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# **Competitive Analysis of the Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip by Adapting Porter's Five Forces Model**

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# تحليل القدرة التنافسية لقطاع التعليم العالي في قطاع غزة باستخدام نموذج القوى الخمسة لمايكل بورتر

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قُدِّمَ هذا البحث استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في إدارة الأعمال

1432هـ - 2011م

## **Dedication**

To the soul of my father.

To my mother.

To my family, brothers, and sisters .

To my dear wife, who did her best to help me and presented patiently  
to achieve my ambition.

To my son Tarek.

To my daughters Tala and Sumaya.

To all friends.

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## **Abstract**

### **Competitive Analysis of the Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip by Adapting Porter's Five Forces Model**

This study aims at analyzing the competitiveness at HES among the main regular universities that grant bachelor degree in the Gaza Strip by adapting Porter's Five Forces Model. It depends on a comprehensive survey that consists of senior management at the targeted universities; the Islamic University–Gaza, Al Azhar University, Al Aqsa University and Palestine University. A questionnaire was distributed to measure the variables and their effect on the competitiveness at HES. Such variables are the level of rivalry among existed regular universities, the level of restrains that limit entry of new competitors to HES, the bargaining power of students, and the bargaining power of suppliers' input, besides the variable of universities advantages consisting of age, reputation, resources and capabilities.

Through analyzing the variables, the results showed that the competitiveness among the targeted universities is not strong so much since it represents 68.08%, thus the results indicate that the level of rivalry among existed universities is 70.62%, meanwhile the level of that restrains that limit the entry of new competitors is 73.85%, students' ability to control and take decisions is 65.91% and the suppliers' ability to control and take decisions is 61.79%. Finally, the results showed that the advantages of universities are 77.32%. the results show that there is difference among the existing universities as a result of the particular discussion toward universities' reputation, universities' resources and capabilities due to name of university and the difference comes in favor to the Islamic University of Gaza.

The study has two sets of recommendations. One is for universities and the other is for the Ministry of Higher Education. The researcher recommends that current and potential universities should pay attention to develop their academic programs and their polices in terms of providing students with higher education services. They should also focus on attracting students via all available ways and capabilities, besides making use of competitiveness study of higher education sector. This can be fulfilled through studying the rivalry level among existed universities and analyzing the bargaining power of students and suppliers who contribute in providing any university with necessary resources to sustain its work. Moreover, it is important to study the possibility of having new competitors at HES and its effect on competitiveness.

On the other hand, the other recommendations are delivered to Ministry of Higher Education and they include developing regulations and legal systems that are responsible for the entry of new universities in this sector which matches with its requirements, capacities and required quality standards.

## تحليل القدرة التنافسية لقطاع التعليم العالي في قطاع غزة باستخدام نموذج القوى الخمسة لمايكل بورتر

### ملخص الرسالة

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل مستوى القدرة التنافسية في قطاع التعليم العالي للجامعات النظامية الرئيسية القائمة التي تمنح درجة البكالوريوس في قطاع غزة باستخدام نموذج القوى الخمسة لمايكل بورتر. اعتمدت الدراسة على الحصر الشامل لعينة الدراسة المكونة من الإدارة العليا في الجامعات المستهدفة وهي الجامعة الإسلامية، جامعة الأزهر، جامعة الأقصى، جامعة فلسطين، حيث تم استخدام الاستبيان كأداة رئيسية لجمع البيانات الأساسية للدراسة من خلال توزيعها لقياس المتغيرات وفحص درجة تأثيرها على مستوى القدرة التنافسية في قطاع التعليم العالي، هذه المتغيرات هي مستوى المنافسة الحالية بين الجامعات القائمة، مستوى القيود التي تحد دخول منافسون جدد إلى قطاع التعليم العالي، القوة التفاوضية للطلبة، القوة التفاوضية للموردين بالإضافة إلى متغير المميزات الإيجابية للجامعات المؤلفة من العمر الزمني للجامعات، سمعة الجامعات، الموارد والقدرات لدى الجامعات .

وقد أظهرت النتائج التي كشفت عنها الدراسة من خلال تحليل المتغيرات أن القدرة التنافسية بين الجامعات القائمة في قطاع التعليم العالي ليست قوية بشكل كبير حيث تمثل 68.08%، وقد تبين من النتائج أن مستوى المنافسة الحالية يمثل 70.62%، بينما مستوى القيود والعقبات التي تحد من دخول منافسون جدد 73.85%، وقوة الطلبة على التحكم واتخاذ القرار يمثل 65.91%، أما قوة الموردين على التحكم واتخاذ القرار 61.79%، وقد أظهرت النتائج أن المميزات الإيجابية للجامعات تمثل 77.32%. وأظهرت النتائج أن هناك فروق بين الجامعات القائمة فيما يتعلق بسمعة الجامعة والموارد والإمكانات وتأتي هذه الفروق لصالح الجامعة الإسلامية.

خرجت هذه الدراسة بمجموعتين من التوصيات، الأولى موجهة للجامعات، والثانية موجهة لوزارة التعليم العالي. حيث أوصى الباحث أن تولي الجامعات الحالية القائمة والجامعات التي تنوي الدخول لقطاع التعليم العالي اهتماماً أكبر في تطوير برامجها الأكاديمية وسياستها في تقديم خدمات التعليم العالي للطلبة وأن تركز على جذب الطلبة لبرامجها بكافة السبل والإمكانات المتاحة والاستفادة من دراسة القدرة التنافسية لقطاع التعليم العالي من خلال دراستها لمستوى المنافسة الحالي وتحليل القوة التفاوضية للطلبة والموردين الذي يساهمون في تزويد الجامعة بالموارد التي تساعد على استمرار عملها، بالإضافة إلى دراسة إمكانية دخول منافسون جدد إلى قطاع التعليم العالي وأثر ذلك على القدرة التنافسية. كما وجهت المجموعة الثانية من التوصيات إلى وزارة التعليم العالي إلى تطوير اللوائح والتشريعات القانونية التي تعمل على دخول الجامعات الجديدة لقطاع التعليم العالي بما يتناسب مع متطلبات القطاع من إمكانات وقدرات وطاقت استيعابية وفق مقاييس الجودة المطلوبة.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>3G</b>	Third generation technology.
<b>AHP</b>	Analytic Hierarch Process.
<b>AQAC</b>	Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission.
<b>HES</b>	Higher Education Sector.
<b>IO</b>	Industrial Organization.
<b>LISREL</b>	Linear Structural Relations.
<b>MNE</b>	Multi-national Enterprise.
<b>MO</b>	Market Orientation.
<b>MoHE</b>	Ministry of Higher Education.
<b>PFFF</b>	Porter's Five Forces Framework.
<b>PR</b>	Business of PR electronic signal conditioning modules founded by Peter Rasmussen.
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research & Development.
<b>RBV</b>	Resource-Based View.
<b>SCL</b>	Sectoral Competition Level.
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
<b>TQM</b>	Total Quality Management.
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme.
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
<b>USA</b>	United States of America.

## **Chapter One**

### **Background context**

## **1.1 Introduction:**

"In recent years, the concept of competitiveness has emerged as a new paradigm in economic development. Competitiveness captures the awareness of both the limitations and challenges posed by global competition, at time when effective government action is constrained by budgetary constraints and the private sector faces significant barriers to competing in domestic and international markets" (Wikipedia, 2011). Easterly and Levine (2002) argue that empirical observation confirms that resources (capital, labor, technology, and talent) tend to concentrate geographically in an industry to achieve competitiveness awareness. This result reflects the fact that firms are embedded in inter-firm relationships with networks of suppliers, buyers and even competitors that help them to gain competitive advantages in the sale of its products and services (Wikipedia, 2011).

An industry analysis usually begins with a general examination of the forces influencing the organization. The objective of such a research is to use this to develop the competitive advantage of the organization to enable it to defeat its rival companies. Much of this analysis was structured and presented by Professor Michael Porter, his contribution to our understanding of the competitive environment of the firms has wide implications for many organizations in both the private and public sectors (Lynch, 2000).

"In analyzing the competition between firms, many approaches have been created to describe the competitive forces in an industry. Michael Porter (porter, 1980) suggests four general business strategies that could be adopted in order to gain a competitive advantage" (Abusafia, 2004). According to QuickMBA (2010), Michael Porter provided a framework that models an industry as being influenced by five forces including the bargaining power of supplier, the bargaining power of buyer, the threat of potential new entrants, the threat of substitutes and the extent of competitive rivalry.

Higher education plays vital role in developing the social, political and economical situation of the Palestinian People, it is considered as the main wealth of the Palestinian People in the absence of the other natural resources (Habayeb, 2005). According to MoHE (2011), there are 7 universities in Gaza Strip grant four years bachelor degree; in addition to, 19 technical & community colleges offer two years diploma; moreover, the e-learning institutions.

Therefore, identifying the competitiveness at Higher Education Sector (HES) in the Gaza Strip is very important to describe the performance of the academic institutions which provide higher education service, and to help them formulating their strategies to develop their work, so adapting Porter's five forces model is a tool which is used to measure the competitiveness level at HES.

## **1.2 Research problem statement:**

Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip plays a vital role in developing the Palestinian society. It has many different academic institutions which provide higher education service to students in various fields with different levels of quality by exploiting available resources.

As a measurement tool and a strategic management approach, Porter's five forces model may help in analyzing the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip. Hence, the overall research hypotheses is **to examine the level of competitiveness among regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip by adapting Porter's five forces model.**

## **1.3 Research hypotheses:**

To analyze the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip, hypotheses were stated as the following:

- 1.3.1 There is a statistical significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the rivalry level among the existing universities on the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.
- 1.3.2 There is a statistical significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the potential entry of new competitors on the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.
- 1.3.3 There is a statistical significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the bargaining power of students on the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.
- 1.3.4 There is a significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the bargaining power of suppliers' inputs on the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.



1.3.5 There is a statistical significant effect of some universities' advantages (chronological age, reputation, resources and capabilities) at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  on the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.

1.3.6 There is a statistical significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to their general information (Job title, name of university, and age of university).

#### **1.4 Research variables:**

##### ***The dependent variable:***

- Level of competitiveness.

##### ***The independent variable:***

- Level of rivalry among the existing universities.
- The potential entry of new competitors.
- The bargaining power of suppliers' inputs.
- The bargaining power of students.
- The universities advantages (Resources and capabilities, Age, and Reputation).

#### **1.5 Research objectives:**

1.5.1 To analyze the competitiveness and attractiveness of regular universities which grant bachelor degree at HES in the Gaza Strip.

1.5.2 To identify driving forces of competitiveness through other applied models used in competitiveness analysis within industries.

1.5.3 To make recommendations that may improve the competitiveness and attractiveness and achieve competitive advantages of regular universities which grant bachelor degree at HES in the Gaza Strip.

#### **1.6 Research importance:**

Achieving competitiveness among the existing universities at HES became a big challenge to universities in the Gaza Strip, universities therefore need to develop plans to improve their academic programs and quality of education. This research is going to shed the light on the

driving forces of competitiveness that help universities allocate resources toward improving their performance.

To research knowledge, this study is the first to adapt Porter's five forces model in the Gaza Strip in order to examine the level of competitiveness among main existing regular universities at HES.

### **1.7 Research limitations:**

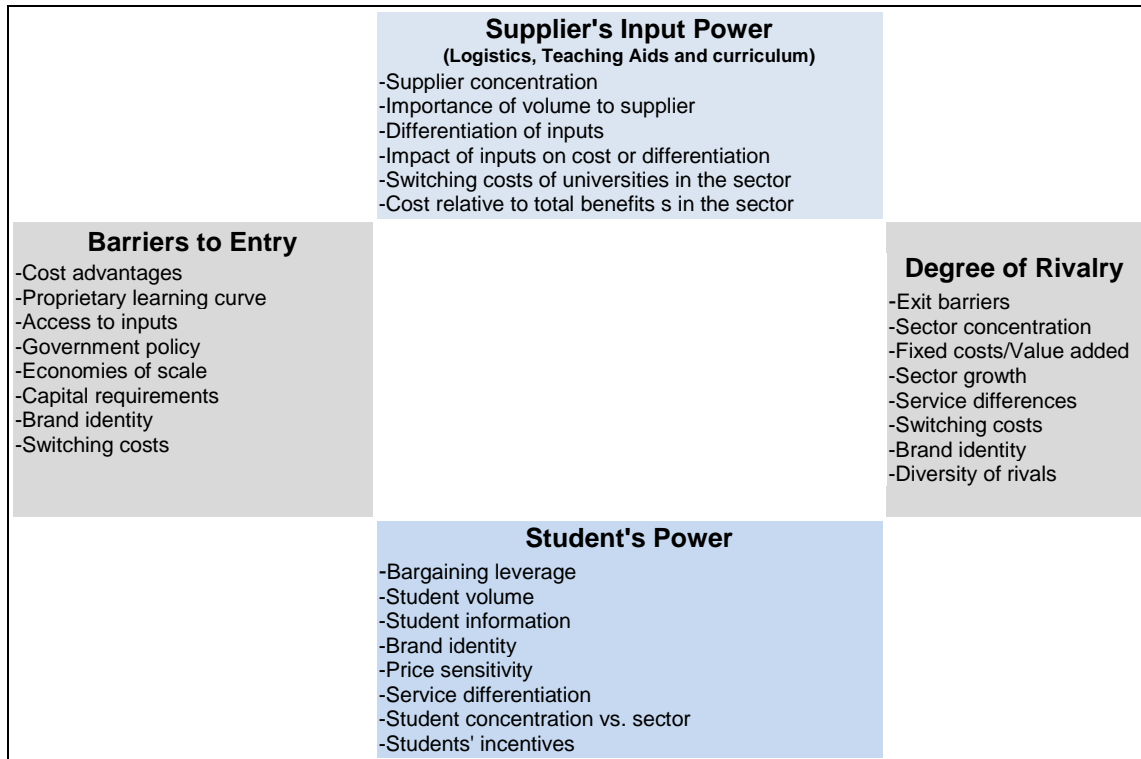
It is mostly hard to identify the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip; however, this research analyzes the competitiveness at HES by adapting Porter's five forces model, which includes degree of rivalry, threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers and bargaining power of suppliers.

Adapting Porter's five forces model to HES involves interacting the bargaining power of buyers with the bargaining power of students; in addition to, the bargaining power of suppliers with the bargaining power of supplier's inputs, which includes providing the HES through the supplier's laboratories, logistics, stationery, teaching aids, libraries, teachers and curriculums. Moreover, the threat of substitutes is not applicable in the research because there are no substitutes of regular academic institutions at HES in the Gaza Strip, and according to Porter's Model, the competition engendered by a threat of substitutes comes from products outside the industry (QuickMBA, 2010).

On the other hand, the research targets the universities in the Gaza Strip (The Islamic University of Gaza, Al-Azhar University, Al-Aqsa University, University of Palestine and Gaza University) as main regular universities, which grant bachelor's degree based on their (resources and capabilities, reputation and age). In contrast, the research excluded the nineteen colleges because they grant two years diploma; in addition to, the Al-Quds Open University and Al-Ummah University because their academic systems depend on the distance learning; moreover, the e-learning institutions because they are not accredited by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, also Gaza University is excluded because it was established 3 years ago, thus it has little resources, experience, and its students' number is small; in addition to, Gaza University didn't graduate students to join the marketplace. The adaptation of Porter's five

forces model is illustrated in the figure (1.1) showing the applicable four forces of (Supplier's Input Power, Student's Power, Barriers to Entry and Degree of Rivalry).

**Figure (1.1)**  
**Adaptation of Porter's fiver forces model**



## 1.8 Research structure:

*The research consists of five chapters divided as follows:*

- A) Chapter 1: Background context and previous studies.
- B) Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and Higher Education Sector.
- C) Chapter 3: Research methodology.
- D) Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion.
- E) Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations.

## **1.9 Previous studies:**

### **1.9.1 (Rundh, 2009)**

#### **"Development of customer value in a supply chain: managerial thinking about strategic marketing"**

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze how companies develop their customers value when external changes affect the supply chain, the focus is on what managers expect will influence customer value from a strategic point of view. This study is based on a qualitative study where managers at a division level have been interviewed.

The study findings show that the main driving forces (technology, marketplace, and customer driver) have been identified and found to affect the supply chain when companies develop their customers value. On the other hand, the study implies that managers need to assess the main driving forces and find a competitive and marketing strategy that can match competition and influence driving forces in the actual market area.

