

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

THE EFFECT OF COMPETITIVE INTENSITY ON DETERMINING COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF A SELECTED SAMPLE OF REAL ESTATE PROJECTS IN IRAQ

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—Abstract—

This study examines the impact of competitive intensity on the formulation of competitive strategies within Iraq's real estate sector, based on an analytical investigation of selected real estate projects. It addresses the core issue of the extent to which market competition influences firms' strategic choices. A descriptive-analytical design was employed, with data gathered through a structured questionnaire developed around the study's two main variables: competitive intensity and competitive strategies. The instrument was administered to 360 employees across several real estate companies operating in selected Iraqi governorates. The collected data were analysed using SPSS and AMOS. The findings indicate a statistically significant positive effect of competitive intensity on shaping competitive strategies in real estate firms. Higher levels of competition encourage firms to adopt adaptive and forward-looking strategies that improve differentiation and support growth. Accordingly, the study recommends strengthening firms' capabilities in market and competitive analysis and implementing dynamic strategic approaches to enhance sustainability and responsiveness within Iraq's evolving real estate market.

Keywords: Competitive Intensity, Competitive Strategies, Iraqi Real Estate Sector

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INTRODUCTION

Competitive intensity is a critical determinant shaping organisational strategic decision-making. The real estate sector is particularly sensitive to such dynamics, especially in developing contexts such as Iraq, where firms operate under regulatory constraints, financing limitations, market volatility, and heightened rivalry between domestic and international investment projects. In this environment, real estate institutions are required not only to continuously monitor competitive pressures but also to design strategies aligned with the prevailing level of competition, whether through differentiation, cost leadership, or focus-based segmentation approaches.

Accordingly, this study investigates the effect of competitive intensity on the selection of competitive strategies adopted by real estate projects in Iraq, based on a field analysis of a selected sample of projects. It draws on Porter's Five Forces framework alongside general strategic management theories to interpret the observed relationships. The study examines how variations in competitive intensity influence the extent to which firms adopt flexible, differentiated, or alternative strategic orientations to sustain performance in a volatile environment. Its significance lies in addressing a gap in Iraqi management literature concerning competitive environment analysis within the real estate sector, while also offering practical guidance for decision-makers on responding to increasing competition through evidence-based strategic formulation.

FIRST AXIS: PREVIOUS STUDIES AND STUDY METHODOLOGY

This section provides an overview of relevant theoretical and empirical studies available to the researcher that are directly related to the study topic. These studies were utilised to construct the conceptual and methodological framework of the research design. The review follows principles of scholarly rigour, emphasising recent and contemporary sources, and is systematically organised according to language and year of publication.

First Requirement: Previous Studies

The study by [Aliasghar et al. \(2022\)](#) examined the role of knowledge derived from both domestic and international sources in enhancing process innovation, with a particular focus on the moderating influence of perceived competitive intensity among suppliers operating within and outside Iran. The research targeted 171 automotive component suppliers and employed a descriptive-analytical design. The findings indicated that foreign knowledge positively contributes to process innovation, with competitive intensity acting as a mediating mechanism that strengthens this relationship, thereby enabling firms to operate more effectively under conditions of severe economic sanctions.

The study by [Sulistyowati et al. \(2023\)](#) investigated the influence of competitive intensity, organisational laxity, entrepreneurial orientation, and knowledge management on organisational performance, with innovation serving as a mediating factor in culinary SMEs in Depok. A sample of 231 SMEs was selected using purposive sampling, and a descriptive-analytical approach was applied. The results demonstrated that higher competitive intensity positively stimulates innovation, as intensified market rivalry compels firms to develop innovative practices to strengthen competitive advantage and improve overall performance.

The study by [Jayampathi \(2024\)](#) explored the mediating role of competitive intensity in the relationship between knowledge management orientation and organisational performance. Based on data collected from 254 responses across listed companies in Sri Lanka, using a descriptive-analytical methodology, the findings revealed that knowledge management significantly enhances organisational performance, with competitive intensity acting as a partial mediator. The study emphasised that effective knowledge utilisation fosters continuous learning and innovation, enabling organisations to respond more effectively to market fluctuations and improve competitiveness. The study by [Abu Asida and Mohammed \(2024\)](#) examined the impact of competitive strategies on achieving sustainable performance in food manufacturing organisations in Saudi Arabia. The research focused on eleven listed organisations and concluded that the adoption of well-structured competitive strategies contributes significantly to organisational survival and long-term success. The findings further highlighted that contemporary organisational performance extends beyond profitability to include the attainment of sustainable performance outcomes.

