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The Role of Strategic Marketing in Retaining Customers to Achieve Competitive Advantage for Telecom Egypt

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the various relationships between strategic marketing, customer retention, and achieving competitive advantage, applied to Telecom Egypt. The descriptive analytical approach was used, addressing the different dimensions of strategic marketing and competitive advantage, with a focus on the importance of pricing strategy, distribution strategy, product strategy, and promotion strategy. The results reveal the critical importance of strategic marketing in retaining customers and enhancing competitive advantage. The study also confirms the significant positive impact of achieving competitive advantage on customer retention, and it highlights that customer retention acts as a mediator in the relationship between strategic marketing and achieving competitive advantage.

Keywords: strategic marketing, customer retention, competitive advantage, Telecom Egypt, pricing strategy, distribution strategy, product strategy, promotion strategy.

مستخلص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى استكشاف العلاقات المختلفة بين التسويق الاستراتيجي والاحتفاظ بالعملاء وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية، بالتطبيق على الشركة المصرية للاتصالات، من خلال فحص العلاقة بين التسويق الاستراتيجي وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية، والعلاقة بين الاحتفاظ بالعملاء وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية، وتم استخدام المنهج التحليلي الوصفي، حيث تناولت الدراسة أبعاد التسويق الاستراتيجي (استراتيجية التسعير واستراتيجية التوزيع واستراتيجية المنتج واستراتيجية الترويج). وكشفت النتائج عن أن هناك دور هام للتسويق الاستراتيجي في الاحتفاظ بالعملاء وتعزيز الميزة التنافسية، كما أكدت الدراسة على الأثر الإيجابي الكبير لتحقيق الميزة التنافسية على الاحتفاظ بالعملاء، كما كشفت الدراسة أن الاحتفاظ بالعملاء يعتبر وسيطاً في العلاقة بين التسويق الاستراتيجي وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق الاستراتيجي، الاحتفاظ بالعملاء، الميزة التنافسية، المصرية للاتصالات، استراتيجية التسعير، استراتيجية التوزيع، استراتيجية المنتج، استراتيجية الترويج.

1- Introduction:

In light of the economic and technological advancements in the modern world, fierce competition among companies has become an undeniable reality. Companies strive diligently to achieve competitive superiority, ensuring their strong presence in the business market. Strategic marketing is considered one of the most important tools that companies can leverage to attain this competitive edge.

Strategic marketing is pivotal for companies in achieving competitive superiority, encompassing a set of decisions and actions taken by marketing executives to accomplish the company's marketing and sales objectives. Effective strategic marketing is fundamental to the success of companies and their ability to thrive in the business market (Schiavone & Simoni, 2022).

Strategic marketing encompasses several important aspects, such as identifying the target market, analyzing customer needs and preferences, developing marketing plans, setting objectives, and determining appropriate channels to reach target customers. Additionally, strategic marketing includes setting suitable prices, devising promotion and advertising strategies to attract customers, and increasing awareness of the products or services offered (Sukardi, et al, 2023).

Customer retention is a fundamental element in the marketing strategy of any organization striving for success and growth in today's ever-changing business environment. Loyal customers are a cornerstone in building brand equity and achieving sustainable long-term success for the company. Customer retention entails the ability to retain existing customers and enhance the relationship with them by providing excellent services and positive experiences (Bani Issa, & Qutaishar, 2020).

Few organizations didn't know about Customer Experience, a lot of have been attempting to metric customer satisfaction and have lots of data as a finding (Gao, et al, 2021). The trouble is that assessing customer satisfaction does not broadcast anybody how to accomplish it. Customer satisfaction is basically the peak of a chain of Customer Experiences so, the net outcome of the better ones minus the bad ones. It happens when the chasm between customers' perspective and their consequential experiences has been completed. To know how achieve satisfaction, an organization have to analyze it into its experience's element. considering a vastly abundant Customer Experiences aren't the lead result of the brand's notes or the organization's active offerings, a company's retest of its capabilities and options will not satisfy.

Achieving competitive advantage is one of the primary objectives that companies across various sectors aim to accomplish in today's competitive business environment. Achieving competitive advantage means the company's ability to provide unique value to customers and outperform its competitors in the market. Smart organizations are those that can leverage their human, material, and knowledge resources by using their intelligence to exploit those resources and support their competitive advantage.

Achieving competitive excellence also requires effective marketing strategies to enhance products or services and highlight competitive factors. This is done by identifying and directing the added value that the product or service can provide to customers and promoting it effectively. The company must have the ability to adapt and innovate to meet customer expectations and keep pace with market and technological developments. Achieving competitive excellence strategies requires a strong strategic vision and effective strategic planning. The company must identify areas of

excellence and develop strategies to achieve them. These strategies may include developing new and innovative products or services, improving quality and performance, developing strong customer relationships and building loyalty, or improving internal processes and increasing efficiency and reducing costs (Eid & Wesn, 2022).

Effective strategic marketing can have a significant impact on the success of companies and their ability to achieve competitive excellence in the business market. It includes a range of decisions and actions taken by marketing executives to achieve the company's goals regarding marketing and selling products or services (Nahar et al., 2021).

Building on the aforementioned, the researcher found a new and extensive area for research and interest, which is studying the role of strategic marketing in customer retention to achieve competitive advantage in companies in general, and in the Telecom Egypt Company in particular.

2- Literature Review

The study by [\(Norhaalisah & Ikka.,2024\)](#) aimed to identify factors in marketing strategies that could increase sales volume for large, medium, small, micro, and enterprises. The study sought to provide insights and recommendations for managing effective marketing strategies, which could positively impact craftsmanship, regional development, and the community in Panjandrum. The findings appear that entrepreneurial marketing positively affects marketing performance and competitive advantage, but competitive advantage does not affect marketing performance nor mediate the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on marketing performance. Additionally, market disruption positively moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and marketing performance. **The study suggests that** micro, small, and medium-sized craft businesses should focus on product innovation, creative marketing campaigns, and enhanced customer interaction through market research to better understand consumer needs and preferences.

The study by [Al Karim et al. \(2024\)](#) aimed to examine the impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) components and customer retention on competitive advantage through customer loyalty in the banking sector of Bangladesh. The research used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 326 respondents who were conveniently selected from commercial banks in Bangladesh, and the data were analyzed using Smart-PLS software.

The results showed that customer orientation and technology capability have a positive impact on competitive advantage, while customer knowledge did not have a significant effect. Furthermore, customer loyalty plays a significant mediating role between customer orientation and technology capability with competitive advantage, whereas the mediating effect between customer knowledge and competitive advantage was not significant. The findings of the study can help bank managers in Bangladesh improve their marketing strategies by focusing on enhancing communication with new customers about promotional activities and keeping existing customers informed about new CRM initiatives. The study contributes to expanding the knowledge base in the areas of CRM, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage, highlighting the important mediating role of customer loyalty between CRM components and competitive advantage.

The study by [Hussain et al. \(2024\)](#) aimed to explore the impact of strategic marketing on customer retention, focusing on the mediating role of customer satisfaction and the

moderating role of customer loyalty through the framework of relationship marketing theory. In this context, the research employed a methodology that involved collecting data from a large population of 5,276 employees working in courier service offices across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A sample size of 385 individuals was determined using the Krejci and Morgan sampling formula, and data were collected through self-administered questionnaires adapted from previous relevant studies.

The results derived from the data analysis indicate a strong positive relationship between strategic marketing, customer satisfaction, and customer retention in the service sector in Pakistan. The findings also showed that customer satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between strategic marketing and customer retention, meaning that improving marketing strategies can enhance customer satisfaction, which in turn contributes to increased customer retention. Additionally, customer loyalty plays a role in moderating this relationship, suggesting that customer loyalty can amplify the effect of strategic marketing on customer retention.

The study by West et al. (2023) aimed to analyze how strategic marketing can be used as a key tool to create a competitive advantage for companies in the face of contemporary challenges. The study focused on presenting effective strategies that enable marketers to gain a deeper understanding of the market and identify opportunities that would enhance the positioning of companies in a competitive environment. It included recent examples such as the rise of Disney+, the use of artificial intelligence in marketing, and the impact of social issues like the Black Lives Matter movement and the COVID-19 pandemic on marketing strategies.

The study concluded that strategic marketing is key to achieving a sustainable competitive advantage through an integrated approach that involves understanding the current market, setting clear future objectives, and utilizing innovative strategies such as product innovation, smart pricing, and effective distribution strategies. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of continuous measurement of results to ensure the achievement of strategic goals and the enhancement of the competitive advantage of companies.

The study revealed that marketing capability significantly impacts marketing innovation, with SMEs having adequate personnel and technology to implement innovative activities. Marketing innovation was found to be a strong predictor of sustainable competitive advantage, as SMEs showed innovation across product, price, place, and promotion. The research also tested and largely supported the mediating role of marketing innovation in the relationship between marketing capability and competitive advantage. Qualitative data indicated that SMEs are open to innovations and actively build networks with customers and other business leaders to enhance their operations. The food industry in Pampanga was identified as highly competitive, emphasizing the need for continuous improvement and innovation for SMEs to thrive in this saturated market.

The study by (Ricardian to et al. ,2023) aim to understand and analyze how corporate risk management and business strategies impact the competitive advantage and performance of shipping companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange. The study showed the performance volatility and competitive advantage of these companies on the stock exchange, noting that inadequate risk management could lead to a decline in performance and competitive advantage. The study confirms that companies lacking a competitive advantage

may exhibit weak performance and may lose in competition. The study sample consisted of 65 observations from 13 companies monitored over five years.

The study indicated that shipping companies in Indonesia can improve their performance through risk management, emphasizing the necessity of addition risk management into the company's strategy. It suggests the potential to enhance company performance through competitive advantage and the importance of implementing business strategies.

study the study by (Silas Guntur et al.,2022) investigated how entrepreneurial marketing strategies—specifically change leadership, self-financing, and calculated risks—affect the competitive advantage of SMEs in Plateau State, North Central Nigeria. Addressing challenges like high failure rates and competition with larger firms, the study aimed to explore the benefits of these strategies. Using a Quantitative approach with questionnaires distributed to 286 SME owners and managers. The results revealed that change leadership and self-financing were strongly linked to competitive advantage, risks had a weaker association. The findings suggest that adopting strategies like change leadership and self-financing can significantly improve the competitive position of SMEs in the region.

