

## ORCHESTRATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: THE SYNERGISTIC ROLES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION, AND STRATEGIC AGILITY

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**Abstract:** Studying strategic planning and some factors that may influence success in any business is important for achieving competitive advantages and growth. Therefore, this study examines the role of strategic planning (SP) in enhancing entrepreneurial orientation (EO), sustainable competitive advantage (SCA), and strategic agility (STA) in the hospitality sector, particularly in Makkah and Madinah, Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the mediating roles of EO and STA are performed to integrative models that explain the internal capability mechanisms driving competitive advantage in volatile service industries. This study used a quantitative approach to gather information from hospitality managers across Saudi Arabia. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to test direct and mediated relationships among SP, EO, STA, and SCA, using a survey-based methodology and data collected from 286 hospitality industry employees. Structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) indicates that SP significantly influences EO, SCA, and STA, with substantial effects on the firm's overall competitive positioning. Further, EO and STA mediate the relationship between SP and SCA, underscoring the importance of a dynamic, adaptable strategy to sustain long-term competitive advantage. The findings suggest that hospitality organizations must integrate strategic planning, entrepreneurial orientation, and strategic agility to navigate a competitive, evolving market landscape. This highlights the importance of combining deliberative and dynamic strategic processes to achieve sustained competitiveness. Overall, these linkages account for how SP and STA, through EO and SCA, create sustainable advantage, advancing the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities View (DCV) theories in service environments.

**Keywords:** Strategic planning, entrepreneurial orientation, sustainable competitive advantage, strategic agility, PLS-SEM

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### INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry has become a significant sector in social and economic growth (Kirylov et al., 2023). The hospitality sector in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is evolving quickly as consumer expectations, their participation in the company's value-generating process, and the speed of change are driven by the adoption of newer instruments. Due to the alarming rate of economic change and the resulting increasingly intense competition, the long-term viability of organizations is essential (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). Globally, this business has expanded and is now a significant employer and source of wealth for many nations. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the tourism industry contributes to the stability of local economies by generating foreign-exchange earnings, opening up investment and placement opportunities, boosting government revenue, enhancing a nation's image, and aiding all economic sectors and local communities (Aldehayyat & Al Khattab, 2012). Therefore, tourism is an accelerating sector and a main economic source for a lot of countries (Sumardi et al., 2024). Consequently, the goal of the present initiatives should be to establish an atmosphere conducive to sustainable growth. Several strategic development initiatives can help realize the idea of sustainability, which ensures the effective coexistence of humans and the environment without causing ecological disruption (Agus Harjoto & Salas, 2017; Herzallah et al., 2025a). The majority of large and medium-sized companies face challenges due to a highly competitive industry (Aamer et al., 2020; Ho et al., 2023). The concept of SCA refers to the distinct advantages that any business has over its competitors and that are challenging for them to emulate.

These benefits allow it to maintain its market position and achieve long-term profitability. It is crucial to keep investing in and developing their competitive edge, for example, through marketing, strategic planning (SP), and research and development, to preserve a sustainable competitive advantage. These benefits enable the business to maintain its market position and achieve long-term profitability (Rizki et al., 2023). So, one of the systems that companies have found to be preventing the practical application of strategy is SP. It is now well acknowledged that one of the most important drivers of strategy execution in business is leadership-driven planning (Lerai et al., 2023). Large and small businesses alike should invest in SP for a variety of business scenarios, as it may serve as a channel for communicating organizational goals and the alternate courses of action to be pursued to achieve them (Mulyaningsih et al., 2021).

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Through leadership, organizational leaders create new arguments that enable institutions to prosper in a turbulent business climate. Additionally, SP helps an organization develop competitively profitable plans and align with its goals and strategic intent (George et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2024). An extensive study identified five elements of entrepreneurial orientation (EO): risk-taking, innovativeness, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy.

Usually, managers face the challenge of allocating scarce resources (Raj et al., 2019). STA consists of three dimensions: strategy awareness, leadership unity, and resource flexibility. Strategic sensitivity combines a keen understanding of external trends with an internally interactive strategy process. The approach is proactive, with an open strategy process, increased strategic vigilance, and effective internal communication. Leadership unity, also known as collective commitment, enables the top management team to make quick, strong strategic decisions in response to emerging situations. The CEO must demonstrate mutual reliance, cooperation, and integrative leadership (Reed, 2021). So, the goals of this investigation are reflected in formulating hypotheses in the next section, the literature review. Some novelty of this research is still observed.

Firstly, this study amalgamates SP, EO, and STA in a single model for hospitality and justifies dual mediations to SCA (EO and STA), moving beyond single-predictor studies. Recent studies also demonstrate the role of EO or STA in conferring an advantage, but rarely position SP as an orchestrator in hospitality (Chasapi et al., 2024; Aloulou et al., 2024; Hartono et al., 2024). Another novelty of this research is to reveal the RBV-to-DCV theory (resources → capabilities → reconfiguration) explicitly and to demonstrate that strategic planning is valuable in this regard, as it energizes EO and agility (Chasapi et al., 2024; Choukeir, 2024; Iriqat et al., 2025). Thirdly, in the Saudi hotel market amid Vision 2030, this study emphasizes liberalization and competition and enhances external validation and policy implications.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 1. Theoretical underpinnings

The collection of strategic resources under a company's control, along with the management that oversees their utilization, defines its potential for expansion. Resource-based theory (RBT) has been one of the most prominent ideas in research on strategic management over the past three decades and has become a very popular theoretical framework for understanding performance (Kornelius et al., 2020). According to the Resource-based view (RBV), a company may get a competitive edge by developing its strategic resources and competencies. Dynamic capabilities, or an extension of the RBV, are the agility and flexibility that result from a firm's capacity to rearrange its resources (Dubey et al., 2018; Iriqat et al., 2025). Businesses often work very hard to reduce management-related competitive disadvantages through a range of strategies and to improve operations that benefit the environment, thereby boosting profitability and reducing costs. Many sectors and academics are concerned about an organization's performance, as it affects its potential to survive and grow in the future (Samad & Ahmed, 2021). Most corporations renew their competitive edge over time by reevaluating the relative importance of each dynamic capacity. Process performance with strategic agility is determined by a relative degree of mass customization capacity to deliver goods and services. Process performance is determined by the client's unique qualities, traits, requirements, and preferences (Balen et al., 2023).

Given the importance and complexity of the competition, competitors may also possess aggressive, firm-specific resources and capabilities that help them maintain their competitive edge. Nevertheless, the firm-specific features in question have not received sufficient attention in the study that has already been conducted. For example, competitors with high entrepreneurial orientation (EO) share several traits (Seepana et al., 2021). In the hospitality sector, scholars are explaining competitive outcomes more often with resource-based and dynamic-capabilities theories, showing that hotel innovation and performance are founded upon valuable resource bundles and sensing–seizing–reconfiguring routines; however, most studies theorize or test capabilities independently, rather than as an integrated system linking deliberate strategic planning (SP) to entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and strategic agility (STA) (i.e., how planning begets behavior and agility to produce sustainable competitive advantage, SCA). Drawing on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities View (DCV), this study positions SP, EO, and SA within the distinctive operational imperatives of the hospitality industry, i.e., Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda.