The study by [Hussain and Saleh \(2024\)](#) analysed the relationship between hybrid competitive strategies and customer attraction in Iraqi private commercial banks. Using a purposive sample of 90 respondents, the study found that these banks predominantly adopt hybrid strategies combining differentiation and cost leadership, with a stronger emphasis on differentiation. This indicates a strategic orientation towards service innovation and diversification aimed at enhancing customer attraction within the banking sector. The study by [Mahmudovna \(2024\)](#) investigated competitive strategies and the role of innovation in their implementation to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Based on a sample of 300 managers and employees selected from relevant organisations and using a descriptive research design, the findings revealed that organisations integrating innovation into their competitive strategies demonstrate greater adaptability to environmental changes, improved market positioning, and enhanced sustainable growth. The study further recommends strengthening organisational innovation culture and supporting research and development activities to ensure more effective strategic implementation.

Analysis and Discussion of Previous Studies

This section discusses several key indicators and dimensions identified across the reviewed studies, as follows:

1. The sample sizes in previous studies varied considerably, spanning both service and industrial sectors, reflecting differences in research scope and context.
2. The majority of prior studies relied on questionnaires as the primary instrument for data collection.
3. A substantial proportion of earlier research adopted a descriptive analytical approach, with comparatively limited emphasis on in-depth analysis of cognitive measurement outcomes.
4. Although many studies examined competitive intensity and competitive strategies as separate constructs, integrated and coherent analysis of the relationship between these two variables remains relatively limited.
5. The reviewed literature suggests the applicability of the study variables within the context of Iraqi firms, particularly when supported by the implementation of sustainable competitive strategies.

Areas of Distinction for the Current Study

This study is distinguished from previous research reviewed in this section through several key aspects, as follows:

1. It clarifies the causal relationship between the two main variables, competitive intensity and competitive strategies, an area that remains insufficiently addressed in prior studies, particularly within the Iraqi context and the organisations under investigation, based on the researcher's knowledge.
2. The study applies contemporary strategic management concepts to the selected organisation, where the effective utilisation of competitive intensity and competitive strategies is expected to foster sustainable competitive advantage in a highly competitive market environment, while also supporting broader sustainable development objectives through the alignment of both variables.
3. It develops an integrated analytical framework that combines the two variables, thereby enhancing understanding of their interactive role in achieving sustainable competitive performance at the organisational level, a perspective not sufficiently explored in prior Iraqi studies.
4. The research further examines the challenges and opportunities associated with applying these concepts within the Iraqi business environment, thereby adding a contextual and locally grounded dimension to the existing theoretical discourse on competitive intensity and competitive strategies.

5. It provides practical, data-driven recommendations aimed at improving the competitive positioning of the organisation under study within the Iraqi market environment.
6. Finally, the study addresses a notable knowledge gap by offering findings that may serve as a foundation for future research in similar domains, particularly given the scarcity of Arab studies addressing competitive intensity, and the absence—according to the researcher’s knowledge—of studies explicitly integrating both variables at the global, Arab, and Iraqi levels.

The Second Requirement

Study Methodology: This requirement comprises the overall study framework, including the research problem, significance, objectives, hypotheses, and data collection procedures, as outlined below:

First: The Study Problem

Competitive intensity exerts a direct influence on the strategic orientation of real estate projects in Iraq, particularly under conditions of rapid economic and social transformation. Real estate firms encounter substantial difficulties in formulating effective strategies that enable differentiation and sustained competitiveness within an increasingly saturated market. The key challenges associated with competitive intensity include:

1. The large number of active real estate projects and firms in the market, coupled with the high similarity of services and offerings across these entities.
2. Strong demand for residential and commercial properties, alongside the impact of government policies and regulatory frameworks shaping the business environment.

In response to these conditions, Iraqi real estate companies have increasingly sought strategic solutions, with competitive strategies emerging as a central mechanism for addressing market pressures. These strategies generally include:

1. Adoption of cost-efficient construction methods or concentration on large-scale housing developments.
2. Exploitation of public–private partnership opportunities to reduce risk, or differentiation of projects in ways that limit imitation by competitors.

Accordingly, the research problem can be articulated through the following key questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of competitive intensity among Iraqi real estate companies, as perceived by the study sample?
2. To what extent do Iraqi real estate companies prioritise the identification and application of competitive strategies, as perceived by the study sample?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies within Iraqi real estate firms?
4. To what extent does competitive intensity influence the selection of competitive strategies in real estate companies?