The study by Mani and Mishra (2022) aimed to explore how major companies like Intel, Marriott International, and Disney use marketing strategies to maintain a competitive advantage over decades, and to provide insights on how marketing can be leveraged as a tool for building sustainable competitive advantage.

The study concluded that companies relying on effective marketing strategies can sustain a long-term competitive advantage despite global challenges and intense competition. It also emphasized that the successful marketing strategies adopted by Intel, Marriott, and Disney can inspire companies across various sectors to use marketing as a means to achieve sustainability in competition.

The study by Sitinjak et al. (2022) aimed to analyze the impact of competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and brand equity on the retention of high-value funds from corporate customers at Bank Mandiri Region I Medan. The primary goal was to understand how these factors collectively affect the bank's ability to retain institutional clients, who represent a significant portion of the bank's income. Through this analysis, the study sought to provide insights into how to improve customer retention strategies and increase their loyalty to the bank.

The results of the study indicated that competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and brand equity have a positive and significant effect on the retention of high-value funds at Bank Mandiri Region I. The multiple regression analysis revealed that all these factors have a statistically significant and positive impact on the bank's ability to retain customers. Specifically, the study found that competitive advantage enhances the bank's ability to retain clients, while customer satisfaction and brand equity play a crucial role in improving retention levels. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the bank focuses on strengthening these factors as key strategies to achieve customer retention goals and increase loyalty.

The study by Kanagal (2020) aimed to analyze the vital role of strategic marketing within competitive marketing strategy and its impact on enhancing business performance and increasing competitive advantage. The focus of the study was to understand how strategic marketing improves the effectiveness of marketing strategies by identifying the market,

setting its objectives, and developing appropriate strategies to create value for customers and increase organizational profit. The study also sought to explore how strategic activities can influence achieving competitive advantage through both current and future market contexts and how strategic marketing can help in achieving business objectives in various scenarios.

The results of the study revealed that strategic marketing plays a fundamental role in enhancing business performance and achieving competitive advantage by improving profitability and building strong customer partnerships. It was found that strategic marketing contributes to guiding moments of truth, attracting customer attention, and protecting emotional well-being, in addition to understanding consumer psychology and building trust with customers. Specifically in the hotel industry, it was observed that hotels focusing on their exceptional strategies and services are able to interact more effectively with customers, leading to improved service levels and increased customer satisfaction.

The study by Alao et al. (2020) aimed to investigate the effect of strategic marketing on competitive advantage and how resource capabilities moderate this effect. A cross-sectional survey research design was employed with a sample of managerial staff from petroleum products marketing companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The study found that strategic marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on competitive advantage ($R = 0.594$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.627$, $F(4, 491) = 208.685$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Additionally, resource capability did not significantly moderate the effect of strategic marketing on competitive advantage ($\Delta R^2 = 0.000$, $\Delta F(1, 493) = 0.0305$, $p > 0.05$) in the selected petroleum marketing companies in Lagos State. The study recommended that the management of petroleum products marketing companies should commit to adopting strategic marketing to enhance competitive advantage.

The study by Bii & Wanyoike (2019) aimed to explore the impact of a customer-centric strategic approach on achieving competitive advantage and customer satisfaction at CFC Stanbic Bank in Kenya. The primary objective was to understand how customer-focused strategies can enhance the bank's competitive edge by improving customer satisfaction. The study employed a descriptive design and focused on a sample of 100 employees from the bank's branches in Nairobi.

The results showed that enterprise technology plays a crucial role in enhancing customer satisfaction. Effective use of technology was found to improve the bank's ability to track product and service performance and facilitate the flow of knowledge within the organization. However, the study identified a gap between technological advancements and employees' ability to effectively handle them, which could lead to system delays and customer inconvenience. Based on these findings, the study recommended regular employee training on technology use to ensure improved customer experience and maintain the bank's competitive advantage.

Despite the availability of numerous studies on strategic marketing, customer retention, and competitive advantage, there are clear gaps in the current research that require special attention:

- ✓ **Scarcity of studies on strategic marketing in the telecommunications sector in Egypt:** There is a lack of specific studies addressing the role of strategic marketing within the telecommunications sector in Egypt. Most existing research focuses on other sectors or provides general analysis without delving into the telecommunications industry. Therefore, there is an urgent need for in-depth research

exploring how strategic marketing applications can enhance the performance of telecommunications companies in the Egyptian market.

- ✓ **Impact of strategic marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty:** Current studies have not sufficiently addressed how strategic marketing influences customer satisfaction and increases brand loyalty. Understanding this relationship is crucial for improving marketing strategies and enhancing customer experience, which requires more comprehensive and analytical research.
- ✓ **Strategic marketing applications in addressing competitive challenges:** There is a gap in understanding how Telecom Egypt utilizes strategic marketing to tackle competitive challenges. The interaction between marketing strategies and the competitive environment has not been explored adequately, highlighting the need for further studies to clarify how competitive advantage can be achieved.
- ✓ **Factors influencing the success of strategic marketing:** Future research needs to focus on analyzing the factors that affect the success of strategic marketing, including both internal and external factors that may impact the effective implementation of strategies at Telecom Egypt. This area requires deeper exploration to understand how these factors influence the overall success of marketing strategies.

2.1- Strategic Marketing:

2.1.1- Concept of Strategic Marketing

The study by (Wang et al., 2022) aimed to Focused on the relationship between green intellectual capital, green entrepreneurship orientation, green marketing, green organizational culture, also competitive advantage strategies to achieve success in sustainable manufacturing businesses. Employees of large manufacturing companies in China were the study population.

Strategic marketing involves identifying a competitive advantage for the company and developing effective marketing strategies to enhance this advantage and attract more customers. These marketing strategies include determining the appropriate pricing for products and services, developing effective advertising campaigns, and providing a unique customer experience.

It is evident that strategic marketing represents a comprehensive vision for the organization's future, where marketing management studies the market, customers, competition, and surrounding environment comprehensively and deeply. Based on this study, it defines and develops marketing strategies and plans aimed at achieving this comprehensive vision of the organization in the long term. Therefore, marketing strategies can be considered as a practical and operational translation of the concept of strategic marketing, seeking to achieve strategic objectives and improve the organization's position in the market and increase its competitiveness.

2.1.2- Importance of Strategic Marketing

The importance of strategic marketing can be outlined in several paragraphs:

- Strategic marketing plays Important in guiding the long-term direction of an organization by aligning its objectives with market demands and competitive dynamics. via conducting in-depth market analysis, strategic marketing enables organizations to identify opportunities, anticipate challenges, and develop proactive strategies to achieve sustainable growth.

- From of the key aspects of strategic marketing its emphasis on customer orientation. that understanding the needs, preferences, and behavior of customers, organizations can tailor their products, services, and marketing initiatives to effectively meet customer expectations and build long-lasting relationships.
- Strategic marketing facilitates differentiation and positioning in the marketplace. By identifying unique selling propositions and the crafting compelling value propositions, organizations can carve out a distinct identity and competitive advantage amidst a crowded market landscape. This differentiation not only enhances brand perception but market share and customer loyalty.
- Strategic marketing serves as a catalyst for organizational alignment and integration. fostering collaboration across different functions and departments, such as sales, product development, and customer service, strategic marketing ensures a cohesive approach to achieving organizational goals and delivering value to customers.

2.1.3- Strategic Marketing Triangle

The strategic marketing triangle is a model that reflects the interaction between three fundamental strategies that form the basis of success in strategic marketing. These strategies are customer strategy, organizational strategy, and competition strategy. The details of these strategies are as follows:

a) Customer Strategy: This strategy focuses on understanding and meeting the needs and expectations of customers. Focusing on customers requires a deep understanding of customer preferences and market needs, including understanding purchasing patterns and factors influencing their decisions.

b) Competition Strategy: This strategy focuses on analyzing and understanding the competitive environment and the organization's position relative to competing companies. This includes studying competitors' products, marketing strategies, prices, and evaluating strengths and weaknesses in competition.

c) Organizational Strategy: This strategy focuses on the goals and vision of the organization and how to achieve them through marketing. This includes setting specific goals and developing strategies to achieve these goals, and identifying the financial, human, and technological resources necessary to implement these strategies.

In the end, the strategic marketing triangle reflects the mutual interaction between competition, customer, and organizational strategies, which contributes to building and implementing effective marketing strategies aimed at achieving the specific goals of the organization.

2.2- Customer Retention

2.2.1- Concept of Customer Retention:

Good customer retention programs are those that can be permanently modified and improved in line with market requirements, customer orientations, and prevailing trends in marketing and promotional activities among various brands (Jessie, et al, 2018).

It becomes clear to the researcher that the previous definitions agree with the characteristic of continuity, as in order to maintain the customer, he must continue to purchase a specific product or deal with a specific organization and repeat the purchase of the good or service as a result of the individual's positive feeling towards the product or

organization. That is, it is the tendency or willingness of the customer to buy back from the same company again, and loyalty is seen as an indicator of customer retention (Malhotra, 2022).

2.2.2- The Importance of Customer Retention:

Retaining existing customers by increasing their satisfaction and creating new marketing opportunities by attracting potential customers. And the needs of customers, whether in the field of individuals or organizations, have become more diverse and more complex at the same time, as the needs of customers have increased to many new services (Aka, et al., 2016).

Today, the organization has realized that customer satisfaction is the real arm of loyalty, and it is also an opportunity to double the number of its brand ambassadors. If loyalty is the focus of the contemporary organization, then satisfaction is an important component in this concept. The greater the customer satisfaction, the higher the retention rate, which ultimately leads to profits. High. Especially since building customer satisfaction requires organizations to show marketing practices that involve aspects of trust, seriousness, and compatibility with the aspirations and expectations of customers through products that meet that and are based on facts that outperform competitors and attract more customers (Sheng & Lin, 2010).

