The Impact of Strategic Decisions on The Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott

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Abstract:

This study aims to examining the relationship between the impact of Strategic Decisions on The Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott. Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott is measured through dimensions such as Financing decisions, Supply Chain Optimization, Marketing and Branding Initiatives, Strategic Partnerships, Governmental Collaboration.

Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott is evaluated through the dimensions of Emphasis on Quality, Adaptive Pricing, Customer oriented, Diversification of Product Offerings. The study utilizes a descriptive analytical approach, relying on both secondary and primary data.

The study indicates a high level of availability of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott dimensions and found a high level of availability of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott dimensions. the results support the presence of statistically significant impacts between the Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott dimension and the Competitiveness of Local

Products Under the Boycott. The study recommends Emphasize Local Product Promotion, Integrated Decision-Making, Adaptive Marketing Strategies.

Keywords: Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott, Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott, Egyptian food product companies.

المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص العلاقة بين تأثير القرارات الاستراتيجية في ظل المقاطعة على تنافسية المنتجات المحلية في ظل المقاطعة، حيث تم قياس القرارات الاستراتيجية من خلال أبعاد مثل قرارات التمويل، تحسين سلسلة التوريد، المبادرات التسويقية وبناء العلامات التجارية، الشراكات الاستراتيجية، والتعاون الحكومي. كما تم قياس تنافسية المنتجات المحلية في ظل المقاطعة من خلال أبعاد التركيز على الجودة، والتسعير التكيفي، والتوجه نحو العميل، وتنويع عروض المنتجات، كما اعتمدت الدراسة على نهج وصفي تحليلي، باستخدام البيانات الثانوية والبيانات الأولية.

تشير نتائج الدراسة إلى وجود مستوى عالٍ من توفر أبعاد القرارات الاستراتيجية في ظل المقاطعة، كما توصلت إلى وجود مستوى عالٍ من توفر أبعاد تنافسية المنتجات المحلية في ظل المقاطعة. تدعم النتائج وجود تأثيرات إحصائية جوهرية بين أبعاد القرارات الاستراتيجية في ظل المقاطعة وتنافسية المنتجات المحلية في ظل المقاطعة، وتوصي الدراسة بتعزيز الترويج للمنتجات المحلية، واتخاذ قرارات متكاملة، واستراتيجيات تسويق مرنة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القرارات الاستراتيجية في ظل المقاطعة، تنافسية المنتجات المحلية في ظل المقاطعة، شركات المنتجات الغذائية المصرية.

1. Introduction

In an era were consumer activism and sociopolitical expressions shape global narratives, the act of boycotting stands as a potent

instrument for societal transformation. Boycotting manifests as a deliberate abstention, a conscious refusal to engage with specific products or services from targeted companies or countries, driven by the objective to incite change in their political actions or objectives. Within the nuanced landscape of the Egyptian market, such protests are not merely acts of rejection; they represent strategic manoeuvres aimed at applying pressure and conveying collective resistance, especially concerning issues like support for Palestine (Atanga, et al., 2022).

This form of protest holds significant weight in regions such as the Middle East, where countries like Egypt wield considerable purchasing power. One prominent example is the impact of a boycott on a global franchise like McDonald's in Egypt. Beyond individual actions, effective boycotts necessitate collective and coordinated efforts involving public participation and governmental engagement. The repercussions on employment are multifaceted, with potential risks of job losses counterbalanced by the prospect of robust frameworks for workers' rights mitigating these effects (Clarke, 2023).

The immediate consequences of boycotting franchises encompass a tangible reduction in demand and consumption, leading to increased layoffs and heightened strain on social welfare systems. This impact reverberates throughout the franchises' supply chains, particularly if deeply integrated with local industries. Conversely, local markets may witness a surge

in demand as consumers pivot towards domestic alternatives, albeit with challenges and uncertainties about long-term sustainability (Delacote, 2009).

Moreover, the response of Local industries to the market void created by a boycott varies, presenting both opportunities and obstacles. While some companies have reported notable sales increases, the overall capacity of Local industries to consistently fill this void remains uncertain, considering the significant market share held by boycotted companies.

Below is a table showing the most famous products that were subject to the boycott, the local products that replace them, and the company that produces these local products:

Table No. (1):

The most important local products and their boycotted Versus

N	Local Company	Local Product	Boycotted Company	Boycotted Product
1	Juhayna	Juhayna Yogurt Greek Yogurt Bekhero Dairy Zabado Rayeb Mix Juhayna Juice	Dannon	Whole Milk Yogurt, Low Fat Yogurt, Nonfat Yogurt, Fruit on the Bottom, Creamy Classic and Smoothies
2	Egypt Foods	Tiger Big Chips Jaguar Kalbaz Cono Cones & Popcorn Rusky	PepsiCo	Chipsy, Lay's, Doritos and Cheetos
3	El shamadan	El shamadan wafer biscuits El shamadan cake Nawaem biscuits	Edita	HOHOs, Twinkies, Molto and TODO
4	Spirospathis and Sina Cola	spirospathis Sina cola	Pepsi and Coca Cola	Pepsi Can, Coca Cola Can, Frutz, Mirinda, Mountain Dew, 7 Up, Lipton, Sprite and Fanta
5	Lacto Egypt	Lacto 1&2&3 Egy 1&2 Lacto Lf Lacto Ci 1&2	NIDO and Nestle	S-26 Progress Gold 3, Nido Plus, Nestle Cerelac, Nan 3, illuma 3 and Promise Pe Gold

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the data contained in the official websites of the companies.

This study aims to uncover the intricate dynamics at play within the Egyptian market concerning boycotting and its ramifications on the competitiveness of Local products. By examining the interplay between strategic decisions made by local companies to leverage the void created by the boycott of international companies supporting Israel and how this impacts the competitiveness of Local products is compelling.

The study aims to delve into the intricate interaction between these strategic decisions and the subsequent effects on the competitive capabilities of Local products in response to heightened demand resulting from the boycott. By exploring these dynamics within such volatile contexts, the research endeavours to unearth valuable insights into the strategies that foster adaptability, flexibility, and increased capacity for local products. This analysis seeks to bridge the gap in understanding how local companies navigate and exploit the market shifts caused by boycotts, thereby potentially reshaping the landscape of Local product competitiveness.

The comprehensive exploration of these dimensions within the Egyptian market can shed light on strategies that drive success in times of volatility and uncertainty, ultimately providing a roadmap for local businesses to enhance their competitiveness and adaptability amidst ever-evolving global socio-political landscapes.

2. Theoretical framework and previous studies:

Below are the most important previous studies related to the issue of the effect of the Strategic Decisions under the Boycott on Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott and the relationship between them to identify the most important topics presented, define the objectives and the most important results, comment on these studies and clarify the extent of their use, as well as when identifying the research gap, they are divided into the following axes:

2.1. Independent Variable: Strategic Decisions under the Boycott.

1- Boycott:

The boycott is the act of stopping to buy products or services from a company if one does not agree with a specific action, or even with the whole set of actions taken by a company. The reasons for the boycott may have roots on ideological questions, as part of a group; for economic aspects, considering an economic downturn, or because they feel exploited from a monopolistic market structure, for example. there are six types of boycotts: economical, religious, minority, environmental, relational, and labour boycott. Friedman's definition of labour boycott, however, ignores aspects of the management context of a company and their interaction and involvement with other stakeholders, at that time (Cruz, 2017).

2- Strategic Decisions

Managerial choices deemed as strategic encompass the allocation of significant resources, establishment of pivotal precedents, and guidance of consequential actions within a company. They serve as pivotal determinants shaping the overall trajectory of a firm. The mechanisms facilitating adept strategic decision-making significantly impact the outcomes within an organization, influencing its efficacy and productivity. These mechanisms are subject to the manager's accumulated knowledge, prior experiences, the contextual framework within the organization, and the inherent dynamics of the environment. Successful outcomes in decision-making are often defined by their reliability, adaptability, and contribution to performance metrics (Mitchell, et al., 2011).

Accordingly, the researcher can define the Strategic Decisions under the Boycott as follows:

"In the context of the ongoing boycott of foreign companies within Egypt, strategic decisions by local enterprises refer to purposeful managerial choices aimed at capitalizing on the void created by the boycott of international competitors. These decisions encompass the deliberate allocation of resources, formulation of strategic precedents, and implementation of impactful actions intended to exploit the market gap resulting from the absence or decreased presence of foreign firms. Such decisions serve as pivotal determinants steering the trajectory of

Local companies amidst this market disruption, influencing their competitive positioning and market share. The strategic decision-making process involves navigating the dynamic landscape influenced by consumer activism and ideological disagreements, while leveraging local advantages and resources to address consumer demands previously met by international competitors. The effectiveness of these strategic decisions lies in their ability to capitalize on the market void, enhance local product competitiveness, and establish sustainable market footholds, thereby reshaping the market dynamics within the context of the ongoing international company boycott in Egypt."

This definition specifically highlights how local companies in Egypt strategically manoeuvre to exploit the absence of international competitors due to the boycott, emphasizing their decision-making processes and the impact on the local market's competitive landscape.

2.2. Studies in Strategic Decisions under the Boycott:

Below are the most important studies related to the Strategic Decisions under the Boycott variable:

The study of **(Lasarov, et al., 2023),** investigated temporal dynamics of individual participation in boycotts, exploring reasons for declining consumer involvement post-initial surge in response to socially irresponsible company behavior. Incorporating findings from four distinct studies, it provided a multifaceted understanding of consumer behavior in boycotts over time.

