, packaging, and font. In addition, the study found that the company company has utilized its distinctive competencies to create new market. It seems possible that such result is due to the fact that such company under investigation has its superior quality, strength, and characteristics that differentiate it from its rivals by using lean manufacturing process that concentrates on reducing waste and maximizing profits. This finding lends tremendous support to the study of McGee and Love (1999) that developing distinctive competencies enable the company to remain competitive in market.

To conclude, the findings of this section showed a strong correlation between the focus advantage and the CA in Pinar Company. This section presents an answer to the third part of the third research question regarding the effects of focus advantage in Pinar Company in achieving its CA.

5.2 Conclusion and Implications

Based on the findings that had been compiled from the data regarding the relationship between SP and CA in Pinar Company in Istanbul city in Turkey, the study concluded that SP is highly important for achieving the company's objectives. The study further concluded that there is a positive correlation between SP and CA. The study concluded that operational efficiency, capacity building, and manpower efficiency lead to a CA. Besides, the study further concluded that cost advantage is highly implemented in Pinar Company, followed by focus advantage, subsequent by differentiation advantage in which all of them lead to a CA. The study suggested the following pedagogical implications for the stakeholders who are entrepreneurs to apply SP to achieve CA.

Regardless of the fact that there are a large number of studies on pair and group work activities whether nationally or globally, there has been limited comprehensive research on the relationship between SP and CA in Pinar Company. The main purpose of the study not only lies in articulating the relationship between SP and CA in Pinar Company but also in mentioning the strategic methods that can be implemented to achieve CA.

5.3 Study Limitation and Recommendation for Future Research

The present study was designed by adopting a quantitative were used i.e., the questionnaire was distributed to the employees in Pinar Company in Turkey; therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other companies in Turkey. Therefore, the study recommends further studies to investigate the relationship between SP and CA in other companies in Turkey to gain a deeper insight on the issue and also to generalize the findings.

The study further recommends further studies to investigate the views of employees by carrying out mixed method approach such as interviews and questionnaire to yield robust conclusions about the findings.

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