The customer retention process is one of the very difficult issues due to the changes in the psychology and behavior of customers, as the biggest challenge is how to obtain and maintain these customers, especially in the context of the multiplicity and diversity of services provided by each organization, and thus it tries to attract the largest number of customers and achieve their loyalty by diversifying the services, Giving a larger group of incentives and thus trying to meet their needs and desires and develop the method of providing services and their diversity as well as marketing and improving their quality, thus measuring their level of satisfaction with the services provided (Lin, et al, 2023).

The marketing orientation has become towards building an interdependent relationship with the external customer so that the organization can achieve a certain value for the customer and focus on the value of the customer by providing all his needs of services that are compatible with his expectations. Orientation towards the customer refers to identifying the needs and desires of customers in order to provide a service of value to them on an ongoing basis, and therefore the application of this concept is related to the beliefs and cultures that the senior management must embody within the organizations (Heinonen, et al, 2019).

2.3- Achieving Competitive Advantage:

2.3.1- The Concept of Competitive Advantage.

The concept of strategic competitive advantage refers to the factors that enable a company to produce goods or services better or at a lower cost than its competitors, achieving higher profitability and enhancing its position among them while adding value to both the company and its customers. Examples illustrating this definition include the efficient manufacturing of products (Tablawi, 2022, p. 45).

Strategic competitive advantage, on the other hand, encompasses the benefits or factors that enable a company or organization to outperform its competitors in the market and achieve consistently superior performance. It represents the means through which a company can attract and retain customers and achieve sustainable profitability (Wang et al., 2022, p. 250).

The researcher sees that the concept of competitive advantage is the factors that enable a company or organization to outperform its competitors in the market and achieve consistently superior performance. This includes achieving sustainable profitability, increasing market share, attracting more customers, achieving differentiation, and sustaining growth.

2.3.2- The Importance of Strategic Competitive Advantage:

Strategic competitive advantage is a crucial element in the success of any organization or company in the contemporary business world. It distinguishes successful companies from their competitors and enables them to achieve excellence and prosperity in a constantly changing competitive market. Developing and maintaining strategic competitive advantage is among the most significant challenges facing companies and institutions in the twenty-first century. Among the importance of strategic competitive advantage are:

A) Profitability Enhancement: Strategic competitive advantage plays a crucial role in enhancing the profitability of the company. When a company possesses a competitive advantage, it can leverage this advantage to achieve higher profits. (Ali et al., 2021, p. 305).

B) Market Survival: The competitive market relies on continuous updating and change, and companies that cannot respond to these changes may find themselves out of the market. (Chung & Ho, 2021, p. 257).

C) Customer Attraction: One of the main benefits of strategic competitive advantage is the company's ability to attract more customers and potential customers. When the company is known for offering distinctive products or services that effectively meet customer needs, it will have a greater opportunity to attract more customers. (Laghais & Alzoubi, 2020, p. 208).

D) Achieving Excellence: Strategic competitive advantage helps the company achieve excellence in the minds and hearts of customers. When the company distinguishes itself with unique products or high-quality services that exceed customer expectations, it becomes the first choice when it comes to making purchasing decisions. (Anwar & Shah, 2020, p. 2).

E) Growth Sustainability: One of the main benefits of strategic competitive advantage is growth sustainability. It enables the company to sustainably grow by using strategies that allow it to expand its business scope and reach new markets. (Yasa, 2020, p. 8).

3- Research Problem

In light of the rapid developments in the telecommunications and technology sector, Telecom Egypt faces significant challenges in building effective marketing strategies aimed at retaining customers and enhancing its position in the competitive market. Telecom Egypt is one of the leading telecommunications companies in Egypt, but it struggles to implement and define strategic marketing strategies that help it achieve a competitive advantage and retain customers.

Recent reports indicate that Telecom Egypt achieved a revenue growth of 28% compared to the previous year, reaching EGP 56.7 billion. Data services revenues increased by 18%, while infrastructure revenues, incoming international calls, and submarine cable projects increased by 27%, 76%, and 64%, respectively. However, rising operating costs and inflation significantly impact the company's ability to offer services at competitive prices, complicating the problem further.

In contrast, telecommunications companies in other countries face similar challenges. For example, STC in Saudi Arabia has developed marketing strategies focusing on providing

innovative services such as 5G and expanding digital services, which has helped it retain customers and increase revenues. Similarly, Ooredoo in Qatar has adopted marketing strategies focusing on digital transformation and offering innovative services such as cloud services and artificial intelligence, helping it achieve a competitive advantage in the market.

Based on these comparisons, it can be said that the challenges facing Telecom Egypt require continuous updating and development of marketing strategies. The company should invest in modern technologies such as 5G and cloud services to improve the quality of services provided to customers. Additionally, it should develop marketing strategies that focus on offering innovative and attractive services to customers, such as promotional offers and customized packages, and improve customer experience by providing excellent technical support services and multiple communication channels.

In conclusion, the central research question can be summarized as follows: What is the role of strategic marketing in retaining customers to achieve a competitive advantage?

4- Research Objectives:

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Examine the relationship between strategic marketing and customer retention.
- Examine the relationship between strategic marketing and achieving competitive advantage.
- Investigate the relationship between strategic marketing, achieving competitive advantage, and customer retention.

5- Hypotheses

- The First Hypothesis "There is a statistically significant impact of strategic marketing on achieving competitive advantage."
- The Second Hypothesis "There is a statistically significant impact of strategic marketing on customer retention."
- The Third Hypothesis "There is a statistically significant impact of customer retention on achieving competitive advantage."
- The Fourth Hypothesis "There is a statistically significant impact of strategic marketing on achieving competitive advantage through customer retention."

6- Research model

The following figure (1) shows the general framework for the study variables, it follows:

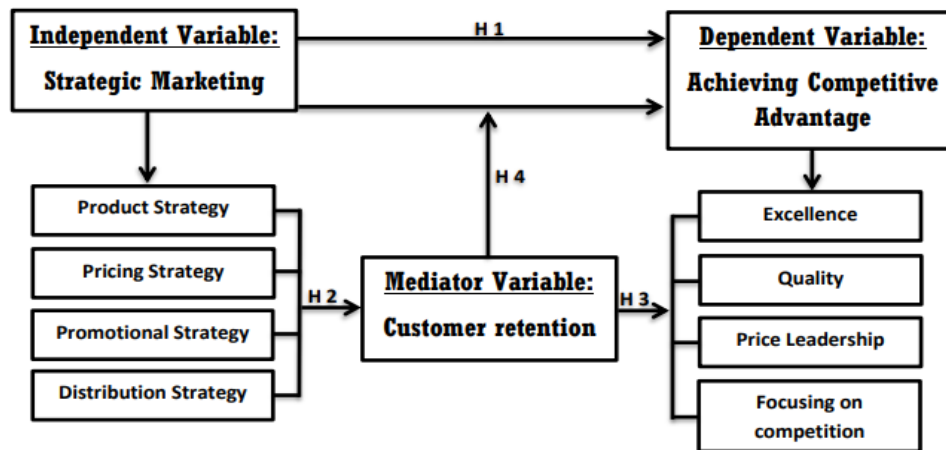


Figure No. (1): Study Framework.

7- Study Significances

The study revolving around "the role of strategic marketing in customer retention to achieve competitive advantage" and its application to the Telecom Egypt Company carries both scientific and practical significance:

A- Scientific Significance

This study addresses a vital and significant topic in the field of strategic marketing, focusing on the role of marketing in customer retention and achieving competitive advantage. This topic is among the most academically intriguing issues due to the evolving competitive environment and the complexities of the market and advanced technology. Through exploring the role of strategic marketing, this study can contribute to enriching scientific knowledge about how to achieve competitive advantage by focusing on customers and meeting their needs. Additionally, the study can provide a significant contribution to filling knowledge gaps and guiding future research in this field.

B- Practical Significance:

The study on the role of strategic marketing in customer retention and achieving competitive advantage in the Telecom Egypt Company is of utmost importance for the service sector. It provides a conceptual and analytical framework to understand how to achieve competitive superiority through adopting innovative and effective marketing strategies. With a better understanding of the role of marketing in customer retention, the company can improve the customer experience, thereby increasing brand loyalty and achieving sustainable competitive advantage in the competitive telecommunications market. Moreover, the study's findings can guide strategic decisions within the company and identify future investments in marketing, contributing to improving its competitive performance and achieving sustainable growth.

8- Study Design:

Depending on the nature of the subject of the study and the information that must be obtained to reveal the impact of Strategic Marketing (as an independent variable) on Achieving Competitive Advantage (as dependent variables), Retaining Customers as a mediator variable and through the questions that the study seek to answer, this study relied on the descriptive analytical

approach, which is "a way to describe and measure the phenomenon studied by collecting, classifying, and analyzing the problem.

In Descriptive design, hypothesis is formulated and tested, and generalizations of findings have arrived a through inductive-deductive reasoning. Also, Descriptive design employs methods of randomization so that error may be estimated when inferring population characteristics from observations of samples and the variables and procedures are described (Cooper, & Schindler, 2013).

Although there are many studies on the topic of Achieving Competitive Advantage, Strategic Marketing and Retaining Customers.

But as far as the researcher knows, the Retaining Customers variable was not used as an intermediate variable between the independent variable (Strategic Marketing) and the dependent variable (Achieving Competitive Advantage).

The researcher who used this research sought to investigate discrepancies and come up with recommendations that would improve overall performance and bridge the research gap in this area.

8.1- Study Procedures:

Two types of data were used to achieve this approach from the following sources:

A- Secondary Data:

It is the data obtained to build theoretical framework of the study, where it was relied on to identify theoretical background of the study, on the various references of books and articles and previous studies of academic theses of the relevant and published research, which dealt with the topics of Strategic Marketing, Achieving Competitive Advantage and Retaining Customers.

B- Primary Data:

These data were collected in the field through the survey list in the field study to test the validity of the assumptions on which the study was based. By obtaining this data from Employees in the field of Telecom Egypt Company.