Results revealed the significant impact of the perceived severity of an issue on initial participation, influencing subsequent boycotting behavior. Emotional factors (perceived severity, brand image) and practical factors (personal costs, perceived control) varied in effects. Fluctuations in boycotting behavior occurred over time, with self-improvement consistently motivating participation. Brand image showed diverse effects, control perception had mixed impacts, and personal costs had inconsistent effects across studies. Different consumer types demonstrated varied participation patterns (Deliberators, Apathetic individuals, Forgetters, Capitulated consumers). Frontline employees and perceived service quality were crucial factors, especially where employees significantly influenced customer perceptions. Prior knowledge of a boycott affected various factors but did not consistently bias results. A consistent decline in perceived severity and participation occurred from the heat-up to the cool-down phase, indicating a temporal decrease in consumer reactions. Coherent findings across studies indicated stability and applicability of identified factors influencing consumer boycott behavior.

The study of **(Tan, & Papasolomou, 2023),** delves into explore the relationship between consumer-brand identification, intention to boycott, and socially responsible consumption behavior (SRCB). The study also examined the mediating effect of SRCB and the influence of perceived brand hypocrisy. The study employed correlational analysis to assess the relationships

between consumer-brand identification, intention to boycott, and SRCB. Mediation analysis was used to explore the role of SRCB, and the influence of perceived brand hypocrisy was examined.

The study found that consumer-brand identification positively correlates with SRCB, indicating that stronger identification leads to increased engagement in socially responsible activities. Actively communicating socially responsible initiatives enhances consumer participation in SRCB. SRCB partially mediates the relationship between consumer-brand identification and intention to boycott. Perceived brand hypocrisy did not impact the studied relationships directly or indirectly. The significant role of SRCB in reducing the intention to boycott underscores the importance of incorporating it into business practices and communication strategies.

The study of **(Johnson, 2020),** delves into showcase the successes and contributions of the Baby Food Campaign, particularly in the formation of the first comprehensive international marketing code for transnational organizations. The study analyzes the tactical developments and strategies employed by both the industry and the consumer movement during different stages of the campaign.

The study found that The Baby Food Campaign brought a concealed issue into the public spotlight, reshaping global public health debates. Active participation in United Nations processes accelerated the development of the first international marketing code for transnational organizations. Formation and empowerment of

local consumer organizations led to the establishment of the first successful international grassroots boycott network. Nestle, the industry leader, responded to boycott demands and initiated marketing changes as early as 1978. Nestle and the International Nestle Boycott Committee (INBC) signed a historic agreement in 1984, committing Nestle to implement the International Marketing Code. The Baby Food Campaign became a model for future campaigns, emphasizing the importance of ongoing efforts, strategic thinking, and a transnational approach when confronting powerful corporations. The study underscores the transformative impact of sustained activism on industry conditions, highlighting the potential for positive change.

In the study conducted by **(Lavorata, 2014),** has a dual objective, proposing a tool for assessing Retailer's Commitment to Sustainable Development (RCSD) and testing its impact on retailer image, consumer loyalty, and boycotts. The study employs structural equation modeling to test hypothesized relationships and examine the influence of sustainable development practices on retailers.

The study highlights various key findings. Retailer's commitment to sustainable development positively influences consumers' perceptions, contributing to a favorable image. Commitment to Sustainable Development doesn't directly correlate with consumer loyalty, indicating other factors influence purchase decisions. Consumer intentions to boycott due to negative perceptions often

don't translate into actual actions, suggesting complexities in acting on intentions. Retailers must remain attentive to sustainable development actions, as consumers might influence practices through boycotts or pressure. Subjective norms influence behavioral intentions, with social pressures impacting consumer decision-making processes. Sustainable development enhances a retailer's image but doesn't significantly increase consumer loyalty compared to factors like price, proximity, and product quality. Demographic variables (gender, age, education) don't affect a retailer's commitment to sustainable development. Ethical consumption behavior, particularly purchasing organic products, significantly influences consumer perceptions of retailers' sustainable practices, emphasizing the role of ethical consumption in shaping perceptions.

The study of **(Muhamad, et al., 2013),** aimed to explore the impact of company strategies in responding to consumer boycotts on consumers' motivation to participate in such boycotts. By comparing two models of consumers' boycott intentions, particularly in the context of religious-based boycotts, the study sought to provide empirical insights into how different company strategies influence consumer behaviors.

Active responses by companies, emphasizing local connections and engaging in charitable activities, showed advantages over adopting a 'non-response' strategy. Different company strategies uniquely affected consumers' motivation to participate in a boycott. An active response strategy impacted animosity and self-

enhancement, predicting consumers' intentions to boycott differently compared to a non-responsive strategy. Responding to boycotts, particularly emphasizing local connections and charitable activities, was found to disassociate companies from the source of animosity leading to boycotts. Normative pressure to boycott and consumers' motivation to uphold moral values played crucial roles in predicting intentions to boycott. The study highlighted the complexity marketers face in responding to consumer boycotts, emphasizing the need to balance brand preservation, consumer sentiment, and stakeholder interests. Responding to boycotts in a tactful manner is vital for companies to shape their brand's future in consumers' minds and the marketplace. The study suggests that marketers must carefully consider their strategies when facing consumer boycotts, and future research could explore various other strategies in different boycott contexts to enhance understanding in this area.

In the study conducted by **(Yuksel, & Mryteza, 2009),** assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly public relations tactics, employed by companies to counter potential political motivations-driven boycotts among consumers. Investigate whether strategies used to counteract adverse publicity are equally effective in dealing with boycott scenarios. The sample used for this study is a convenience sample of 175 University of Sydney students, who participated for bonus course credit. The study employed two experiments with an experimental design, providing identical negative corporate information about Coca-Cola to two segments of

the subject sample, and then introducing different strategic responses to assess their impact on consumers' behavior and perceptions. The findings of this study highlight several significant outcomes. The most effective technique for reducing the likelihood of consumers forgoing a product in both boycott and negative publicity scenarios is the introduction of unrelated positive information.

Negative corporate information about competitors, like smear campaigns, is somewhat effective in reducing the likelihood of boycott participation, though less effective than unrelated positive information about the target brand (Coca-Cola). Negative corporate information about competitors does not impact the likelihood of forgoing consumption in situations of negative publicity without specific behavioral guidance, suggesting the moderating influence of direction on its effectiveness. The presence of clear behavioral direction significantly moderates the likelihood of consumers forgoing the product, indicating that boycott requests have a more pronounced impact on a company's financial performance compared to negative publicity alone. Perceived severity of the issue doesn't consistently correlate with participation in a boycott, and changes in perceived severity do not necessarily lead to changes in the likelihood of consumers forgoing consumption.

2.3. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott.

1- Competitiveness:

"Competitiveness, derived from the Latin word 'computer,' signifies active participation in the competitive landscape for market share. The concept gained significant traction following Porter's seminal work, 'The Competitive Advantage of Nations' in 1990, although its historical roots can be traced back to economic theories espoused by Adam Smith and his successors. The surge in concern about international competitiveness emerged in the early 1980s, paralleling the rise of European and Asian nations challenging American economic dominance (Waheeduzzaman, 2011).

Competitiveness signifies the capacity to deliver goods and services in the desired form, location, and time sought by consumers, at prices matching or surpassing those offered by other potential suppliers. Simultaneously, it involves earning returns on employed resources at least equal to their opportunity costs. This definition encapsulates two dimensions of competition: one within domestic and international product markets, influencing the acquisition and retention of market shares, and the other in factor markets, where factors utilized in production must yield returns exceeding their opportunity costs. Both dimensions highlight that competitiveness is a comparative metric, reliant on contrasting against a reference point. When

evaluating market shares, the comparison relates to market size, whereas in assessing competitiveness in factor markets, it's associated with the value a factor would command in another production process (Bhawsar, & Chattopadhyay, 2015).

2- Competitiveness of Local products:

According (Charlebois, et al., 2022), The competitiveness of Local products refers to their ability to offer competitive pricing in comparison to non-local or imported counterparts within a specific geographical area or market. Local products are typically characterized by their origin or production within the defined region, often embracing a connection to the locality in which they are grown, produced, or processed. Assessing the competitiveness of these local products involves analyzing their pricing relative to non-local or imported alternatives available in the market. This assessment seeks to determine whether local products are priced competitively, considering factors such as accessibility, cost, and consumer preferences. The aim is to ascertain whether local products hold pricing positions that are on par with or more favorable than non-local alternatives, acknowledging the potential value consumers attach to the unique qualities or attributes associated with locally sourced items.

Accordingly, the researcher can define the Strategic Decisions under the Boycott as follows:

"The competitiveness of Local products within the context of Local companies facing a boycott of foreign products refers to

their ability to offer price-competitive and desirable alternatives to the boycotted foreign goods in the domestic market. Local products, often originating or manufactured within the region, aim to fill the market gap created by the boycott of foreign products. This assessment involves analyzing the pricing, quality, accessibility, and consumer preferences for local products vis-à-vis the boycotted foreign alternatives. The goal is to determine if local products can effectively seize the market opportunity resulting from the boycott, potentially capturing a larger market share by providing appealing and competitive options for consumers within the affected market."

2.4. Studies In Competitiveness of Local products:

Below are the most important studies related to the Competitiveness of Local products variable:

The study of **(Charlebois, et al., 2022),** aimed to assess the price competitiveness of products certified by the Aliments du Québec (AdQ) program in the province of Quebec. Leveraging machine learning, artificial intelligence, and targeted data mining techniques, the research sought to discern whether locally certified products exhibit higher prices compared to non-local comparator products originating outside Quebec. The analysis involved over 350,000 discrete price data points collected in Winter 2022, encompassing 48 subcategories. The primary goal was to evaluate whether certified local products were more

expensive or competitively priced compared to their non-local counterparts.

The findings challenge the prevalent perception that local food products are typically more costly. Within the 48 subcategories, in 70.83% of cases, local products were either competitively priced (similar prices) or more competitively priced than the comparator products. The study underscores the need to debunk the misconception surrounding the affordability of Local food items, particularly within an inflationary economic environment. However, the magnitude and significance of percentage differences in pricing must be considered contextually, especially concerning consumer preferences and product characteristics.