### **1.9.2 (Ormanidhi and Stringa, 2008)**

#### **"Porter's model of generic competitive strategies"**

The main purpose of this research is to discuss the approaches of (Structure-Conduct-Performance, the New Industrial Organization and Game Theory, the Resource-Based Perspective, and Market Process Economic) in terms of their relations, similarities, and differences relative to Porter's model. The research depends on the comparative discussion to support the use of Porter's model to evaluate firm's competitive behavior and what strategy they choose. The research concludes that Porter's model is considered as an insightful and convenient approach to analyzing the firm's competitive behavior for a number of reasons. These reasons are its popularity, well-defined structure, feasibility, clarity, simplicity and generality.

### **1.9.3 (Montalvo, 2007)**

#### **"The Industry of Electronic Signal Conditioning Modules – An Analysis of the Swedish Market"**

This research is an applied study on the industry of electronic signal conditioning modules in the Swedish Market; the thesis' primary source of information is the international company of PR electronics which is founded by Peter Rasmussen. The purpose of this research is

to produce an analysis of the Swedish market competition in the field of electronic modules; namely, the PR product range 4100-series, which is constituted of a wide variety of products to cover a wide variety of functions within signal conditioning.

The research concludes that (1) the intensity of competitive rivalry in the industry is consisting of a few large firms, where signal conditioning is only a small part of their product program and PR is the biggest competitor, (2) the bargaining power of the customers comes from the size of the industry; the majority of customers reduce their bargaining power because they don't buy large quantities, (3) the suppliers to PR electronics don't possess an excessive bargaining power; PR has a vulnerable supplier relationship because the industry relies only on two suppliers they are working with, and (4) the threat of new entrants is small since the high fixed cost has been there for 10 years.

#### **1.9.4 (Gabriel, 2006)**

##### **"Application of Porter's five forces framework in the banking industry of Tanzania"**

This study is an applied study on the banking industry of Tanzania, the study used Porter's five forces model in order to achieve its purpose of assessing the attractiveness of the banking industry in Tanzania.

The study concludes that the banking industry of Tanzania has been growing at a high speed for the last decade. Out of 22 banks, 19 of them have been licensed within a decade. Therefore, this has increased a tremendous competition within the industry. The study implies that bargaining power of Suppliers force is favorable to the industry. The rivalry among the existing bank, threat of new entrants, and bargaining power of customer is found to be unfavorable forces to the industry. It is therefore urged from this analysis that on average the industry is not attractive.

#### **1.9.5 (Sirikari & Tang, 2006)**

##### **"Industrial competitiveness analysis: Using the analytic hierarchy process"**

This study is an applied study on the automotive component industry in Thailand to analyze competitiveness in that industry by proposing the Analytic hierarch Process (AHP) model that applies theories of the Industrial Organizations (IO), and the Resources-Based View

(RBV) which are rooted in both strategic management and operations management to study the complex relationship between factors that affect industrial competitiveness.

The study concludes that (1) competitiveness drivers can be classified into two groups. The first group consists of market forces characterized by IO-based theory, or external drivers (bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers, potential entrants, and substitute products). The second group encompasses resources and capabilities, or internal drivers found in RBV theory, and (2) there are five dimensions which can be reliable competitiveness indicators of the automotive components industry. These indicators are: manufacturing excellence, value-added of product, market expansion, financial returns, and intangible values.

#### **1.9.6 (Oral & Mistikoglu, 2005)**

##### **"Competitive Analysis of the Turkish Brick Industry- a case study for developing countries"**

This research is an applied study on the Turkish brick industry for developing countries; the aim of this research is to examine the factors affecting the competition in brick industries in developing countries within the frame of Porter's five forces model. A questionnaire survey was undertaken with Turkish brick makers and the results were evaluated by using frequency tables.

Findings show that competition between the existing companies in Turkish brick industry was fierce with many similar-sized companies, low entry and exit barriers, and increasing bargaining power of the buyers.

#### **1.9.7 (Min, 2005)**

##### **"Five Competitive Forces in China's Automobile Industry"**

This research is an applied study on the China's automobile industry; the aim of this research is to define the conditions of competition for Multi-national Enterprise (MNE) in China through the industrial competitive framework of Porter's five forces model, and to demonstrate how it influences the MNE strategy and competitive position. In particular, this research provides a comparison of the competitive position of American, European, and Japanese automobile multinationals in China.

The research finds that (1) the industry rivalry level has the most important obstacles of high tariff and non-tariff barriers, foreign investment limits, and local content requirement;

moreover, the competition in China's automobile industry is from both domestic and foreign firms, the government therefore has formed three big companies to challenge the foreign ones, and adopted the strategy of alliances with foreign firms to favor domestic firms by raising technology level, and achieving greater economies of scale, (2) the monopolistic position of Volkswagen in China is seriously threatened by new entrants and developments of other foreign and national carmakers, due to the explosion of vehicle demand in China since 2001, (3) the bargaining power of customers is high, because the rapid growth of China has triggered a growth in purchasing power, and (4) the presence of capable specialized suppliers and related industries constitutes an important condition for MNEs in China's vehicle industry.

### **1.9.8 (Abu Safia, 2004)**

#### **"The Evaluation of the Competitive Advantages of the Palestinian Cellular Telecommunications Company- Jawwal"**

This research is an applied study on the Cellular Telecommunications Market in the Gaza Strip. The research methodology is built on the comparative method between Jawwal & the Israeli firms' support activities by using the value chain to identify the nature of the prevalent competition between the Palestinian cellular communications company "Jawwal", and the Israeli cellular communications companies which operate in the Palestinian Authority territories without being licensed by the Palestinian Authority, and the effect of the Israeli measures against Jawwal on the company's activities.

The research concludes that the competitive advantage in the cellular telecommunications service industry depends on many fields, which are (1) Quality of services, (2) Customer care, (3) Service development & innovation, and (4) Human resources. The research considers the quality of services as one of the important factors, which affects customers' satisfaction.

### **1.9.9 (Siaw & Yu, 2004)**

#### **"An Analysis of the Impact of the Internet on Competition in the Banking Industry, using Porter's Five Forces Model"**

This research is an applied study on the internet banking industry by using Porter's Five Forces Model. This study aims to examine how the emergence of the internet is likely to affect the competitive landscape of the banking industry by analyzing ways in which the internet impacts on the competitive dynamics of the banking industry.

The research finds that the impact of internet banking of the five forces are: (1) on the threat of entry, the internet fundamentally lower barriers to entry that allow more new competitors to enter banking industry; it gives people from other industry segments opportunities to succeed in business where they had little or no presence before, (2) on bargaining power of buyers, it increased indirectly way; as more new comers were expected to enter the industry, banking customers were facing more alternatives that increased their bargaining power, (3) on bargaining power of suppliers, there is only be a few gateways (suppliers) such as Time Warner and Microsoft; therefore, the bargaining power of suppliers was strong, and (4) on rivalry, the internet enabled small banks to compete on equal ground with the large-scale multinational financial giants, because the traditional high-cost, brick-and-mortar branch is not mandatory, also the internet's universal standard eliminates costs involved in customers changing to a new provider.

#### **1.9.10 (Chin and etal, 2003)**

##### **"Comparing the industrial organization view and market orientation"**

The main purpose of this research is to establish the Industrial Organization (IO) view and Market Orientation (MO) as distinct externally oriented strategies that influence firm behaviors and outcomes. It proposes a conceptual framework, which considers the effect of supplier power as moderator of the orientation-performance relationship; the research depended on the comparison methodology to compare between the I/O and MO to better understand business performance. The research concludes that supplier power is a key determinant of the relationship between outcomes of financial, customers, employees and market and I/O orientations, and the supplier power has a moderating effect on the relationship between each orientation and outcomes.

#### **1.9.11 ( Teo, 2002)**

##### **"Market Entry Strategies of Wireless Startups"**

This research is an applied study on the market entry strategies and policies of the wireless industry in United States of America (USA) of five startups, new ventures or companies, are illustrated as A, B, C, D, and E that provide different wireless services. The aim of this research is to identify the market entry strategies of wireless startups by using Porter's Five



Forces theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV), the research used the quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the subject matter in depth.

The research concludes that (1) the startups are successful at overcoming barriers of entry in their respective markets. Despite the high financial barrier into the infrastructure provision market, these startups erected additional barriers to prevent entry of potential players, (2) the startups didn't actively undertake any action to overcome the intensity of rivalry because their entry strategies are more defensive than offensive; they seek to protect their markets, rather than attack their competitors, and finally (3) the bargaining powers of customers and suppliers were not manipulated to the startups' advantages; all the startups sold to customers with higher bargaining powers than they did.

### **1.9.12 (Gray, 2002)**

#### **"Marketing strategy and competitive environment as determinants of business performance"- A study of American manufacturers.**

The main purpose of this research is to test the impact of five marketing strategy variables of (aggressiveness, defensiveness, adaptability, specializations, and cooperation) and two environmental variables of (Market attractiveness and competitive position) on profitability of large American manufacturing companies. The Linear Structural Relations (LISREL) framework was used to test the hypotheses, which specify positive relationships between those variables and profitability. The aggressiveness is concerned with the interaction between an organization and its competitors, the defensiveness, adaptability, and specialization focus on the interaction between an organization and its customers, and the cooperation is concerned with the interaction between an organization and other parties in the organization's channel of distribution.

The research concludes that competitive position and defensiveness have, respectively, about 1.4 and 1.3 times the positive impact of market attractiveness on profitability. Market attractiveness has approximately 1.2 times greater impact on business profitability than does aggressiveness. The impact of adaptability and specialization are relatively less forceful than other significant causal effects.

### **1.9.13 (Hacklin, 2001)**

#### **"A 3G convergence Strategy for Mobile Business Middleware Solutions"**

The research is an applied study on Smartner Information Systems Ltd. in Heliski, Finland. The purpose of this research is to examine whether Smartner's current knowledge, products, and development will be applicable under third generation technology (3G) by using Porter's five forces model.

The research concludes that (1) the threat of new entrants explains that software giants, such as Microsoft, are expanding their business into mobile middleware solutions and wireless terminal applications, and are competing on quality, price, as well as compatibility with existing products, (2) the bargaining power of customers is high because as compared to a huge operator, Smartner's possibilities to affect the end user are small, so the end user decides upon mobile services, and thus Smartner's success, (3) there are only a few rivals competing in the same segment as Smartner, and (4) the bargaining power of suppliers explains that Smartner is not really dependent upon suppliers and subcontractors.

### **1.10 Conclusion:**

This Chapter tackles the items of research problem and the research question; in addition to, the research hypothesis, objectives, importance, variables, structure, and limitations. It also handles the previous studies and the literature of the competitive analysis in previous studies either in Arabic or in English languages.

**Chapter Two**

**Theoretical Framework**

## **2.1 Introduction:**

This chapter is grounded in the array of reviewing the concepts of the strategic management and the important business approaches that should be considered in crafting strategies to produce successful performance of strategies.

This chapter consists of (1) reviewing the most important concepts of the strategic management, (2) industry and competitive analysis, (3) core competencies and competitive advantage, and (4) Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.

In this chapter, Porter's Five Forces Framework (PFFF), as one of the approaches which is used in an industry analysis, is discussed in-depth to illustrate the essential factors that may effect on the level of competition in an industry in order to pave the way for discussing the forces which effect on the level of the competition at HES in the Gaza Strip.

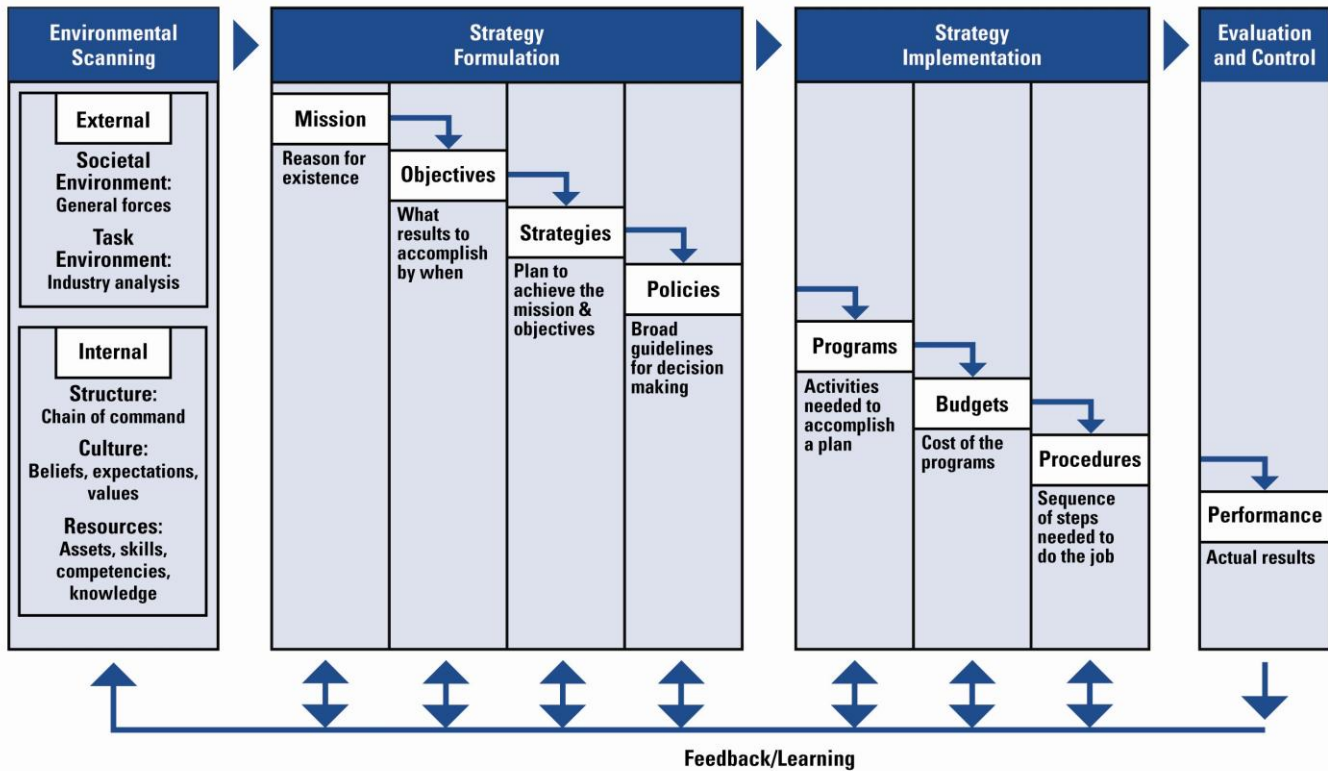
## **2.2 Concepts of Strategic management:**

### **2.2.1 Definition of Strategic Management:**

Deciding what the strategic management is neither easy nor steady. Many authors argued in defining the strategic management in different aspects of strategic planning , decision making, and industries analysis. Wheelen and Hunger (2008) argue that "Strategic Management is that set of managerial decisions and actions that determine the long-run performance of a corporation". Strategic management is the direction and scope of an organization over the long-term which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a challenging either the external or the internal environments, to meet the needs of markets and to fulfill stakeholder expectations, and it is concerned with difficulties and complexity degrees surrounding organizations as a result of ambiguous and non-routine situations rather than operation-specific implications (Johnson & Scholes, 2002). Strategic management entails specifying the organization's mission, vision, goals and objectives, developing policies and plans, which are designed to achieve these objectives through allocating and utilizing resources in a good way to implement the policies and plans (Wikipedia, 2011).

According to Wheelen and Hunger (2008), strategic management consists of four basic elements as illustrated in figure (2.1) as following:

**Figure (2.1)**  
**Basic Model of Strategic Management**



Source: Wheelen and Hunger ( 2008)

### 2.2.2 Environmental Scanning:

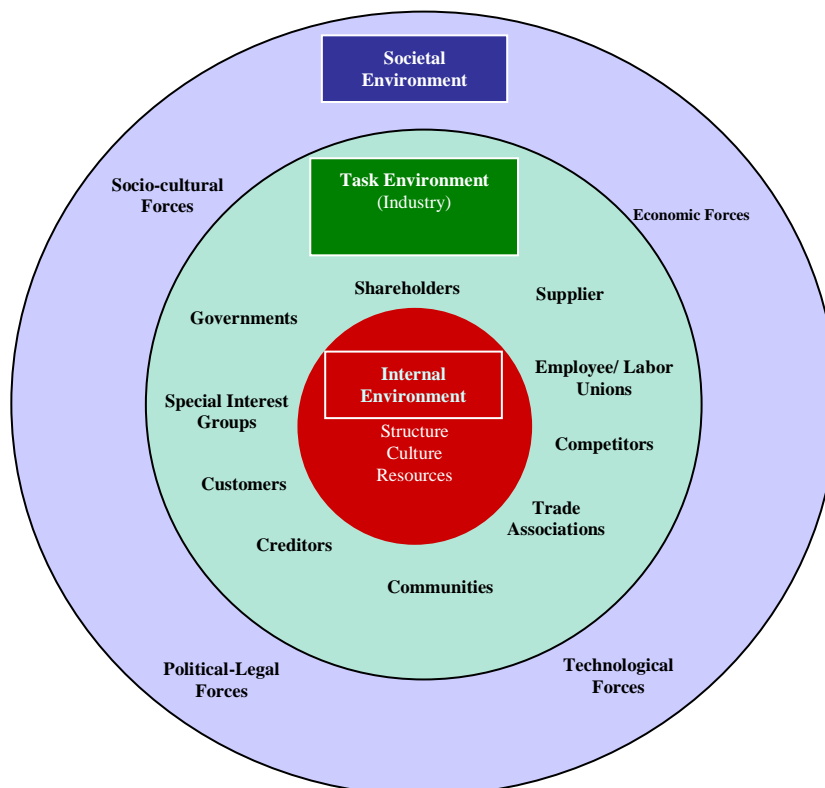
The purpose of environmental scanning is to reveal the external and internal strategic factors that will determine the future of the cooperation. Environmental scanning consists of monitoring, evaluation, and disseminating of information from the external and internal environments to key people within the corporation. SWOT is one of the important and simplest ways that used to describe and analyze the particular Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats; whereas, the external environment consists of variables (Opportunities and Threat) that are outside the organization, and the variables (Strengths and Weaknesses) in term of the internal environment are inside the organization. (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008).