From an RBV perspective, hotels compete by utilizing valuable, rare, and inimitable assets such as brand reputation, service quality, location attributes, technological adoption, and human capital; all of which could be architected by means of good strategic planning (SP) to generate value (Al-Shawabkeh, 2024; Chasapi et al., 2024). The DCV further develops this by outlining the sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring activities that help hotels dynamically realign resources in response to shifting tourist demand, seasonality (e.g., Hajj and Ramadan), and global competition (Zeng et al., 2024; Burton et al., 2025).

Evidence for EO's effect on performance in tourism or hospitality is similarly mixed and contingent (e.g., on governance, turbulence), indicating that EO is likely a conduit rather than an autonomous driver; although mediation designs that position EO and STA as twin transmitters of SP's effect remain scarce in sector-specific experiments (Faruk, 2023; Hartono et al., 2024). Recent reviews call for integrative models connecting planning, entrepreneurial activities, agility, and sustainability-based advantage in services; a package that is precisely what hotels need during turbulent demand periods, yet note a lack of empirical studies estimating such multi-step capability chains with strict mediation in hospitality samples (Pennetta et al., 2025; Burton & Dickinger, 2024; Traskevich & Fontanari, 2024).

During this sectoral disruption, strategic planning provides the foundation for foresight and alignment. At the same time, entrepreneurial orientation (EO) translates risk-taking and innovative behaviors into action, enabling hotels to seize emerging opportunities (Aloulou, 2024). Therefore, syncretizing RBV and DCV perspectives with the hospitality sector helps to reinforce that achieving sustainable competitiveness is both a question of having valuable resources as well as continually rearranging them via planning, entrepreneurship, and speed in a very dynamic service context. The theory provides a framework for understanding how organizations adapt and achieve SCA by leveraging key resources. It will also be highly instrumental in explaining the hypotheses proposed in relation to SP, STA, SCA, and EO (Figure 1).

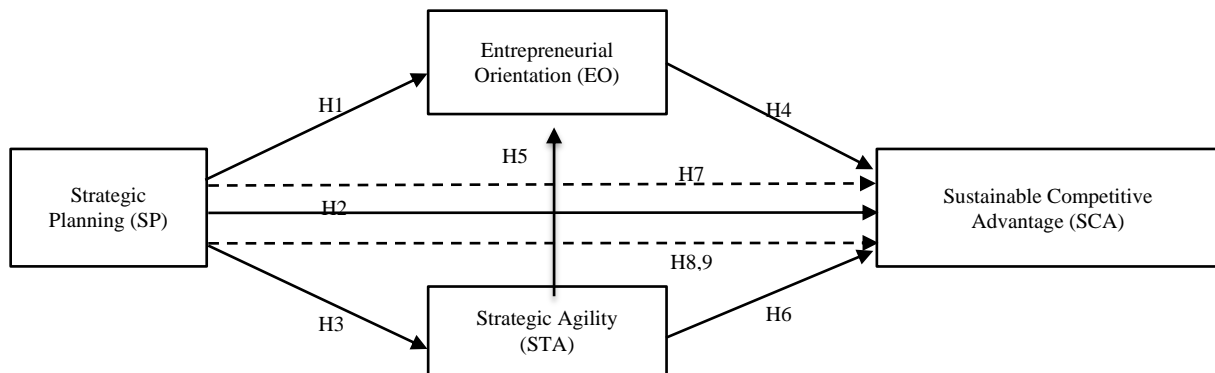


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

## 2. Research hypotheses & model

### 2.1. Influence of SP

SP is regarded as a resource assemblage employed by organizations to achieve high performance (Ejigu, 2023). It is now well acknowledged that one of the most important underlying drivers of strategy execution in firms is planning. Establishing organizational boundaries, effectively managing the organization's resource pool, upholding a fruitful institutional tradition, and emphasizing ethical behaviour are among the planning-related tasks (Lerai et al., 2023). SP is the process by which leaders articulate the vision and identify the actions required to accomplish it (Alosani et al., 2019).

SP helps an organization create competitively profitable plans that shape its goal formulation and strategic intent. When formulating strategies, the leader takes care to anticipate and develop operational plans by benchmarking what others have accomplished. Once this is done, resources are assigned (George et al., 2019). In many organizations, SP is widely used across a variety of industries, including manufacturing and service companies, as well as in the public and private sectors, until it was recognized as an essential component of leadership (Samad & Ahmed, 2021). SMEs may see a considerable increase in business growth if they incorporate OE into their SP and use it as their business strategy (Mozumdar et al., 2023). EO refers to a set of procedures and policies that motivate a business to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours (Covin et al., 2020). Three traits are commonly used to address it: either an aggregate measure that includes "innovation, aggressiveness, and risk-taking," or a measure that provides for "aggressiveness, risk-taking, and proactiveness" (Seepana et al., 2021). Recent studies explore the effect of SP in hospitality and tourism organizations, fostering EO by promoting these three pillars and their core principles in volatile markets (Ho et al., 2023; Lazarte-Aguirre, 2024; Cheng et al., 2025).

Strategic management may serve as a tool for communicating company objectives and the alternate courses of action to be pursued to accomplish these goals; therefore, businesses of all sizes should possess strategic planning in a variety of business scenarios (Mulyaningsih et al., 2021). To better understand the importance of competitive advantage (CA), further research into variables that might affect SP is required to boost CA. Two fundamental corporate strategy plans serve as the foundation for strategic planning. Predictive intuitive planning is planning based on prior experiences, considerations, and reflective thinking. Essentially, intuitive planning is a plan based on management's experiences, instincts, thoughts, and reflections. Formal long-term planning, which involves many individuals, research, procedures, and the creation of written plans, comes in second. Accordingly, this type of planning is known as formal SP (Robinson & Pearce, 1983).

Formal SP, often referred to as systematic SP, is a sequence of interrelated stages that includes strategy development and carefully examines and diagnoses both internal and external factors. This process consists of three phases: strategy formulation (which includes the strategy's purpose, vision, plans, objectives, and strategic alternatives); strategy implementation (which involves putting a strategy into practice); and finally, mentorship and assessment (Dwikat et al., 2022). A business's ability to quickly and efficiently adjust to changing market conditions is a crucial success factor that requires a well-defined plan. As a result, methodical strategic planning has developed to the point where its primary benefit is helping businesses navigate and operate more effectively in unpredictable environments (George et al., 2019). SP aids in assessing how to meet objectives, expand market share, and help the organization grow amid fiercer competition. The concept is that a sound business plan is one of the many ways to get a competitive edge (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Studies also confirmed that CA serves as a channel for transmission from making plans to achieving attainable outcomes. A wider planning and tourism sector also shows that connecting planning with sustainability or innovation can drive the distinctiveness and durability of opportunities and advantages (Mousa et al., 2024; Okech & Aosa, 2025).