Second: The Importance of the Study

This study holds considerable importance as it examines the relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies within the real estate sector. Its theoretical significance is reflected in the following aspects:

1. It contributes to the enrichment of theoretical knowledge by offering a conceptual framework that explains how competitive intensity shapes strategic decision-making, thereby supporting a deeper understanding of market dynamics in the real estate sector.
2. It extends existing literature by building on prior studies addressing competitive intensity and competitive strategies, offering additional analytical depth and contextual insight.
3. It provides real estate managers and decision-makers with empirically grounded insights into more effective responses to competitive intensity.
4. It assists real estate firms in formulating and developing innovative competitive strategies based on systematic assessment of market competition levels.
5. It offers recommendations for improving resource management and enhancing operational efficiency in alignment with competitive market requirements.
6. It contributes to strengthening the competitive positioning of Iraqi real estate firms by proposing strategies suited to both local and regional market challenges.

Third: Study Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect of competitive intensity on the determination of competitive strategies in Iraqi real estate projects. Based on this main objective, the following sub-objectives are derived:

1. To assess the level of awareness of competitive intensity among real estate companies in Iraq.
2. To analyse the competitive strategies adopted by real estate companies in Iraq.
3. To investigate the role of competitive intensity in shaping the adoption of competitive strategies in Iraqi real estate firms.
4. To identify the key challenges influencing the level of competitive intensity within Iraqi real estate companies.
5. To determine the major constraints affecting the selection of competitive strategies in Iraqi real estate projects.
6. To propose practical solutions to address issues related to competitive intensity and strategy formulation, based on both theoretical and field evidence, through the development of a model explaining the relationship between the two variables.

Fourth: Hypothetical Study Plan

The study adopts the hypothetical model illustrated in [Figure \(1\)](#), which explains the role of competitive intensity dimensions—entry of new competitors, bargaining power of suppliers, bargaining power of buyers, threat of substitute products, and rivalry among existing competitors—in influencing competitive strategies in their various forms, namely cost leadership, focus strategy, and differentiation strategy.

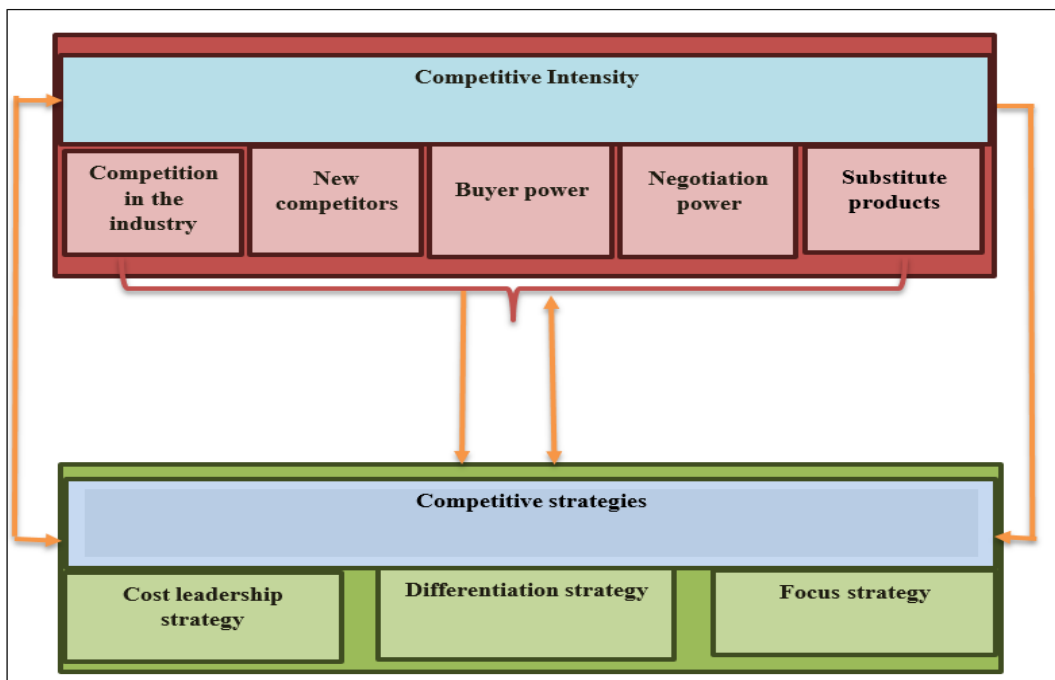


Figure 1: Study Hypothesis Diagram

Fifth: Study Hypotheses: Based on the figure, the study is based on two main hypotheses:

H1.1: *There is a statistically significant correlation between competitive intensity and competitive strategies.*

H1.2: *Competitive intensity significantly influences competitive strategies.*

Sixth: Study Population and Methodology

The study population comprises employees of Iraqi investment companies operating within the real estate sector across four governorates, namely Baghdad, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, and Nineveh. The total population consists of 360 employees, with the sample size determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical research design.

Seventh: Data and Information Collection Methods

To address the theoretical dimension of the study, the researcher relied on a range of Arabic and foreign sources relevant to the research topic, including books, academic journals, research articles, studies, theses, dissertations, and credible online resources. In addition, primary data were supported through personal interviews conducted with selected employees representing different specialisations and key positions within the studied real estate companies.