Organizations today must practice strategic planning that clearly helps in defining objectives and assesses both the internal and external situation to formulate corporate strategies that help in making adjustment as necessary to stay on track. The environmental scanning therefore helps top management to avoid surprises, identify threats and opportunities, gain competitive advantage,

and improve long-term and short-term planning. It includes (1) the internal analysis of the firm, (2) External macro environment consisting of (demographic-economic, natural, technological, political-legal, and social-cultural), and (3) the analysis of the firm's industry by using Porter's five forces model. (Robbins & Coulter, 2009, P:181). The environmental variables are illustrated in figure (2.2).

**Figure (2.2)**

**The environmental variables**



Source: Wheelen and Hunger ( 2008)

**2.2.3 Identifying the External Environment:**

To undertake environmental scanning, top management must be aware of the many variables of societal and task environments within corporations. The *societal environment* consists of many forces which have influence that don't directly affect on the short-run activities of the corporation, but they affect on its long-run decision. On the contrary, The *task environment* includes those elements or groups that directly affect on corporations performance. But *Industry analysis* refers to an in-depth examination of key factors within a corporation's task environment; whereas, Michael Porter popularized many model used in industry and competition analysis that affect on forming corporate strategies , and both the societal and task environment

must be monitored to detect the strategic factors that are likely to have a strong impact on corporate success or failure. (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008).

#### **2.2.4 Industry and Competitive Analysis:**

According to Lynch (2003), "An industry analysis usually begins with a general examination of the forces influencing the organization. The objective of such a study is to use this to develop the competitive advantage of the organization to enable it to defeat its rival companies". Wheelen and Hunger (2008) argue that "Before an organization can begin strategy formulation, it must scan the external environment to identify possible opportunities and threats and its internal environment for strengths and weaknesses".

Crafting strategy is not like an activity where managers can succeed and find solutions through good intentions and creativity, it is an analysis-driven approach. Choosing and judgments among what strategy to pursue in corporations depends on a critical assessment of a company's external environment and internal situation. Therefore, suitability of a company will be suspect if a its strategy is not well-matched to both external and internal circumstances and situations of industry and competitive conditions; in addition to, its resources and capabilities. (Thompson & Strickland, 1996).

#### **2.2.5 Porter's Five Forces Framework (PFFF):**

Min (2005) explains that "the success of competitive strategy is a function of the attractiveness of the industries in which the firm competes and of the firm's relative positioning those industries". The five forces model is a dynamic approach to analyzing industry structure, based on five competitive forces acting in an industry or sub-industry: threat of entry, rivalry among current competitors threat of substitution, bargaining power of buyers, and bargaining power of suppliers (Porter, 2002). Dagdeviren and Yuksel (2009) argue that "the five forces in Porter's model assumes that suppliers, buyer, potential entrants and substitute products affect the intensity of competitive rivalry among existing firms and the collective strength of the five forces determines the Sectoral Competition Level (SCL) of the organization".

Based on well-established industrial economic principles, Porter argues that the degree of attractiveness of a given industry is determined by the five forces which have a claim on the economic values created by the industrial activity (Hax, 2001). These forces are shown in figure (2.3), and illustrated as the followings:

## **I. Threat of New Entrants:**

Mistikoglu & Oral (2005) argue that one of the determinants which define characteristics of competitive advantage is the industry's barrier to entry, every company therefore should be able to enter or exit a market if it is a free market. However, every industry has its special characteristics and conditions that may restrain new competitors to enter markets. According to (Minizberg, etal, 2003), some of the possible barriers to entry are:

- *Economies of scale: These economies deter entry by forcing the aspirant either to come in on a large scale or to accept a cost disadvantage. Economies of scale can also act as hurdles in distribution, utilization of the sales force, financing, and nearly any other part of a business.*
- *Product differentiation: Brand identification creates a barrier by forcing entrants to spend heavily to overcome customer loyalty.*
- *Capital requirements: the need to invest large financial resource in order to compete creates a barrier to entry, particularly if the capital is required for unrecoverable expenditures in up-front advertising or R&D. Capital is necessary not only for fixed facilities but also for customer credit, inventories, and absorbing start-up losses.*
- *Cost disadvantages independent of size: Entrenched companies may have cost advantages not available to potential rivals, no matter what their size and attainable economies of scale. These advantages can stem from the effects of the learning curve, proprietary technology, access to the best raw materials sources, assets purchased at pre-inflation prices, government subsidies, or favorable locations.*
- *Access to distribution channels: The new boy on the block must, of course, secure distribution of his product or services. The more limited the wholesale or retail channels are and the more that the existing competitors have these tied up, obviously the tougher that entry into the industry will be.*
- *Government policy: The government policy can limit or even foreclose industries with such controls as license requirements and limits on access to raw materials. The government also can play a major indirect role by affecting entry barriers through controls such as air and water pollution standards and safety regulations.*



## **II. Rivalry Among Existing Firms:**

Thompson & Strickland (1996) argue that "the strongest of the five competitive forces is usually the jockeying for position and buyer favor that goes on among rival firms. Rivalry emerges because one or more competitors see an opportunity to better meet customer needs or is under pressure to improve its performance". According to Wheelen & Hunger (2008), intense rivalry is related to the presence of several factors, including:

- *Number of Competitors: When competitors are few and roughly equal in size, they watch each other carefully to make sure that they match any move by another firm with an equal countermove.*
- *Rate of Industry Growth: Any slowing in passenger traffic tends to see off price wars in the airline industry because the only path to growth is to take sales away from a competitor.*
- *Product or Service Characteristics: A product can be very unique, with many qualities differentiating it from others of its kind, or it may be a commodity, a product whose characteristics are the same, regardless of who sells it.*
- *Amount of Fixed Costs: Because airlines must fly their planes on a schedule, regardless of the number of paying passenger for any one flight, they offer cheap standby fares whenever a plane has empty seats.*
- *Capacity: If the only way a manufacturer can increase capacity is in a large increment by building a new plant, it will run that new plant at full capacity to keep its unit costs as low as possible, thus producing so much that the selling price falls throughout the industry.*
- *Height of Exit barriers: Exit barriers keep a company from leaving an industry. The brewing industry, for example, has a low percentage of companies that voluntarily leave the industry because breweries are specialized assets with few uses except for making beer.*
- *Diversity of Rivals: Rivals that have very different ideas of how to compete are likely to cross paths often and unknowingly challenge each other's position.*

### **III. Threat of Substitute Products or Services:**

Threat of substitutes exists when a product's demand is affected by the price change of a substitute product from another industry. A product's price elasticity is affected by substitute products; however, , the demand becomes more elastic since customers have more substitutes become available in an industry. The competition revealed by a threat of substitute comes from products outside the industry (QuickMBA, 2010).

### **IV. Bargaining Power of Buyers:**

Wheelen & Hunger (2008) argue that "buyers affect an industry through their ability to force down prices, bargain for higher quality or more services, and play competitors against each other". According to Johnson & Scholes (2002), bargaining power of buyers is likely to be high when some of the following conditions prevail:

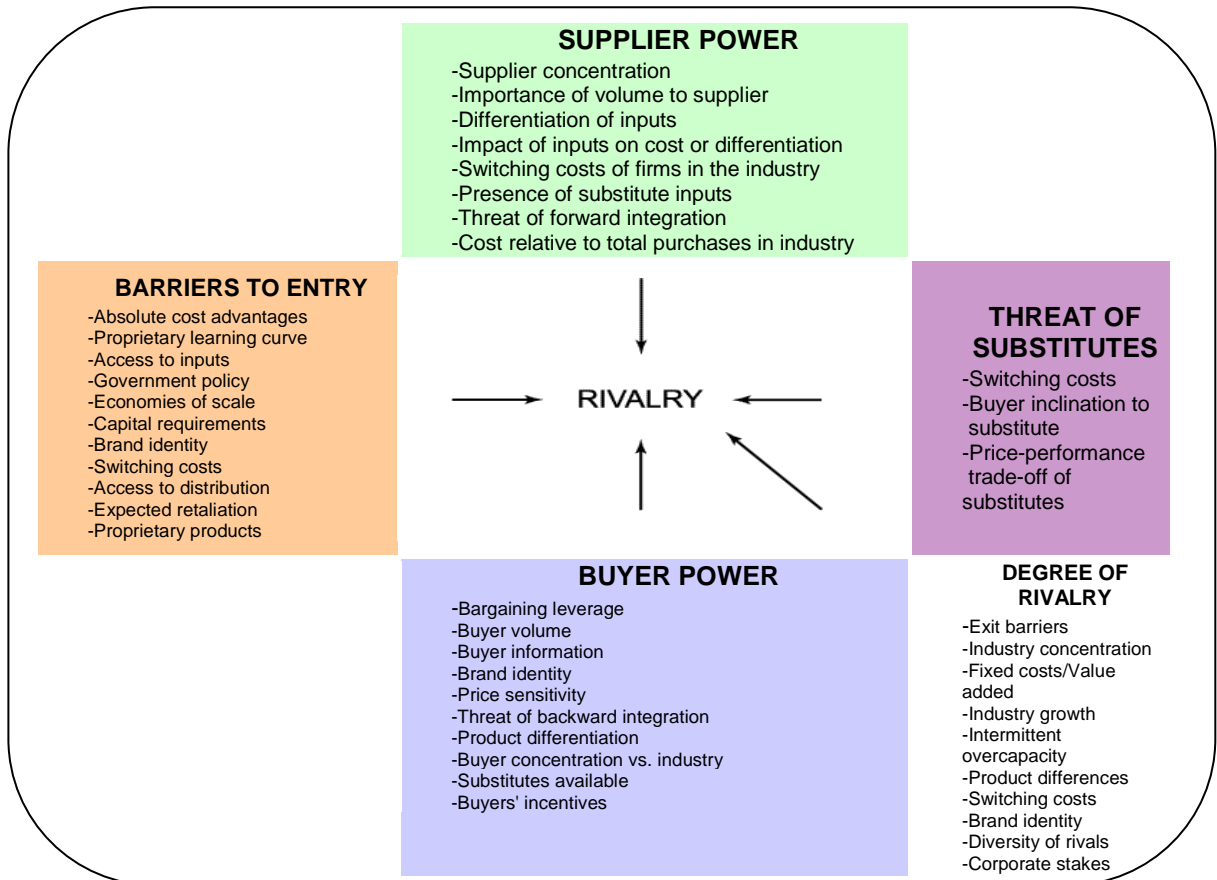
- *There is a concentration of buyers, particularly if the volume purchase of the buyers is high.*
- *The supplying industry comprises a large number of small operators.*
- *There are alternative sources of supply, perhaps because the product required is undifferentiated between suppliers or, as for many public sector operations, when the deregulation of markets spawns new competitors.*
- *The component or material cost is a high percentage of total cost, since buyers will be likely to 'shop around' to get the best price and therefore 'squeeze' suppliers.*
- *The cost of switching a supplier is low or involves little risk.*
- *There is a threat of a backward integration by the buyer (e.g. by acquiring a supplier) if satisfactory prices or quality from suppliers cannot be obtained.*

### **V. Bargaining Power of Suppliers:**

Mistikoglu & Oral (2005) show that "according to Porter's five forces model, suppliers have control over the competition in the industry through their bargaining power", and according to Lynch (2000), Porter suggested that suppliers are more powerful under the following conditions:

- *If there are only a few suppliers: This means that it is difficult to switch from one to another if a supplier starts to exert its power.*
- *If there are no substitutes for the supplies they offer: This is especially the case if the suppliers are important for technical reasons, perhaps they form a crucial ingredient in a production process or the service they offer is vital to smooth production.*
- *If supplier's prices form a large part of the total cost of the organization: Any increase in price would hit value added unless the organization was able to raise its own prices in compensation.*
- *If a supplier can potentially undertake the value-added process of the organization: Occasionally a supplier will have power if it is able to integrate forward and undertake the value-added process undertaken by the organization; this could pose a real threat to the survival of the organization.*

**Figure (2.3)**  
**Porter's five Forces Model**



Source: QuickMBA (2010)

### **2.2.6 The value of Porter's Five Forces Framework:**

According to Grundy (2006), the value of PFFF is appeared to offer the following attributes:

- It helps to predict the long-run rate of returns in a particular industry.
- It is a more simplistic to focus on relative market growth rates in determining industry attractiveness.
- It contributes in combining input-output analysis of an industry through the five forces.
- It emphasizes the importance of searching for imperfect markets, which offer more national opportunities for superior returns.
- It reveals the importance of negotiating power and bargaining arrangements in determining relative market attractiveness.
- It makes managers to focus on the external environment factors of an industry more than traditional "SWOT" analysis.

### **2.2.7 Compiling the "Forces" to Understand an Industry:**

Porter's (1980) strategic positioning model is built upon the assumption that five forces determine industry attractiveness, i.e. the potential to earn rents. Three forces represent the 'horizontal' competitive relationship, namely the rivalry among competing firms, the threat of new entrants and the threat of substitutes. Two other forces reflect the firm's 'vertical' linkages with external actors, namely buyer and supplier power (Rugman, 2000).

Identifying all the variables of each force and their strength in the industry might be daunting task, but no other business analysis gives as robust a representation of the attractiveness of an industry as a whole. This analysis is useful for determining whether to enter an industry or specific market. It is also useful for identifying strengths and weaknesses, risks and opportunities (Mckinney, 2008).

### **2.2.8 Identifying the Internal Environment:**

According to Wheelen and Hunger (2008), "the internal environment of a corporation consists of variables (Strengths and Weaknesses) that are within the organization itself and are not usually within the short-run control of top management. These variables from the context in which work is done, they include the corporation's structure, culture, and resources. Key strengths from a set of core competencies that the corporation can use to gain competitive advantage".

Analysts must also look within the corporation itself to identify internal strategic factors-critical strengths and weaknesses that are likely to determine whether a firm will be able to take advantage of opportunities while avoiding threats. This internal scanning, often referred to as organizational analysis, is concerned with identifying and developing an organization's resources and competencies (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008).

The internal analysis provides important information about an organization's specific resources and capability. An organization's *resources* are its assets-financial, physical, human, and intangible that it uses to develop, manufacture, and deliver product to its customers. The major value-creating *capabilities* of the organization are known as its *core competencies*. Both resources and core competencies determine the organization's competitive weapons (Robbins & Coulter, 2009).

### **2.2.9 Core competency:**

▪ **Core competency definition:** Many authors argue about the definition of core competencies. Some authors state that "Core competencies are the major source strengths (human, organizational, physical-present or potential) of organizations" (Abusafia, 2004). Other authors state that "Core Competencies is something a firm does especially well in comparison to its competitors" (Thompson, 1996). Other authors were more specific in their definition like Lynch (2000), he states that core competencies are "defined as a group of skills and technologies that enables an organization to provide a particular benefit to its customers". Prahalad and Hamel (1990) suggest three factors to help identify core competencies in a firm as following:

- A core competence will make a firm able to grow across different fields.
- A second characteristic includes the ability to contribute to the customers assumed benefits of the product or service.
- Finally a core competency should be difficult for a rival to imitate.

▪ **Importance of core competency:** Abusafia (2004) argues that "Core competencies underlie the leadership that firms have build or wish to acquire over their competitors, core competencies build into core products or services which form the basis of the business areas of the firm, it can be linked to many business areas in the firm itself to form a competitive advantage". Moreover, Lynch (2000) explains that "the particular importance of core competencies comes from the fact that "core competencies are a vital prerequisite for the competitive battle that then takes place

for market share: the development of key resources has to come before and not during market place activity”.