STA is an organization's ability to quickly adjust and reevaluate its plan in response to changes in the external business environment. Organizations have adopted agility to continuously adapt to external challenges and opportunities amid the many and intense sources of change and the ever-increasing dynamics of today's business world (Rizki et al., 2023; Iriqat et al., 2025). One way to place agility in the discussion of strategy development is to discuss the distinctions between intentional and emergent strategies, or between strategy as a plan and approach as a pattern (Van Ruler, 2021). A well-defined vision for the organization is essential for effective SP, as it serves as the foundation for the organization's mission and helps define its goals (Christofi et al., 2023; Lai et al., 2025). It has been suggested that an organization's failure to understand and appreciate the reality of its capabilities prevents it from utilizing them, thereby wasting numerous opportunities. Conversely, a clear vision gives the organization the speed it needs to carry out activities and implement procedures, as well as the motivation that all stakeholders in the value chain need to take advantage of the right

opportunities (Hamdan et al., 2020; Herzallah et al., 2025a). Organizations may expand and thrive in dynamic, unpredictable situations when they possess agility (Balen et al., 2023), enabling quicker, better-coordinated responses to shifting conditions (Chiang et al., 2012). Thus, based on the discussion above, the hypotheses are developed:

- H1.** SP significantly affects EO.
- H2.** SP significantly affects SCA.
- H3.** SP significantly affects STA.

## 2.2. Influence of EO and STA

Research on EO often examines only its three most prevalent characteristics: risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness; combining them into a composite concept of the orientation before assessing how it affects business success (Hughes & Morgan, 2007). The ultimate goal of the organization's concurrent advantage- and opportunity-seeking behaviours is to identify and seize new possibilities (Withers et al., 2018). Organizations have five approaches to promote EO and ensure its growth. First, by supporting entrepreneurial ideas, the company may grant employees autonomy. Second, to maintain competitive aggressiveness, the company may permit attack advertisements. Thirdly, by employing new practices, the company often encourages experimentation and innovation. Fourthly, in a scenario similar to COVID-19, the company can permit proactiveness to exhibit resilience (Bicer, 2021). Lastly, a company might encourage people to take risks by entering into high-risk agreements with rivals (Mustafa et al., 2022). Businesses might gain a lasting competitive advantage by fostering (Pratono et al., 2019). A key component of enhancing a company's strategic advantages is EO, which may also boost creative output. Businesses that prioritize entrepreneurship are more successful than those that don't (Abdulrab et al., 2021). An efficient EO would provide SMEs with a competitive edge in the marketplace and improve their business performance. Additionally, when SMEs embraced EOs, they enhanced their sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) and improved their overall company performance (Elgarhy & Abou-Shouk, 2023; Herzallah et al., 2025a; Zaki et al., 2025). As CEOs plan to do something different and seize opportunities that other companies cannot, EO is a crucial idea. Since practically all hotels offer the same goods and services, it can be challenging to separate oneself from the hotel market (Sarya et al., 2022). EO has a chief and favorable impact on SCA. To enhance SCA in their operations and survive in the current competitive business market, managers and individuals should take proactive steps to seize opportunities that foster creativity and competitive aggression (Akani et al., 2022). Some recent evidence from meta-analyses and review articles also explored the role of green or strategic EO in improving multiscale sustainable performance, using a proxy for sustainability-anchored advantage, thereby bolstering the nexus (Khalifa et al., 2025b; Öztürk et al., 2024; Aloulou et al., 2024).

The key to developing an SCA is controlling assets and gaining an advantage over competitors. Among these resources, perceptions of corporate innovation and behaviours demonstrating strategic agility are significant. It is anticipated that responsiveness and innovation in the face of turbulence will lead to a notable boost in business performance (Yildiz & Aykanat, 2021). Because it helps businesses withstand market shocks, organizational agility is crucial during crises. This is because agility can turn new industry-wide obstacles into possibilities, giving businesses an edge over their competitors (Bicer, 2021). Moreover, the significance of managerial competencies and capabilities in procuring, developing, and implementing organizational resources, as well as in converting these assets into targeted capabilities capable of yielding enduring CA (Dubey et al., 2018). Creating hospitality and services research shows agile hotels better capture latent market needs and translate innovation efforts into outcomes; research in allied fields links agility to stronger innovative/proactive orientations, with agility potentially initiating EO rather than merely being an outcome of it. Reciprocal effects are thus plausible, yet positioning STA as an antecedent enabler of EO is theoretically sound and increasingly apparent in contemporary service contexts (Cubillas-Para et al., 2025; Paulino et al., 2025). The goal of RBV theory is to comprehend how an organization's distinct assets and competencies support its CA (Khairy et al., 2023; Zaki et al., 2025). STA is a tool that the company may use to get a competitive edge. Writers argue over how market factors like competitiveness, sustainability, and technology affect their work. To thrive, one must adapt to the sector's changing dynamics, and the author proposes that STA offers an opportunity to develop and expand CA (Lungu, 2020). Agility translates resources and plans into timely reconfiguration—exactly what sustains advantage amidst turbulence. Multi-sectoral or country-based studies (including Middle East contexts) reported positive effects of SA on competitive advantage and performance, with some identifying sustainability-based advantage as the mechanism (e.g., through strategic renewal or environmental management) (Alkandi & Helmi, 2024; Al Shawabkeh, 2024). Hospitality-specific studies also link agility to hotels' long-term competitiveness. Together, these findings justify a strong positive STA→SCA relationship. Thus, the following hypotheses have been developed:

- H4:** EO significantly influences SCA.
- H5:** STA significantly influences EO.
- H6:** STA Significantly Influences SCA.

## 2.3. Mediating Role of EO and STA

The foundation for entrepreneurial actions and choices may come from an attitude toward entrepreneurial conduct. As a result, in situations where the viewpoint of one's immediate social circle is influential, it may affect an individual's conviction in recognizing and cultivating business ideas (Martins & Perez, 2020). Businesses that expand internationally acquire expertise in identifying and tapping into new markets. As people gain greater proficiency in these areas, the uncertainty in subsequent attempts decreases, and they acquire the entrepreneurial skills and capacities to handle it effectively. Businesses feel more comfortable taking on new projects and risks when they have greater expertise and less uncertainty, which leads to a higher degree of EO. EO is characterized by a willingness to take chances to create novel product concepts, methodologies,

and procedures, to refresh existing products, and to be more proactive than competitors in seeing and seizing unexplored market opportunities (Genc et al., 2019). High-tech companies that use EO have seen improvements in their ability to innovate products and processes. Additionally, they found that firms that actively compete in a rapidly changing environment and promote competitive aggression achieve better innovation performance (Al-Jinini et al., 2019). SP influences SCA through EO by leveraging entrepreneurial activities, and it converts strategic activities and intentions into valuation with an innovative touch. This overall activity also occurs during the dynamic period of market shifting from orthodox to a modern, sustainable, agile stage, where SP is proactive, taking entrepreneurial initiatives that mediate the firm's ability to cultivate unique capabilities leading to SCA (Dini et al., 2025; Çelikel, 2025; Mehta et al., 2025; Bakashaba & Bindeeba, 2025).