Eighth: Study Instrument

The study instrument was a structured questionnaire developed using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). It was constructed based on multiple validated sources and adapted as presented in [Table \(1\)](#). The questionnaire was organised into two main sections. The first section measured competitive intensity, comprising five dimensions: industry rivalry, entry of new competitors, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, and threat of substitute products. This section included a total of 25 items, with five items allocated to each dimension. The second section focused on the dependent variable, competitive strategies, and included 15 items distributed across three dimensions: cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy, and focus strategy, with five items assigned to each dimension, as detailed in [Table \(1\)](#).

Table 1: Questionnaire Components and Sources

No.	Study Variables	Number of Items	Source
First	Competitive Intensity		(O'Cass & Weerawardena, 2010; Safari et al., 2016; Segura Mojica, 2020; Shirkhodaie et al., 2021; Supriyanto et al., 2024)
1	Industry Competition	5	
2	Entry of New Competitors	5	
3	Bargaining Power Buyers	5	
4	Bargaining Power Suppliers	5	
5	Threat of Substitute Products	5	
Second	Competitive Strategies		(Al-Jubouri & Al-Obaidi, 2023) (Al-Omari, 2012) (Al-Kubaissi & Dawood, 2015)
1	Cost Leadership Strategy	5	
2	Differentiation Strategy	5	
3	Focus Strategy	5	

Ninth: Reliability Measurement

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, a widely used statistical technique for evaluating the internal consistency of questionnaire items. The analysis was applied to both study variables and their respective dimensions to determine the extent to which the instrument produces stable and consistent results over time. A Cronbach’s alpha value exceeding 0.60 is generally considered acceptable, indicating that the questionnaire is reliable and capable of producing consistent outcomes when administered to the same respondents at different points in time. As presented in Table (2), the reliability results for the study variables were as follows: competitive intensity recorded an alpha value of 0.87, while competitive strategies achieved 0.85, and the overall reliability coefficient was 0.86. All values exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.60, confirming a high level of internal consistency and strong reliability of the measurement instrument across the studied dimensions.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the Study Variables and their Dimensions

No.	Study Variables	Alpha Coefficient	Overall Alpha for Each Variable	Total Alpha
First	Competitive Intensity		0.87	0.86
1	Industry Competition	0.85		
2	Entry of New Competitors	0.88		
3	Bargaining Power of Buyers	0.79		
4	Bargaining Power of Suppliers	0.86		
5	Threat of Substitute Products	0.89		
Second	Competitive Strategies		0.85	
1	Cost Leadership Strategy	0.85		
2	Differentiation Strategy	0.81		
3	Focus Strategy	0.89		

Study Boundaries

The spatial boundaries of the study are confined to investment companies operating within the real estate sector across four Iraqi governorates, namely Baghdad, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, and Diyala. The temporal scope of the study extends from 1/10/2024 to 25/5/2025, covering the period from the formulation of the research topic to the completion and reporting of its findings. The cognitive (conceptual) boundaries are limited to the two main study variables, namely competitive intensity and competitive strategies.

SECOND AXIS: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

First Requirement: Competitive Intensity

This includes the following:

First: The Concept of Competitive Intensity

[Shirkhodaie et al. \(2021\)](#) define competitive intensity as an organisation's capability and willingness to modify its marketing mix decisions in order to achieve a competitive advantage within highly contested markets. [Andersén \(2022\)](#) describes it as the degree of influence exerted by the competitive environment on organisations, which intensifies pressure to enhance performance, foster innovation, and formulate adaptive competitive strategies in response to changing conditions. It is also understood as the set of incentives that direct managerial attention and resources towards practices that improve organisational performance.

[Olabode et al. \(2022\)](#) conceptualise it as a market condition characterised by a high level of rivalry, where such an environment encourages organisations to innovate and develop capabilities to sustain existing advantages or create new ones. Similarly, [Perez-Uribe et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasise that it reflects the pressures faced by organisations operating in saturated markets, where firms must continuously adapt to competitors' actions in order to secure market share and achieve growth. [Crick et al. \(2024\)](#) further define competitive intensity as strong market rivalry that shapes the relationship between competitive strategies and organisational performance, particularly in volatile environments marked by rapidly changing customer preferences, thereby necessitating improvements in product quality and differentiation. In addition, [Mahdi et al. \(2024\)](#) view it as the degree of competitive pressure within the business environment that influences strategic decision-making and organisational performance, especially under unstable conditions.