8.2- Population and Sample Design:

This study aims to explore the role of strategic marketing in retaining customers to achieve a competitive advantage within Telecom Egypt Company. The population for this study comprises all 26,332 administrative employees of Telecom Egypt Company as of 2024. A sampling framework was established based on Mugenda & Mugenda (2012), which involves an exhaustive list of all sampling units, from which a sample can be selected.

A simple random sampling method was employed to ensure equal chances of selection for each employee. The sample size was determined using the following equation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016):

$$n = \frac{NP(1 - P)x^2}{(N - 1)d^2 + P(1 - P)x^2}$$

whereas:

n: Sample size required.

N: Size of the study population.

P: The ratio of the community is equal to.

d² The percentage of error that can be exceeded and the maximum value is 0.05.

x² 2: the value of the kai square with one degree of freedom = 3.841 at 95% confidence level or 5% significance level.

By applying this equation, the calculated sample size was 378 employees. Questionnaires were distributed to these 378 randomly selected employees, resulting in 319 valid responses. This effective response rate ensures the sample's representativeness and the reliability of the study's findings on the impact of strategic marketing on customer retention and competitive advantage.

Descriptive statistics were computed for demographic variables such as gender, qualification, age, years of experience, and career level among the study sample. The following table presents the frequency and proportion of these demographic variables:

Table No. (1): Descriptive statistics of demographic variables for the study sample (n = 319)

Demographic variables		%	No.
Gender	Male	72.4	231
	Female	27.6	88
Qualification	Educational qualification Pre-university.	17.55	56
	University education qualification.	59.25	189
	Educational qualification after university.	23.2	74
Age	Less Than 25 Years Old.	27.9	89
	From 25 To 40 Years Old.	38.2	122
	From 40 Years And Over.	33.9	108
Years of Experience	less than 10 years.	9.7	31
	From 10 years to less than 20 years.	43.9	140
	From 20 years and over.	46.4	148
Career Level	Senior Management	51.1	163
	Middle Management	37.6	120
	Supervisor	11.3	36

9- Validity and Reliability:

The questionnaire was used as the main tool for obtaining the primary data from the study population. The questionnaire was chosen because it is one of the most common methods of data collection and is used to suit and adapt it in terms of the nature of the study. Based on the review of previous studies and scientific research specialized in the subject.

To make sure that the degree of reliability and validity of the questionnaire used in the study of the Measuring the relationship between Strategic Marketing and Achieving Competitive Advantage Through the mediating variable (Retaining Customers), the researcher used the method factor (alpha Cronbach) to measure the reliability and validity tool used in the study is as follows.

Table No. (2): Results of Validity and Reliability

Dimension	No	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability*
Product Strategy.	3	0.772	0.879
Pricing Strategy.	3	0.709	0.842
Promotional Strategy.	3	0.763	0.873
Distribution Strategy.	3	0.846	0.920
Strategic Marketing	12	0.875	0.935
Excellence.	3	0.869	0.932
Quality.	3	0.84	0.917
Price Leadership.	3	0.847	0.920
Focusing on Competition	3	0.83	0.911
Achieving Competitive Advantage.	12	0.936	0.967
Retaining Customers.	5	0.886	0.941

* Composite reliability= The positive square root of Cronbach's alpha coefficient

The table presents the results of validity and reliability assessments for various dimensions related to Strategic Marketing and Achieving Competitive Advantage & Retaining Customers., Cronbach's alpha coefficient and composite reliability measures are used to evaluate internal consistency and reliability. Generally, the dimensions exhibit satisfactory levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.709 to 0.936. These values indicate a high degree of reliability in the measurements. Moreover, the composite reliability values, which are the positive square roots of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, further confirm the reliability of the dimensions, ranging from 0.842 to 0.967. The high composite reliability scores suggest that the constructs are accurately measured and consistent across items.

10- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA):

Confirmatory Factor Analysis is used to examine the previous information about the data structure based on the previous research results and testing how far is it representing the proposed model. There are group of indicators that are used to determine the goodness of the proposed model using the Confirmatory Factor Analysis; these indicators are called Goodness-of-Fit-

Indices. Table (3) gives an overview including the variables and the indicator type and the ranges of acceptance.

Table No. (3): Goodness-of-Fit-Indices

Index	Acceptance Condition
χ^2 Test	p-value $< \alpha = 0.05$
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	(GFI) > 0.90
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	(AGFI) > 0.90
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	(NFI) > 0.90
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	(RFI) > 0.90
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	(IFI) > 0.90
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	(TLI) > 0.90
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	(CFI) > 0.90
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	(RMSEA) > 0.90

Finally, the ideal estimated model is not determined out of the data compatibility's goodness in the view of only one indicator of Goodness-of- Fit- Indices, however based on achieving the higher number of these indicators. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) has been applied to ensure that the study variables can be measured using the dimensions related to it.

10.1- Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Strategic Marketing

Figure (2) shows the Confirmatory Factor Analysis results for (Strategic Marketing)

Figure No. (2): Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Strategic Marketing

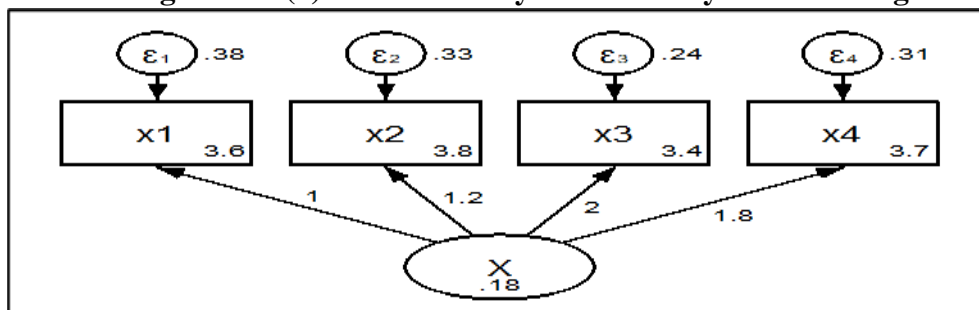


Table No. (4): shows Model Fit Indices for Strategic Marketing

χ^2 TEST	Value	0.10
	p-value	0.9543
GFI	0.982	
AGFI	0.948	
NFI	0.957	
RFI	0.966	
IFI	0.923	
TLI	0.955	
CFI	0.927	
RMSEA	0.033	

Table (4) shows that there is a strong relationship between study variables, whereas $X^2 = 0.10$, $p\text{-value} = 0.9543 > \alpha = 0.05$. In table (4) all the Goodness-of-Fit-Indices (GFI, AGFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) are within the ranges of acceptance (i.e, all are higher than 0.90), also $RMSEA = 0.033 < 0.08$ which means that the model's goodness fit is good to achieve all the conditions of Goodness-of-Fit-Indices. Table (5) shows the Paths, Coefficients, standardized Estimates, standard error (S.E), Z-test and its p-value.

Table No. (5) CFA Model Estimates for Strategic Marketing

Paths			Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z- Test	p- value
Product Strategy.	⇒⇒	Strategic Marketing	1.00	constrained	-	***
Pricing Strategy.	⇒⇒		1.230	0.135	9.08	***
Promotional Strategy.	⇒⇒		2.018	0.196	10.27	***
Distribution Strategy.	⇒⇒		1.842	0.183	10.07	***

From table (5), it is shown that all Standardized Estimates are more than 0.5 which indicates the internal consistency of the research scale, and those Estimates are statistically significant with 0.05 significance level, whereas the $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, which refers to the importance of questionnaire statements in measuring the Strategic Marketing variables.

10.2- Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Achieving Competitive Advantage

Figure (3) shows the Confirmatory Factor Analysis results for (Achieving Competitive Advantage).

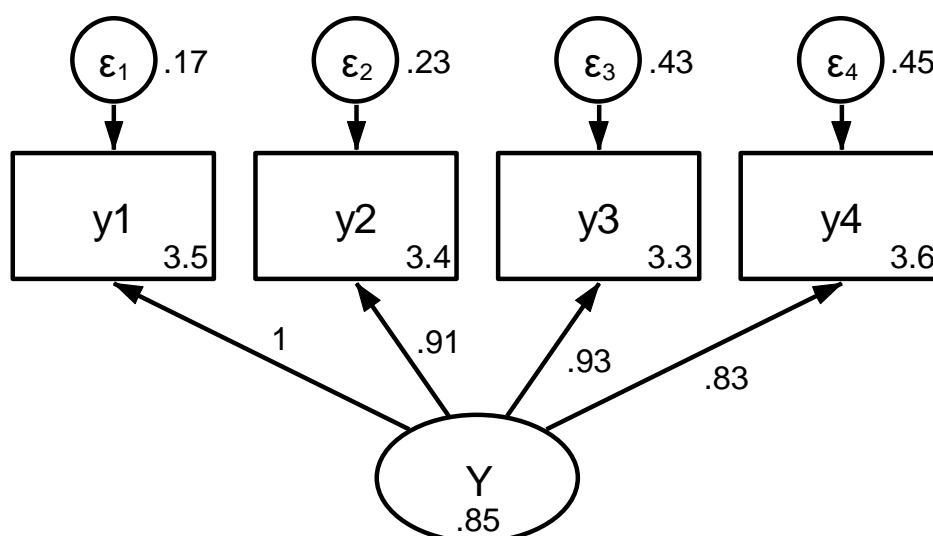


Figure No. (3): Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Achieving Competitive Advantage

Table No. (6): shows Model Fit Indices for Achieving Competitive Advantage

X^2 TEST	Value	3.76
	<i>p-value</i>	0.1530
GFI	0.971	
AGFI	0.935	
NFI	0.948	
RFI	0.974	
IFI	0.938	
TLI	0.956	
CFI	0.955	
RMSEA	0.029	

In table (6) that there is a strong relationship between study variables, whereas $X^2 = 3.76$, $p\text{-value} = 0.1530 > \alpha = 0.05$, and all the Goodness- of-Fit-Indices (GFI, AGFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) are within the ranges of acceptance (i.e, all are higher than 0.90), also $RMSEA = 0.029 < 0.08$ which means that the model's goodness fit is good to achieve all the conditions of Goodness-of-Fit-Indices. Table (6) shows the Paths, Coefficients, standardized Estimates, standard error (S.E), Z-test and its p-value.