Certain studies claim that generating CA improves a company's strategic agility and performance. One way to supply CA is through STA. To guarantee STA, it is imperative to assess both internal and external environments consistently, promptly obtain and use information, and promptly adapt to market developments (Kale et al., 2019). Synergy can be achieved through partner cooperation, which speeds up the decision-making process. Working with partners allows businesses to leverage each other's resources and expertise when implementing joint projects, a valuable tactic for increasing business agility. Collaborations with agile companies encourage partners to develop comparable levels of skills, knowledge, and adaptability within their businesses to meet the ever-evolving needs of their clients and the market (Kurniawan et al., 2021). By broadening the company's repertoire of competitive moves and the types of suitable reactions to shifting surroundings, agility can boost CA (Cubillas-Para et al., 2025; Abdalla et al., 2025). In hotel samples, agility continues to appear as a mediating dynamic capability converting structured managerial systems into improved performance: organizational agility mediates quality/management systems' impact on performance in Spanish hotels; design-strategy work demonstrates agility mediating strategy processes to new-product outcomes; and hotel research confirms agility's direct association with competitive/sustainable advantage (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2024; Lai et al., 2025).

Agile companies can adapt to ever-changing conditions and take innovative steps to manage the risks and uncertainties of the market. Agility will rise in tandem with a stronger market focus. The impact of agility on marketing performance is substantial (Nurcholis, 2020). The link between technology uncertainty and organizational innovation in the hotel industry is influenced by organizational agility. Furthermore, gaining an advantage over competitors may be significantly aided by organizational agility (Shajrawi & Aburub, 2023). Thus, the following hypotheses are developed:

**H7:** The relationship between SP and SCA is mediated by EO.

**H8:** The relationship between STA and SCA is mediated by EO.

**H9:** The relationship between SP and SCA is mediated by STA.

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. Sampling procedure

This study gathered information from several employee tiers in two major cities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Makkah and Madinah. Some inclusion criteria are followed, including a minimum of 30 rooms, more than 2 years of continuous operation, active participation in 1 or more OTAs, and a senior manager with knowledge of strategic processes. We excluded hotels undergoing extensive refurbishment or an ownership change during data collection to avoid deviant strategic routines.

With a stratified approach (by star rating, chain affiliation, and city: Riyadh, Jeddah, Makkah/Madinah, Eastern Province), we drew a frame of eligible properties and invited hotels at random by email and phone follow-ups. The hospitality sector created over 700,000 jobs in 2023, up 37% from 2019 levels, driven by the expansion of various hospitality services and the overall recovery from COVID-19. As of September 2023, Makkah's hotel occupancy rate was up 5.9 percentage points year-on-year, while the average occupancy rate in Madinah increased by 10.1 percentage points (Research & Markets, 2024).

Then, the questionnaire was distributed to the hotel managers themselves and disseminated to sub-management teams. After omitting response errors and duplicate responses, this study selected 286 employees as the sample, yielding a response rate of 72%. 83.92% of the 286 participants in the current research on Saudi hotel demographics are men, while 64.33% are married, indicating a male-oriented working environment. The majority of participants (46.15%) were aged 21-29.

A bachelor's degree was the most common educational attainment among respondents (54.55%), followed by high school education (26.92%). 34.27% had more than seven years of job experience, while 30.07% had less than four years. Overall, the study collected data across several regions to reduce bias and ensure the generalizability of the sampling, leading to better responses. The sample size of 286 is sufficient and meets the criteria for running PLS-SEM tests. The research has also supported the recommendations of Zaki & Elnagar (2025), and Hair et al. (2021) who maintained that 100 is a sufficient minimum sample size and thus guarantees good results in the context of SEM analysis. A larger sample size enables advanced data analysis techniques, such as structural equation modeling (SEM), which, in turn, facilitates testing assumptions about variable dependencies. Testing for differences in average answers between groups of people who completed the questionnaire at different times was performed using the t-test. The results show no identifiable differences in the means, indicating that responses were not significantly different across survey administrations. The questionnaire consisted of 41 core questions; five were demographic questions on gender, age, experience level, education, and management status. The overall time to complete the questionnaire was about 15 minutes under privacy. The freedom to withdraw during the survey was emphasized, and the participation was of free will. The majority of the items in the questionnaire were closed-ended questions.

Follow-up calls were also made to ensure participation. A pilot test with twenty scholars was conducted to ensure that the research variables were well understood. The pilot test proved that all respondents had a complete understanding of the research variables. The format of the questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, a cover letter outlining the goal of this survey, providing contact information, and focusing on the hotel's properties was introduced. The second section aimed to

collect the participants' perspectives on SP, AT, CA, IN, PR, IT, SA, DM, AA, and SC, utilizing a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). PLS-SEM is considered an appropriate technique for analyzing structural models with many variables and direct and indirect pathways. Several studies, especially those related to tourism and hospitality, make extensive use of it (Becker et al., 2023; Elnagar et al., 2025; Herzallah et al., 2025b; Khalifa et al., 2025).

## 2. Survey measures

The researcher extracted relevant items from the literature to measure the constructs of interest. SP was assembled from ample research evidence (Boyd & Reuning-Elliott, 1998; Lim et al., 2021; Nowak, 2021). This construct is more structured, empirical, and integrative than most prior models, which may have been lacking in one or more of these characteristics.

This model emphasizes the importance of measurement and adaptability in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Several key facets are addressed in this construct, including mission statement, trend analysis, action planning, long-term goals, and liquidity concentration. This factor is inscribed under six items (SP1-SP6). Similarly, SCA is also derived by focusing on relevant prior studies and ensembled with four variables (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020; Wu & Chen, 2012).

This term refers to a set of unique attributes or capabilities that enable a firm to outperform its rivals for an extended period. This quality can be addressed by attempting several strategies from the managerial or corporate side. Other competitors cannot easily imitate genuinely sustainable competitive advantages; therefore, these companies can sustain their superior performance in the marketplace over time. Firms experiencing SCA routinely outperform all their rivals and may enjoy profit and market share premiums. Such advantages may be related to proprietary technology, preferred access to raw materials, strong brands, or superior customer service (Setyaningrum & Muafi, 2022). EO refers to a firm's disposition toward innovation, risk, and market opportunity in strategic management and entrepreneurship (Rezaei & Ortt, 2018).