Drawing on these perspectives, competitive intensity can be defined from the researchers' viewpoint as the extent of rivalry among organisations operating within the same sector or industry, which exerts direct pressure on marketing strategies, pricing structures, and innovation processes. Accordingly, organisations are required to continuously adapt to market dynamics and develop innovative solutions to maintain and strengthen their competitive position.

Second: Objectives of Competitive Intensity

Competitive intensity achieves several objectives for business organizations, the most important of which are ([Andersén, 2022](#)):

1. **Increased Efficiency of All Activities:** Competitive pressure will drive all organizational functions to improve their operational, marketing, and financial performance to achieve competitive advantage.
2. **Improved Organizational Performance:** The organization's management must direct all its operational efforts toward achieving better results under competitive pressure.
3. **Adaptation to Crises:** Intense competition pushes organizations to adopt flexible processes to confront unexpected challenges.
4. **Enhanced Environmental Innovation:** Environmentally friendly practices are a crucial factor when competitive intensity is high, as implementing these practices requires employing green and sustainable innovation technologies to deliver green products.

Third: Dimensions of Competitive Intensity

The success of an organization in the competitive field is based on adopting one of the five competitive forces proposed by Porter in 1980, which are as follows:

1. **Industry Competition:** This refers to rivalry among organizations producing similar products, representing the arena in which firms undertake actions to strengthen their competitive position and prevent competitors from gaining advantage. In this context, organizations establish barriers or protective mechanisms through competitive strategies or focus on delivering superior customer value. This rivalry also extends to the competition for highly skilled and experienced human resources, as talent is often a key determinant of future competitive success ([Oduor et al., 2017](#)).

2. **Threat of New Entrants:** Entry into an industry is typically pursued by organizations seeking to capture market share and increase profitability. However, new entrants face structural barriers established by incumbent firms, which implement defensive strategies to limit or restrict access to the market. Established firms often reinforce these barriers to preserve their competitive advantage and market position (Cao et al., 2018).
3. **Bargaining Power of Suppliers:** Suppliers hold significant influence when they are able to increase input prices or reduce quality, particularly in situations where inputs are essential and switching costs are high. Under such conditions, suppliers can directly affect industry profitability. Consequently, organisations must maintain strong and balanced relationships with key suppliers to safeguard their competitive position (Nie et al., 2019).
4. **Bargaining Power of Buyers:** Buyers, including end consumers, exert pressure on firms by demanding lower prices, higher quality, and improved services, while also leveraging competition among firms within the same industry. This bargaining power can significantly influence pricing structures and profitability levels across the sector (Cao et al., 2018).
5. **Threat of Substitute Products:** Organisations within any industry compete not only with direct rivals but also with producers of substitute goods. The availability of substitutes places a ceiling on prices and limits potential profitability by constraining the ability of firms to charge higher prices. As a result, the presence of attractive substitute products reduces overall industry returns and intensifies competitive pressure (Alkhafaji, 2011; Sulistyowati et al., 2023).

Section Two: Competitive Strategies

First: The Concept of Competitive Strategies: According to Shihab et al. (2023, 267), competitive strategies refer to an organisation's capacity to address long-term developments rather than routine operational activities, with emphasis on innovation, new product development, emerging production technologies, and future market opportunities. Abu Asida & Fallaq (2024, 14) describe them as a strategic organisational approach aimed at achieving market success through targeted actions that satisfy customers, incorporating both offensive and defensive measures to counter competitors' positioning strategies. Escudero-Gómez (2024) conceptualises them as essential mechanisms for avoiding organisational decline and sustaining market presence through operational excellence, product innovation, and strengthened customer relationships.

Mahmudovna (2024) defines them as competitive market scenarios in which firms compete over limited resources by manipulating marketing mix elements—price, product, promotion, and place—thereby expanding consumer choice and improving product quality. Similarly, Heriqbaldi et al. (2025) emphasise that competitive strategies enable firms to respond effectively to market dynamics, achieve organisational goals, and enhance performance outcomes and sustainable growth.

Second: Objectives of Competitive Strategies: Competitive strategies support business organisations in achieving several key objectives, the most important of which are (Zairbani & Jaya Prakash, 2025):

1. **Strategies:** Organisations may adopt cost leadership or differentiation approaches to build competitive advantage, which has a direct impact on organisational performance.
2. **Strategic Growth:** Emphasis on strategic growth is essential, as it significantly influences competitive positioning and overall performance outcomes.
3. **Bargaining Power:** Recognising the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers is crucial for developing strategies capable of withstanding market pressures.
4. **Market Entry Barriers:** Firms must account for threats posed by new entrants and substitute products when designing competitive strategies.