Table No. (7): CFA Model Estimates for Achieving Competitive Advantage.

Paths			Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z- Test	p- value
Excellence.	⇒⇒	Achieving Competitive Advantage	1.00	constrained	-	-
Quality.	⇒⇒		0.908	0.042	21.67	***
Price Leadership.	⇒⇒		0.932	0.051	18.25	***
Focusing on Competition.	⇒⇒		0.828	0.049	16.78	***

The previous table shown that all Standardized Estimates are more than 0.5 which indicates the internal consistency of the research scale, and those Estimates are statistically significant with 0.05 significance level, whereas the $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, which refers to the importance of questionnaire statements in measuring the Achieving Competitive Advantage variables.

10.3- Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Retaining Customers

Figure (4) shows the Confirmatory Factor Analysis results for (Retaining Customers).

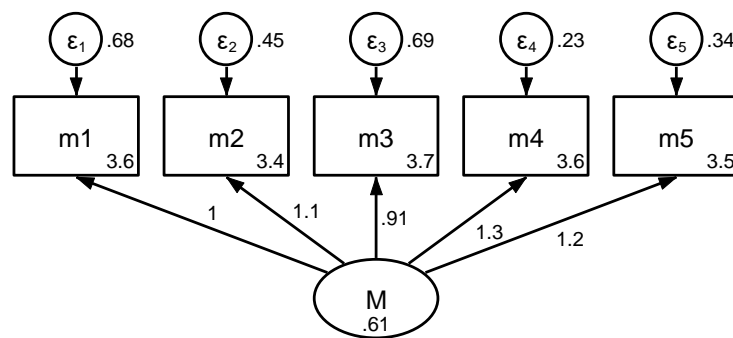


Figure No. (4): Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Retaining Customers

Table No. (8): shows Model Fit Indices for Retaining Customers

χ^2 TEST	Value	60.62
	<i>p-value</i>	0.000
GFI	0.933	
AGFI	0.948	
NFI	0.974	
RFI	0.929	
IFI	0.975	
TLI	0.951	
CFI	0.960	
RMSEA	0.044	

In table (8) all the Goodness- of-Fit-Indices (GFI, AGFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) are within the ranges of acceptance (i.e, all are higher than 0.90), also RMSEA = 0.044 < 0.08 which means that the model's goodness fit is good to achieve all the conditions of Goodness-of-Fit-Indices. Table (8) shows the Paths, Coefficients, standardized Estimates, standard error (S.E), Z-test and its p-value.

Table No. (9): CFA Model Estimates for Retaining Customers.

Paths			Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z- Test	p- value
The company prioritizes monitoring customer complaints and working towards their resolution.	⇒⇒	Retaining Customers	1.00	constrained	67.165	***
The company adjusts its services to	⇒⇒		1.076	0.083	12.94	***

Paths			Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z- Test	p- value
meet the needs and requirements of customers.						
The company conducts continuous customer satisfaction surveys to measure customer satisfaction.	⇒⇒		0.914	0.085	10.78	***
The company is committed to engaging customers in updating and developing the communication services they need.	⇒⇒		1.330	0.094	14.05	***
The company is committed to applying global quality standards in providing communication services.	⇒⇒		1.219	0.090	13.52	***

The previous table shown that all Standardized Estimates are more than 0.5 which indicates the internal consistency of the research scale, and those Estimates are statistically significant with 0.05 significance level, whereas the p-value = 0.000 < 0.05, which refers to the importance of questionnaire statements in measuring the Retaining Customers variables.

11- Descriptive Statistics to Measure the Variables.

11.1- Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Marketing.

Strategic Marketing in its dimensions is the independent variable, and it has four basic dimensions and includes 12 questions. Importance of independent variable (Strategic Marketing), point of view of the study sample was determined. The results were as follows:

Table No. (10): Descriptive Statistics to Product Strategy in Strategic Marketing.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company consistently offers innovative products/services that meet customer needs.	3.37	67.34%	1.14	1
2-	The company has a diverse range of products/services suitable for all market segments.	3.98	79.69%	0.86	3
3-	products/services development efforts are aligned with market trends and customer preferences.	3.60	71.91%	1.19	2
	Total	3.65	72.98%	0.75	

The total average dimension of Product Strategy is (3.65) and with an agreement rate of (72.98%), and this indicates that the Product Strategy in the Strategic Marketing was an agreement degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agree on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (11): Descriptive Statistics to Pricing Strategy in Strategic Marketing.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The pricing strategy considers both customer affordability and profitability for the company.	3.92	78.37%	0.93	1
2-	The company's pricing strategy aligns with its overall objectives.	3.70	73.98%	1.02	3
3-	Prices are adjusted according to changes in market conditions.	3.85	76.99%	0.99	2
	Total	3.82	76.45%	0.78	

The total average dimension of (Pricing Strategy is (3.82) and with an agreement rate of (76.45%), and this indicates that the Pricing Strategy in the Strategic Marketing was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agree on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (12): Descriptive Statistics to Promotional Strategy in Strategic Marketing.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The promotional strategy utilizes a mix of traditional and online channels to reach a wide audience.	3.76	75.17%	1.07	1
2-	The times for promotional offers and discounts are chosen to coincide with seasons and occasions.	3.27	65.39%	1.27	2
3-	The company's promotional strategy contributes to brand visibility and awareness.	3.20	64.08%	1.28	3
	Total	3.41	68.21%	1.00	

The total average dimension of (Promotional Strategy is (3.41) and with an agreement rate of (68.21%), and this indicates that the Promotional Strategy in the Strategic Marketing was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agreement on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (13): Descriptive Statistics to Distribution Strategy in Strategic Marketing.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company has a distribution network reaching all regions in Egypt.	3.88	77.62%	1.01	1
2-	Distribution partnerships are strategically chosen.	3.65	72.92%	1.20	2
3-	The company's distribution channels ensure products are readily available to customers.	3.56	71.29%	1.10	3
	Total	3.70	73.94%	0.97	

The previous table shows the total average dimension of Distribution Strategy is (3.70) and with an agreement rate of (73.94%), and this indicates that the Distribution Strategy in the Strategic Marketing was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agreement on the expressions of this dimension.

The level of Importance in Strategic Marketing within Telecom Egypt Company has been assessed, and the study sample's perspective on these dimensions has been organized accordingly. The findings are as follows:

Table No. (14): Descriptive Statistics for the Strategic Marketing Variable.

N	Dimensions	Mean	Percentage %	Std.	Arrang.
1-	Product Strategy.	3.65	72.98%	0.75	3
2-	Pricing Strategy.	3.82	76.45%	0.78	1
3-	Promotional Strategy.	3.41	68.21%	1.00	4
4-	Distribution Strategy.	3.70	73.94%	0.97	2
	Total (Strategic Marketing)	3.64	72.89%	0.71	

The previous Table showcases descriptive statistics for the "Strategic Marketing" variable, delineating dimensions like Product Strategy, Pricing Strategy, Promotional Strategy, and Distribution Strategy. Notably, Pricing Strategy emerges with the highest mean score of 3.82, indicating robust agreement among respondents regarding its effectiveness (76.45% agreement). Distribution Strategy follows closely with a mean score of 3.70, reflecting substantial accord (73.94% agreement). Product Strategy also exhibits a commendable mean score of 3.65, implying favorable sentiment (72.98% agreement). Promotional Strategy, while slightly lower with a mean score of 3.41, still garners considerable agreement (68.21%). Standard deviations are relatively low across all dimensions, suggesting consistency in responses. This data underscores the perceived importance and effectiveness of Strategic Marketing, particularly in aspects of Promotional Strategy and Product Strategy within the context of the Telecom Egypt Company.

11.2- Descriptive Statistics for Achieving Competitive Advantage.

Achieving Competitive Advantage in its dimensions is the independent variable, and it has four basic dimensions and includes 12 questions. Importance of independent variable (Achieving Competitive Advantage), point of view of the study sample was determined. The results were as follows:

Table No. (15): Descriptive Statistics to Excellence in Achieving Competitive Advantage.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company strives to deliver products that stand out from competitors.	3.56	71.22%	1.15	2
2-	Excellence is the core value driving decision-making.	3.60	71.97%	1.06	1
3-	The company continuously seeks opportunities for improvement to maintain excellence.	3.44	68.71%	1.20	3
	Total	3.53	70.64%	1.01	

The previous table shows the total average dimension of (Excellence) is (3.53) and with an agreement rate of (70.64%), and this indicates that the Excellence in the Achieving Competitive Advantage was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agree on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (16): Descriptive Statistics to Quality in Achieving Competitive Advantage.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company enhances its competitive position by focusing on delivering high-quality services.	3.47	69.34%	1.16	1
2-	The prices of the company's products/services are aligned with the quality offered.	3.40	68.09%	1.10	3
3-	The company consistently monitors and improves product/service quality based on customer feedback.	3.42	68.34%	1.08	2
	Total	3.43	68.59%	0.97	

The previous table shows the total average dimension of (Quality) is (3.43) and with an agreement rate of (68.59%), and this indicates that the Quality in the Achieving Competitive Advantage was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agree on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (17): Descriptive Statistics to Price Leadership in Achieving Competitive Advantage.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company employs various measures to reduce costs.	3.40	68.09%	1.17	2
2-	Low cost is a priority in the company's policy to achieve adequate returns.	3.11	62.19%	1.30	3
3-	The company provides mechanisms to ensure efficient resource utilization without waste or extravagance.	3.41	68.28%	1.24	1
	Total	3.31	66.19%	1.08	

The previous table shows the total average dimension of (Price Leadership) is (3.31) and with an agreement rate of (66.19%), and this indicates that the Price Leadership in the Achieving Competitive Advantage was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agreement on the expressions of this dimension.