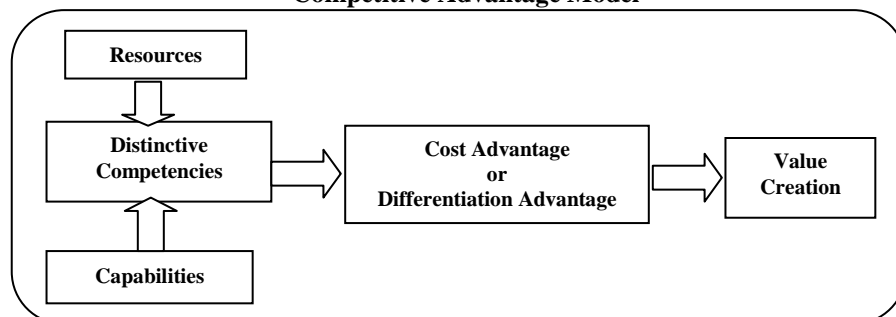
On the other hand, Thompson (1996) argues that “ the importance of a core competence to strategy-making rests with (1) “the added capabilities it gives a firm in going after a particular market opportunity, (2) the competitive edge it can yield in marketplace, and (3) it’s potential for being a corner stone of strategy”.

### 2.2.10 Competitive Advantage:

▪ **Competitive advantage definition:** A competitive advantage is an advantage over competitors gained by offering consumers greater value, either by means of lower prices or by providing greater benefits and service that justifies higher prices (Abusafia, 2004). According to Thomas (1988), “competitive advantage refers to all aspects of an organization that allow it to compete more effectively than its rivals, competitive advantage examines both internal and external strengths and weaknesses of a firm and its rivals”. Thomson (2000) argues that “a firm has competitive advantage whenever it has an edge over rivals in attracting customers and defending against competitive forces”.

A competitive advantage exists when the firm is able to deliver the same benefits as competitors, but at a lower cost (cost advantage), or deliver benefits that exceed those of competing products (differentiation advantage). Thus, a competitive advantage enables the firm to create superior value for its customers and superior profits for itself (QuikMBA, 2010). According to Lynch (2000), the purpose of a competitive advantages is to distinguish firms for a certain period of time until all the Firms share the same advantage, and to create a competitive advantage, firm’s core competencies should be evaluated and developed in which core competencies may span for many years after continued development. Figure (2.4) illustrates the model of the competitive advantages.

Figure (2.4)  
Competitive Advantage Model



Source: QuikMBA (2010)

▪ **The importance of Competitive Advantage:** The particular importance of creating and sustaining competitive advantages comes from the fact that the firm with competitive advantage “has good prospects for above-average profitability and success in the industry. Without competitive advantage, a company risk being out competed by stronger rivals and locked into mediocre performance” (Abusafia, 2004).

Organizations depend on many factors of price, quality, service, good well and others to achieve the competitive advantage. Some of those factors can be imitate by the firms competitors, Lynch (2000) explains that “the real benefit comes from advantages that competitors cannot easily imitate”. According to Abusafia (2004), gaining competitive advantage enhances firms with many benefits, but the main challenge is to develop and sustain this competitive advantage.

▪ **Sources of Competitive Advantage:** Sources of competitive advantage can be one or more of, but not limited to, the following (QuickMBA, 2010):

1. Making the best product on the market.
2. Delivering superior customer service.
3. Achieving lower costs than rivals.
4. Being in more convenient geographical locations.
5. Using appropriate technology.
6. Having highly skilled human resources.
7. Possessing a well known brand name and reputation.
8. Providing buyers more value for each dollar they pay.

One of the key factors for the foundation of a competitive advantage is to provide customers with what they perceive as a superior value. In other words, we can say that the superior value is to provide customers with a better product. Also competitive advantage exists when the firm is able to deliver the same benefits as competitors but at a lower cost, or deliver benefits that exceed those of competitors; these abilities are called a competitive advantage that enables the firm to create superior value for its customers and superior profits for itself (QuickMBA, 2010).

### 2.2.11 Competitive Strategies:

A competitive strategy is a strategy for how an organization will compete in its business. For a small organization in only one line of business or a large organization that has not diversified into different products or markets, the competitive strategy describes how it will compete in its primary or main market. For organizations in multiple business; however, each business has its own competitive strategy that defines its competitive advantages, the products or services it will offer, the customers it wants to reach, and the like (Robbins & Coulter, 2009).

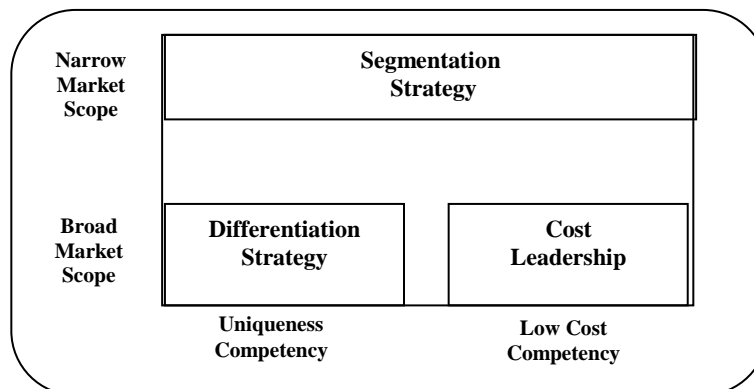
#### 2.2.11.1 Porter's Generic Strategies:

According to Montalvo (2007), competitive Strategy is techniques used for analyzing industries and competitors and competitive advantage describes three general types of strategies that are commonly used by businesses. These three generic strategies are defined along two dimensions: strategic cope and strategic strength. Strategic scope is a demand-side dimension and looks at the size and composition of the market you intend to target. Strategic strength is a supply-side dimension and looks at the strength or core competency of the firm. In particular he identified two competencies that he felt were most important: product differentiation and product cost (efficiency).

Porter concludes that there are three best strategies. They are cost leadership, differentiation, and market segmentation (or focus). Market segmentation is narrow in scope while both cost leadership and differentiation are relatively broad in market scope. Porter's three strategies are illustrated in figure (2.5) as follows:

**Figure (2.5)**

**Porter's Generic Strategies**



Source: Motalvo (2007)



• **Cost Leadership Strategy:** A company's goal in pursuing a cost leadership or low-cost strategy is to outperform competitors by producing goods or services at a lower cost. Two advantages accrue from this strategy. First, because of its lower cost, the cost leader is able to charge a lower price for its products than its competitors and still make the same level of profit as other companies. If companies in the industry charge similar process for their product he cost leader makes a higher profit than its competitors because of its lower costs. Second, if price wars develop and companies start to compete on price as the industry matures, the cost leader will be able to withstand competition better than the other companies because of its lower costs. The question is how does a company become the cost leader? It achieves this position by the combination of product/market/ distinctive competence choices, it makes to gain a low-cost competitive advantage (Hill & Jones, 1989, P:127-128). Table (2.1) outlines these strategic choices.

**Table (2.1)**  
**Cost Leadership Strategies**

	<b>Cost leadership</b>	<b>Differentiation</b>	<b>Focus</b>
<b>Product differentiation</b>	Low (principally by price)	High (principally by uniqueness)	Low to high (price or uniqueness)
<b>Market segmentation</b>	Low (mass market)	High (many market segments)	Low (one or a few segments)
<b>Distinctive competence</b>	Manufacturing and materials management	Research and development sales and marketing	Any kind of distinctive competence

**Source: Hill and Jones (1989)**

• **Differentiation Strategy:** In order to achieve differentiation one needs to create a product that is perceived as unique. The unique features or benefits should provide superior value for the customer if this strategy is to be successful (Montalvo, 2007). This strategy involves in selecting one or more criteria used by buyers in a specific market, and then positioning the business uniquely to meet those criteria, sometimes this strategy associated with a premium price for the product, this premium price reflects the higher production costs and extra value-added features provided for the consumer. In other words differentiation is about charging a premium price that more than covers the additional production costs, and about giving customers clear reasons to prefer the product over other less differentiated products (Abusafia, 2004).

- **Segmentation Strategy:** In this strategy the firm concentrates on a select few target markets. It is also called a focus strategy or niche strategy. It is hoped that by focusing your marketing efforts on one or two narrow market segments and tailoring your marketing mix to these specialized markets, you can better meet the needs of that target market. The firm typically looks to gain a competitive advantage through effectiveness rather than efficiency. As a focus strategy it may be used to select targets that are less vulnerable to substitutes or where a competition is weakest to earn above-average return on investments (Montalvo, 2007).

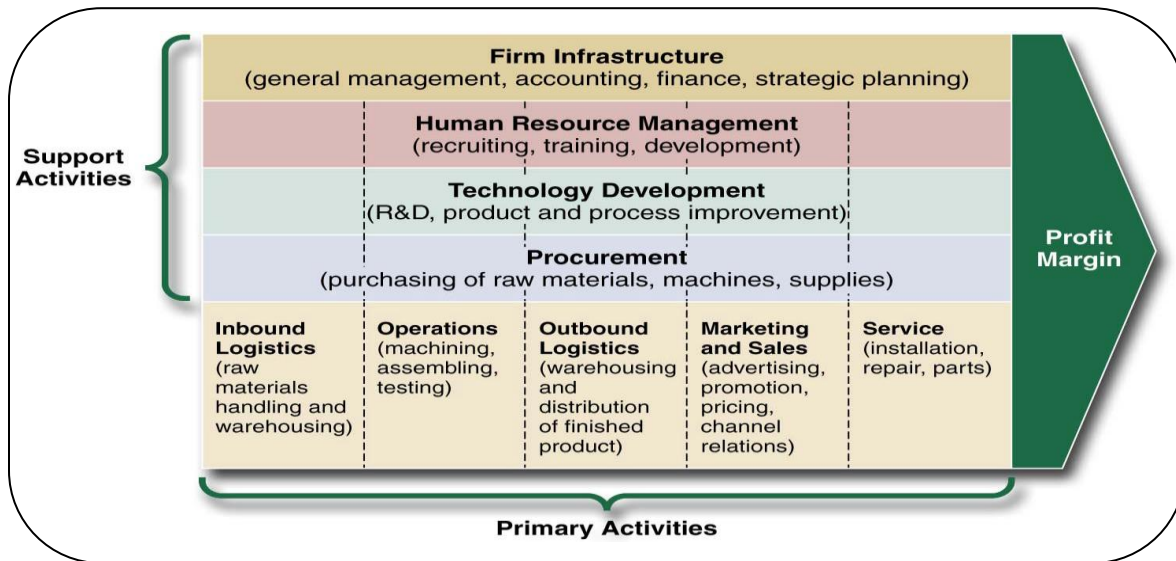
### 2.2.12 Value Chain Analysis:

"The value chain is the mostly used as a common analytical tool to identify how a company might gain an advantage over its rivals. The value chain links the value of the activities of an organization with its main functional parts, it then attempts to make an assessment of the contribution that each part makes to the overall added value of the business" (Lynch, 2000). Porter's value chain system is illustrated in figure (2.6).

The term 'Value Chain' is used for creating and sustaining superior performance. The value chain analysis therefore describes the activities the organization performs and links them to the organization's competitive position (Abusafia, 2004).

Wheelen & Hunger (2008) argue that "*each corporation has its own internal value chain of activities. Porter propose that a manufacturing firm's primary activities usually begin with inbound logistics (raw materials handling and warehousing), go through an operations process in which a product is manufactured, and continue on to outbound logistics (warehousing and distribution), to marketing and sales, and finally to service (installation, repair, and sale of parts) several support activities, such as procurement (purchasing), technology development (R&D), human resource management, and firm infrastructure (accounting, finance, strategic planning), ensure that the primary value-chain activities operate effectively and efficiently*".

**Figure (2.6)**  
**Value Chain Analysis Model**



Source: Wheelen & Hunger (2008)

According to Abusafia (2004), "Porter (1990) states that the ability to perform particular activities and to manage the linkages between these activities is a source of competitive advantage. He distinguishes between two types of activities which are primary activities and support activities".

Primary activities are directly concerned with the creation or delivery of a product or service (the production process itself). According to Mr. Porter, the primary activities of the firm are (Lynch, 2000):

- ***Inbound logistics.*** These logistics related to the operations between the organization and its suppliers or within the organization itself.
- ***Operations.*** Related to the production area of the firm.
- ***Outbound logistics.*** Concerns in reorganizing to cover the means of attract customers to buy this service.
- ***Marketing and sales.*** Concerns in analyzing customer's wants and needs and brings to the attention of customers what products or services the firm has for sale.
- ***Service.*** Related to before or after the service has been sold, implementing after- sales' service system or customer service call center does this part.

Each of these primary activities is linked to support activities, which help to improve their effectiveness or efficiency. The four main areas of support activities are (Abusafia, 2004):

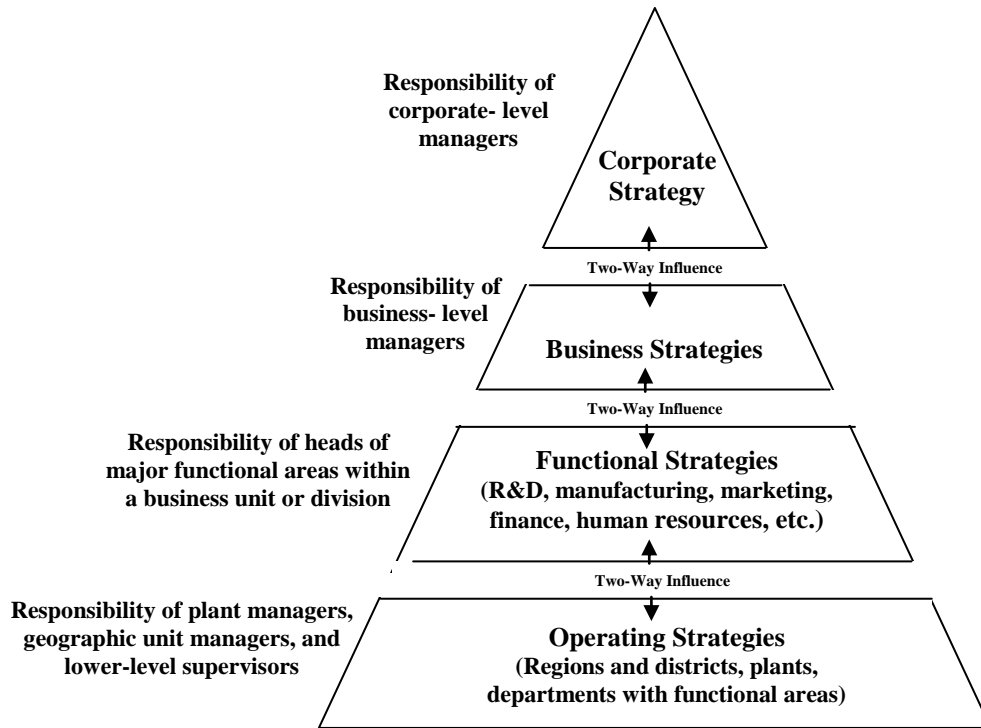
- Procurement. In which the firm has a specialized team of managers, their function is to obtain the lowest price and highest quality of materials for the activities of the firm.
- Technology development. Which concerns in the development of new product using existing technology, also training and knowledge that will allow the firm to remain efficient?
- Human resource management. Concerns in recruitment, training, management development and reward structure.
- Firm Infrastructure. Includes the background planning and control system (systems for planning, finance, quality, information management).

### **2.2.13 Strategy Formulation:**

Strategy formulation is the development of long-range plans for the effective management of environmental opportunities and threats, in light of corporate strengths and weakness (SWOT). It includes defining the corporate mission, specifying achievable objectives, developing strategies, and setting policy guidelines (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008). As managers formulate strategies, they should consider the realities of the external environment and their available resources and capabilities and design strategies that will help the organization to achieve its goals (Robbins & Coulter, 2009). Thompson (1996) argues that "Strategy can be formulated on many different levels according to the size of corporation".