Third: Dimensions of Competitive Strategies: These include the following:

1. **Cost Leadership Strategy:** This strategy involves a set of integrated actions aimed at producing or delivering goods at the lowest possible cost relative to competitors, while maintaining acceptable quality standards from the customer's perspective (Bhat et al., 2024). Jerab and Mabrouk (2023) note that a low-cost position enables an organisation to set prices below competitors while maintaining comparable quality and achieving sustainable profit margins. It also provides protection against strong buyers and powerful suppliers, as customers are unlikely to find lower-priced alternatives, thereby limiting their bargaining power.

2. **Differentiation Strategy:** Differentiation has become increasingly important due to the growing diversity in customer preferences, which cannot be satisfied through standardised offerings (Gorondutse & Abdullah, 2017). This strategy enables firms to meet unique customer needs by offering distinctive products or services, allowing them to charge premium prices. The ability to sell above production cost, due to perceived uniqueness, strengthens competitive positioning and enhances performance (Islami et al., 2020).

3. Focus Strategy: This strategy involves targeting a specific customer segment or geographic market. Within this narrow scope, firms may pursue either cost leadership or differentiation (Kyengo et al., 2016). The core logic lies in concentrating resources on a defined segment where the organisation can outperform competitors through specialised capabilities. This is particularly effective when serving customers with specific needs or limited purchasing power, enabling firms to achieve a strong niche advantage (Al-Rubaiyaw & Al-Alaq, 2016, 33).

Third Requirement: The Intellectual Relationship Between Competitive Intensity and Competitive Strategies

The relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies is a core dimension in understanding market dynamics and organisational performance. Heightened competition across industries creates significant challenges for firms; however, it also generates opportunities for strategic enhancement and continuous improvement. In response, organisations adopt effective competitive strategies—such as cost leadership, differentiation, and innovation—to strengthen their market position and achieve sustainable performance outcomes. From this standpoint, firms seek to implement strategies that reinforce their competitive capabilities. The key aspects of this relationship can be summarised as follows:

1. Competitive Intensity Drives Innovation and Improvement: Strong competitive pressure compels organisations to innovate and upgrade their offerings, as observed in sectors characterised by price competition, frequent product launches, and intensive marketing activities (Jayampathi, 2024).

2. Strategic Adoption to Gain Market Share: Firms can mitigate market loss and enhance their market share by implementing competitive strategies such as differentiation, cost efficiency, and focus-based approaches (Obeidat & Al-Amin, 2014).

3. Supplier Bargaining Power and Market Impact: Suppliers with strong bargaining power can influence pricing structures and market conditions by increasing input costs, thereby affecting overall industry competitiveness (Sorrentino et al., 2018).

4. Negotiation Dynamics: Pricing behaviour is shaped by buyer power, where sellers adjust prices according to buyers' reservation levels and bargaining positions, often resulting in more aggressive pricing strategies when buyer power is high (Feng et al., 2020).

5. Pricing Strategies and Supply Chain Dynamics: In situations of supply chain disruption, effective pricing strategies become critical. The timing and nature of disruptions significantly influence pricing decisions for substitute goods, underscoring the importance of strategic pricing and demand timing in managing risk associated with substitutes (Gupta et al., 2021).

6. Innovation as a Core Element of Competitive Strategies: Innovation plays a central role in competitive strategies, enabling organisations to enhance processes, introduce new products, and improve service quality, thereby increasing efficiency and overall performance (Tuna & Yıldız, 2022).

AXIS THREE: THE FIELD FRAMEWORK

This axis includes the measurement and analysis of the overall index of the dimensions of competitive intensity, as well as the examination of the overall index of competitive strategy dimensions, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and test the study hypotheses for acceptance or rejection, as shown below:

The Overall Index of the Results of Competitive Intensity Dimensions

The results presented in Table (3) reflect the responses of the study sample regarding the five dimensions of competitive intensity (industry competition, threat of new entrants, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, and threat of substitute products). The overall level of agreement reached 71.7%, indicating a clear awareness among respondents of the presence of multifaceted competitive intensity within the work environment and its influence on the operations of real estate companies. The overall mean score was 3.685, with a standard deviation of 1.012. Neutral responses constituted 8.4%, while negative responses accounted for 19.7%. The total response index reached 73.6%, reflecting a relatively stable perception of the importance of these dimensions in shaping competitive capability. The calculated gap of 26.24% indicates variation in awareness and experience levels among respondents.

The “Threat of New Entrants” dimension ranked first in terms of relative importance, recording the highest agreement level at 77.4%, the highest mean score of 4.009, and a response rate of 80.1%, alongside a relatively low gap of 19.8%. This suggests a strong organisational awareness of the risks posed by new market entrants and their potential impact on market share. In contrast, the “Bargaining Power of Buyers” dimension was rated as the least influential from the respondents’ perspective, with the lowest agreement level of 60.5%, a mean score of 3.137, and the highest gap of 37.2%. This may be attributed to variations in customer profiles or differing levels of dependence on specific buyer segments among the companies studied.