Table No. (18): Descriptive Statistics to Focusing on Competition in Achieving Competitive Advantage.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company directs its efforts towards certain market segments to capture the largest share of customers in them.	3.58	71.60%	1.28	3
2-	The company has genuine intentions to enter new competitive fields.	3.59	71.79%	1.16	2
3-	The company prioritizes innovation to differentiate itself from competitors.	3.69	73.79%	1.10	1
	Total	3.62	72.39%	1.02	

The previous table shows the total average dimension of (Focusing on Competition) is (3.62) and with an agreement rate of (72.39%), and this indicates that the Focusing on Competition in the Achieving Competitive Advantage was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agreement on the expressions of this dimension

The level of Importance of Achieving Competitive Advantage was assessed within Telecom Egypt Company, and the study sample provided their perspectives on these dimensions. The findings are outlined below:

Table No. (19): Descriptive Statistics for the Achieving Competitive Advantage Variable.

N	Dimensions	Mean	Percentage %	Std.	Arrang.
1-	Excellence.	3.53	70.64%	1.01	2
2-	Quality.	3.43	68.59%	0.97	3
3-	Price Leadership.	3.31	66.19%	1.08	4
4-	Focusing on Competition	3.62	72.39%	1.02	1
	Total (Achieving Competitive Advantage)	3.47	69.45%	0.90	

The previous table shows the descriptive statistics for the variable of Achieving Competitive Advantage with dimensions - Excellence, Quality, and Price Leadership - Focusing on Competition at the Telecom Egypt Company. Each dimension was evaluated based on mean responses, percentage, and standard deviation, and the results indicate a generally positive perception of Achieving Competitive Advantage, with average scores ranging from 3.31 to 3.62. The Focusing on Competition dimension received the highest ranking, with 72.39% of participants evaluating it positively, followed by Excellence (70.64%) and Quality (68.59%). Overall, the results indicate a strong Importance of Achieving Competitive Advantage among telecom Egyptian, especially in developing punctuality.

11.3- Descriptive Statistics for Retaining Customers.

Retaining Customers in its dimensions is the Mediating variable, and it has included 5 questions. Importance of Mediating variable (Retaining Customers), point of view of the study sample was determined. The results were as follows:

Table No. (20): Descriptive Statistics to Excellence in Retaining Customers.

N	Statement	Mean	agreement rate	Std deviation	Arrang.
1-	The company prioritizes monitoring customer complaints and working towards their resolution.	3.61	72.23%	1.14	2
2-	The company adjusts its services to meet the needs and requirements of customers.	3.43	68.59%	1.08	5
3-	The company conducts continuous customer satisfaction surveys to measure customer satisfaction.	3.68	73.54%	1.10	2
4-	The company is committed to engaging customers in updating and developing the communication services they need.	3.61	72.10%	1.14	3
5-	The company is committed to applying global quality standards in providing communication services.	3.48	69.59%	1.12	4
	Total	3.56	71.21%	0.92	

The previous table shows the total average variable of (Retaining Customers) is (3.56) and with an agreement rate of (71.21%), and the Retaining Customers was a high degree in Telecom Egypt Company, and that opinions tend towards agree on the expressions of this variable.

12- Test the Hypotheses of the Study:

This section deals with testing hypotheses using statistical methods to determine their validity. Structural equation modeling (SEM) will be used as follows:

12.1- The First hypothesis:

"There is a Statistically Significant impact of Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage in Telecom Egypt Company".

To verify the quality of the model and determine the validity of the hypothesis, this was tested through a set of criteria for judging the quality of the model shown in the following table.

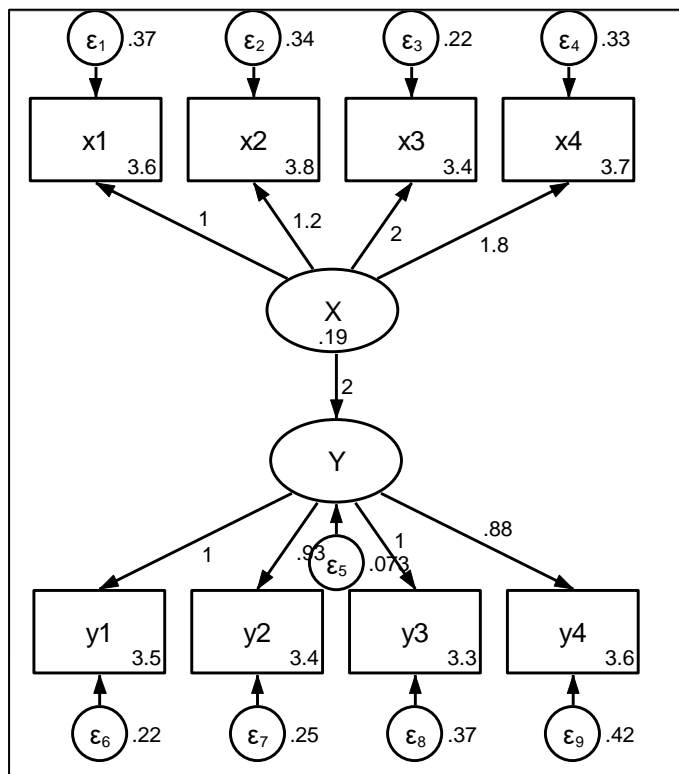


Figure No. (5): Structural Model Results H1

Indicator	Value	Acceptance level
Normed Chi-Square	2.548	between (2,5)
The Goodness-of-Fit statistic (GFI)	0.973	between (0,1)
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.953	between (0,1) ≥ 0.90
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.972	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
The Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.970	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.019	between (0.01,0.08)

In this structural model, the values are recorded as $X^2/df = 2.548$, $NFI = 0.972$ & $CFI = 0.970$, and $RMSEA = 0.019$. Because there is adequate fit, as indicated by these indices, between the hypothesized model and the data collected. An examination of the path coefficients could proceed for the structural model.

Table No. (22): Structural path analysis result (Strategic Marketing)

exogenous construct	Path	endogenous construct	Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z-Test	R ²	p-value
Achieving Competitive Advantage	⇒⇒	Product Strategy.	1.01	0.012	9.33	0.284	***
	⇒⇒	Pricing Strategy.	1.198	0.127	9.46	0.383	***
	⇒⇒	Promotional Strategy.	2.029	0.181	11.22	0.649	***
	⇒⇒	Distribution Strategy.	1.793	0.168	10.67	0.549	***

***p<.001, **p<.01*p<.05

This table presents the results of the structural path analysis for the dimension of "Strategic Marketing" in the context of the study. Each row corresponds to a specific path from the exogenous construct "Strategic Marketing" to various endogenous constructs, including Achieving Competitive Advantage, Excellence, Quality, and Price Leadership, Focusing on Competition. The "Estimate B" column indicates the path coefficient, which represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the constructs. The values of the path coefficients (ranging from 1.01 to 2.029) suggest positive relationships between Strategic Marketing and each of the endogenous constructs. Additionally, the low standard errors and Z-test values indicate the robustness and statistical significance of these relationships.

The proportion of variance explained (R²) values ranging from 0.284 to 0.649 indicates that dimensions of Strategic Marketing accounts for a big portion of the variability in Retaining Customers, Overall, these results provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that dimensions Strategic Marketing significantly predicts and influences of Achieving Competitive Advantage in Telecom Egypt Company.

12.2- The second hypothesis:

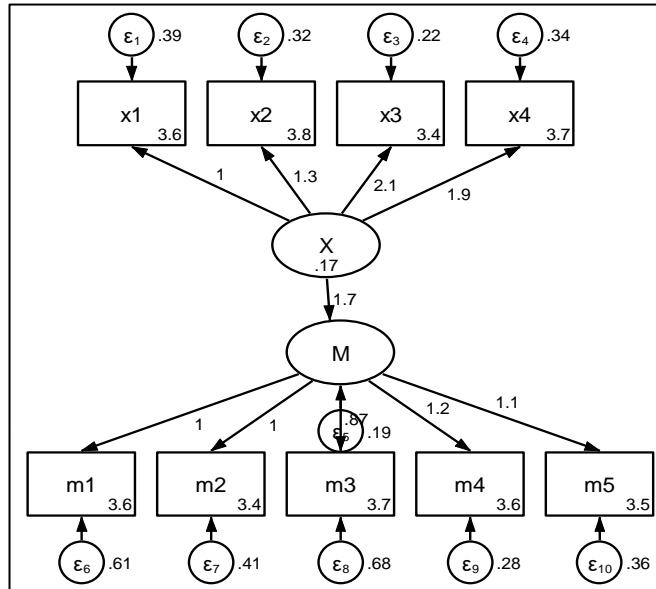
"There is a Statistically Significant impact of Strategic Marketing on Retaining Customers in Telecom Egypt Company".

To verify the quality of the model and determine the validity of the hypothesis, this was tested through a set of criteria for judging the quality of the model shown in the following table.

Table No. (23): Measurement Model Assessment (Strategic Marketing)

Indicator	Value	Acceptance level
Normed Chi-Square	3.192	between (2,5)
The Goodness-of-Fit statistic (GFI)	0.964	between (0,1)
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.972	between (0,1) ≥ 0.90
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.985	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
The Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.954	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.022	between (0.01,0.08)

In this structural model, the values are recorded as $X^2/df = 3.192$, $NFI = 0.985$ & $CFI = 0.954$, and $RMSEA = 0.022$. Because there is adequate fit, as indicated by these indices, between the hypothesized model and the data collected. An examination of the path



coefficients could proceed for the structural model.

Figure No. (6): Structural Model Results H2

Table No. (24): Structural path analysis result (Strategic Marketing)

exogenous construct	Path	endogenous construct	Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z-Test	R ²	P-value
Retaining Customers	⇒⇒	Product Strategy.	1.675	0.193	8.67	0.170	***
	⇒⇒	Pricing Strategy.	1.291	0.141	9.13	0.369	***
	⇒⇒	Promotional Strategy.	2.115	0.053	10.44	0.513	***
	⇒⇒	Distribution Strategy.	1.859	0.186	9.99	0.407	***

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

This table presents the results of the structural path analysis for the dimension of "Strategic Marketing" in the context of the study. Each row corresponds to a specific path from the exogenous construct "Strategic Marketing" to various endogenous constructs, including Retaining Customers. The "Estimate B" column indicates the path coefficient, which represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the constructs. The values of the path coefficients (ranging from 1.29 to 2.114) suggest positive relationships between Strategic Marketing and each of the endogenous constructs. Additionally, the low standard errors and Z-test values indicate the robustness and statistical significance of these relationships. The proportion of variance explained (R^2) values ranging from 0.170 to 0.513

indicates that dimensions of Strategic Marketing accounts for a big portion of the variability in Retaining Customers, Overall, these results provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that dimensions Strategic Marketing significantly predicts and influences of Retaining Customers in Telecom Egypt Company.