By understanding and materializing the dimensions of EO-risk-taking (RT1-RT3), autonomy (AT1-AT3), competitive aggressiveness (CA1-CA3), innovativeness (IN1-IN3), and proactiveness (PR1-PR3), firms can create a culture that nurtures sustained innovation and superior performance. STA refers to an organization's ability to predict, move faster, and innovate in an ever-changing commercial environment. In light of that, organizations should enhance their ability to understand their environment to sustain competitive growth. It will not only help overcome the challenges an organization faces but also position it well for prospects. This study conceptualized the construct in terms of three dimensions: sensing agility (SA1-SA3), decision-making agility (DM1-DM4), and acting agility (AA1-AA6), each comprising 3, 4, and 6 items, respectively.

## FINDINGS

### 4.1 Measurement model analysis

The examination of the measurement model, also referred to as the outer model, involved model validation through assessments of convergent and discriminant validity for the latent variables. Hair et al. (2017) evaluated construct reliability using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR) ratings. For convergent validity, factor loadings needed to exceed 0.50, and both the average variance extracted (AVE) and Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) had to be greater than 0.50 and 0.70, respectively. Table 1 presents the relevant metrics, including factor loadings ranging from 0.605 to 0.903,  $\alpha$  coefficients from 0.731 to 0.847, CR coefficients from 0.755 to 0.969, and AVEs from 0.514 to 0.699. All measures exceeded the recommended thresholds, confirming the validity of the constructs. To assess potential bias, common method bias (CMB) is examined, as the VIF was below the threshold of 3.3 (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 1. Construct reliability and validity (first-order constructs)

Constructs	Items	Loadings (>0.50)	M	SD	A (>0.70)	CR (>0.70)	AVE (>0.50)
Strategic Planning (SP)	SP1	0.625	5.911	0.731	0.834	0.858	0.551
	SP2	0.764					
	SP3	0.755					
	SP4	0.605					
	SP5	0.852					
	SP6	0.817					
Autonomy (AT)	AT1	0.695	5.086	1.160	0.821	0.855	0.514
	AT2	0.649					
	AT3	0.678					
	AT4	0.809					
	AT5	0.684					
	AT6	0.774					
Competitive aggressiveness (CA)	CA1	0.831	6.390	0.781	0.752	0.852	0.645
	CA2	0.684					
	CA3	0.881					
Innovativeness (IN)	IN1	0.839	5.011	1.198	0.760	0.763	0.678
	IN2	0.868					
	IN3	0.759					
Proactiveness (PR)	PR1	0.810	5.836	0.885	0.762	0.825	0.674
	PR2	0.748					
	PR3	0.898					
Risk-taking (RT)	RT1	0.738	4.862	1.230	0.803	0.969	0.699
	RT2	0.860					
	RT3	0.901					

Sensing agility (SA)	SA1	0.778	5.654	0.678	0.717	0.755	0.638
	SA2	0.877					
	SA3	0.733					
Decision making agility (DM)	DM1	0.789	5.716	0.703	0.785	0.787	0.607
	DM2	0.761					
	DM3	0.769					
	DM4	0.797					
Acting agility (AA)	AA1	0.699	5.750	0.774	0.817	0.822	0.524
	AA2	0.739					
	AA3	0.719					
	AA4	0.749					
	AA5	0.618					
	AA6	0.807					
Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA)	SCA1	0.883	5.734	0.936	0.847	0.863	0.690
	SCA2	0.903					
	SCA3	0.706					
	SCA4	0.816					

In addition to convergent validity, the study demonstrated discriminant validity using three methodologies, as shown in Tables 2 and 3. The square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded the correlations between constructs. This demonstrates that the notions are distinct, indicating discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Elnagar & Aljuwaiber, 2025). The heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio for all constructs fell below the acceptable level of 0.90. This contributes to evidence of discriminant validity. Then, both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio analysis confirmed the measurement model's discriminant validity.

The model's constructs were unique, capturing various aspects of the phenomenon under study. The second-order constructs were constructed and confirmed in two steps. EO was constructed using AT, CA, IN, PR and RT, whereas STA was constructed using AA, DM. and SA. Second-order constructs were created using a two-stage, disjoint approach, as described by Sarstedt et al. (2019). According to Table 4, all reflective constructs demonstrated convergent validity. After the second-order constructs were created, their discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT Ratio. Hair et al. (2019) found that the results shown in Table 5 were also valid.

Table 2. Discriminant validity results using cross-loading

	AA	AT	CA	DM	IN	PR	RT	SA	SCA	SP
AA1	0.699	0.322	0.423	0.235	0.184	0.282	0.207	0.195	0.511	0.525
AA2	0.739	0.191	0.251	0.324	0.344	0.258	0.338	0.301	0.462	0.430
AA3	0.719	0.255	0.178	0.213	0.243	0.214	0.301	0.286	0.444	0.446
AA4	0.749	0.267	0.384	0.282	0.314	0.351	0.267	0.259	0.487	0.531
AA5	0.618	0.167	0.201	0.321	0.358	0.308	0.255	0.299	0.436	0.435
AA6	0.807	0.319	0.338	0.326	0.334	0.354	0.310	0.279	0.554	0.600
AT1	0.374	0.695	0.106	0.016	0.046	0.203	0.102	-0.050	0.248	0.253
AT2	0.183	0.649	0.113	0.036	-0.022	0.209	0.079	-0.014	0.124	0.214
AT3	0.209	0.678	0.165	-0.037	-0.125	0.227	0.002	0.059	0.127	0.190
AT4	0.285	0.809	0.256	0.064	0.080	0.272	0.074	0.029	0.283	0.366
AT5	0.173	0.684	0.119	0.068	-0.024	0.262	-0.003	-0.003	0.171	0.248
AT6	0.248	0.774	0.279	0.005	0.008	0.157	-0.062	0.039	0.331	0.300
CA1	0.353	0.224	0.831	0.179	0.074	0.210	0.154	0.163	0.311	0.384
CA2	0.250	0.150	0.684	0.144	-0.021	0.065	0.014	0.098	0.139	0.271
CA3	0.372	0.236	0.881	0.171	0.114	0.204	0.007	0.082	0.430	0.428
DM1	0.266	0.028	0.146	0.789	0.318	0.243	0.293	0.234	0.258	0.309
DM2	0.249	-0.019	0.068	0.761	0.246	0.196	0.244	0.287	0.228	0.323
DM3	0.354	0.022	0.177	0.769	0.294	0.272	0.254	0.332	0.235	0.361
DM4	0.353	0.079	0.235	0.797	0.262	0.245	0.263	0.354	0.261	0.342
IN1	0.325	-0.035	0.044	0.289	0.839	0.297	0.456	0.192	0.316	0.225
IN2	0.306	-0.034	-0.013	0.284	0.868	0.212	0.477	0.163	0.348	0.232
IN3	0.376	0.107	0.207	0.316	0.759	0.310	0.492	0.264	0.325	0.341
PR1	0.343	0.260	0.135	0.255	0.333	0.810	0.271	0.182	0.255	0.354
PR2	0.273	0.169	0.123	0.250	0.184	0.748	0.242	0.118	0.224	0.239
PR3	0.381	0.284	0.254	0.259	0.290	0.898	0.326	0.212	0.368	0.398
RT1	0.210	-0.098	-0.038	0.291	0.466	0.143	0.738	0.081	0.159	0.108
RT2	0.289	-0.014	0.039	0.315	0.491	0.278	0.860	0.139	0.203	0.211
RT3	0.403	0.114	0.118	0.274	0.506	0.371	0.901	0.185	0.364	0.383
SA1	0.274	-0.005	0.104	0.256	0.186	0.107	0.090	0.778	0.224	0.338
SA2	0.352	0.065	0.131	0.351	0.267	0.221	0.202	0.877	0.316	0.369
SA3	0.247	-0.046	0.085	0.311	0.124	0.171	0.107	0.733	0.222	0.275
SCA1	0.557	0.266	0.372	0.246	0.337	0.239	0.280	0.261	0.883	0.620
SCA2	0.559	0.302	0.368	0.260	0.369	0.309	0.267	0.264	0.903	0.611
SCA3	0.435	0.099	0.251	0.284	0.305	0.276	0.279	0.278	0.706	0.454
SCA4	0.651	0.390	0.358	0.269	0.322	0.356	0.249	0.283	0.816	0.599