According to Thompson (1996), in the small size, the strategy can be consisted of three levels; corporate level, business unit and functional. Some experts argue that strategies are initiated at four levels in the multi-businesses; therefore, there is a strategy for the company and all of its businesses as a whole (corporate strategy), a strategy for each separate business (business strategy), a strategy for each specific functional unit within a business (functional strategy), and finally, there are still narrower strategies for basic operating units, sales, and departments within functional areas (operating strategy). Figure (2.7) illustrates the four main levels as follows:

**Figure (2.7)**  
**Strategies Levels**



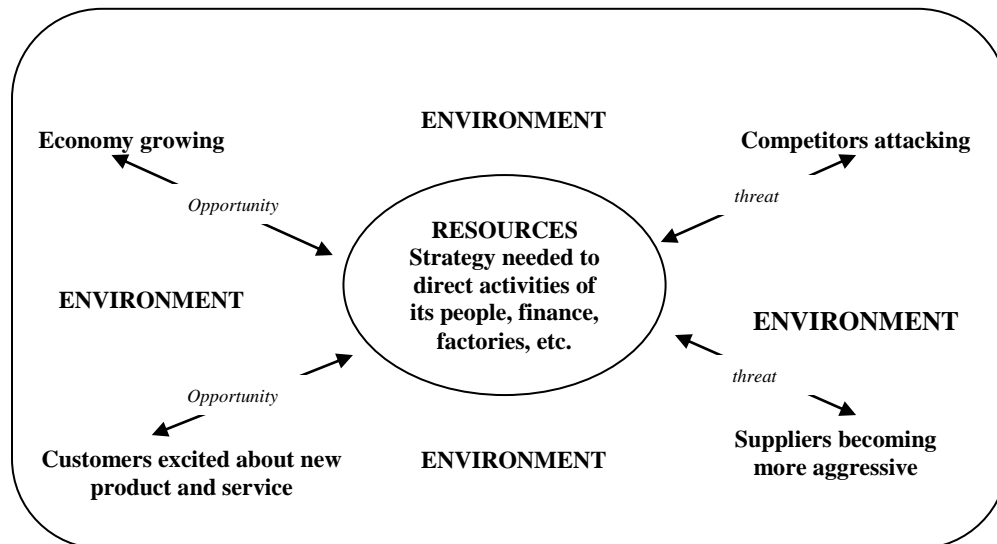
Source: Thompson and Strickland ( 1996)

**Corporate Level:** Corporate strategy concerns how a diversified company intends to establish business positions in different industries and the actions and approaches employed to improve the performance of companies among group of businesses to achieve a proper position in an industry (Thompson & Strickland, 1996). Corporate level strategy is concerned with (1) reach-defining the issues that are corporate responsibilities, (2) competitive contact-defining where in the corporation competition is to be localized, (3) managing activities and business interrelationships, and (4) management practices- corporations decide how business units are to be governed (QuickMBA, 2010).

Corporate Strategy can be seen as the linking process between the management of the organization's internal resources and its external relationship with its customers, supplier, competitors and the economic and social environment in which it exists. The organization develops these relationships from its abilities and resources. Hence, the organization uses it

history, skills, resources, knowledge and various concepts to explore its future actions (Lynch, 2003). Figure (2.8) shows some examples of this process.

**Figure (2.8)**  
**The links between organization's resources with its environment**



Source: Lynch (2003)

▪ **Business Level:** A strategic business unit may be a division, product line, or other profit centers that can be planned independently from the other business units of the firm. At the business unit level, the strategic issues are less about the coordination of operating units and more about developing and sustaining a competitive advantage for the goods and services that are produced (QuickMBA, 2010).

The central thrust of business strategy is how to build and strengthen the company's long-term competitive position in the marketplace. Toward of this end, business strategy is concerned principally with (1) forming responses to changes under way in the industry, the economy at large, the regulatory and political arena, and other relevant areas, (2) crafting competitive moves and market approaches that can lead to sustainable competitive advantage, (3) uniting the strategic initiative of functional departments, and (4) addressing specific strategic issues facing the company's business (Thompson & Strickland, 1996).

▪ **Functional Level:** Functional strategies are concerned with product line, market development, distribution, financing, research and development, production, and manpower planning. Functional strategies are primarily concerned with (1) efficiently utilizing function specialists, (2) integrating activities within the functional area (e.g., coordinating advertising, promotion, marketing research in marketing, or purchasing, inventory control and shipping in production/operation), and (3) assuring that functional strategies mesh with business unit strategies (Thomas, 1988).

Thompson (1996) argues that "functional strategy concerns the managerial game plan for running a major functional activity within a business- R&D, production, marketing, customer, service, distribution, finance, human resources, and so on; a business needs as many functional strategies as it has major activities.

▪ **Operating Level:** Operating strategies concern the even narrower strategic initiatives and approaches for managing key operating units (plants, sales districts, distribution centers) and for handling daily operating tasks with strategic significance (advertising campaigns, material purchasing, inventory control, maintenance, shipping) (Thompson & Strickland, 1996).

#### **2.2.14 Strategy Implementation:**

"Strategy implementation is a process by which strategies and policies are put into action through the development of programs, budget, and procedures. This process might involve changes within the overall culture, structure, and/or management system of the entire organization" (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008).

Implementing strategy entails converting the organization's strategic plan into action and then into results. It's a job for the whole management team, not a few senior managers. While an organization's chief executive officer and the heads of major organizational units are ultimately responsible for seeing that strategy is implemented successfully, the implementation process typically impact every part of the organizational structure, from the biggest operating unit to the smallest frontline work group (Thompson & Strickland, 1996).

### **2.2.15 Evaluation and Control:**

"Evaluation and control is a process in which corporate activities and performance results are monitored so that actual performance can be compared with desired performance. Managers at all levels use the resulting information to take corrective action and resolve problems" (Wheelen & Hunger, 2008).

Prescriptive strategy has taken the approach that a rational and fact-based analysis of the options will deliver the strategy that is most likely to be successful, that strategy depends on logic and evidence in choosing between the options. The content of strategy options therefore needs to be evaluated for their contribution to the organization. To undertake this task, the evaluative process needs to be set against criteria that are relevant to the organization. As a starting point in developing such criteria, we might begin by recalling that the main purposes of corporate strategy are to add value and develop sustainable competitive advantage for the organization. For general purposes, these criteria (consistency, suitability, validity, feasibility, business risk, and stakeholder attractiveness) might be used in evaluating strategy options (Lynch, 2000).

## **2.3 Higher Education Sector (HES) in the Gaza Strip:**

### **2.3.1 Overview:**

Saffarini (2010) argues that "education and higher education in Palestine are rich and challenging experiences. It is rich because of the motivation and eagerness of the Palestinians to share their experiences with others and learn from them, and challenging because Palestine is not yet an independent state. Indeed, Palestinians consider higher education as the main wealth of Palestine in the absence of other natural resources and it plays a vital role in developing the economical, political and social situation of the Palestinian people".

According to Habayeb (2005), the development of the higher education in Palestine became basic element and essential requirement in the current situation and the future expectations that require re-evaluating of its condition according to the increasing changes in the globe, so the counting on the academic human resources became basic and vital element in building an independent Palestinian state, higher education is one of the main elements of building its infrastructure.



### 2.3.2 Higher Education System:

The education in the Palestinian territories refers to the educational system in Gaza and the West Bank administered by Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). MoHE has a responsibility for the whole education sector from pre-primary to higher education and it is also in charge of managing governmental educational institutions and supervising private educational institutions.

University Education in Palestine consists of 4 years of college education to obtain bachelor's degree, additional 2 years for a master's degree, and 3 more years to obtain a doctorate. Thus the Palestinian educational system is compatible with the continuous process which makes it easier to internationalize (Saffarini, 2010).

According to the MoHE (2011), there are 7 universities in Gaza Strip offer four years bachelor courses (3 private, 3 public, and 1 governmental). Additionally, there are 19 technical & community colleges offer two years diploma courses (3 public, 6 private, 2 UNRWA, 1 Red Crescent, and 6 governmental) that mainly offer courses in technical and different specializations. The following tables illustrate the universities and colleges in the Gaza Strip.

**Table (2.2)**

#### **List of universities and colleges at HES in the Gaza Strip**

No.	University Name	Type	No.	College Name	Type
<b>Universities</b>					
1.	The Islamic University of Gaza	Public	5.	Gaza University	Private
2.	Al-Azhar University of Gaza	Public	6.	Al-Quds Open University	Public
3.	Al-Aqsa university	Governmental	7.	Ummah University	Private
4.	University of Palestine	Private			
<b>Colleges</b>					
1.	The University College of Applied Science	Public	11.	Intermediate Studies College	Public
2.	Arab Community College	Public	12.	Gaza Community College for Tourist Studies	Private
3.	Al-Zaytona College for Science & Development	Private	13.	Applied Future Polytechnic	Private
4.	Palestine Applied Polytechnic	Private	14.	College of Dar El-Dawa & Human Science	Private
5.	Nama'a College of Science and Technology	Private	15.	Gaza Training College	UNRWA
6.	Khan Younis Training College	UNRWA	16.	Capacity Development College	Red Crescent
7.	College of Science and Technology	Governmental	17.	Palestine Technology College	Governmental
8.	Palestine College of Nursing	Governmental	18.	Abd Almohsen Hammouda Alshrey Institute	Governmental
9.	Al-Aqsa Community College for Intermediate Studies	Governmental	19.	Islamic Studies College-D/Balah	Governmental

**Source: MoHE (2011)**

**Table (2.3)**

**General information about the universities at HES in the Gaza Strip**

No.	University Name	Type of Education System	Establishment Date	Number of students	Faculties
1-	The Islamic University of Gaza	Normal	1978	19204	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medicine</li> <li>2. Engineering</li> <li>3. Information Technology</li> <li>4. Nursing</li> <li>5. Science</li> <li>6. Commerce</li> <li>7. Education</li> <li>8. Arts</li> <li>9. Sharia &amp; Law</li> <li>10. Usoul Eldeen</li> </ol>
2-	Al-Azhar University-Gaza	Normal	1991	18156	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education</li> <li>2. Law</li> <li>3. Science</li> <li>4. Agriculture &amp; Environment</li> <li>5. Arts &amp; Human Sciences</li> <li>6. Pharmacy</li> <li>7. Economics &amp; Administrative Sciences</li> <li>8. Applied Medical Sciences</li> <li>9. Medicine</li> <li>10. Dentistry</li> <li>11. Engineering &amp; Information Technology</li> <li>12. Sharia</li> <li>13. Postgraduate Studies</li> </ol>
3-	Al-Aqsa University	Normal	1991	14339	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Science</li> <li>2. Arts &amp; Human Sciences</li> <li>3. Education</li> <li>4. Information</li> <li>5. Arts</li> <li>6. Business Administration &amp; Financing</li> <li>7. Physical Education</li> </ol>
4-	University of Palestine	Normal	2003	1192	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applied Engineering</li> <li>2. Information Technology</li> <li>3. Business &amp; Finance</li> <li>4. Law &amp; Judicial Practice</li> <li>5. Information &amp; Communication</li> <li>6. Medicine &amp; Oral Surgery &amp; Dental</li> <li>7. Education</li> </ol>
5-	Gaza University	Normal	2007	700	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Computer Science &amp; Information Technology</li> <li>2. Business Administration &amp; Finance</li> <li>3. Communication Sciences &amp; Languages</li> <li>4. Education</li> </ol>
6-	Al-Quds Open University	Distance learning	1981	13841	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Technology and Applied Sciences</li> <li>2. Agriculture</li> <li>3. Social and Family Development</li> <li>4. Administrative and Economic Sciences</li> <li>5. Education</li> </ol>
7-	Ummah university	Distance Learning	2008	1058	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information Technology</li> <li>2. Education</li> <li>3. Police Sciences &amp; Legal</li> <li>4. Arts</li> <li>5. Economics &amp; Administrative Sciences</li> </ol>

**Source: MoHE (2011)**

### 2.3.2.1 Higher Education System Pillars:

According to AQAC (2011), the higher education system consists of thematic pillars that every academic institution depends on them in launching its programs; these pillars as follows:

**I. The Educational Program:** Series of educational courses which being thought in two semesters at least at one of higher educational institutions.

**II. The University:** An institution which includes three colleges at least and presents educational programs reach to the bachelor degree, the first universal degree. It may provide programs of higher education ends with the higher diploma, master degree or philosophy degree it may also presents educational programs get to give the diploma certificate according to the systems of diploma.

**III. College of University:** An institution which provides an academic educational or a vocational program ends with the Bachelor Degree. The colleges may present vocational or technical programs lasts for two or three years ends with a certificate of diploma in regarding to its instructions.

**IV. The Polytechnic College:** The institution which presents vocational or technical programs ends with a certificate of diploma according to its systems. It also may give an educational technical or vocational program to the award of; the Bachelor degree, the Master degree or Philosophy degree in the majors of vocation and technology.

**V. The Community College:** The institution in which an academic educational, vocational or technical programs are offered for a period of not less than one academic year to the award of an academic, vocational or technical diploma in accordance with regulation.

**VI. The Academic's Degrees:** According to the specialty, each higher educational institution may award the following academic degrees:

- **The Diploma's Degree:** A certificate is awarded after completing thirty certified academic hours at least after secondary school certificate or what equivalent diploma as systems.
- **The Bachelor's Degree:** Degree conferred following the completion of thirty certified academic hours as a minimum equivalent after obtaining a bachelor's degree.

- ***The Master's Degree:*** Degree awarded after the end of thirty-six certified academic hours or equivalent as a minimum after obtaining a bachelor's degree and provides a letter or applies for a comprehensive exam.
  
- ***The Philosophy of Doctor (PhD):*** Degree awarded after the end of forty-five certified academic hours or its equivalent as a minimum as well as a philosophy's thesis after obtaining a master's degree.

### **2.3.3 Accreditation of New Academic Institution:**

Accreditation is a recognition status granted for a stipulated period of time to a new program after the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) evaluation indicates that it meets or exceeds minimum thresholds of educational quality. The process of accreditation should provide higher education with an opportunity for critical self-analysis leading to improvement of quality; for consultation and advice from persons coming from other institutions.

Accreditation reflects the fact that in achieving recognition, the individual program is committed to development of an application and evaluation process. Not only to meet certain standards but also to continuously seek ways in which to enhance the quality of education. Therefore accreditation must be a process in different steps: the nine stepping-stones of accreditation are: (1) Development of an Application, (2) submission of initial documentation, (3) preliminary review of initial documentation , (4) formative evaluation, (5) evaluation process, (6) site visit, (7) report preparation, (8) accreditation decisions, and (9) dissemination.

The result of the whole accreditation process is an accreditation report accessible by all stakeholders. If accreditation is to be accepted by all parties concerned the process must be completely transparent. The accreditation process is based on the assessment of the program by subject and field specialists based on agreed upon criteria. The application form that you are about to fill is structured in two sections (AQAC, 2011).


### 2.3.3.1 Procedures for Licensing and Accreditation:

According to AQAC (2011), the following procedures are applicable to all requests seeking accreditation for new programs at Palestinian tertiary education institutions, or licensing and general accreditation for new institutions of tertiary education. Table (2.4) shows the accreditation process.

**Table (2.4)**

#### **Procedures for licensing and accreditation for new programs**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Documentary evidence &amp; clarification</b>
1- Receiving the Request ↓	1.1 To be received at AQAC office by 31.12 of the year prior to the next academic year, for which it is, proposed to start. Request is recorded in the database of the new requests.
2- Request complete administratively ↓	2.1 Submitted on “Form AQAC 3-2003”, for programs, signed and dated. 2.2 Submitted on “Form AQAC-Instit-2003”, for institutions, signed and dated. 2.3 All listed documents in the Forms attached. 2.4 Two copies—hard and electronic—of the request are submitted. 2.5 Relevant licensing and accreditation fees are transferred to AQAC’s bank account. 2.6 Requests submitted by 31.12 and not completed administratively by 31.12 of the following year are dropped from the database, and have to re-apply.
3- Evaluation of Request ↓	3.1 In-house evaluation by the relevant “Specialization Coordinator”. 3.2 Send request to an internal (in Palestine) evaluator. 3.3 Send request to an external (outside Palestine) evaluator. 3.4 Specify 3 weeks for the submission of evaluations. 3.5 Requests are sent under the cover of a Standard Letter.
4- Follow-up of Recommendations ↓	4.1 Send evaluations (blind) to the initiator (s) of the request, for follow-up and revisions. 4.2 Grant a period 3-4 weeks to submit required revisions. 4.3 Review evaluations by the relevant “Specialization Coordinator” at AQAC. 4.4 If recommendations are contradictory, send the entire file to the AQAC Council member who specializes in the same field, for opinion.
5- Site Visit ↓	5.1 Not required for every request. If the information submitted not clear, or accurate, or persuasive, etc., the Head of AQAC arranges for a Site Visit. 5.2 A Site Visit Team of 2-3 is composed, generally, of the Head of AQAC, the “Specialization Coordinator” and an external specialist in the field. 5.3 The time for the Site Visit is arranged with the relevant institution, and it should be done before the end of April of that year. 5.4 The purpose of the Site Visit is communicated in writing to the relevant institution. 5.5 The “Specialization Coordinator” prepares a Site Visit Report, which becomes an integral part of the evaluations.