The study of **(Li, et al., 2022)**, delves into regional brand competitiveness by empirically examining its influencing factors in two primary producing areas of Jilin Province, China. Employing structural equation modelling and analysing 214 valid questionnaires, the research unveils significant insights.

Findings indicate that Brand Market and Government Guidance exert direct and positive influences on regional brand competitiveness. Moreover, Regional Resource and Industrial Development indirectly impact regional brand competitiveness, operating through the mediating role of Brand Market and Government Guidance. Among these factors, Brand Market emerges as the most pivotal element affecting regional brand

competitiveness. Leveraging these findings, the study proposes a path to enhance the competitiveness of traditional agricultural products within the context of economic globalization. Additionally, targeted strategies and recommendations are formulated to address prevailing challenges.

The purpose of **(Padilla-Lozano, & Collazzo, 2022)** study is to explore the interplay of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and green innovation in boosting competitiveness (Market performance, and Intangible performance) in manufacturing in an emerging market context. This study adds green innovation as mediator in the relationship between CSR and competitiveness. A model with three second-order constructs is developed and tested, in a sample of 325 managers from manufacturing companies in Ecuador, using quantitative and cross-section methods.

After obtaining adjusted and validated measurement models, a structural equation model was conducted, where the main hypotheses were confirmed, providing empirical evidence that CSR and green innovation significantly influence manufacturing competitiveness in a developing economy.

The study of **(Akramov, et al., 2021),** aimed to provide theoretical insights and practical guidance on leveraging branding strategies to enhance the competitiveness of garment enterprises in Uzbekistan. Identify specific aspects of brand management, enterprise competitiveness, and strategies for transforming local garment brands into globally recognized

entities. The study provides scientific value by identifying aspects of brand management and strategies for transforming local garment brands into globally recognized entities.

This study found that the textile and clothing industry in Uzbekistan is crucial to the nation's economy, driven by local raw materials like cotton, silk, and wool. The industry significantly contributes to employment and living standards, with quality control being vital for exports due to global demand for natural, high-quality products. Despite growth in production and technological advancements, challenges persist in brand development and international market access, including a lack of long-term plans, shortage of professional designers, and branding issues. Foreign investments have positively impacted technical capabilities and market presence in the industry. The study highlights brand propensity factors in garment consumer behaviour, emphasizing the need for further research to understand consumer behaviour better through thorough market studies and strategic branding approaches.

The study of **(Canover, & Kartikasari, 2021),** discusses the penetration rate of imported products on e-commerce platform in Indonesia and strategies to improve local product competitiveness. The authors used the biggest e-commerce platform in three most sold product categories in 2019. Big data were collected from website on 126,366 clothing products, 504,118 beauty products, 1,966,046 electronics products, and

1,540 product reviews in the first quarter of 2020. The authors utilized qualitative analysis including descriptive analysis, sentiment analysis, content analysis, and SWOT analysis.

This study found that the penetration rate of imported products: 66% for cosmetics, 58% for electronic accessories, and 40% for clothing. Positive reviews for local products are higher than for imported products in all categories, with quality and delivery being crucial factors for online buyers. Strategies to improve competitiveness include leveraging positive public sentiment, promoting local producers and sellers through collaboration with the government and education institutions, enforcing e-commerce platform laws, collecting e-commerce data, and showcasing local product advantages such as thoughtful service, fastest delivery, and standardized quality.

The study of **(Ozerova, et al., 2019),** focuses on Determine and classify competitiveness indicators for agricultural products. Evaluate the competitiveness levels of grain in different districts of the Krasnoyarsk region. Propose the creation of a logistical infrastructure, including a wholesale distribution center, to improve agricultural product competitiveness. the Methodology of the study is to Conduct a comprehensive analysis to assess grain competitiveness levels in various districts of the Krasnoyarsk region by comparing indicators with leading regions.

The study emphasizes the importance of identifying and classifying competitiveness indicators for agricultural products.

Assessment of grain competitiveness in different districts of the Krasnoyarsk region reveals varying levels based on distinct production conditions. The proposal recommends the creation of a wholesale distribution center as a crucial measure to enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products. The strategy aligns with the need to promote import substitution within the operational landscape of agriculture in the Krasnoyarsk region.

The study of **(Wirawan, et al., 2014),** aimed to enhance the quality of Local Bali fruits to bolster their competitiveness within the Bali tourism market. Focusing on the cultivation, harvest, post-harvest handling, marketing strategies, and necessary regulations, the research identified challenges hindering the entry of Local fruits into the tourism market. Citrus, salacca, mangoes, mangosteen, banana, and papaya were the focal fruits examined. The investigation involved comprehensive surveys encompassing interviews with farmers, wholesalers, fruit suppliers, hotel, and restaurant managers.

Results revealed that the Local fruits faced challenges in entering the tourism market, with Balinese locals preferring imported fruits for cultural ceremonies and events. Key issues included deficiencies in harvesting, packaging, storage, and transportation, leading to microbial and insect infestations. Challenges were particularly evident in citrus and banana, experiencing storage damages and issues throughout the marketing process. Efforts to improve fruit appearance through

treatments like herbal oil emulsions and antimicrobial treatments showed promising results in maintaining freshness and eliminating infections. The study emphasizes the impact of production continuity, standardization, and local-level regulations on the competitiveness of local fruits within the village community, aiming for potential improvements in Bali's fruit market.

2.6. Commentary on Previous Studies:

After reviewing the most important studies reached and related to the subject of the current study, and reviewing and analysing the results of those studies can draw some conclusions on the aspects of agreement and the difference between the current study and previous studies and get out of the research gap, as follows:

- **Compatibility With Previous Studies**:

Through a review of previous studies, they are like the current study in dealing with the issue of the Strategic Decisions under the Boycott and Competitiveness of Local products in different organizations and business sectors in many countries. Most of the previous studies emphasized the importance of strategic decisions under boycott conditions and the competitiveness of Local products across diverse organizations and business sectors in various countries. The alignment with the current study is evident in the recognition of the significance of these factors in shaping organizational responses and market

dynamics. The existing body of research underscores the importance of strategic decision-making during boycotts and sheds light on the competitiveness of Local products in both domestic and international contexts.

Moreover, the reviewed studies, much like the present research, acknowledge the multifaceted nature of competitiveness and strategic decisions. They emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of these concepts, taking into account factors such as consumer behaviour, market dynamics, and the specific characteristics of the products under consideration. This aligns with the comprehensive approach adopted in the current study, which delves into the complexities of strategic decisions and their impact on the competitiveness of Local products.

The studies reviewed also touch upon the role of consumer perceptions, corporate communication, and sustainable practices, echoing the interconnected nature of these elements in influencing competitiveness. This resonates with the current study's focus on assessing the impact of strategic decisions on the competitiveness of Local products, considering factors such as consumer-brand identification, intention to boycott, and socially responsible consumption behaviour.

In summary, the compatibility with previous studies lies in the shared emphasis on strategic decision-making under boycott conditions and the evaluation of the competitiveness of Local

products. The collective body of research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of these concepts, providing valuable insights for organizations and policymakers in navigating complex market environments.

- **Benefits From Previous Studies**:

Previous studies will serve as foundational pillars in this research endeavour, contributing significantly to various aspects of the study. The theoretical framework will benefit from insights gleaned from these studies, providing a solid foundation upon which the current research will be built. By leveraging the theories, models, and conceptual frameworks established in prior works, this study will gain a robust theoretical basis, enabling a deeper exploration of strategic decisions under boycott conditions and the competitiveness of Local products.

Moreover, the methodologies and survey configurations will be informed by the methodologies used in earlier studies. By drawing on established research methodologies and survey designs, this study will streamline its approach, saving valuable time and effort in the process. The references and key literature highlighted in previous studies will be instrumental in guiding the direction of this research, aiding in the selection of pertinent resources, and avoiding redundant efforts.

Furthermore, previous studies will play a pivotal role in delineating the themes and focal areas of investigation. By examining the themes and key points emphasized in earlier

research, this study will delineate the specific areas of interest and relevance, ensuring a targeted and focused exploration of strategic decision-making under boycott scenarios and the competitiveness of Local products.

In essence, the wealth of knowledge accumulated from previous studies will be instrumental in shaping various facets of the current research, spanning from the theoretical underpinnings to methodological approaches and thematic considerations. Leveraging the insights and methodologies from these studies will enhance the depth and precision of the current investigation.

- **Research Gap and Difference in The Current Study**:

The existing body of research exhibits a diverse range of study areas; however, a critical examination reveals a discernible gap, particularly concerning strategic decisions and competition in the Egyptian market. This gap becomes more pronounced when considering the competitiveness of Local products in the context of the prevalent boycott in Egypt. The research gap in the current study can be succinctly outlined as follows:

- Neglect of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott in the Egyptian Market.
- Overlooking Competitiveness of Local Products amid Boycott in Egyptian and foreign research in general.
- Scarcity of Focus on Boycott in the Egyptian Market in general.

In essence, the research gap identified in the current study underscores the need for a targeted investigation into the strategic decisions made by local companies to bolster competitiveness in the Egyptian market, particularly during a period marked by a significant boycott of foreign products. Bridging this gap will contribute valuable insights into the dynamics of strategic decision-making and competitiveness, filling a void in the existing literature and offering practical implications for businesses operating in Egypt.