SP1	0.484	0.129	0.169	0.401	0.292	0.349	0.309	0.422	0.438	0.625
SP2	0.505	0.315	0.339	0.299	0.287	0.390	0.270	0.282	0.483	0.764
SP3	0.545	0.316	0.429	0.312	0.215	0.346	0.253	0.264	0.546	0.755
SP4	0.343	0.144	0.318	0.270	0.159	0.164	0.135	0.213	0.314	0.605
SP5	0.591	0.364	0.431	0.337	0.243	0.337	0.253	0.301	0.603	0.852
SP6	0.553	0.351	0.362	0.307	0.244	0.239	0.210	0.357	0.621	0.817

Table 3. Discriminant validity results using HTMT and Fornell-Larcker criterion

HTMT Criterion										
Constructs	AA	AT	CA	DM	IN	PR	RT	SA	SCA	SP
AA										
AT	0.408									
CA	0.500	0.291								
DM	0.490	0.090	0.259							
IN	0.522	0.142	0.161	0.466						
PR	0.510	0.380	0.240	0.400	0.432					
RT	0.442	0.147	0.123	0.435	0.737	0.394				
SA	0.480	0.097	0.188	0.511	0.328	0.272	0.199			
SCA	0.797	0.340	0.446	0.391	0.501	0.428	0.352	0.411		
SP	0.821	0.419	0.556	0.538	0.409	0.505	0.339	0.534	0.802	
Fornell-Larcker criterion										
Constructs	AA	AT	CA	DM	IN	PR	RT	SA	SCA	SP
AA	0.724									
AT	0.355	0.717								
CA	0.416	0.262	0.803							
DM	0.392	0.037	0.204	0.779						
IN	0.407	0.014	0.094	0.360	0.823					
PR	0.410	0.296	0.221	0.307	0.330	0.821				
RT	0.385	0.038	0.072	0.339	0.577	0.346	0.836			
SA	0.370	0.015	0.136	0.386	0.250	0.214	0.175	0.798		
SCA	0.670	0.332	0.411	0.316	0.401	0.356	0.321	0.324	0.830	
SP	0.689	0.381	0.466	0.428	0.323	0.412	0.322	0.413	0.693	0.742

Table 4. Construct reliability and validity after generating second-order constructs

Constructs	Items	Scale type	Loadings	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	Constructs	Items	Scale type	Loadings	$\alpha$	CR	AVE
SP	SP1	Reflective	0.640	0.834	0.851	0.551	SCA	SCA1	Reflective	0.882	0.847	0.861	0.690
	SP2		0.771					SCA2		0.902			
	SP3		0.756					SCA3		0.712			
	SP4		0.610					SCA4		0.813			
	SP5		0.845					AT		0.484			
	SP6		0.804					CA		0.559			
STA	AA	Reflective	0.869	0.651	0.801	0.576	EO	IN	Reflective	0.666	0.592	0.755	0.386
	DM		0.718					PR		0.717			
	SA		0.676					RT		0.652			

Table 5. Discriminant validity results in the second-order construct

HTMT Criterion					Fornell-Larcker criterion				
	EO	STA	SP	SCA		EO	STA	SP	SCA
EO					EO	0.621			
STA	0.911				STA	0.623	0.759		
SP	0.871	0.902			SP	0.620	0.706	0.742	
SCA	0.829	0.768	0.802		SCA	0.592	0.625	0.689	0.831

Table 6. Direct hypotheses results

Paths	Std beta	Std error	t-value	p-value	f2	Q2	VIF	Decision
H1. SP -> EO	0.359	0.365	5.096	0.000	0.118	0.375	1.992	Supported
H2. SP -> SCA	0.420	0.422	5.548	0.000	0.171	0.466	2.228	Supported
H3. SP -> STA	0.706	0.709	26.589	0.000	0.992	0.479	1.000	Supported
H4. EO -> SCA	0.208	0.213	3.386	0.001	0.051	0.368	1.826	Supported
H5. STA -> EO	0.369	0.370	6.243	0.000	0.125	0.432	1.992	Supported
H6. STA -> SCA	0.199	0.195	3.154	0.002	0.038	0.388	2.241	Supported

### 4.2 Structural model analysis

The structural path analysis results, presented in Table 6, show significant relationships between the model's components, with all hypotheses (H1–H6) supported. Specifically, H1 (SP → EO) has a standardized beta of 0.359 (t-value = 5.096, p-value = 0.000), H2 (SP → SCA) shows a beta of 0.420 (t-value = 5.548, p-value = 0.000), and H3 (SP → STA) reveals a strong beta of 0.706 (t-value = 26.589, p-value = 0.000). H4 (EO → SCA) also supports the hypothesis with a beta of 0.208 (t-value = 3.386, p-value = 0.001), while H5 (STA → EO) and H6 (STA → SCA) further confirm significant relationships with

betas of 0.369 (t-value = 6.243, p-value = 0.000) and 0.199 (t-value = 3.154, p-value = 0.002), respectively. The results for the indirect paths show significant support for all hypotheses. Specifically, H7 (SP → EO → SCA) has a standardized beta of 0.075, t-value of 2.684, and p-value of 0.007, H8 (STA → EO → SCA) shows a standardized beta of 0.077, t-value of 2.855, and p-value of 0.004, and H9 (SP → STA → SCA) has a standardized beta of 0.140, t-value of 3.173, and p-value of 0.002. These results indicate that all indirect paths are statistically significant, confirming support for the proposed relationships.

An Importance-Performance Matrix Analysis (IPMA) was conducted within Partial Least Squares (PLS) with SCA as the outcome construct. Latent construct scores were rescaled to a 100 to 0 range for performance calculation. The results, shown in Table 8 reveal that SP is the most important construct for SCA, with a total effect of 0.689 and performance of 79.760. IPMA highlights the need to improve Strategic Planning to enhance SCA.