Step	Documentary evidence & clarification
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">6- Decision</div> 	<p>6.1 Send all evaluations to AQAC Council members, accompanied with a summary of main conclusions, using the “Decision-Taking Form”.</p> <p>6.2 Place a copy of all requests under discussion on AQAC website, with restricted access to Council members, for ease of reference.</p> <p>6.3 AQAC Council discusses all requests ready for decision, in one or more special Council sessions for this purpose, to be held over the period of 15.4 – 15.5 of each year. The decisions and conditionalities are recorded on the “Decision-Taking Form”, which gets signed by the Head of AQAC.</p> <p>6.4 The Head of AQAC arranges for a special session with the Minister, during the second half of May, to review the decisions and issue the appropriate letters, signed by the Minister.</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">7- Dissemination</div>	<p>7.1 AQAC updates the “List of Accredited Programs”, including the new decisions, and disseminates it during the first half of June.</p> <p>7.2 The Minister’s Office circulates to local press a news item about new decisions.</p>

**Sources: AQAC (2011)**

### **2.3.4 Conclusion:**

This chapter presents theoretical basis reviewing the most important concepts of the strategic management. It mainly focuses on competitive strategies explaining Porter's five forces model as one of the approaches which is used in an industry analysis. Moreover, the chapter manifests an overview about the Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip, it views the academic institutions consisting of either four years or two years.

**Chapter Three**  
**Research Methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction:**

This chapter aims at introducing a detailed presentation of methodology and procedures which were thoroughly adopted to conduct this research on competitiveness level analysis at HES in the Gaza Strip. This chapter therefore consists of (1) Study methodology and data collection, (2) research sampling and population, (3) validity and reliability of questionnaire, (4) analysis of sample, and (5) statistical methods.

### **3.2. Study methods and data collection:**

This research adopts the analytical descriptive method, as it is considered the most used in business and social studies. This section presents the methods used to carry out the research and answer the research questions. In order to collect the needed data for this research, the researcher uses two methods as follows:

#### **3.2.1. Secondary Data:**

To introduce the theoretical literature of the subject, the research uses the secondary data resource which may include: previous studies, books, academic magazines, periodicals, websites and electronic versions, MoHE reports, and published articles related to the subject, this data is essential to gain understanding of the research area and what has already been done.

#### **3.2.2. Primary Data:**

In order to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data of the research, questionnaire is used as a tool for collecting primary data. Although questionnaires may be cheap to administer compared to other data collection methods, they are expensive in terms of design time and interpretation.

The questionnaire which is especially designed for this research consists of the following parts:

1. The first part contained general information about universities.
2. The second part consists of five sections about the analysis of competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip by adapting PFFF as follows:
  - a. The first section is about the level of rivalry among existing universities.



- b. The second section is about the level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to HES.
  - c. The third section is about students power to control and take decisions.
  - d. The forth section is about suppliers' inputs power to control and take decisions.
3. The third part is about the effect of the universities' advantages (Resources and capabilities, Age, and Reputation) on competitiveness level at HES.

All items pursued the semantics differential scale as the following:

Level	Strongly agree	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→	Strongly disagree
Scale	10	→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→→	1

### 3.3. Research Population & Sampling:

The research population includes the senior management at the main existing universities (the Islamic University of Gaza, Al-Azhar university, Al-Aqsa university, and University of Palestine) in the Gaza Strip. The research is considered a comprehensive survey of the all population. Table (3.1) illustrates the sample size.

**Table (3.1)**  
**Research population**

University Title	The Islamic university of Gaza	Al-Azhar university	Al-Aqsa university	University of Palestine	Total
President	1	1	1	1	4
President assistant	0	0	2	1	3
Vice-president	3	4	2	2	11
Vice-president assistant	7	1	5	0	13
Deans	18	15	14	8	55
Deans Assistant	12	15	11	0	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>124</b>

Sources:

- The Islmaic University of Gaza brochure, (2011).
- Al-Azhar Universitty brochure, (2011).
- Al-Aqsa University brochure, (2011).
- University of Palestine brochure, (2011).

### **3.4. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire:**

A pilot study was conducted before collecting the final results of the sample. It provides a trial run for the questionnaire, which involves testing the wordings of question, identifying ambiguous questions, testing the techniques that used to collect data, and measuring the effectiveness of standard invitation to respondents. The pilot sample has been done in July 2011 and was collected the same month.

#### **3.4.1. Validity of referees:**

The initial questionnaire has been given to a group of referees to judge its validity according to its content, the clearness of its items meaning, appropriateness to avoid any misunderstanding and to assure its linkage with the study objectives and hypothesis.

#### **3.4.2. Validity of the questionnaire:**

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring. Validity has a number of different aspects and assessment approaches. Statistical validity is used to evaluate instrument validity, which include criterion-related validity and construct validity.

To insure the validity of the questionnaire (criterion-related validity and structure validity), Pearson test was used which measure the correlation coefficient between each paragraph in one field and the whole field.

#### **3.4.3. Criterion Related Validity:**

**Internal consistency:** The internal consistency of the questionnaire is measured by a scouting sample, which consisted of thirty questionnaires, through measuring the correlation coefficients between each paragraph in one field and the whole field. Tables below show the correlation coefficient and p-value for each field items. As show in the tables (3.2-3.9) the P-values are less than 0.05 or 0.01, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$  or  $\alpha = 0.05$ , so it can be said that the paragraphs of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

**Table (3.2)**  
**The correlation coefficient between each paragraph in the field and the whole field**  
**(The level of rivalry among existing universities)**

No.	question	Pearson coefficient	p-value
1.	Number of universities that offer higher education service in the Gaza Strip is large, which increases the level of current competition.	0.468	0.009
2.	Resources and capabilities available at the University suit the academic institutions only.	0.537	0.002
3.	I think that the government would financially support the university if it has a financial deficit to cover its expenditure.	0.392	0.032
4.	The university has a strategy to continue in higher education sector, regardless of the size of demand or costs.	0.531	0.003
5.	Other local universities affect on the level of education fees for the academic programs at universities.	0.532	0.003
6.	Quality and type of academic programs rendered to students by other local universities are high.	0.685	0.000
7.	The government issued restrictions and laws that limit the exit of the similar universities that grant bachelor degree from higher education sector easily.	0.462	0.010
8.	Fixed costs of the universities are high (which must be paid regardless of the size of the demand).	0.473	0.008
9.	The available capacity at your university is high.	0.467	0.009
10.	The university has a full exploitation of its capacity.	0.467	0.009
11.	There is a variety in the number and type of specializations available at the university.	0.551	0.002
12.	There is an increase in the demand level for students who want to enroll at bachelor programs at the university.	0.696	0.000
13.	The university has appropriate flexibility in applying the academic bachelor programs.	0.451	0.012
14.	University academic programs are characterized by being outstanding and with a high quality.	0.652	0.000

**Table (3.3)**  
**The correlation coefficient between each paragraph in the field and the whole field**  
**(The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector)**

No.	Question	Pearson coefficient	p-value
1.	Universities establishment requires big capitals.	0.553	0.002
2.	In order to be economically feasible for the university, the university should have a large capacity of students, classrooms, laboratories and sufficient number of academic staff in different specializations.	0.721	0.000
3.	The government imposes restrictions and legal barriers such as; licenses limit the entry of new universities into higher education sector.	0.784	0.000
4.	The university has outstanding academic programs and reputation that attract students to enroll.	0.405	0.026
5.	According to the experience of the university, it has the economic advantages such as access to technology and human resources of academic and administrative staff with low costs that be difficult for the new universities to get them easily.	0.551	0.002
6.	The university will reduce fees for students in case of new universities entry into higher education sector.	0.783	0.000

**Table (3.4)**

**The correlation coefficient between each paragraph in the field and the whole field  
(Students power to control and take decisions)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Pearson coefficient</b>	<b>p-value</b>
1.	Students, who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university interested in the quality level of programs provided to them.	0.766	0.000
2.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university gain benefit greatly from the privileges of other services rendered by the university such as; continuing education, clubs, public library, student affairs and cafeteria.	0.472	0.009
3.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university can obtain information about service costs provided to them.	0.452	0.012
4.	There is an increase in the level of students who stop their study at the university during the academic year.	0.451	0.012
5.	The students have sufficient information about the local academic programs that enable them to make their decision easily.	0.572	0.001
6.	Bachelor programs at the university are characterized by being encouraging for students to enroll in the university and to continue until the graduation.	0.698	0.000
7.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have motivations encourage them to continue in the university.	0.641	0.000
8.	Students enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university can move to another university easily.	0.589	0.001
9.	The students will face a high risk represented in holding the responsibility of equivalencing courses upon moving to another university.	0.499	0.005
10.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university seek to reduce the cost of obtaining the service of higher education by all the available means.	0.492	0.006
11.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have the ability to dispense with the service of higher education provided to them.	0.399	0.029
12.	The increasing number of the newly emerged universities at higher education sector has a negative impact on applying for admission in the university.	0.614	0.000

**Table (3.5)**

**The correlation coefficient between each paragraph in the field and the whole field  
(Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions)**

No.	Question	Pearson coefficient	p-value
1.	The number of suppliers who contribute in providing the university with furniture and technical equipments used in teaching is large.	0.621	0.000
2.	The number of publishing houses that provide the university with books and scientific references is large.	0.704	0.000
3.	The teachers provide curricula, which are easy to understand with high quality from different publishing houses.	0.791	0.000
4.	The university depends on high academic degrees to provide its services concerning higher education for undergraduate students.	0.880	0.000
5.	The university could easily continue without some of the working teachers who have different academic titles.	0.394	0.031
6.	The teachers write high-quality curricula used in teaching.	0.798	0.000
7.	There is a sufficient number of PhD holders available at higher education sector to provide the service of education for undergraduate students.	0.841	0.000

**Table (3.6)**

**The correlation coefficient between each paragraph in the field and the whole field  
(The advantages of the universities)**

No.	Question	Pearson coefficient	p-value
	<b>Chronological Age:</b>		
1.	The chronological age of the university is an important factor in determining the volume of demand for enrollment in the university.	0.491	0.006
2.	The level of university experience, through its age, affects on the size of demand of its bachelor degree programs.	0.712	0.000
	<b>Reputation of the university</b>		
3.	The university has a good reputation among the universities at higher education sector, which strongly affects on the demand size of students on its bachelor degree programs.	0.570	0.001
4.	The university effectively seeks to invest and promote its reputation for achieving outstanding rank at higher education sector.	0.520	0.003
5.	The university has programs, tools and adopted plans to improve its image in the community.	0.824	0.000
	<b>Resources and potentials of the university:</b>		
6.	The university has a high-qualified and a well-expert teaching staff.	0.666	0.000
7.	The university has a professional a well-expert administrative staff.	0.636	0.000
8.	The university has well-equipped classrooms with furniture and teaching aids, they are appropriate to the requirements of higher education service provided to students.	0.490	0.006
9.	The university has good scientific laboratories for all specializations to efficiently meet the scientific needs of students.	0.584	0.001
10.	The university has large green areas in its campus; in addition to, clubs specified to entertainment and extra-curricular activities.	0.480	0.007
11.	The university depends on various financial resources to finance its programs and to implement its strategic plan.	0.663	0.000
12.	The university depends on the students' fees as a main resource to finance the implementation of its programs and strategic plan.	0.387	0.035

### 3.4.4. Structure Validity of the Questionnaire:

Structure validity is the second statistical test that used to test the validity of the questionnaire structure by testing the validity of each field and the validity of the whole questionnaire. It measures the correlation coefficient between one field and all the fields of the questionnaire that have the same level of scale.

As shown in table (3.10), the significant values are less than 0.05 or 0.01, so the correlation coefficients of all the fields are significant at  $\alpha= 0.01$  or  $\alpha= 0.05$ , so it can be said that the fields are valid to be measured what it was set for to achieve the main aim of the research.

**Table (3.7)**  
**Structure Validity of the Questionnaire**

Number	Section	Pearson correlation coefficient	p-value
1.	The level of rivalry among existing universities	0.717	0.000
2.	The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector	0.589	0.001
3.	Students power to control and take decisions	0.712	0.000
4.	Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions	0.817	0.000
5.	The advantages of the universities	0.711	0.000

### 3.4.5. Reliability of the questionnaire:

According to Ishtawi (2011), reliability is defined as " instrument consistency"; therefore, the reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency which measures the attribute; it is supposed to be measured. The less variation an instrument produces in repeated measurements of an attribute, the higher its reliability. Reliability can be equated with stability, consistency, or dependability of a measuring tool. The test is repeated to the same sample of people on two occasions and then compares the scores obtained by computing a reliability coefficient.

After applying the questionnaire and treating the data by SPSS program, the researcher calculated the reliability of the questionnaire by using Kronpakh Alpha coefficient and Half Split Method through the SPSS software.

#### 3.4.5.1. Half Split Method:

This method depends on finding Pearson correlation coefficient between the means of odd rank questions and even rank questions of each field of the questionnaire. Then, correcting the

Pearson correlation coefficients can be done by using Spearman Brown correlation coefficient of correction. The corrected correlation coefficient (consistency coefficient) is computed according to the following equation: Consistency coefficient =  $2r/(r+1)$ , where r is the Pearson correlation coefficient.

The normal range of corrected correlation coefficient  $2r/(r+1)$  is between 0.0 and +1.0. As shown in table (3.11), all the corrected correlation coefficients values are between 0.7861 and 0.902 and the general reliability for all items equal 0.855, and the significant ( $\alpha$ ) is less than 0.05 so all the corrected correlation coefficients are significance at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . It can be said that according to the Half Split method, the dispute causes group are reliable.

**Table (3.8)**  
**Split-Half Coefficient method**

Number	Section	person-correlation	Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Sig. (2-Tailed)
1.	The level of rivalry among existing universities	0.735	0.847	0.000
2.	The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector	0.821	0.902	0.000
3.	Students power to control and take decisions	0.6476	0.7861	0.000
4.	Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions	0.799	0.888	0.000
5.	The advantages of the universities	0.746	0.855	0.000
<b>Total</b>		<b>0.7365</b>	<b>0.8483</b>	<b>0.000</b>

#### **3.4.5.2. Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha:**

This method is used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire between each field and the mean of the whole fields of the questionnaire. The normal range of Cronbach's coefficient alpha value between 0.0 and + 1.0, and the higher values reflects a higher degree of internal consistency. As shown in table (3.12) the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for the first field of the causes of claims, the second field of common procedures and the third field of the Particular claims. The results were in the range from 0.8127 and 0.920, and the general reliability for all items equal 0.879. This range is considered high; the result ensures the reliability of the questionnaire.

**Table (3.9)**  
**Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
1.	The level of rivalry among existing universities	14	0.917
2.	The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector	6	0.920
3.	Students power to control and take decisions	12	0.8127
4.	Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions	7	0.874
5.	The advantages of the universities	12	0.898
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0.879</b>

### **3.5. Analysis of the respondents:**

The questionnaire was distributed to all members of the population, and (84) questionnaires were obtained for the analysis. The following tables illustrate the characteristics of the respondents.

#### **I. Job Title**

Table (3.10) shows that the job title of "University President's Assistant" represents 6.0%, the job title of "Vice President" represents 7.1%, the job title of "Assistant Vice President" represents 9.5%, the job title of "Dean" represents 51.2%, and the job title of "Vice Dean" represents 26.2%.

**Table (3.10)**

**Job titles at universities**

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
University President's Assistant	5	6.0
Vice President	6	7.1
Assistant Vice President	8	9.5
Dean	43	51.2
Vice Dean	22	26.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>



## II. Age of University:

Table (3.11) shows that universities ages "15 years and more" represents 90.5%, and "5-less than 10 years" represents 9.5%, also the results manifest that majority of universities have 15 years and more which indicate that they have long experience.

**Table (3.11)**  
**Universities' ages**

Age of University	Frequency	Percentages
Less than 5 years	0	0.0
5- less than 10 years	8	9.5
11- less than 15 years	0	0.0
15 years and more	76	90.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.6. Statistical Manipulation:

To achieve the research goal, researcher used the statistical package for the Social Science (SPSS) for Manipulating and analyzing the data.

### 3.7. Statistical methods were used as follows:

- Frequencies and Percentile
- Alpha- Cronbach Test for measuring reliability of the items of the questionnaires
- Person correlation coefficients for measuring validity of the items of the questionnaires.
- Spearman –Brown Coefficient.
- One sample t-test.
- Independent samples t test.
- One way ANOVA.
- One sample K-S test.

### 3.8. Conclusion:

This chapter presents a description of the research methodology that is followed in the implementation of the field study through identifying different ways and tools used in the completion of this study. It also contains a description of the study population and sampling that is considered a comprehensive survey of the all population of the main regular universities which grant the bachelor's degree at HES in the Gaza Strip.

Finally, the chapter addresses the questionnaire preparation and testing its validity besides; it presents the statistical methods used in the analysis of results. All this is to measure the competitiveness level at the HES in the Gaza Strip.

**Chapter Four**  
**Analysis and Discussion**

#### 4.1 Introduction:

This chapter analyzes the questionnaire; the analysis starting point analyzes the normality of the distribution. After this part, the research hypotheses are tested and discussed to investigate in the forces and analyze universities' advantages that affect on the level of competitiveness at HES.