3. Study Problem:

The scarcity of Local products in Egypt during the ongoing boycott is a significant concern. Customers seek viable alternatives to the boycotted items, yet local products are not adequately available or accessible in the market. There's a noticeable absence of advertising campaigns or promotional efforts promoting local products. This absence contrasts sharply with the extensive marketing strategies employed for foreign products, contributing to a disproportionate visibility and consumer perception favoring imported items. There's a failure to address the enhancement of the perceived quality of Egyptian products. Despite their potential, there's a lack of initiatives aimed at improving the mental image and consumer confidence in the quality and reliability of Local products, further contributing to their underutilization during this boycott. An imbalance exists in the prevalence of advertisements and promotional activities, predominantly favoring foreign products. The

widespread marketing and promotional efforts for imported items overshadow the visibility and promotion of Locally produced goods, exacerbating the challenge of their market penetration.

The culmination of these factors underscores the pressing need to delve into the marketing, perception, and availability of Local products in Egypt amidst the ongoing boycott. Addressing these facets is critical not only for the sustenance of Local industries but also for providing consumers with viable and acceptable alternatives while contributing to the economy's resilience during this period of economic strain. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- To what extent is there an emphasis on Strategic Decisions under the Boycott among Egyptian food products companies?
- How much attention is given to creating competitive advantage in Egyptian food products companies?
- What is the impact of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott on creating competitive advantage of Egyptian food products?

4. Objectives of Study:

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Assessing the effectiveness of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott among Egyptian food products companies.

- Determining the level of interest in Creating competitive advantage in Egyptian food products companies during Boycott.
- Revealing the impact of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott on competitive advantage in Egyptian food products.
- Providing a set of recommendations and proposals to officials in local food products companies in Egypt based on the results of the study, which can be generalized and applied in practical scenarios.

5. Study Hypotheses:

The main hypothesis: "There is a statistically significant impact of Strategic Decisions on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott." Several sub-hypotheses arise from this main hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant impact of Financing decisions on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott.
- There is a statistically significant impact of Supply Chain Optimization on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott.
- There is a statistically significant impact of Marketing and Branding Initiatives on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott.

- There is a statistically significant impact of Strategic Partnerships on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott.
- There is a statistically significant impact of Governmental Collaboration on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott.

6. Study Model:

The study employed the following variables to achieve its objective:

- **Independent Variable: Strategic Decisions under the Boycott**

It encompasses the following dimensions: Offer Shares, Supply Chain Optimization, Marketing and Branding Initiatives, Strategic Partnerships, and Governmental Collaboration.

- **Dependent Variable: Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott**

It encompasses the following dimensions: Emphasis on Quality, Adaptive Pricing, Customer oriented, and Diversification of Product Offerings.

The following diagram illustrates the theoretical relationship model between the key variables of the study, represented by the independent variable (Strategic Decisions under the Boycott) and the dependent variable (Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott):

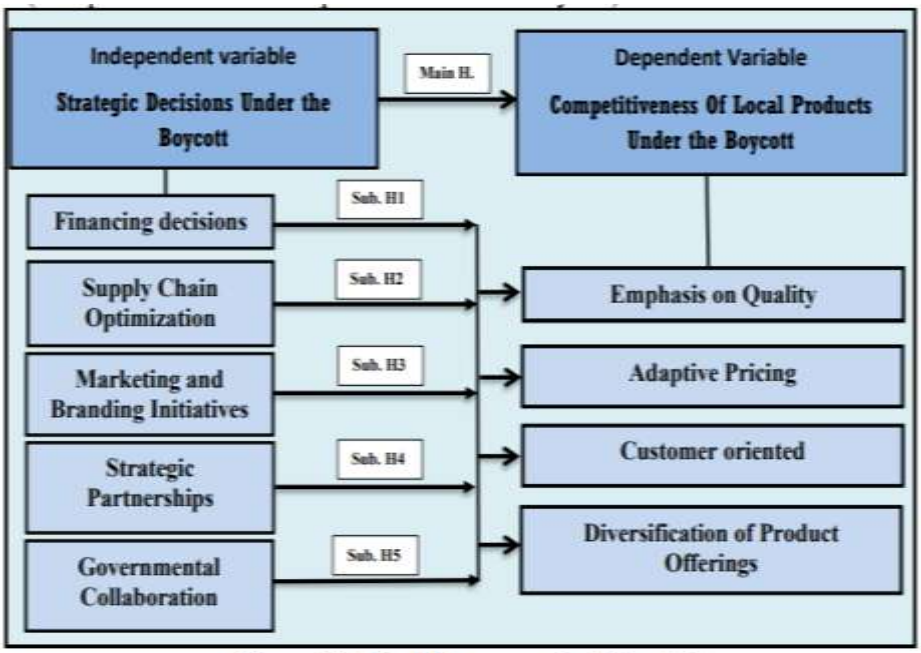


Figure (1): Model framework of the study.

7. Study Importance:

The importance of the current study is due to its scientific and practical additions as follows:

7.1- Scientific Importance:

The scientific significance of this study stems from several key where This study bridges critical gaps in the current academic literature by focusing on strategic decisions and the competitiveness of Local products in the Egyptian market during a boycott. By filling these gaps, it adds valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge in marketing and business studies. By investigating the strategic decisions of Local companies

amidst a boycott scenario, this study contributes to refining and enhancing existing theoretical frameworks in business strategy, consumer behaviour, and market competition. The study's empirical approach, incorporating real-time data and comprehensive analysis, provides empirical evidence to substantiate theoretical claims. It offers a practical application of theoretical concepts within the context of a boycott, enriching academic discourse with tangible results. The findings of this study could serve as a foundation for future research endeavours in similar contexts or within different markets facing analogous economic challenges. It opens avenues for further exploration and deeper understanding of consumer behaviour and market dynamics during boycotts. The study's methodology and approach, particularly its focus on the local market's response to a boycott, could inspire novel methodological approaches in studying market disruptions and their impacts on consumer preferences and business strategies.

7.2- Practical Importance:

The practical significance of this study lies in its multifaceted contributions. It offers actionable insights for local companies navigating a boycott scenario by guiding strategic decisions, enhancing market positioning, and understanding evolving consumer behaviours. These insights pave the way for tailored marketing strategies, bolstering the competitiveness of Local products in the face of foreign alternatives. Moreover, the study's

findings serve as a foundation for policy recommendations aimed at fostering local economic growth and resilience. By addressing deficiencies in promoting local products and consumer awareness, this research holds the potential to not only strengthen market positions but also empower local economies, ultimately contributing to sustainable economic development and market stability during periods of market disruption.

8. Study Design:

Based on the nature of the study's subject and the information required to investigate the impact of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott (as an independent variable) on Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott (as a dependent variable) through the study's research questions, this study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach, which is a method for describing and measuring the studied phenomenon by collecting, classifying, and analysing the problem.

A descriptive study design was utilized for the current study. The descriptive approach involves interrogating members of the study community or a sample of them to describe the studied phenomenon in terms of its nature and degree of existence. According to (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2010), the descriptive study design is non-experimental, as it deals with relationships between variables in a natural setting rather than a laboratory setting. Circumstances and events have already occurred, and the

researcher can identify the most relevant variables for analysing existing relationships.

In a descriptive design, hypotheses are also formulated and tested, and generalizations of the results are reached through inductive reasoning. The descriptive design also employs randomization methods to estimate error when inferring population characteristics from sample observations, and it describes variables and procedures (Cooper, & Schindler, 2013).

Although Strategic Decisions and Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott have been confirmed in many studies, no study has been conducted to assess the impact of Strategic Decisions on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott. The researcher conducting this study aimed to investigate contradictions and develop recommendations to enhance overall performance and bridge the research gap in this field.

9. Study Methodology:

Based on the nature of the study's topic and its objectives in exploring the impact of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott (as an independent variable) on Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott (as a dependent variable) in Egyptian local food products companies, a descriptive analytical research approach has been adopted. This approach is considered a "method to describe and analyse the studied phenomena quantitatively by collecting data from multiple sources,

categorizing them, and analysing them to understand potential relationships and effects.

Two types of data were used in this study:

- **Secondary Data:**

These data were obtained from various sources to build the theoretical framework of the study and understand its theoretical background. These sources include diverse references from books, articles, and previous research in both Arabic and foreign languages related to topics of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott and Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott.

- **Primary Data:**

These are data collected through field research using a survey to test the validity or falsity of the assumptions upon which the study is based. This study aimed to complement the theoretical data by conducting field research, including surveys and interviews with some employees of Egyptian food products companies, to obtain primary data.

Using this research approach and collecting this data, the study will analyse the relationship between Strategic Decisions under the Boycott and the creation of a competitive advantage in Egyptian food products companies to understand the potential impact and the factors that play a role in this context.

10. Research Population and Sample:

- **Population:**

Since the purpose of this study is to investigate how Strategic Decisions influence the Competitiveness of Local products amidst the boycott within Egyptian food product companies. This study's population encompasses companies such as Juhayna, Egypt Foods, El Shamadan, Spirospathis, Sina Cola, and Lacto Egypt, totaling 9830 employees.

- **Sample Design:**

Sampling framework is an exhaustive list of all sampling units, from which a sample can be selected. The sampling framework in the study was configured from employees of Egyptian food product companies. A simple random sample of employees of Egyptian food product companies was selected, the sample size was determined using the following equation (Sekaran, Bougie, 2010):

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

whereas:

n: Sample size required.

N: Size of the study population.

P: The ratio of the community is equal to.

$\mathbf{d^2}$The percentage of error that can be exceeded and the maximum value is 0.05.

$\mathbf{x^2}$ 2: the value of the kai square with one degree of freedom = 3.841 at 95% confidence level or 5% significance level.

By applying the above equation to the collected data, the study sample size was (370) of employees of Egyptian food product companies. The distribution of the sample among the companies under study was as shown in the following table:

Table No. (2):

Distribution of the sample among the companies under study.

N	Company	Population	Sample
1	Juhayna	4000	151
2	Egypt Foods	2360	89
3	El shamadan	571	21
4	Spirospathis	1420	53
5	Sina Cola	1224	46
6	Lacto Egypt	255	10
	Total	9830	370

Source: Prepared by the researcher.