Table 7. Indirect hypotheses results

Paths	Std beta	Std error	t-value	P-value	Decision
H7. SP -> EO -> SCA	0.075	0.078	2.684	0.007	Supported
H8. STA -> EO -> SCA	0.077	0.079	2.855	0.004	Supported
H9. SP -> STA -> SCA	0.140	0.138	3.173	0.002	Supported

Table 8. IPMA for Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Latent constructs	Total effect of the construct SCA (Importance)	Index values (Performance)
EO	0.208	74.874
STA	0.276	66.066
SP	0.689	79.760

**DISCUSSION**

The hotel industry in the twenty-first century is changing swiftly. Customer engagement in the company's value-generating process and expectations are changing.

Innovation is critical to an organization's long-term survival due to the rapid pace of economic change and the fierce competition that ensues (Nasifoglu Elidemir et al., 2020). The study aims to explore how SP can be integrated to enhance sustainable competitive advantage. The study tested nine hypotheses, with entrepreneurship orientation and strategic agility as mediators. The result showed that all the hypotheses are significant and conclusive. Firstly, SP has a significant and positive influence on EO, SCA, and STA, which aligns with previous literature (Alosani et al., 2019; Dwikat et al., 2022; Samad & Ahmed, 2021; Van Ruler, 2021).

According to George et al. (2019), SP helps an organization develop plans that are more profitable than competitors' and influences the development of its goals and objectives. The leader anticipates and develops operational plans by comparing what other organizations have achieved, and then allocates resources. Systematic SP provides executives with the skills and methods they need to accomplish long-term CA. Businesses may strengthen themselves by generating value and building, recognizing, securing, and controlling their competitive edge in the market (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). Another consistent study by Arifiani et al. (2021) found that to handle potentially disruptive events such as new regulations, companies need to become more skilled at SP and more flexible and creative. Balen et al., 2023 found that the positions of managed businesses will increase further if they can expand sustainably. Typically, entrepreneurs ask the neighborhood to help with production-related tasks. When an organization is agile, it can grow and prosper in dynamic, uncertain circumstances.

According to Lerai et al. (2023), planning through leadership is increasingly recognized as one of the most essential drivers of the execution of corporate strategies. Establishing institutional boundaries, effectively managing the institution's resource pool, upholding a fruitful institutional tradition, and emphasizing ethical behaviour are among the planning-related tasks. To communicate corporate goals and the alternative courses of action to achieve them, both large and small firms should invest in SP across a range of business situations (Mulyaningsih et al., 2021). A set of guidelines and practices known as "EO" encourages a company to engage in entrepreneurial activities. These findings are also in line with recent studies (Ho et al., 2023; Christofi et al., 2023; Lazarte-Aguirre, 2024; Cheng et al., 2025; Lai et al., 2025). EO (innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking) enables businesses to discover and create opportunities ahead of the competition, building distinctive offerings and reputation advantages that accumulate into sustainable advantage. New evidence from Saudi firms' industry finds direct positive connections between EO and competitive advantage (PLS-SEM on 307 firms), in line with RBV/DCV reasoning for services contexts (Otache et al., 2025; Öztürk et al., 2024; Aloulou et al., 2024).

Secondly, EO significantly affects SCA, with a positive and significant effect. A similar study by Rizki et al. (2023) concluded that entrepreneurial leadership skills have a noteworthy and favorable effect on long-term CA. It would seem that strong entrepreneurial leadership skills help these organizations develop a long-term competitive edge. According to Anak Agung Sagung & Sri Darma (2020), one of the most crucial responsibilities of a company or organization's leader is to encourage competition among its members. The focus of entrepreneurial-based leadership is on exchange-based or bargaining-

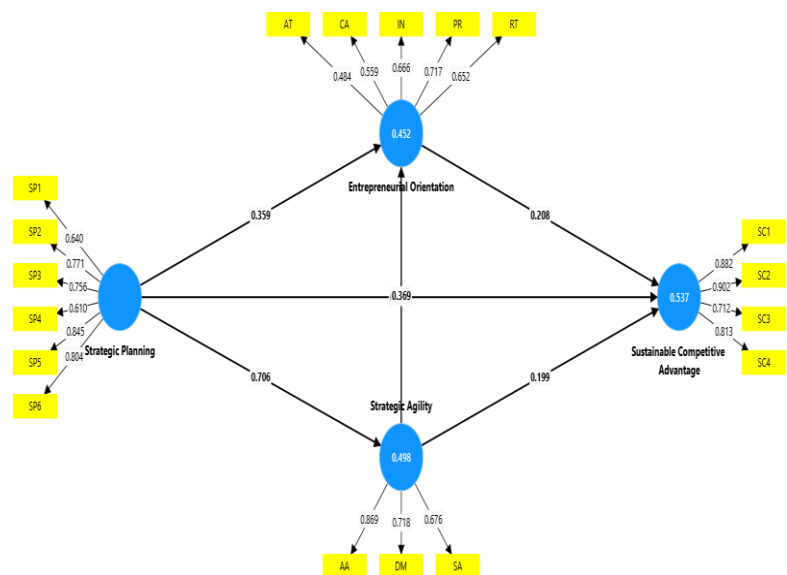


Figure 2. Measurement model diagram

based interactions between managers and staff. This communication is predicated on an understanding of the duties that need to be completed and gratitude for their accomplishment. According to Seepana et al. (2021), OE, strategic aim, and potential absorptive capacity may positively affect innovation outcomes and operational success. Inter-organizational learning is enhanced, and a firm's SCA is positively affected when a responder recognizes an exceptional EO. This finding supports a previous study that suggested businesses might obtain a long-term CA by encouraging environmentally aware EO (Pratono et al., 2019). In hospitality, researchers illustrate the connection of green or strategic EO to stronger multidimensional sustainability performance-financial, environmental, and social; depicting an EO-driven route to sustainability-based advantage. Hotel-focused studies also reveal that green EO interacts with innovation practices (e.g., green open innovation, analytics) to forward sustainable performance, corroborating the EO → SCA connection in lodging contexts (Mondal et al., 2024).