Table 3: The Overall Index of the Total Results of Competitive Intensity Dimensions

Dimensions	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Response Rate	Gap Percentage
Industry Competition	0.772	0.062	0.165	3.967	0.977	0.793	0.206
New Competitors	0.774	0.075	0.149	4.009	1.008	0.801	0.198
Power Buyers	0.605	0.106	0.287	3.137	1.043	0.627	0.372
Power Suppliers	0.675	0.104	0.220	3.474	1.029	0.694	0.305
Substitute Products	0.759	0.073	0.167	3.842	1.003	0.768	0.231
Average	0.717	0.084	0.198	3.685	1.012	0.737	0.262

Second: The Overall Indicator of Competitive Strategies Results

Table (4) presents the aggregated responses of the study sample regarding the main competitive strategies (cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy, and focus strategy). The overall agreement level reached 78.1%, with a mean score of 4.044 and a standard deviation of 1.005, indicating a high level of respondent awareness regarding the importance of adopting these strategies to achieve competitive advantage within the market environment. Neutral responses accounted for 7.8%, while negative responses represented 13.8%. The overall response index was 80.8%, reflecting a generally coherent understanding of the role of these strategies in enhancing competitiveness. The overall gap value of 19% indicates relatively low variability in strategy implementation across the surveyed companies.

The cost leadership strategy ranked first in terms of relative importance, achieving an agreement rate of 86%, the highest mean score of 4.356, and the highest response index of 87.1%, with the lowest gap of 12.8%. This suggests that companies primarily rely on cost reduction and operational efficiency as key mechanisms for strengthening their competitive position.

In contrast, the differentiation strategy was identified as the least adopted and least influential strategy from the perspective of respondents. It recorded the lowest agreement rate of 72.7%, a mean score of 3.859, and the highest gap of 22.8%. This may be attributed to the difficulty of delivering unique products or services, as well as differences in the level of innovation infrastructure across companies. Meanwhile, the focus strategy occupied an intermediate position, with an agreement rate of 75.8%, a mean score of 3.919, and a response rate of 78.3%. This reflects a moderate tendency among companies to adopt niche-based approaches by targeting specific market segments or specialised sectors.

Table 4: Overall Index of Results for Competitive Strategies Dimensions

Competitive Strategies	Agreement	Neutral	Disagreement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Response Rate	Gap Percentage
Cost Leadership Strategy	0.860	0.060	0.077	4.356	1.008	0.871	0.128
Differentiation Strategy	0.727	0.098	0.173	3.859	1.003	0.771	0.228
Focus Strategy	0.758	0.076	0.165	3.919	1.006	0.783	0.216
Average	0.781	0.078	0.138	4.044	1.005	0.808	0.190

Third: Testing the Study Hypotheses: This section presents the results of testing the study hypotheses, which examine the relationship between competitive intensity as the independent variable and competitive strategies as the dependent variable, based on data collected from the study sample. The data were analysed using SPSS and AMOS due to their strong capability in structural equation modelling (SEM). Accordingly, this section is organised into two parts:

First: Testing the Main Hypothesis 1: The results presented in [Table \(5\)](#) indicate a statistically significant relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies, with a correlation coefficient of 78.1% at a significance level of 0.05. This finding suggests that higher levels of competitive intensity within the real estate business environment are associated with a greater adoption of competitive strategies by organisations. Accordingly, the first main hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5: Correlation Between Competitive Intensity and Competitive Strategies (Overall)

Variables	Dependent Variable: Competitive Strategies		
	R	Significance Level	Sample Size
Independent Variable: Competitive Intensity	0.781	0.05	360

Second: Testing the Main Hypothesis 2: The results of [Figure 2](#) indicate the presence of a significant overall effect of competitive intensity on competitive strategies, thereby providing the basis for testing the second main hypothesis considering the reported findings. The results of [Figure 2](#) are summarised in [Table \(6\)](#), which confirm a statistically significant effect of competitive intensity on competitive strategies. The regression estimate (Estimate) is 0.61, and the relationship is statistically significant, as indicated by the Critical Ratio (CR = 11.233), which exceeds the threshold value of 1.96 at a 0.05 significance level.

This suggests that an increase of one unit in competitive intensity leads to an increase of 0.61 units in competitive strategies. The standard error (SE = 0.0543) is relatively low, indicating a high level of data consistency. The P-value is also significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming the robustness of the relationship. In addition, the standardised regression weight (SRW = 0.37) indicates that competitive intensity has a direct effect of 37% on competitive strategies. Accordingly, the second main hypothesis is accepted.