11. Variables Measures:

A questionnaire was used as the primary tool to obtain initial data from the study population. The questionnaire was selected because it is one of the most common and suitable data collection methods, given its alignment with the nature of the study. The questionnaire was designed in line with the study's objectives to test its hypotheses, which were developed based on a review of previous studies and specialized scientific research on the topic. The questionnaire includes the following dimensions:

- **First Part:** This Part aims to assess the effectiveness of Strategic Decisions under the Boycott in Egyptian food products. It measures the extent of availability of the following dimensions: Offer Shares, Supply Chain Optimization, Marketing and Branding Initiatives, Strategic Partnerships, and Governmental Collaboration.
- **Second Part:** This Part aims to understand the reality of Competitiveness of Local products under the boycott in Egyptian food products. It measures the extent of availability of the following dimensions: Emphasis on Quality, Adaptive Pricing, Customer oriented, and Diversification of Product Offerings.
- **Third Part:** This Part involves gathering personal and professional data from the study sample, consisting of employees in Egyptian food products branches involved in the study. This data includes gender, Company name, Name of the University, Graduation Year, University major.

12. Descriptive statistics

12.1 Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott variable:

The strength of the dimensions of the independent variable (Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott) was measured to assess their availability, and these dimensions were ranked in order of importance from the perspective of the study participants, as follows:

Table (3): Descriptive Statistics for Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott Variable.

N	Phrases	Mean	agreement rate	T-Test	(Sig.)	Ranking
1	The company relies solely on internal cash flows to finance its operations.	**3.72**	**74.46%**	**12.36**	**0.000***	**1**
2	After the blockade, the company turned to obtaining bank loans.	**3.68**	**73.66%**	**11.08**	**0.000***	**3**
3	The company obtains funds from debts.	**3.65**	**73.07%**	**10.47**	**0.000***	**4**
4	The company determines a specific ratio between debts and equity (stocks).	**3.71**	**74.26%**	**11.24**	**0.000***	**2**
5	The company funds its operations through the reinvestment of its profits.	**3.62**	**72.04%**	**8.32**	**0.000***	**5**
Financing decisions		**3.67**	**73.4%**	**10.69**	**0.000***	**Fourth**
1	The company carefully utilizes its inventory to produce the maximum quantity possible while maintaining the required quality.	**3.84**	**76.83%**	**15.37**	***0.000**	**2**
2	The company continuously analyzes market trends to adjust purchases amidst market fluctuations.	**3.64**	**72.87%**	**9.81**	***0.000**	**5**
3	The company maintains supplier diversification to ensure a continuous supply of raw materials.	**3.78**	**75.64%**	**13.45**	***0.000**	**3**
4	The company follows specific transportation methods to ensure a continuous supply of products to the customer.	**3.86**	**77.23%**	**15.35**	***0.000**	**1**
5	The company deals with accredited suppliers to maintain quality.	**3.75**	**75.05%**	**12.96**	***0.000**	**4**
Supply Chain Optimization		**3.78**	**75.52%**	**19.14**	**0.000***	**first**
1	The company encourages and supports employees in understanding and enhancing its brand.	**3.80**	**76.04%**	**13.35**	***0.000**	**1**
2	The company employs solutions to preserve the environment.	**3.56**	**71.29%**	**8.37**	***0.000**	**5**
3	The company encourages employees to represent the brand by professionally executing their tasks.	**3.65**	**73.07%**	**12.11**	***0.000**	**4**
4	The company allocates a portion of its funds to donations.	**3.80**	**76.04%**	**14.60**	***0.000**	**2**
5	The company conducts advertising campaigns to promote its brand as a local company.	**3.74**	**74.85%**	**12.89**	***0.000**	**3**

N	Phrases	Mean	agreement rate	T-Test	(Sig.)	Ranking
Marketing and Branding Initiatives		**3.71**	**74.26%**	**17.67**	**0.000***	**second**
1	The company understands the factors that make partnerships successful.	**3.67**	**73.47%**	**11.75**	***0.000**	**1**
2	The company has identified and understood the major barriers that hinder successful efforts in partnerships.	**3.59**	**71.88%**	**8.88**	***0.000**	**2**
3	The company seeks to engage with other local companies amidst the blockade.	**3.57**	**71.49%**	**8.77**	***0.000**	**3**
4	The company has succeeded in having appropriate partners.	**3.54**	**70.8%**	**8.22**	***0.000**	**4**
5	The company understands the mutual interdependence between partners in achieving common goals.	**3.48**	**69.6%**	**10.35**	***0.000**	**5**
Strategic Partnerships		**3.57**	**71.4%**	**9.59**	**0.000***	**fifth**
1	The government implements policies to support the company in producing alternatives to boycotted goods.	**3.62**	**72.48%**	**10.22**	***0.000**	**4**
2	Officials collaborate with the company to develop and enhance local alternatives.	**3.75**	**75.05%**	**13.50**	***0.000**	**1**
3	The government provides financial incentives to boost the production and competitiveness of Local products.	**3.65**	**73.07%**	**10.38**	***0.000**	**3**
4	Government entities actively participate in promotional campaigns to support local alternative goods to boycotted items.	**3.74**	**74.85%**	**11.97**	***0.000**	**2**
5	The government offers facilitations to ensure the easy distribution of Locally produced goods.	**3.59**	**71.8%**	**11.97**	***0.000**	**5**
Governmental Collaboration		**3.67**	**73.45%**	**11.60**	**0.000***	**third**
Overall Indicators		**3.68**	**73.61%**	**13.73**	**0.000***	

It appears that, according to the study participants' perspective, the most available dimensions of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott are ranked as follows: First, following the "**Supply Chain Optimization**" with an average of 3.78. Second, following "**Marketing and Branding Initiatives**" with an average of 3.71. Third, following "**Governmental**

Collaboration" with an average of 3.67. Fourth, following "**Financing decisions**" with an average of 3.71. Finally, finally, following "**Strategic Partnerships**" with an average of 3.57.

Based on this, there is a high level of emphasis on the use of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott in Egyptian food product companies. The opinions are leaning towards agreement on the dimensions of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott, with an overall average of 3.68.

12.2 Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott variable:

The dimensions of the dependent variable (Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott) were measured to assess their availability, and these dimensions were ranked in order of importance from the perspective of the study participants, as follows:

Table (4): Descriptive Statistics for the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott Variable.

N	Phrases	Mean	agreement rate	T- Test	(Sig.)	Ranking
1	The company is concerned with the quality of its infrastructure to maintain industry standards.	3.75	75.05%	14.80	0.000*	4
2	The company has precise planning processes to maintain and improve the quality of its products.	3.82	76.44%	14.74	0.000*	1
3	The company enforces strict control to ensure the quality of the food products produced meets consumer expectations.	3.77	75.45%	15.10	0.000*	3
4	The company strives to enhance its products to compensate customers for boycotted items.	3.78	75.64%	13.86	0.000*	2
5	The company utilizes research services to maintain or improve product quality.	3.71	74.2%	11.75	0.000*	5
Emphasis on Quality		3.77	75.36%	14.05	0.000*	second

N	Phrases	Mean	agreement rate	T- Test	(Sig.)	Ranking
1	The company focuses on reducing production costs to offer competitive prices amid the boycott.	**3.84**	**76.83%**	**15.54**	**0.000***	**1**
2	The company adjusts its pricing strategies to align with customer opinions.	**3.67**	**73.47%**	**12.38**	**0.000***	**5**
3	The company has implemented discounts and special offers during the boycott.	**3.71**	**74.26%**	**13.07**	**0.000***	**4**
4	The company uses adaptable pricing strategies to cope with changes resulting from the boycott.	**3.73**	**74.65%**	**11.89**	**0.000***	**3**
5	The company monitors and adjusts prices to remain competitive during the boycott.	**3.76**	**75.25%**	**13.04**	**0.000***	**2**
Adaptive Pricing		**3.74**	**74.89%**	**18.75**	**0.000***	**fourth**
1	The company maintains strong relationships with consumers in the local food product industry.	**3.65**	**73.07%**	**11.36**	**0.000***	**5**
2	The company prints selling prices for end consumers on product packaging.	**3.88**	**77.62%**	**16.35**	**0.000***	**1**
3	The company consistently meets customer requirements and deadlines.	**3.78**	**75.64%**	**13.72**	**0.000***	**3**
4	The company contributes to the development of supplier and related sectors in the food product industry.	**3.79**	**75.84%**	**13.03**	**0.000***	**2**
5	The company considers customer demands in the production and sale of its products.	**3.77**	**75.45%**	**14.08**	**0.000***	**4**
Customer oriented		**3.78**	**75.52%**	**20.32**	**0.000***	**first**
1	Human resource performance is continuously monitored and evaluated.	**3.66**	**73.27%**	**11.02**	**0.000***	**4**
2	Issues related to electronic human resource management are addressed promptly when they arise.	**3.72**	**74.46%**	**12.74**	**0.000***	**2**
3	The quality of decisions related to human resource management is assessed using available electronic programs.	**3.82**	**76.44%**	**14.74**	**0.000***	**1**
4	The organization has electronic programs for monitoring and evaluating the quality of human resource performance.	**3.67**	**73.47%**	**11.86**	**0.000***	**5**
5	Diversification of Product Offerings motivate employees in the organization to achieve excellence.	**3.71**	**74.26%**	**12.29**	**0.000***	**3**
Diversification of Product Offerings		**3.75**	**75.04%**	**16.41**	**0.000***	**third**
Overall Indicators		**3.76**	**75.20%**	**17.38**	**0.000***	

According to the study participants' perspective, the most available and important dimensions of Competitiveness of Local

Products Under the Boycott are as follows: In the first rank comes **"Customer oriented"** with an average of 3.78, followed by **"Emphasis on Quality"** in the second rank with an average of 3.77, then **"Diversification of Product Offerings"** in the third rank with an average of 3.75, and finally **Adaptive Pricing"** in the fourth rank with an average of 3.74.