12.3- The third hypothesis:

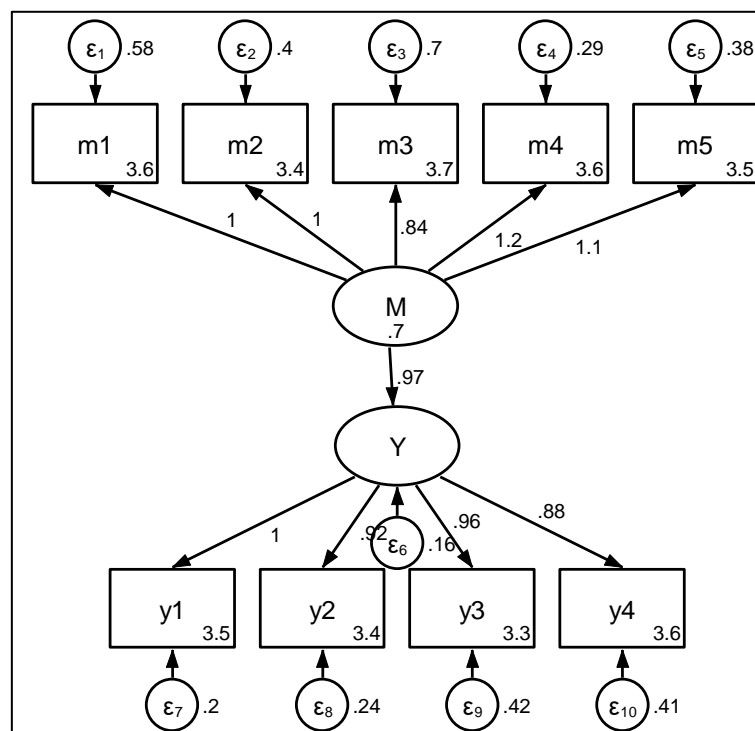
"There is a Statistically Significant impact of Retaining Customers on Achieving Competitive Advantage in Telecom Egypt Company".

To verify the quality of the model and determine the validity of the hypothesis, this was tested through a set of criteria for judging the quality of the model shown in the following table.

Table No. (25): Measurement Model Assessment (Retaining Customers)

Indicator	Value	Acceptance level
Normed Chi-Square	4.159	between (2,5)
The Goodness-of-Fit statistic (GFI)	0.946	between (0,1)
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.973	between (0,1) ≥ 0.90
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.938	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
The Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.929	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.045	between (0.01,0.08)

In this structural model, the values are recorded as $X^2/df = 4.159$, $NFI = 0.938$ & $CFI = 0.929$, and $RMSEA = 0.045$. Because there is adequate fit, as indicated by these indices, between the hypothesized model and the data collected. An examination of the path



coefficients could proceed for the structural model..

Figure No. (7): Structural Model Results H3

Table No. (26): Structural path analysis result (Retaining Customers)

exogenous construct	Path	endogenous construct	Estimate B (path coefficient)	S. E	Z-Test	R ²	p-value
Achieving Competitive Advantage	⇒⇒	Retaining Customers	0.970	0.065	14.83	0.671	***

***p<.001, **p<.01*p<.05

This table presents the results of the structural path analysis for the dimension of "Retaining Customers" in the context of the study. Each row corresponds to a specific path from the exogenous construct "Retaining Customers" to various endogenous constructs, including Achieving Competitive Advantage. The "Estimate B" column indicates the path coefficient, which represents the strength and direction of the relationship between the constructs. The values of the path coefficient (0.970) suggest positive relationship between Retaining Customers and each of the endogenous constructs. Additionally, the low standard errors and Z-test values indicate the robustness and statistical significance of these relationships. The proportion of variance explained (R²) value=0.671 indicates that Retaining Customers accounts for a big portion of the variability in Achieving Competitive Advantage, Overall, these results provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that Retaining Customers significantly predicts and influences of Achieving Competitive Advantage in Telecom Egypt Company.

12.4- The Fourth Hypothesis

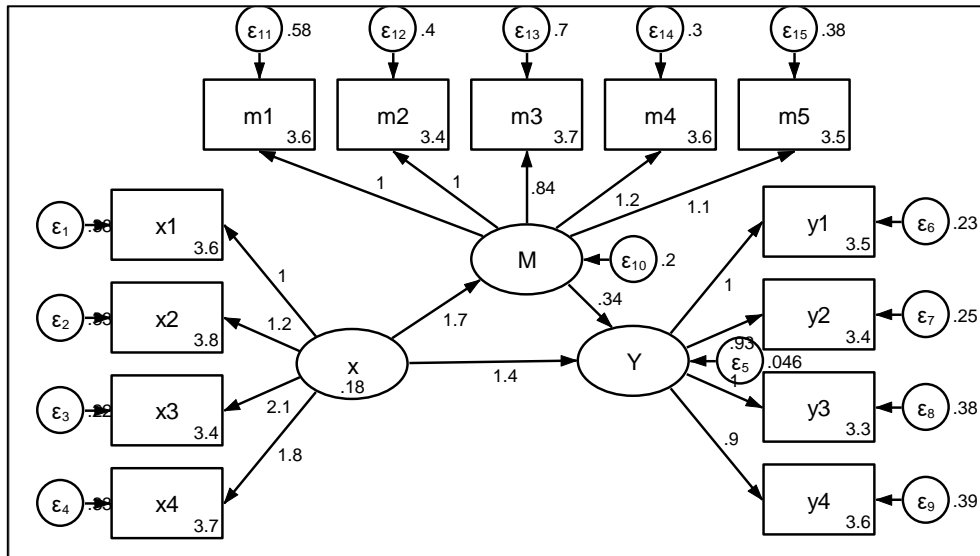
"There is a statistically significant impact of strategic marketing on achieving competitive advantage through customer retention in the Telecom Egypt Company."

To verify the quality of the model and determine the validity of the hypothesis, this was tested through a set of criteria for judging the quality of the model shown in the following table.

Table No. (27): Measurement Model Assessment (The Fourth hypothesis)

Indicator	Value	Acceptance Level
Normed Chi-Square	2.445	between (2,5)
The Goodness-of-Fit statistic (GFI)	0.929	between (0,1)
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	0.988	between (0,1) ≥ 0.90
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.944	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
The Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.970	between (0,1) ≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.034	between (0.01,0.08)

In this structural model, the values are recorded as $X^2/df = 2.445$, $NFI=0.944$ & $CFI = 0.970$, and $RMSEA = 0.034$. Because there is adequate fit, as indicated by these indices,



between the hypothesized model and the data collected. An examination of the path coefficients could proceed for the structural model.

Figure No. (8): structural model results

The hypothesis of this study was tested using structural equation modeling via STATA14 as presented in Figure (9). The structural model assessment as shown in Table provides the indication of the hypothesis tests. Strategic Marketing is significantly predicting Achieving Competitive Advantage through Retaining Customers, hence, H4 is accepted ($\beta = 1.4$, $p < 0.001$, ($\beta = 1.7$, $p < 0.001$)

Table No. (28): Structural path analysis result (Fourth hypothesis)

Retaining Customers on Achieving Competitive Advantage	Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage	Direct Effect
0.342	1.414	
0.571		Indirect Effect
M ——— Y	X ——— Y	Path
4.29	10.85	Z
0.000**	0.000**	Sig.
0.945		R ²

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

The R^2 value indicates the amount of variance of dependent variables which is explained by the independent variables. Hence, a larger R^2 value increases the predictive ability of the structural model. It is crucial to ensure that the R^2 values should be high enough for the model to achieve a minimum level of explanatory power. Table (28) shows the result of R^2

from the structural model and indicates that all the R^2 values are high enough for the model to achieve an acceptable level of explanatory power.

The indirect effect of the Strategic Marketing on the level of Achieving Competitive Advantage in Telecom Egypt Company, in the presence of Retaining Customers as a mediating variable, reached (0.572), which confirms the role that Retaining Customers plays in enhancing the effect of the Strategic Marketing on the level of Achieving Competitive Advantage. In Telecom Egypt Company. The calculated Z value for the impact factor of the first path (Strategic Marketing -Achieving Competitive Advantage) was (10.85) and is significant at the level of significance (0.05), While the calculated Z value for the impact factor of the second path (Retaining Customers - Achieving Competitive Advantage) was (4.29) and is significant at the level of significance (0.05). This result indicates that there is an effect of the Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage through Retaining Customers as a mediating variable. Increased interest in the Strategic Marketing by Telecom Egypt Company, in light of the presence of Retaining Customers, would generate an impact on the Achieving Competitive Advantage

Based on the previous results, it can be said, **there is impact of Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage through Retaining Customers**

13- Results and Conclusions Study.

The study reached several results that could contribute to solving the study problem, answering its questions, testing its hypotheses. The researcher has classified the results of the field study according to the variables he has identified in the study of the Role of Customer retention as an intermediate variable in the relationship between Strategic Marketing as an independent variable, Achieving Competitive Advantage as a dependent variable, so that the benefit is clearer, especially when formulating appropriate and applicable recommendations for each variable, as follows:

13.1- Results Related to Strategic Marketing:

The current study concluded that is a high Importance of Strategic Marketing dimensions, and opinions tend to agree. It was found that the most available dimensions of Strategic Marketing are respectively: The first (Pricing Strategy) the Mean is (3.82), the second (Distribution Strategy) the Mean is (3.70), the third (Product Strategy) the Mean is (3.65), the fourth (Promotional Strategy) the Mean is (3.41). The Importance ratio for each dimension of Strategic Marketing was as follows:

The study concluded that the importance of the **Product Strategy**, as one of the dimensions of Strategic Marketing, was highly regarded within the Egyptian Customs Authority, with opinions generally agreeing with the statements related to this dimension. It was revealed that the company consistently offers innovative products and services that meet customer needs.