#### 4.2 One Sample K-S Test:

*One Sample K-S* test was used to identify if the data follows normal distribution or not, this test is considered necessary in case testing hypotheses as most parametric test stipulate data to be normality distributed and this test used when the size of the sample is greater than 50. Results test as shown in table (4.1), clarifies that the calculated p-value is greater than the significant level which is equal 0.05 (p-value. > 0.05), this in turn denotes that data follows normal distribution, so parametric tests is used.

**Table (4.1)**  
**Data Normality Test**

Number	Section	items No.	Statistic	P-value
1.	The level of rivalry among existing universities.	14	0.653	0.787
2.	The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector.	6	1.019	0.250
3.	Students power to control and take decisions.	12	0.853	0.460
4.	Suppliers power to control and take decisions.	7	0.798	0.547
5.	The advantages of the universities.	12	0.939	0.341
	<b>Total</b>	51	0.513	0.955

#### 4.3 Discussion and hypotheses test:

The one sample t-test is used in the following tables to test if the opinion of the respondent in the content of the sentences are positive (weight mean greater than "60%" and the p-value less than 0.05) or the opinion of the respondent in the content of the sentences are neutral (p-value is greater than 0.05) or the opinion of the respondent in the content of the sentences are negative (weight mean less than "60%" and the p-value less than 0.05).

In this chapter, the researcher sheds light on the level of competitiveness among universities at HES in Gaza Strip. Also, the hypotheses test will be examined as followings:

**1- Level of rivalry among existing main regular universities:**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about the *level of rivalry among existing main regular universities* and the results are shown in table (4.2) as followings:

***The highest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- In item No. (11), the weight mean equal to "81.79%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that there is a variety in the number and type of specializations available at the universities.
- 2- In item No. (14), the weight mean equal to "80.00%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities' academic programs are characterized by being outstanding and with a high quality.
- 3- In item No. (12), the weight mean equal to "79.76%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that there is an increase in the demand level for students who want to enroll at bachelor programs at the universities.

***And the lowest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- The item No. (7), the weight mean equal to "59.05%" and p-value equal to "0.677", which means that the respondents are not sure that the government issued restrictions and laws that limit the exit of the similar universities that grant bachelor degree from higher education sector easily.
- 2- The item No. (2), the weight mean equal to "57.98%" and p-value equal to "0.303", which means that the respondents are not sure that resources and capabilities available at the universities suit the academic institutions only.
- 3- In item No. (3), the weight mean equal to "45.95%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the government would not financially support the universities if they have a financial deficit to cover its expenditure.

**Table (4.2)****Level of rivalry among existing universities**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	Number of universities that offer higher education service in the Gaza Strip is large, which increases the level of current competition.	7.45	74.52	7.481	0.000
2.	Resources and capabilities available at the University suit the academic institutions only.	5.80	57.98	-1.037	0.303
3.	I think that the government would financially support the university if it has a financial deficit to cover its expenditure.	4.60	45.95	-5.791	0.000
4.	The university has a strategy to continue in higher education sector, regardless of the size of demand or costs.	7.95	79.52	12.660	0.000
5.	Other local universities affect on the level of education fees for the academic programs at universities.	6.94	69.40	4.267	0.000
6.	Quality and type of academic programs rendered to students by other local universities are high.	6.11	61.07	0.527	0.600
7.	The government issued restrictions and laws that limit the exit of the similar universities that grant bachelor degree from higher education sector easily.	5.90	59.05	-0.418	0.677
8.	Fixed costs of the universities are high (which must be paid regardless of the size of the demand).	7.30	72.98	6.005	0.000
9.	The available capacity at your university is high.	7.62	76.19	9.711	0.000
10.	The university has a full exploitation of its capacity.	7.19	71.90	6.351	0.000
11.	There is a variety in the number and type of specializations available at the university.	8.18	81.79	13.117	0.000
12.	There is an increase in the demand level for students who want to enroll at bachelor programs at the university.	7.98	79.76	14.257	0.000
13.	The university has appropriate flexibility in applying the academic bachelor programs.	7.86	78.57	11.614	0.000
14.	University academic programs are characterized by being outstanding and with a high quality.	8.00	80.00	14.216	0.000
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.06</b>	<b>70.62</b>	<b>11.486</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "7.06", the weight mean equal to "70.62", and the p-value equal to "0.000", which means that *the level of rivalry among existing main regular universities* is relatively existed among the main regular universities in the Gaza Strip, and this is probably attributed to the similarity among universities according to their experience, resources, education quality, and reputation.

A relative situation arises when we look at the study of Oral and Mistkogl (2005); they argue that the competition between the existing companies in Turkish brick industry was fierce with many similar-sized companies, low entry and exit barriers, and increasing

bargaining power of the buyers. Increasing number of universities is good for students and will affect on the rivalry degree among existing universities at HES. According to Gabriel (2006), the banking industry of Tanzania has been growing at a high speed for the last decade; this therefore has increased a tremendous competition within the industry.

## **2- Level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector:**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about the level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to the higher education sector and the results shown in table (4.3) as follows:

### ***The highest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- In item No. (1), the weight mean equal to "89.29%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities establishment require big capitals.
- 2- In item No. (4), the weight mean equal to "82.86%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have outstanding academic programs and reputation that attract students to enroll.
- 3- In item No. (2), the weight mean equal to " 82.62%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have a large capacity of students, classrooms, laboratories and sufficient number of academic staff in different specializations.

### ***And the lowest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- In item No. (5), the weight mean equal to "73.33%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that according to the experience of the universities, the they have the economic advantages such as access to technology and human resources of academic and administrative staff with low costs that be difficult for the new universities to get them easily.
- 2- In item No. (3), the weight mean equal to "71.43%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the government imposes restrictions and legal barriers such as; licenses limit the entry of new universities into higher education sector.

3- In item No. (6), the weight mean equal to "43.57%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities will not reduce fees for students in case of new universities entry into higher education sector.

**Table (4.3)**

**Level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	Universities establishment requires big capitals.	8.93	89.29	24.506	0.000
2.	In order to be economically feasible for the university, the university should have a large capacity of students, classrooms, laboratories and sufficient number of academic staff in different specializations.	8.26	82.62	12.903	0.000
3.	The government imposes restrictions and legal barriers such as; licenses limit the entry of new universities into higher education sector.	7.14	71.43	4.843	0.000
4.	The university has outstanding academic programs and reputation that attract students to enroll.	8.29	82.86	16.666	0.000
5.	According to the experience of the university, it has the economic advantages such as access to technology and human resources of academic and administrative staff with low costs that be difficult for the new universities to get them easily.	7.33	73.33	8.021	0.000
6.	The university will reduce fees for students in case of new universities entry into higher education sector.	4.36	43.57	-6.067	0.000
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.38</b>	<b>73.85</b>	<b>12.205</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "7.38", the weight mean equal to "73.85", and the p-value equal to "0.000", which means that *the level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector* is relatively high; therefore, the potential new universities will not easily enter the HES, because they need a big capital, and huge resources to be established and to be competent; moreover, the big number of the existing academic institutions in the Gaza Strip, *see the higher education section in chapter 2*, maybe limit the entry of new universities into the HES.

According to Teo (2002), a similar situation arises; he argues that the companies are successful at overcoming barriers of entry in their respective markets, despite the high financial barrier into the infrastructure provision market, these companies erected additional

barriers to prevent entry of potential players. So, the existing universities maybe erect barriers according to their experience, reputation, and resources to limit entry of potential players in their respective sector. On the other hand, a different situation arises; whereas, Siaw and Yu (2004) argue that the internet is a threat of entry that allow more new competitors from other industry segments opportunities to succeed in business where they had little or no presence before.

### **3- Students power to control and take decisions:**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about the power of students to control and decision-making and the results are shown in table (4.4) as follows:

*The highest three items according to the weight means as follows:*

- 1- In item No. (6), the weight mean equal to "76.79%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that bachelor programs at the universities are characterized by being encouraging for students to enroll in the university and to continue until the graduation.
- 2- In item No. (8), the weight mean equal to "76.55%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the students enrolled in the bachelor programs at universities can move to other universities easily.
- 3- In item No. (7), the weight mean equal to "74.17%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at universities have motivations to encourage them to continue in the universities.

*And the lowest three items according to the weight means as follows:*

- 1- In item No. (12), the weight mean equal to "51.55%" and p-value equal to "0.006", which means that the increasing number of the newly emerged universities at higher education sector has a positive impact on applying for admission in the universities.
- 2- In item No. (4), the weight mean equal to "47.02%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that there is decreasing in the level of students who stop their study at the universities during the academic year.
- 3- In item No. (11), the weight mean equal to "43.21%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the universities don't have the ability to dispense with the service of higher education provided to them.



**Table (4.4)**  
**Students power to control and take decisions**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	Students, who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university interested in the quality level of programs provided to them.	7.02	70.24	5.473	0.000
2.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university gain benefit greatly from the privileges of other services rendered by the university such as; continuing education, clubs, public library, student affairs and cafeteria.	7.29	72.86	7.977	0.000
3.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university can obtain information about service costs provided to them.	6.90	69.05	4.324	0.000
4.	There is an increase in the level of students who stop their study at the university during the academic year.	4.70	47.02	-5.290	0.000
5.	The students have sufficient information about the local academic programs that enable them to make their decision easily.	7.29	72.86	8.021	0.000
6.	Bachelor programs at the universities are characterized by being encouraging for students to enroll in the university and to continue until the graduation.	7.68	76.79	10.934	0.000
7.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have motivations to encourage them to continue in the university.	7.42	74.17	8.356	0.000
8.	Students enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university can move to another university easily.	7.65	76.55	10.328	0.000
9.	The students will face a high risk represented in holding the responsibility of equivalencing courses upon moving to another university.	6.26	62.62	1.293	0.200
10.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university seek to reduce the cost of obtaining the service of higher education by all the available means.	7.40	74.05	7.135	0.000
11.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have the ability to dispense with the service of higher education provided to them.	4.32	43.21	-7.023	0.000
12.	The increasing number of the newly emerged universities at higher education sector has a negative impact on applying for admission in the university.	5.15	51.55	-2.796	0.006
<b>Total</b>		<b>6.59</b>	<b>65.91</b>	<b>6.086</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "6.59", the weight mean equal to "65.91", and the p-value equal to "0.000", which means that *the students power to control and take decisions* is relatively high; therefore, the students can relatively make a control and take their own decisions regarding selecting in which university they want to study, maybe because students focus on few universities which have experience, diversification, and good reputation.

According to Hacklin (2001), a relative situation arises; he argues that the bargaining power of customers is high because as compared to a huge operator, Smartner's possibilities to affect the end user are small, so the end user decides upon mobile services, and thus Smartner's success. Likewise, Siaw and Yu (2004) maybe agree that the bargaining power of buyers increased indirect way; as more new comers were expected to enter the industry. The bargaining power of students therefore increased as more new universities were expected to enter HES.

#### **4- Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions:**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the *suppliers' input power to control and take decisions*. The table (4.5) shows the results as follows:

##### ***The highest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- In item No. (4), the weight mean equal to "73.10%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities depend on high academic degrees to provide their services concerning higher education for undergraduate students.
- 2- In item No. (7), the weight mean equal to "67.74%" and p-value equal to " 0.001", which means that there is a sufficient number of PhD holders available at higher education sector to provide the service of education for undergraduate students.
- 3- In item No. (1), the weight mean equal to "65.95%" and p-value equal to "0.004", which means that the number of suppliers who contribute in providing the universities with furniture and technical equipments used in teaching is large.

##### ***And the lowest three items according to the weight means as follows:***

- 1- The opinion of item No. (6), the weight mean equal to "60.48%" and p-value equal to "0.826" which means that the respondents are not sure that the teachers write high-quality curricula used in teaching.
- 2- The opinion of item No. (2), the weight mean equal to "57.86%" and p-value equal to "0.335", which means that the respondents are not sure that the number of publishing houses that provide the universities with books and scientific references is large.
- 3- In item No. (5), the weight mean equal to "42.38%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities could not easily without some of the working teachers who have different academic titles.

**Table (4.5)**  
**Suppliers' inputs power to control and take decisions**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	The number of suppliers who contribute in providing the university with furniture and technical equipments used in teaching is large.	6.60	65.95	2.958	0.004
2.	The number of publishing houses that provide the university with books and scientific references is large.	5.79	57.86	-0.970	0.335
3.	The teachers provide curricula, which are easy to understand with high quality from different publishing houses.	6.50	65.00	2.712	0.008
4.	The university depends on high academic degrees to provide its services concerning higher education for undergraduate students.	7.31	73.10	7.772	0.000
5.	The university could easily continue without some of the working teachers who have different academic titles.	4.24	42.38	-6.155	0.000
6.	The teachers write high-quality curricula used in teaching.	6.05	60.48	0.220	0.826
7.	There is a sufficient number of PhD holders available at higher education sector to provide the service of education for undergraduate students.	6.77	67.74	3.303	0.001
<b>Total</b>		<b>6.18</b>	<b>61.79</b>	<b>1.366</b>	<b>0.176</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "6.18", the weight mean equal to "61.79", and the p-value equal to "0.176", which means that *the suppliers' inputs power to control and take decisions* is neutral; therefore, the power of suppliers' inputs of teachers, logistics, curricula, and publishing houses have a moderate level of controlling to support universities to continue in their work smoothly. Therefore, this affect moderately on the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip.

Hacklin (2001) agree that the Smartner is not really dependent upon suppliers and subcontractors; therefore, the existing universities also are not really dependent upon direct suppliers, but on supplier's input including teaching aids, teachers, and logistics which are provided through suppliers indirectly. On the other hand, Siaw and Yu (2004) disagree that the bargaining power of suppliers is strong because there is only a few suppliers such as Time Warner and Microsoft.

## 5- Level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about the *level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip* and the results are shown in table (4.6).

Table (4.6)

Level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	The level of rivalry among existing universities.	7.06	70.62	11.486	0.000
2.	The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector.	7.38	73.85	12.205	0.000
3.	Students power to control and take decisions.	6.59	65.91	6.086	0.000
4.	Suppliers' inputs power to control and take decisions.	6.18	61.79	1.366	0.176
<b>Total</b>		<b>6.81</b>	<b>68.08</b>	<b>9.794</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "6.81", the weight mean equal to "68.08", and the p-value equal to "0.000" which is less than "0.05" which means that the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip is relatively high.

This is maybe as a result of the effect of the student power to control and take decisions; accordingly, the student maybe not dominate decisions to join universities easily. This is maybe because most of students focus on few regular universities in the Gaza Strip according to their advantages. On the other hand, the suppliers' inputs power to control and make decisions including of teachers, equipments and furniture affect moderately on the competitiveness level at HES; because they are mostly available at HES, so universities can select among them easily.

The level of rivalry among the existing main regular universities and the level of constraints that limit the entry of new universities into HES affect highly on the competitiveness at HES, maybe because establishment of universities needs huge capitals, also they can't easily exit from HES when they fail to continue.

On the other hand, this maybe encourage universities to achieve the competitive advantages in light of the competitiveness level at HES; therefore, Abu Safia (2004) argues that the competitive advantage in the cellular telecommunications service industry depends on many fields, which are (1) Quality of services, (2) Customer care, (3) Service development & innovation, and (4) Human resources. Level of competitiveness and competitive advantage can be measured by different driving forces; thus, Sirikari & Tang (2006) manifests that there are five dimensions which can be reliable competitiveness indicators of an industry; these indicators are: manufacturing excellence, value-added of product, market expansion, financial returns, and intangible values.

Hill & Jones (1989) argue that "the task facing strategic managers is to analyze competitive forces in the industry environment in order to identify the opportunities and threats that confront the company, and Porter's five forces model one of the models which is used in term of that analysis".

## 6- The advantages of the universities:

### i. The advantages of the universities concerning to universities chronological age is good.

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about universities chronological age and the results are shown in table (4.7) as follows:

1. In item No. (2), the weight mean equal to "81.07%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the level of the universities experience, through their age, affects on the size of demand of their bachelor degree programs.
2. In item No. (1), the weight mean equal 79.05%" and p-value equal " 0.000", which means that the chronological age of the universities is an important factor in determining the volume of demand for enrollment in the universities.