Based on this, Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott is considered to have a high strength and a significant average from the study participants' point of view, and opinions tend to agree on the dimensions of the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott variable, with an overall average of 3.76.

13. Test the Hypotheses of the Study:

This section deals with testing the hypotheses through some statistical methods used to study the validity or incorrectness of the hypotheses. Structural equation modeling was used to study the effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable, while evaluating the model through a number of criteria for judging the quality of the model and relying on it, which are explained as follows before testing. Hypotheses. In light of the above description of the study sample and its variables, the validity of the hypotheses was tested statistically, with the results of the statistical analysis presented and interpreted as follows:

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): is a widely adopted technique in various research disciplines, particularly in the

social sciences. It has become indispensable for researchers due to its ability to analyze complex relationships among variables. However, achieving a model that effectively represents the data and aligns with the underlying theory, known as model fit, remains a subject of ongoing debate.

Normed Chi-Square: also known as the relative chi-square, is a metric calculated by dividing the chi-square index by the degrees of freedom. This index aims to be less sensitive to sample size variations, but consensus on an acceptable ratio is lacking. Recommendations fluctuate, ranging from as high as 5.0 to as low as 2.0.

Goodness-of-Fit Statistic (GFI): evaluates the extent to which the estimated population covariance accounts for the variance in the data. It assesses how closely the model replicates the observed covariance matrix. With a range from 0 to 1, larger sample sizes tend to increase its value, indicating a better fit.

Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI): is influenced by sample size, typically increasing with larger samples. Like GFI, AGFI values fall between 0 and 1, and a generally accepted criterion for a well-fitting model is a value of 0.90 or greater. It accounts for the potential detrimental effect of sample size on fit indices.

Normed Fit Index (NFI): evaluates a model by comparing its $\chi 2$ value to that of the null model, which assumes no correlation among measured variables. Values for NFI range from 0 to 1, with values surpassing 0.90 indicating a good fit. Recent

suggestions propose a higher cut-off criterion, stating that NFI should be greater than or equal to 0.95 for a well-fitting model.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI): is an improved version of the NFI that considers sample size, demonstrating robust performance even with small sample sizes. Like NFI, CFI assumes uncorrelated latent variables in a null/independence model, comparing the sample covariance matrix with this model. Values for CFI range from 0.0 to 1.0, with values closer to 1.0 indicating a good fit. Presently, a CFI $\geq$ 0.95 is recognized as indicative of good fit. CFI is widely reported in SEM analyses due to its resilience against sample size effects.

Incremental Fit Indices (IFI): also known as comparative or relative fit indices, do not use raw chi-square values but compare them to a baseline model. This baseline model assumes that all variables are uncorrelated. IFI values range between 0.1, and the closer the value is to the correct one, the better the fit of the estimated model to the study's data.

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR): RMR and SRMR are calculated as the square root of the difference between the residuals of the sample covariance matrix and the hypothesized covariance model. The range of RMR is influenced by the scales of each indicator in the questionnaire. For instance, if items in a questionnaire have varying scales (e.g., ranging from 1 to 5 or 1 to 7), the RMR is calculated accordingly.

RMSEA: In the range of 0.05 to 0.10, RMSEA was historically considered an indication of fair fit, with values above 0.10 indicating poor fit. However, recent perspectives suggest that an RMSEA between 0.08 and 0.10 signifies mediocre fit, while values below 0.08 indicate good fit. RMSEA assesses how well the model reproduces the observed covariance matrix, offering insights into the model's overall fit.

- **The first sub-hypothesis test:**

"There is a statistically significant impact of Financing decisions on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott". To test the validity of this hypothesis, structural equation modeling was used to study the impact of Financing decisions as one dimension of the independent variable on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott as the dependent variable. The results were as follows:

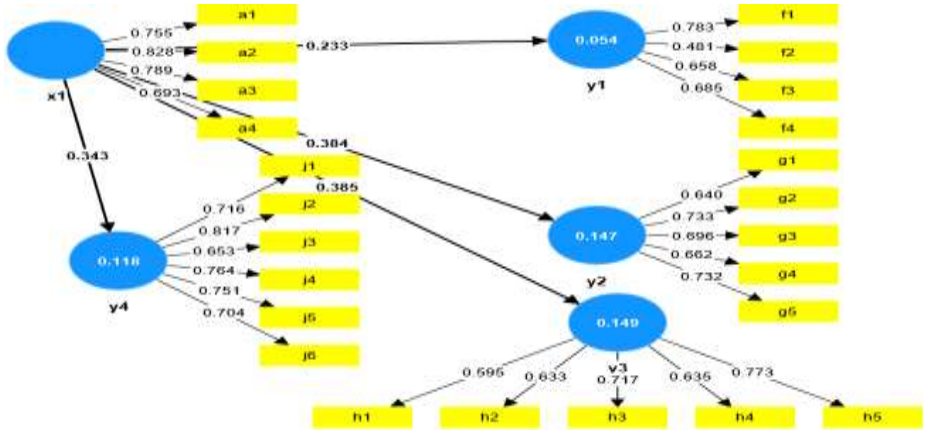


Figure No. (1): Structural Equation Modelling for the Financing decisions Model.

Table (5): The direct impact of the Financing decisions dimension.

Hidden Variables	Path	Observed Variables	Standard Estimate	Non-Standard Estimate	Z-Test	Significance
Financing decisions	- - - >	Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott	0.367	0.021	4.56	***
	- - - >	y1	0.233	0.022	3.12	***
	- - - >	y2	0.384	0.024	5.19	***
	- - - >	y3	0.385	0.039	6.01	***
	- - - >	y4	0.343	0.038	3.19	***

Source: SMARTPLS4 results **Significance at the 0.05 Level *****

The preceding table illustrates the impact of Financing decisions on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott, considering phrases representing each dimension. The following findings were revealed:

- There is a statistically significant impact of the Financing decisions dimension on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 99% confidence level, with a standard parameter of 0.367.
- There is a statistically significant positive impact of phrases representing the Financing decisions dimension on all dimensions of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with standard values ranging between (0.233, 0.385).

To verify the model's quality and assess the validity of the assumptions, a set of criteria for judging the model's quality were tested, as outlined in the following table:

Model Quality Criteria

Table (6): Quality Criteria for Financing decisions Model.

Indicator	Code	Value	Acceptance Level
Standardized Chi-Square Value	CMIN/DF	3.115	Less than 5 as a maximum value
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	0.980	0.90 ≥
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.918	0.90 ≥
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.930	0.90 ≥
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.945	0.90 ≥
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.928	0.90 ≥
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.055	≤ 0.08

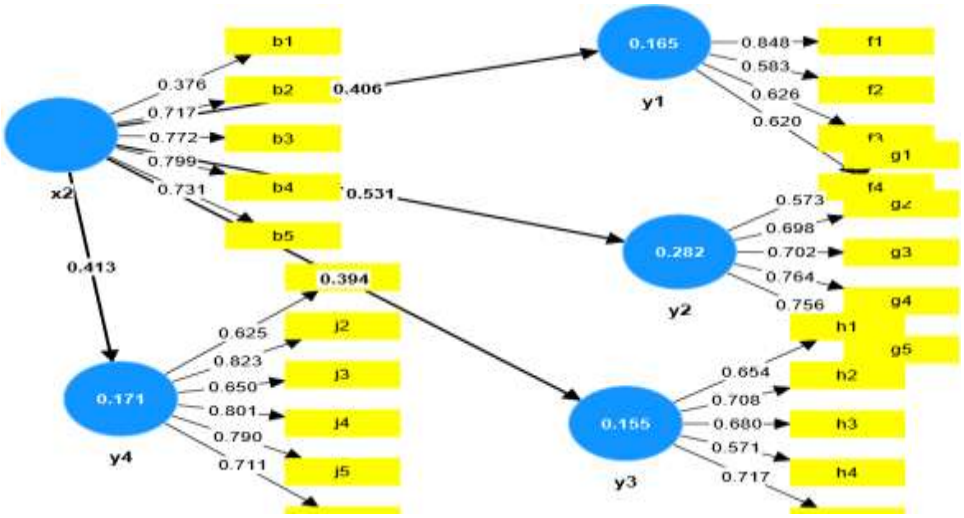
The previous table indicates that all indicators are within the required limits. For example, the acceptable limit for the standardized KA2 indicator is not to exceed 5, and the value of the indicator here is 3.115, signifying the model's quality is within the acceptable range. As for the other indicators, the acceptable limit is not less than 0.90, and they are within the acceptable range. Quality indicators include GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) at 0.980, NFI (Normed Fit Index) at 0.918, IFI (Incremental Fit Index) at 0.930, and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) at 0.928. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation is 0.076, which is less than 0.08, indicating that all indicators are within good limits. Therefore, there is the possibility of matching the actual model to the estimated model.

Furthermore, the quality of the model was verified for estimation, and based on the direct paths between variable levels, a statistically significant impact of Financing decisions

on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott was observed.

- **The second sub-hypothesis test:**

This subtest posits the following: **There is a statistically significant impact of Supply Chain Optimization on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott**. To test the validity of this hypothesis, structural equation modelling was employed to examine the impact of Supply Chain Optimization as an independent variable on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott as a dependent variable. The results were as follows:



Optimization Model.

Table (7): The direct impact of the Supply Chain Optimization dimension.