Thirdly, STA positively influences EO and SCA, and the results are positive and significant. The findings are consistent with those of Battour et al. (2021), who found that, in an uncertain corporate climate where businesses are competing, strategic agility is critical to their market survival. In a highly competitive climate, a firm needs more than just resources to achieve exceptional results over the long run. The secret to SCA is creating fresh resources. Organizational agility is critical in times of crisis, as it can help organizations weather market shocks. This is because agility may convert the sector's emerging barriers into opportunities, providing companies with CA (Bicer, 2021). According to Lungu (2020), The Corporation utilizes STA as a tool to gain a competitive advantage. Writers disagree over how market forces such as technology, sustainability, and competition shape their writing. To prosper, one must adapt to the industry's shifting dynamics, and the author suggests that STA offers an opportunity to advance and broaden CA. Research on how organizational agility is influenced by transactional leadership in the travel and hospitality industry, and how ambidexterity and organizational trust moderate this relationship, provides support for the principles of the RBV. RBV theory aims to understand how an organization's unique assets and abilities support its CA (Khairy et al., 2023). STA facilitates EO by enabling firms to perceive and seize new opportunities, thereby fostering rapid development of entrepreneurial mindsets. Agility enhances firms' entrepreneurial orientation by enabling rapid decision-making, resource reallocation, and the flexibility required for entrepreneurial pursuits. Research indicates that dynamic capabilities, such as agility, infuse entrepreneurial mindsets, fostering risk-taking and innovation in hospitality (Majeed et al., 2025; Suder et al., 2025; Otache et al., 2025).

Finally, the mediating effects of EO and STA are accurate and significant, consistent with previous literature (Genc et al., 2019; Kale et al., 2019; Martins & Perez, 2020; Nurcholis, 2020). Leaders must build new skills and make efficient use of both internal and external capabilities to create a competitive edge. To thrive in a constantly changing environment, executives need to acquire new skills that complement the company's unique approach. To adapt to environmental changes, leaders' competencies should also be updated regularly (Harrison et al., 2016). To meet the constantly changing needs of their clients and the market, businesses can achieve synergy through partner collaboration, thereby expediting decision-making. Collaborating with agile companies encourages partners to develop comparable levels of skills, knowledge, and adaptability within their businesses to meet the ever-evolving needs of their clients and the market (Kurniawan et al., 2021). Across recent service and hospitality literature, entrepreneurial orientation (EO) tends to work as an intervening mechanism between strategic capabilities and sustainable advantage. Empirical frameworks show that well-timed strategic planning (SP) provides the framework and capacities that induce EO behavior, which subsequently generates innovation and sustainability-based advantage, conforming to H7 (SP → EO → SCA) (Aloulou et al., 2024; Kukanja, 2024). Similarly, STA shapes flexible patterns of sensing and seizing opportunities to build EO; innovative tourism firms and hotels are more innovative and proactive, thereby confirming EO's mediating role between STA and SCA (H8) (Paulino et al., 2025). Finally, agility itself is an active-capability bridge, bridging intended plans to sustainable competitive outcomes: STA bridges the SP → SCA relationship (H9) by enabling rapid reconfiguration of resources and continuous strategic renewal within chaotic hospitality environments (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2025; Al Shawabkeh, 2024). Overall, these linkages account for how SP and STA, through EO and SCA to create sustainable advantage, advancing RBV/DCV theory in service environments.

### Research Implications

The study's findings offer vital guidelines for hotel managers, policymakers, and international hospitality chains to create sustainable competitive advantage in chaotic, dynamic environments. This investigation offers essential theoretical and practical contributions as well as insights on how SCA might be improved. First, by employing a longitudinal study or cross-sectional design, the relationships may be confirmed in subsequent investigations. Additionally, this research employed a quantitative methodology to provide insights into the relationships among variables that may influence competitive advantage in the hotel sector (Otache et al., 2025). Second, the results are mainly based on hotels in Saudi Arabia; future researchers can employ these variables as RBV internal factors in other contexts, such as manufacturing industries and service companies. Third, future researchers might investigate additional contextual factors not included in our study, such as the organization's character, the type of service companies, and regional variations. SP procedures should be established, well-documented by management, and accompanied by a policy outlining what should be done, by whom, and when in the event of an emergency.

For Hotel Managers: Hotel managers can demonstrate their ability to apply the convergent model of EO, SA, and SP to enhance organizational resilience and adaptive capacity. In line with this, administrative SP and its rules can provide the necessary direction and resource alignment. Still, a culture of entrepreneurship, comprising innovation, proactiveness, and rational risk-taking, ensures that an organization continually seeks new opportunities (Khalifa et al., 2025b; Ejigu, 2023). Building SA through adaptive decision-making and rapid resource reallocation enables hotels to respond quickly to shifting customer demand and market disturbances, e.g., due to technological innovation or global crises. Evidence supports the conclusion that entrepreneurial activity, combined with proactive environmental sensing, significantly drives hospitality company performance and innovation effectiveness, enabling companies to gain market competitiveness (Hartono et al., 2024;

Sarya et al., 2022). For Policymakers: Policymakers and public officials have greater opportunities to apply these empirical outputs to support groups in optimizing their functional EO and relevant organogram. Keep updating with modern IT-based knowledge and devices, ensuring accessibility and proper training management, to tailor managerial bodies with an innovative mechanism that can help companies counter external uncertainties. Policymakers may also improve their performance by acknowledging academia-industry-government collaborations to build sectoral capacities in EO, SP, and other top-notch management, in line with the goal of uplifting rational occupational productivity (Lazarte-Aguirre, 2024; Öztürk et al., 2024).

For Multinational Hospitality Groups: Multinational hotel chains and hotel groups may implement the SP-EO-STA integrated model as their corporate strategy and local application in very diversified and dynamic economies. Flexibility and EO, as central concerns, help subsidiaries balance global strategies with local customers' needs and competitive conditions (Zeng, 2024; Tajeddini et al., 2020). This accommodative model facilitates continuous renewal and innovation, which are required to lead in diverse cultures and turbulent weather.

## CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of this study are limited to the hotel sectors of Makkah and Madinah and can't be extrapolated to other hotels or businesses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Businesses have faced rapid, significant changes and intense competition as a result of globalization over the past few decades. The highly competitive hospitality industry poses challenges for most large- and medium-sized businesses (Aamer et al., 2020). Thus, creating an environment that supports sustainable growth should be the aim of current endeavours. The concept of sustainability, which ensures that people and the environment can coexist peacefully without causing ecological disruption, can be realized through several strategic development efforts (Agus Harjoto & Salas, 2017). So, the goal of the study is to examine the relationship between SP and SCA. Moreover, the influence of EO and STA as mediators has been analyzed, a factor not previously considered in previous studies. Although previous literature considered the variables to examine the relationships, there is a lack of research in the context of hotels in Saudi Arabia. Our results also align with RBV/DCV hospitality developments, which emphasize the transition from resource stock statics to capability chains: SP as the upstream orchestrator, EO as the behavioral engine, and STA as the reconfiguration gearbox. Thereby, illustrating the mediating roles outlined in H7–H9 (SP→EO→SCA; STA→EO→SCA; SP→STA→SCA) (Kukanja, 2024; Hartono et al., 2024; Sarya et al., 2022).

This presentation aligns with modern hospitality strategy research on dynamic capabilities and with Middle Eastern evidence for agility-driven paths to lasting advantage. Methodologically, the model can be tested using current PLS-SEM practices (reliability/validity, collinearity, mediation bootstraps, predictive checks), confirming the empirical pattern as robust and decision-relevant to managers, policymakers, and international organizations operating in volatile demand cycles.

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