Similarly, the study found that the importance of the **Pricing Strategy** was also highly regarded, with consensus on the statements related to this dimension. The pricing strategy effectively balances customer affordability with company profitability.

The **Promotional Strategy** was deemed highly important as well, with general agreement on the related statements. The study demonstrated that the promotional strategy employs a mix of traditional and online channels to reach a broad audience.

Finally, the **Distribution Strategy** was also considered highly important, with agreement on the relevant statements. The study found that the company has an extensive distribution network that reaches all regions of Egypt.

13.2- Results Related to Achieving Competitive Advantage:

The current study concluded that is a high Importance of Achieving Competitive Advantage dimensions, and opinions tend to agree. It was found that the most available dimensions of Achieving Competitive Advantage are respectively: The first (Focusing on Competition) the Mean is (3.62), the second (Excellence) the Mean is (3.53), the third (Quality) the Mean is (3.43). the fourth (Price Leadership) the Mean is (3.31). The Importance ratio for each dimension of Achieving Competitive Advantage was as follows:

The study concluded that the importance of **Excellence**, as one of the dimensions of Achieving Competitive Advantage, was highly regarded within the Egyptian Customs Authority, with opinions generally agreeing with the related statements. The study found that Excellence is the core value driving decision-making.

Similarly, the study determined that the importance of **Quality** was also highly regarded, with consensus on the related statements. The focus on delivering high-quality services was found to enhance the company's competitive position.

The importance of **Price Leadership** was also found to be high, with agreement on the relevant statements. The study revealed that the company provides mechanisms to ensure efficient resource utilization, avoiding waste and extravagance.

Lastly, the study concluded that the importance of **Focusing on Competition** was highly regarded, with general agreement on the related statements. The company prioritizes innovation to differentiate itself from competitors.

13.3- Results Related to Retaining Customers:

The findings concerning Retaining Customers indicate its significant importance within Telecom Egypt Company. These results are consistent with the sentiments expressed in the statements comprising this variable. The average rating for Retaining Customers was determined to be 3.56, emphasizing its high priority in the company's strategic considerations.

13.4- Results Related to Impact Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage:

The study found that among the dimensions of Strategic Marketing, Promotional Strategy emerged as the most impactful in influencing Achieving Competitive Advantage ($B = 2.029$, $p < .001$). Following closely behind, Distribution Strategy exhibited a substantial influence ($B = 1.793$, $p < .001$). Additionally, Pricing Strategy demonstrated significant importance in shaping competitive advantage ($B = 1.198$, $p < .001$). Lastly, while Product Strategy contributed to competitive advantage, its impact was comparatively moderate ($B = 1.01$, $p < .001$). These findings underscore the critical role of promotional efforts and efficient distribution channels in enhancing the company's competitive position, complemented by effective pricing strategies, with product strategies playing a supportive role in achieving competitive advantage within Telecom Egypt Company.

13.5- Results Related to Impact Strategic Marketing on Retaining Customers:

The study found that among the dimensions of Strategic Marketing, Promotional Strategy emerged as the most impactful in influencing Retaining Customers ($B = 2.115$, $p < .001$).

Following closely behind, Distribution Strategy demonstrated a substantial influence ($B = 1.859$, $p < .001$). Additionally, Product Strategy exhibited significant importance in shaping customer retention ($B = 1.675$, $p < .001$). However, Pricing Strategy showed a comparatively moderate impact on retaining customers ($B = 1.291$, $p < .001$). These findings highlight the critical role of promotional efforts and efficient distribution channels in enhancing customer retention within Telecom Egypt Company, complemented by effective product strategies, while pricing strategies play a somewhat lesser role in influencing customer retention.

13.6- Results Related to Impact Retaining Customers on Achieving Competitive Advantage:

The study found that Achieving Competitive Advantage has a significant positive impact on Retaining Customers ($B = 0.970$, $p < .001$). The high path coefficient indicates a strong relationship between these constructs, suggesting that efforts to achieve competitive advantage substantially contribute to customer retention within Telecom Egypt Company. The model explains 67.1% of the variance in Retaining Customers, highlighting the critical importance of competitive advantage strategies in maintaining customer loyalty.

13.7- Results Related to Role of Strategic Marketing in Retaining Customers to Achieve Competitive Advantage:

The study found significant direct effects of both Strategic Marketing and Retaining Customers on Achieving Competitive Advantage. The direct effect of Strategic Marketing on Achieving Competitive Advantage was strong ($B = 1.414$, $Z = 10.85$, $p = 0.000$), while Retaining Customers also had a notable direct effect ($B = 0.342$, $Z = 4.29$, $p = 0.000$), there was a significant indirect effect ($B = 0.571$), indicating that Retaining Customers mediates the relationship between Strategic Marketing and Achieving Competitive Advantage. explains the model 94.5% of the variance in Achieving Competitive Advantage, underscoring the critical role of both Strategic Marketing and customer retention strategies in enhancing competitive positioning.

14- Discussion:

The findings of the current study align with findings previous research, Show the critical role of strategic marketing dimensions, particularly promotional and distribution strategies, in achieving competitive advantage and retaining customers. This is consistent with Saura et al. (2023) and Nurhalimah & Ikka (2024), who emphasize the importance of a comprehensive marketing approach and entrepreneurial strategies, the study underscores the significant positive impact of achieving competitive advantage on customer retention, resonating with the conclusions of Seshadri et al. (2023) and Malhotra (2022). The mediating role of customer retention between strategic marketing and competitive advantage further supports the findings of Li et al. (2023), underscoring the importance of retention strategies in sustaining competitive success. These results provide a robust framework for companies like Telecom Egypt to enhance their marketing strategies and competitive positioning.

15- Study Recommendations:

From point of views in findings the study. The researcher proposed the following action plan to Egyptian Customs Authority:

15.1- Recommendations Related to Strategic Marketing:

Table No. (29): The Proposed Action Plan of Strategic Marketing.

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
There was High Importance of (Product Strategy)	Conduct comprehensive market research to identify the specific needs and preferences of different market segments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify customer segments based on demographics, behavior, and preferences. - Gather insights through surveys, interviews, and observation. - Analyze data to understand customer needs and preferences. 	Marketing Department, Research and Development Department, Sales Department, Customer Service Department
There was High Importance of (Pricing Strategy)	Conduct a thorough review of its pricing strategy to ensure that it is closely aligned with its overarching goals and objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess costs associated with production, marketing, and distribution. - Analyze competitors' pricing strategies. - Ensure pricing reflects the perceived value of products/services. 	Finance Department, Marketing Department, Strategy Department, Pricing Department
There was High Importance of (Promotional Strategy)	Refine its promotional strategy to ensure that it effectively communicates the brand's value proposition and resonates with its target audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand target audience preferences and behaviors. - Tailor messages to resonate with the audience. - Explore various promotional channels for better reach. 	Marketing Department, Advertising Department, Branding Department
There was High	The company should begin by	- Identify	Operations Department,

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
Importance of (Distribution Strategy)	identifying any bottlenecks or inefficiencies in its current distribution channels that may be hindering the availability of products to customers.	inefficiencies in current channels. - Evaluate channel performance and customer satisfaction. - Implement improvements in logistics, coverage, and partnerships.	Supply Chain Management Department, Logistics Department

15.2- Recommendations related to Improve the Achieving Competitive Advantage:
Table No. (30): The Proposed Action Plan of Achieving Competitive Advantage.

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
There was High Importance of (Excellence)	Allocate resources towards employee training and development programs focused on enhancing skills and knowledge related to quality management and process improvement methodologies.	- Identify specific areas for improvement in quality management and process improvement. - Design training programs tailored to address identified skill gaps. - Execute training initiatives and measure their effectiveness through feedback and performance metrics.	Human Resources Department, Training and Development Department, Quality Assurance Department
There was High Importance of (Quality)	Assessing the pricing strategies of competitors offering similar products/services	- Identify key competitors offering similar products/services.	Marketing Department, Competitive Intelligence Department,

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
	and comparing them with the perceived value provided by the company's offerings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyze competitors' pricing strategies and compare them with the perceived value of the company's offerings. - Adjust pricing strategies based on the competitive landscape and value proposition. 	Pricing Strategy Team
There was High Importance of (Price Leadership)	Explore various cost-saving measures such as streamlining operational processes, negotiating better deals with suppliers, and investing in technology to improve efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify inefficient operational processes and areas for improvement. - Negotiate better terms with suppliers to reduce procurement costs. - Explore technology solutions to automate processes and enhance operational efficiency. 	Operations Department, Procurement Department, Technology and Innovation Department
There was High Importance of (Focusing on Competition)	Conduct comprehensive market research to identify untapped segments and understand their unique needs and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify untapped market segments based on demographics, psychographics, and behavior. 	Marketing Department, Market Research Department, Sales Department

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
	preferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the unique needs and preferences of identified segments through surveys, focus groups, and interviews. - Evaluate the market potential and feasibility of targeting new segments based on research findings. 	

15.3- Recommendations related to Retaining Customers:

Table No. (31): The Proposed Action Plan of Retaining Customers.

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
There was High Importance of (Retaining Customers)	Prioritize gathering comprehensive feedback from customers through various channels, including surveys, feedback forms, and direct interactions, to gain insights into their evolving needs and preferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand feedback channels to include online surveys, feedback forms on the website, and social media platforms. - Establish a systematic process for collecting feedback from customers after each interaction or purchase. - Implement a robust system for analyzing customer feedback to identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement. 	Customer Service Department, Marketing Department, Sales Department

Study Result	Recommendation	Tasks	Responsibility
	Invest in continuous training and development programs for its employees to ensure they are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain quality standards consistently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct assessments to identify skill gaps and training needs among employees. - Develop training programs focused on quality management, customer service, and product knowledge. - Offer ongoing training opportunities to keep employees updated with industry trends and best practices. 	Human Resources Department, Training and Development Department, Quality Assurance Department

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