Hidden Variables	Path	Observed Variables	Standard Estimate	Non-Standard Estimate	Z-Test	Significance
Supply Chain Optimization	- - - >	Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott	0.441	0.012	5.58	***
	- - - >	y1	0.406	0.054	4.39	***
	- - - >	y2	0.531	0.022	7.34	***
	- - - >	y3	0.394	0.043	3.19	***
	- - - >	y4	0.413	0.011	4.29	***

*****Significance at the 0.05 Level Source: SMARTPLS4 results**

The previous illustrates the impact of the Supply Chain Optimization on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott, taking into consideration the phrases representing each dimension. The following findings have been revealed:

- There is a statistically significant impact of the Supply Chain Optimization dimension on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with a standard parameter of 0.441.
- There is a statistically significant impact of phrases representing the Supply Chain Optimization dimension on all dimensions of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with standard values ranging between (0.531, 0.394).

To verify the model's quality and assess the validity of assumptions, a set of criteria for judging model quality was tested, as indicated in the following table:

Model Quality Criteria

Table (8): Quality Criteria for Financing decisions Model.

Indicator	Code	Value	Acceptance Level
Standardized Chi-Square Value	CMIN/DF	2.119	Less than 5 as a maximum value
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	0.947	0.90 ≥
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.933	0.90 ≥
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.954	0.90 ≥
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.933	0.90 ≥
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.990	0.90 ≥
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.048	≤ 0.08

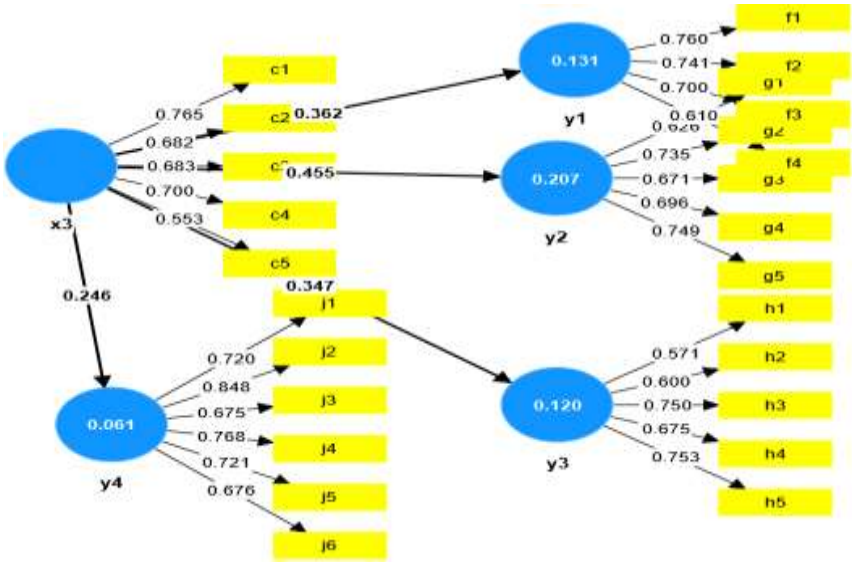
The table indicates that all indicators are within the required limits. For example, the acceptable limit for the standardized KA2 indicator is not to exceed 5, and the value of the indicator here is 2.119, within the acceptable range, signifying the model's quality. As for the other indicators, the acceptable limit is not less than 0.90, and they are within the acceptable range. Quality indicators include GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) at 0.947, NFI (Normed Fit Index) at 0.933, IFI (Incremental Fit Index) at 0.954, and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) at 0.990. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation is 0.048, which is less than 0.08, indicating that all indicators are within good limits. Therefore, there is the possibility of matching the actual model to the estimated model.

Furthermore, the quality of the model was verified, and based on the results of the direct path analysis between variables, a statistically significant impact of resilience on the

Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott was observed.

- **The third sub-hypothesis test:**

This subtest posits the following: **There is a statistically significant impact of Marketing and Branding Initiatives on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott**. To test the validity of this hypothesis, structural equation modelling was employed to examine the impact of Supply Chain Optimization as an independent variable on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott as a dependent variable. The results were as follows:



Branding Initiatives Model.

Table (9): The direct impact of Marketing and Branding Initiatives dimension.

Hidden Variables	Path	Observed Variables	Standard Estimate	Non-Standard Estimate	Z-Test	Significance
Marketing and Branding Initiatives	- - - >	Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott	0.322	0.014	4.13	***
	- - - >	y1	0.362	0.022	4.69	***
	- - - >	y2	0.455	0.027	5.66	***
	- - - >	y3	0.347	0.012	4.22	***
	- - - >	y4	0.246	0.016	3.11	***

Source: SMARTPLS4 results **Significance at the 0.05 Level *****

The preceding table, elucidates the impact of Marketing and Branding Initiatives on the level of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott, considering the phrases representing each dimension. The following observations have been revealed:

- There is a statistically significant impact of the Marketing and Branding Initiatives dimension on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with a standard parameter of 0.322.
- There is a statistically significant impact of phrases representing the Marketing and Branding Initiatives dimension on all levels of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with standard parameters ranging from (0.246, ..., 0.455)

To verify the model's quality and assess the validity of assumptions, a set of criteria for judging model quality was tested, as indicated in the following table:

Model Quality Criteria

Table (10): Quality Criteria for Marketing and Branding Initiatives Model.

Indicator	Code	Value	Acceptance Level
Standardized Chi-Square Value	CMIN/DF	4.801	Less than 5 as a maximum value
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	0.954	0.90 ≥
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.971	0.90 ≥
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.955	0.90 ≥
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.923	0.90 ≥
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.934	0.90 ≥
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.039	≤ 0.08

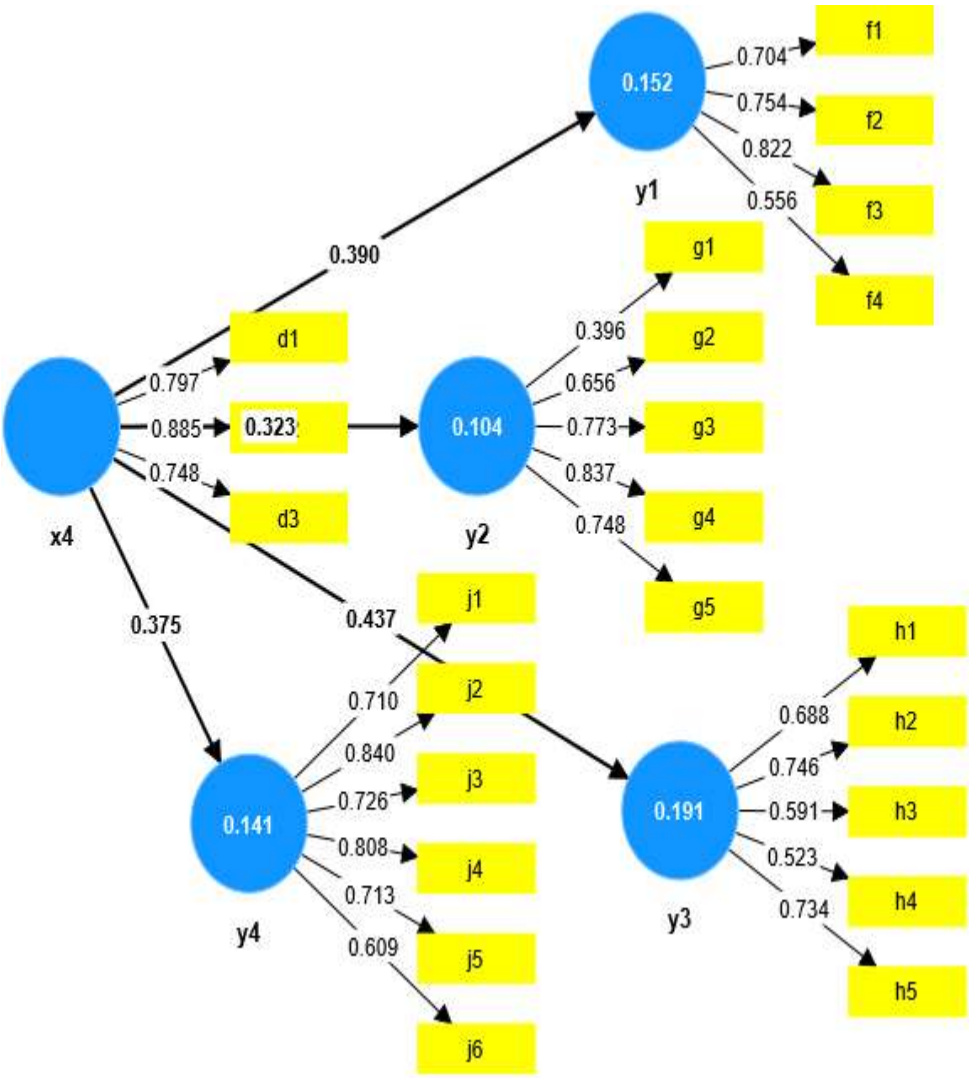
The previous table reveals that all indicators are within the required limits. For instance, the acceptable limit for the standardized KA2 indicator is not to exceed 5, and the value of the indicator here is 4.801, within the acceptable range, indicating the model's quality. As for the other indicators, the acceptable limit is not less than 0.90, and they are within the acceptable range. Quality indicators include GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) at 0.954, NFI (Normed Fit Index) at 0.971, IFI (Incremental Fit Index) at 0.955, and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) at 0.934. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation is 0.039, which is less than 0.08, suggesting that

all indicators are within good limits. Therefore, there is the possibility of matching the actual model to the estimated model.

Furthermore, the quality of the model was verified for hypothesis testing and based on the results of the direct path analysis between variables, a statistically significant impact of antecedence on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott was observed.

- **The fourth sub-hypothesis test:**

This subtest posits the following: - **There is a statistically significant impact of Strategic Partnerships on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott**. To test the validity of this hypothesis, structural equation modelling was employed to examine the impact of Supply Chain Optimization as an independent variable on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott as a dependent variable. The results were as follows:



Partnerships Model.

Table (11): The direct impact of Strategic Partnerships dimension.