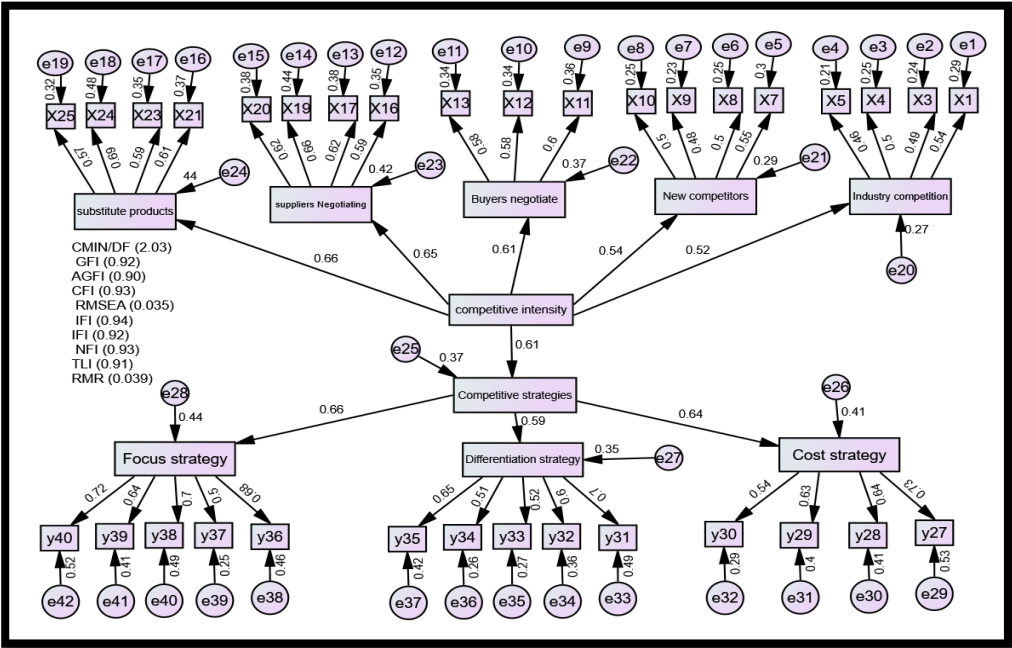


Figure 2: Structural Equation Model of the Effect of Competitive Intensity on Competitive Strategies

Table 6: Results of the Effect of Competitive Intensity on Competitive Strategies

Hypothesis	Relationship			Estimate	Standard Error	(CR)	P	(SRW)
H2	Competitive Intensity	→	Competitive Strategies	0.61	0.0543	11.233	***	0.37

FOURTH AXIS: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the main conclusions derived from data analysis and hypothesis testing regarding the relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies in the real estate sector. It also provides a set of recommendations based on these findings.

First: Conclusions: The study reached several key conclusions, the most important of which are:

1. The overall results of the competitive intensity dimensions indicate a high level of awareness of their impact on real estate companies. The threat of new entrants was the most strongly perceived dimension, while the bargaining power of buyers showed a weaker influence, which may be attributed to variations in client profiles and dependency levels.
2. The overall index of competitive strategies reflects a high level of awareness regarding the importance of adopting cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies to achieve competitive advantage. Cost leadership emerged as the most dominant and widely applied strategy, whereas differentiation was the least implemented due to its associated operational and innovation-related challenges.
3. The correlation analysis confirmed a statistically significant relationship between competitive intensity and competitive strategies in the real estate sector. Accordingly, the first main hypothesis was accepted.
4. The regression analysis further confirmed a statistically significant effect of competitive intensity on competitive strategies, indicating that competitive intensity directly influences strategic choices in the real estate sector. Consequently, the second main hypothesis was also accepted.

Second: Recommendations: Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Real estate companies should enhance training and awareness programmes for employees and clients to improve understanding of competitive pressures in the sector and their impact on strategic decisions.
2. Firms should develop flexible and adaptive strategies to address the entry of new competitors, with greater emphasis on differentiation and innovation to strengthen market position.
3. Companies should improve bargaining relationships with both buyers and suppliers by offering appropriate housing solutions and increasing pricing flexibility to enhance negotiating capacity.
4. Organisations are advised to identify potential operational threats and develop innovative products to improve competitiveness against substitute offerings.

5. A combination of competitive strategies—cost leadership, differentiation, and focus—should be adopted to meet market demands, with particular emphasis on cost leadership as a core strategic approach.
6. Real estate firms should strengthen the integration between competitive intensity analysis and strategic formulation through periodic studies that identify the most influential dimensions of competition.
7. Firms should explicitly account for the direct impact of competitive intensity on strategic decisions, ensuring the development of effective strategies that respond to environmental changes and maintain balance across competitive dimensions.

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