Hidden Variables	Path	Observed Variables	Standard Estimate	Non-Standard Estimate	Z-Test	Significance
Strategic Partnerships	- - - >	Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott	0.396	0.078	4.25	***
	- - - >	y1	0.390	0.057	4.98	***
	- - - >	y2	0.323	0.065	4.29	***
	- - - >	y3	0.437	0.044	6.16	***
	- - - >	y4	0.375	0.075	4.16	***

Source: SMARTPLS4 results **Significance at the 0.05 Level *****

The preceding table, elucidates the impact of Strategic Partnerships on the level of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott, considering the phrases representing each dimension. The following observations have been revealed:

- There is a statistically significant impact of the overall dimension of flexibility on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with a standard parameter of 0.396.
- There is a statistically significant impact of phrases representing the Strategic Partnerships dimension on all dimensions of the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with standard parameters ranging from (0.437, ..., 0.323).

To verify the model's quality and assess the validity of assumptions, a set of criteria for judging model quality was tested, as indicated in the following table:

Model Quality Criteria

Table (12): Quality Criteria for Marketing and Branding Initiatives Model.

Indicator	Code	Value	Acceptance Level
Standardized Chi-Square Value	CMIN/DF	2.980	Less than 5 as a maximum value
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	0.942	0.90 ≥
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.970	0.90 ≥
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.980	0.90 ≥
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.946	0.90 ≥
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.976	0.90 ≥
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.059	≤ 0.08

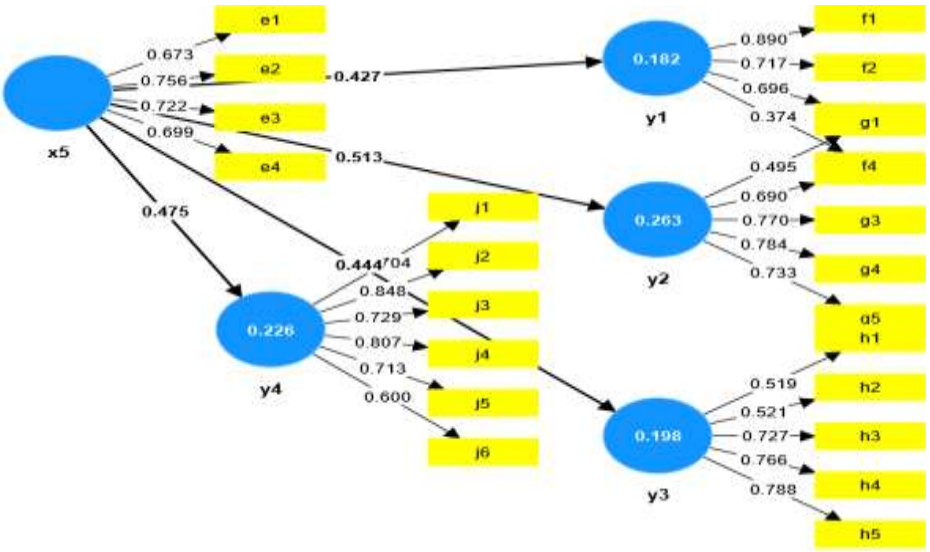
The preceding table indicates that all indicators are within the required limits. For example, the acceptable limit for the standardized KA2 indicator is not to exceed 5, and the value of the indicator here is 2.980, within the acceptable range, signifying the model's quality. As for the other indicators, the acceptable limit is not less than 0.90, and they are within the acceptable range. Quality indicators include GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) at 0.942, NFI (Normed Fit Index) at 0.970, IFI (Incremental Fit Index) at 0.980, and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) at 0.976. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation is 0.059, which is less than 0.08, indicating that

all indicators are within good limits. Therefore, there is the possibility of matching the actual model to the estimated model.

Furthermore, the quality of the model was verified for hypothesis testing and based on the results of the direct path analysis between variables, a statistically significant impact of flexibility on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott was observed.

- **The fifth sub-hypothesis test:**

This subtest posits the following: **There is a statistically significant impact of Governmental Collaboration on Competitiveness of Egyptian local food products under the boycott**. To test the validity of this hypothesis, structural equation modelling was employed to examine the impact of Supply Chain Optimization as an independent variable on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott as a dependent variable. The results were as follows:



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Collaboration Model.

Table (13): The direct impact of Governmental Collaboration dimension.

Hidden Variables	Path	Observed Variables	Standard Estimate	Non-Standard Estimate	Z-Test	Significance
Governmental Collaboration	--->	Competitiveness Of Local Products Under the Boycott	0.455	0.055	6.39	***
	--->	y1	0.427	0.038	5.23	***
	--->	y2	0.513	0.067	7.19	***
	--->	y3	0.444	0.058	6.59	***
	--->	y4	0.475	0.089	6.98	***

Source: SMARTPLS4 results **Significance at the 0.05 Level** ***

The preceding table, elucidates the impact of Governmental Collaboration on the level of Competitiveness of Local Products

Under the Boycott, considering the phrases representing each dimension. The following observations have been revealed:

- There is a statistically significant impact of the overall dimension of responsiveness on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with a standard parameter of 0.455.
- There is a statistically significant impact of phrases representing the Governmental Collaboration dimension on all dimensions of the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott at a 95% confidence level, with standard parameters ranging from (0.427, 0.513).

To verify the model's quality and assess the validity of assumptions, a set of criteria for judging model quality was tested, as indicated in the following table:

Model Quality Criteria

Table (14): Quality Criteria for Marketing and Branding Initiatives Model.

Indicator	Code	Value	Acceptance Level
Standardized Chi-Square Value	CMIN/DF	4.199	Less than 5 as a maximum value
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	0.962	0.90 ≥
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.954	0.90 ≥
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.948	0.90 ≥
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.952	0.90 ≥
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.975	0.90 ≥
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	0.046	≤ 0.08

The previous table clarifies the following:

All indicators are within the required limits. For instance, the acceptable limit for the standardized KA2 indicator is not to exceed 5, and the value of the indicator here is 4.199, within the acceptable range, indicating the model's quality. As for the other indicators, the acceptable limit is not less than 0.90, and they are within the acceptable range. Quality indicators include GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) at 0.962, NFI (Normed Fit Index) at 0.954, IFI (Incremental Fit Index) at 0.948, and CFI (Comparative Fit Index) at 0.975. Additionally, the root mean square error of approximation is 0.047, which is less than 0.08, indicating that all indicators are within good limits. Therefore, there is the possibility of matching the actual model to the estimated model.

Furthermore, the quality of the model was verified for hypothesis testing and based on the results of the direct path analysis between variables, a statistically significant impact of responsiveness on the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott was observed.

14. Results and recommendations

The researcher reached several results that could contribute to solving the research problem, answering its questions, and testing its hypotheses, which are summarized as follows:

The overall assessment of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott dimensions indicates a high level of availability, with a collective mean score of 3.68 and an agreement rate of 73.45%. This suggests a consensus among participants regarding the prevalence of various Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott dimensions, supporting the notion that opinions are generally aligned in acknowledging the significance and existence of these dimensions in the field of Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott.

The overall assessment of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott dimensions reveals a high level of availability, with a collective mean score of 3.76 and an agreement rate of 75.20%. This indicates a consensus among participants regarding the prevalence and significance of various dimensions in the field of Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott.

the results support the presence of statistically significant impacts between the Strategic Decisions Under the Boycott dimension and the Competitiveness of Local Products Under the Boycott. The provided confidence levels and standard parameter values offer a comprehensive understanding of the strength and direction of these impacts, contributing valuable insights to the relationship between AI and internal auditing quality.

It is worth noting that the boycott in Egypt has had a significant impact on the sales of both local and imported products. For example, the Egyptian soft drink "spiro spathis," established in 1920, experienced a tremendous increase in sales

after the boycott of imported products such as Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Similarly, the Egyptian product "Shebsi Tiger" saw a significant rise in sales, while sales of boycotted products like "Chipsy" declined. This, in general, indicates that boycotts have a substantial impact on both local and imported sales.

From the findings point of views in the study. The researcher proposed the following Recommendations:

- **Strategic Decision-Making under Boycott:**

- Conduct a thorough and continuous market analysis to identify the most in-demand products. Understand the products that have been boycotted. Develop competitive and high-quality products that customers can rely on as alternatives to the boycotted products. Continue to use and promote these alternatives even after the boycott has ended.
- Ensure the availability of necessary funding for the company to distribute its products in all regions consistently. Maintain a continuous and reliable source of funding to support the consistent supply of products.
- Establish agreements with wholesalers and distributors to secure widespread and continuous channels for selling local products. Create partnerships that ensure a consistent presence and availability of local products in the market.
- Initiate marketing campaigns to educate boycotting customers about available alternative products of equal quality to the

ones they have boycotted. Promote the brands of local food product companies while adhering to ethical marketing practices, avoiding any criticism or attack on the boycotted products or their producers.

- Establish partnerships with local suppliers and collaborators within the same industry to support the local manufacturing sector. Collaborate with local suppliers and partners to strengthen the local industry.
- The government should support local products by providing tax incentives and facilitating access to financing from banks. It should streamline the procedures for conducting business and similar measures to encourage and ease the operations of local businesses.

▪ **Competitiveness of Local Products Under Boycott:**

- Ensure the quality of products to remain competitive in the face of boycotted products. Local Company should prioritize and invest in quality control measures, adhering to the highest standards to secure the long-term success of our local food products.
- To enhance the acceptability of local products among boycotting customers, it is crucial to maintain competitive pricing, avoiding higher costs than the boycotted products. Local companies should carefully set prices at a reasonable

level, ensuring that they do not exceed the prices of the boycotted items.

- local companies should diversify their product offerings to address the market gap created by the boycott. Providing a varied range of products tailored to the local market needs will not only fill the void left by boycotted foreign items but also cater to the diverse preferences of consumers.

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