**Table (4.7)**  
**Chronological Age**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	The chronological age of the university is an important factor in determining the volume of demand for enrollment in the university.	7.90	79.05	9.417	0.000
2.	The level of university experience, through its age, affects on the size of demand of its bachelor degree programs.	8.11	81.07	11.501	0.000
<b>Total</b>		<b>8.01</b>	<b>80.06</b>	<b>11.099</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "8.01", the weight mean equal to "80.06", and the p-value equal "0.000", which means that the advantages of the universities concerning to universities chronological age is strong. Therefore, the chronological age and the experience of the universities is an advantage which attracts students to the universities' programs; whereas, it affects strongly on the competitiveness level among the existing regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**ii. The advantages of the universities concerning to universities' reputation is good.**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about universities reputation and the results are shown in table (4.8) as follows:

1. In item No. (1), the weight mean equal to "85.83%" and p-value equal "0.000", which means that the universities have a good reputation among the universities at higher education sector, which strongly affects on the demand size of students on its bachelor degree programs.
2. In item No. (2), the weight mean equal to "81.55%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities effectively seek to invest and promote their reputation for achieving outstanding rank at higher education sector.
3. In item No. (3), the weight mean equal to "77.98%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have programs, tools and adopted plans to improve their image in the community.

**Table (4.8)**  
**Universities' reputation**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	The university has a good reputation among the universities at higher education sector, which strongly affects on the demand size of students on its bachelor degree programs.	8.58	85.83	21.526	0.000
2.	The university effectively seeks to invest and promote its reputation for achieving outstanding rank at higher education sector.	8.15	81.55	15.486	0.000
3.	The university has programs, tools and adopted plans to improve its image in the community.	7.80	77.98	11.958	0.000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8.18</b>	<b>81.79</b>	<b>17.925</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "8.18", the weight mean equal to "81.79", and the p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the

advantage related to universities reputation is strong. Therefore, the universities' reputation is one of the important advantages; whereas, universities should utilize their reputation to achieve the convenience and the positioning for students in order to attract them to their programs that maybe affect strongly on the competitiveness level among the existing regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**iii. The advantages of the universities concerning universities resources and capabilities are good.**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about universities resources and capabilities and the results are shown in table (4.9) as follows:

1. In item No. (1), the weight mean equal to "82.38%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have a high-qualified and a well-expert teaching staff.
2. In item No. (2), the weight mean equal to "77.14%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have a professional a well-expert administrative staff.
3. In item No. (7), the weight mean equal to "77.02%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities depend on the students' fees as a main resource to finance the implementation of its programs and strategic plan.
4. In item No. (4), the weight mean equal to "75.36%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have good scientific laboratories for all specializations to efficiently meet the scientific needs of students.
5. In item No. (3), the weight mean equal to "74.64%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities have well-equipped classrooms with furniture and teaching aids, they are appropriate to the requirements of higher education service provided to students.
6. In item No. (5), the weight mean equal to "67.98%" and p-value equal to "0.001", which means that the universities have large green areas in its campus; in addition to, clubs specified to entertainment and extra-curricular activities.

7. In item No. (6), the weight mean equal to "67.86%" and p-value equal to "0.000", which means that the universities depend on various financial resources to finance their programs and to implement their strategic plan.

**Table (4.9)**  
**Universities resources and capabilities**

No.	Items	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	The university has a high-qualified and a well-expert teaching staff.	8.24	82.38	16.070	0.000
2.	The university has a professional a well-expert administrative staff.	7.71	77.14	10.093	0.000
3.	The university has well-equipped classrooms with furniture and teaching aids, they are appropriate to the requirements of higher education service provided to students.	7.46	74.64	9.193	0.000
4.	The university has good scientific laboratories for all specializations to efficiently meet the scientific needs of students.	7.54	75.36	8.788	0.000
5.	The university has large green areas in its campus; in addition to, clubs specified to entertainment and extra-curricular activities.	6.80	67.98	3.291	0.001
6.	The university depends on various financial resources to finance its programs and to implement its strategic plan.	6.79	67.86	4.006	0.000
7.	The university depends on the students' fees as a main resource to finance the implementation of its programs and strategic plan.	7.70	77.02	8.857	0.000
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.46</b>	<b>74.63</b>	<b>14.048</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "7.46", the weight mean equal to "74.63", and the p-value equal "0.000", which means the advantage related to universities resources and capabilities is strong.

The resources and capabilities play a very important rule in strengthening universities' reputation and making them stable through their chronological age; therefore, the universities have a high-qualified teaching staff and depend on the students fees as main resources in order to implement their strategies effectively, and to achieve diversification with high quality to attract more students to their bachelor programs easily, so the resources and capabilities have a strong effect on the competitiveness level among the existing regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.



**7- The advantages of universities concerning (Universities chronological age, universities' reputation, universities resources and capabilities) are good.**

The one sample t-test is used to test the opinion of the respondent about the advantages of the universities and the results are shown in table (4.10) for all items of the field.

**Table (4.10)**  
**The advantages of the universities**

No.	sub axis	Mean	Weight mean	t-value	P-value
1.	<b>Chronological Age.</b>	8.01	80.06	11.099	0.000
2.	<b>University reputation.</b>	8.18	81.79	17.925	0.000
3.	<b>Universities resources and capabilities.</b>	7.46	74.63	14.048	0.000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7.73</b>	<b>77.32</b>	<b>19.431</b>	<b>0.000</b>

*Critical value of t at df "83" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

The results for all items of the above field show that the mean value equal to "7.73", the weight mean equal to "77.32", and the p-value equal "0.000", which means that the universities' advantages including chronological age, reputation, resources and capabilities, are relatively strong and affect on the competitiveness level among the existing regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip; because every university has its own experience, reputation, and resources that maybe make it stable to continue and to render the higher education service to students in order to grant them the bachelor degree.

Those advantages contribute in achieving the competitive advantages for universities which effect strongly on the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip, so by referring to the theatrical part in this study, *see chapter 2 page 25*, according to Thomas (1988), "competitive advantage refers to all aspects of an organization that allow it to compete more effectively than its rivals, competitive advantage examines both internal and external strengths and weaknesses of a firm and its rivals". Although the advantages of universities can identify the competitiveness level at HES in the Gaza Strip, Sirikari & Tang (2006) argue that there are other indicators can identify reliable competitiveness; these indicators are: manufacturing excellence, value-added of products, market expansion, financial returns, and intangible values.

#### 4.4 Research hypotheses

**First hypothesis:** There is a statistical significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the rivalry level among the existing universities on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.

The Pearson correlation is used to test the correlation between the rivalry level among the existing universities and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip , and the results are shown in table (4.11), which illustrates that the p-value equal to "0.000", which is less than "0.05", that means there is a significant effect of the rivalry level among the existing universities on the level of the competitiveness at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**Table No. (4.11)**  
**Correlation between the rivalry level among the existing universities and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip**

Section	Statistic	Rivalry level among competing universities
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Pearson coloration	0.838
	p-value	0.000
	N	84

*Critical value of r at significance level 0.05 and df equal 83 equal 0.213*

According to the above illustration regarding to the first hypothesis, it is important to say that the correlation between the rivalry level among the existing universities and the level of competitiveness at HES in the Gaza Strip is strong, because the level of the competitiveness is affected by the number of universities and their capacity; in additional to, the exit barriers at HES in the Gaza Strip. By referring to the theoretical part in the study, *see chapter 2 page 20*, "rivalry emerges because one or more competitors see an opportunity to better meet customer needs or is under pressure to improve its performance" Thompson & Strickland (1996).

***The second hypothesis: There is a statistical significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the potential entry of new competitors on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in Gaza Strip.***

The Pearson correlation is used to test the correlation between the potential entry of new competitors and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip, and the results shown in table (4.12), which illustrates that the p-value equal "0.000", which is less than "0.05", that means there is a significant effect of the potential entry of new competitors on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**Table No. (4.12)**

**Correlation between the potential entry of new competitors and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip**

Section	Statistic	The potential entry of new competitors
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Pearson coloration	0.691
	p-value	0.000
	N	84

*Critical value of r at significance level 0.05 and df equal 83 equal 0.213*

The second hypothesis shows that there is strong correlation between the competitiveness level among existing universities and the potential entry of new competitors at HES in the Gaza Strip, and Montalvo (2007) emphasizes that that there is a strong correlation between the threat of new entrants and competition level in the industry of electronic signal conditioning module of the Swedish market; thus, he clarifies that the threat of new entrant in the industry is small since the high fixed cost has been there for 10 years.

According to Mistikoglu & Oral (2005), they argue that "one of the defining characteristics of competitive advantage is the industry's barrier to entry. Theoretically, every company should be able to enter or exit a market if it is a free market. However, every industry has its special characteristics that may restrain new entries".

***The third hypothesis: There is a significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the bargaining power of suppliers' inputs on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.***

The Pearson correlation is used to test the correlation between the bargaining power of suppliers' inputs and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip, and the results shown in table (4.13), which illustrate that the p-value equal to "0.000", which is less than '0.05", that means there is a significant effect of the bargaining power of suppliers' inputs on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**Table (4.13)**

**Correlation between the bargaining power of suppliers' inputs and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip**

Section	Statistic	The bargaining power of suppliers' inputs
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Pearson coloration	0.866
	p-value	0.000
	N	84

*Critical value of r at significance level 0.05 and df equal 83 equal 0.213*

The test of the third hypothesis emphasizes the strong correlation between the bargaining power of the suppliers' input and the competitiveness level at HES, and Lynch (2000) implies that "Porter suggested that suppliers are more powerful under the conditions of a few number of suppliers, no substitute for the suppliers, if the supplier's prices from a large part of the total cost of the organization, and if the suppliers can potentially undertake the value-added process of the organizations".

***The fourth hypothesis: There is a significant effect at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  of the bargaining power of students on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip.***

The Pearson correlation is used to test the correlation between the bargaining power of students and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher

Education Sector in the Gaza Strip , and the results shown in table (4.14), which illustrates that the p-value equal to "0.000", which is less than "0.05", that means there is a significant effect of the bargaining power of students on the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip.

**Table (4.14)**

**Correlation between the bargaining power of students and the level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip**

Section	Statistic	The bargaining power of students
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Pearson coloration	0.714
	p-value	0.000
	N	84

*Critical value of r at significance level 0.05 and df equal 83 equal 0.213*

The bargaining power of the students, as illustrated above, has a strong correlation with the competitiveness level at HES; therefore, the students can affect on the competitiveness level when they have the power and the ability to choose among the existing universities.

Wheelen & Hunger (2008) imply that "buyers affect an industry through their ability to force down prices, bargain for higher quality or more services, and play competitors against each other". According to Min (2005), "the competitiveness in China's Automobile Industry is affected by the high bargaining power of customers because the rapid growth of China has triggered a growth in purchasing power".

***The fifth hypothesis: There is a statistical significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to their general information (Job title, university name, and university age).***

***This hypothesis is divided into sub-hypotheses as following:***

- i. There is a statistical significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to job title.**

The one way ANOVA is used to test that hypothesis, and the results are illustrated in table (4.15), which shows that the p-value equal to "0.160", which is greater than "0.05",

which means that there is no significant difference among the responsive toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to job title.

**Table (4.15)**

**One way ANOVA test for the difference among respondents toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to job title**

Research's Topic	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Sig.(P-Value)
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Between Groups	3.749	4	0.937	1.693	0.160
	Within Groups	43.743	79	0.554		
	Total	47.492	83			

*Critical value of F at df "4.79" and significance level 0.05 equal 2.49*

- ii. There is a significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to university name.**

The one way ANOVA is used to test that hypothesis, and the results are illustrated in table (4.16), which show that the p-value equal to "0.394", which is greater than "0.05", which means that there is no significant difference among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to university name.

**Table (4.16)**

**One way ANOVA test for the difference among respondents toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to University's name**

Field	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Sig.(P-Value)
The level of the competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	Between Groups	1.728	3	0.576	1.007	0.394
	Within Groups	45.764	80	0.572		
	Total	47.492	83			

*Critical value of F at df "3.80" and significance level 0.05 equal 2.72*

- iii. There is a significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to university age.**

To test the hypothesis, the Independent Samples test is used and the results are illustrated in table (4.17), which show that the p-value equal to "0.811", which is greater than "0.05", which means that there is no significant difference among the responsive toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to university age.

**Table (4.17)**

**Independent Samples Test for difference among respondents toward the level of competitiveness at HES due to University's age**

Field	age of University	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P-value
The level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at Higher Education Sector in the Gaza Strip	5- less than 10 years	8	6.75	0.854	-0.240	0.811
	15 years and more	76	6.81	0.751		

*Critical value of t at df "82" and significance level 0.05 equal 1.99*

iv. **There is a significant difference at  $\alpha \leq 0.05$  among the respondents toward the advantages of universities (*Universities chronological age, universities' reputation, universities resources and capabilities*) due to university name.**

The one way ANOVA is used to test that hypothesis, and the results are illustrated in table (4.18), which shows that the p-value for all fields equal to "0.000", which is less than "0.05", which means that there is a significant difference among the respondents toward the universities' advantages including universities' reputation, universities' resources and capabilities due to name of university, and *Scheffe* test table (4.19), *next page*, shows that the difference between "the Islamic University of Gaza", and "Al-Azhar University"; whereas, the difference is in favor of " the Islamic University of Gaza", also there is a difference between "the Islamic University of Gaza", and "Al-Aqsa University", also the differences is in favor of " the Islamic University of Gaza".

**Table (4.18)**

**One way ANOVA test for the difference among respondents toward (Universities chronological age, universities reputation, universities resources and capabilities) at HES due to University's name**

Field	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Sig.(P-Value)
<b>Universities chronological Age</b>	Between Groups	17.229	3	5.743	2.182	0.097
	Within Groups	210.518	80	2.631		
	<b>Total</b>	227.747	83			
<b>Universities reputation</b>	Between Groups	34.334	3	11.445	13.336	0.000
	Within Groups	68.654	80	0.858		
	<b>Total</b>	102.988	83			
<b>Universities resources and capabilities</b>	Between Groups	13.134	3	4.378	5.609	0.002
	Within Groups	62.442	80	0.781		
	<b>Total</b>	75.576	83			
<b>The advantages of the universities</b>	Between Groups	17.859	3	5.953	12.685	0.000
	Within Groups	37.545	80	0.469		
	<b>Total</b>	55.404	83			

*Critical value of F at df "3.80" and significance level 0.05 equal 2.72*

**Table (4.19)**

**Scheffe test for Multiple Comparisons due to Name of University**

Mean Difference	Islamic University M= 8.2803	Al-Azhar University M= 7.1932	Al-Aqsa University M= 7.4643	Palestine University M= 7.6563
Islamic University M=8.2803		1.08712*	0.81602*	0.624
Al-Azhar University M=7.1932	-1.08712*		-0.271	-0.463
Al-Aqsa University M= 7.4643	-0.81602*	0.271		-0.192
Palestine University M=7.6563	-0.624	0.463	0.192	

*The mean (M) difference is significant at the 0.05 level.*

The results show that there is no difference among the existing universities as a result of the general discussion toward the whole research topic of level of competitiveness at higher education sector due to name of university as illustrated in table (4.16). On the other hand, the results show that there is difference among the existing universities as a result of the particular discussion toward universities' reputation, universities' resources and capabilities due to name of university and the difference comes in favor to the Islamic University of Gaza as illustrated in table (4.19). This maybe because the Islamic University of Gaza has a convenient academic staff and programs, large green areas, and a big number of labs; moreover, it has an outstanding reputation among the existing universities.

**4.5 Conclusion:**

This chapter presents a description of the data type and the discussion and testing of the study hypotheses. The scientific study tries to shed light on the competitiveness at the HES in the Gaza Strip, and to identify the main forces which may effect on the competitiveness level at the sector, and to identify constraints and obstacles facing strengthening and enhancing such universities, and thus attempts to reach some of the solutions that may assist in the enhancement of HES through universities to raise performance efficiency which may effect on the competitiveness level at the sector, and to know the paths leading to the promotion and development of HES through the development of universities programs and strategic policies.



## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

## 5.1 Introduction:

Being the final chapter in this thesis, this chapter outlines the research conclusions, recommendations to universities, the Ministry of Higher Education, and finally recommendations to future researchers will be outlined.

## 5.2 Conclusion:

In this review, attempts have been made to conclude the current research fields of the level of competitiveness among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip, and the findings are illustrated as follows:

- **Level of rivalry among the existing main regular universities:** the level of rivalry has a weight mean equal to "70.62", which means that it is relatively existed among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip, also the hypothesis test shows that there is a strong correlation between the level of rivalry among universities and the competitiveness level at HES.
- **Level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector:** this field has a weight mean equal to "73.85", which means that it is relatively strong among the main regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip, also the hypothesis test shows that there is a strong correlation between this field and the competitiveness level at HES.
- **Student's power to control and take decision:** this field has a weight mean equal to "65.91", which means that it is not powerful so much, whereas students can't take their decisions easily, also the hypothesis test shows that there is a strong correlation between the bargaining power of students and the competitiveness level at HES.
- **Suppliers' input power to control and take decision:** this field has a weight mean equal to 61.79, and the P-value equal to "0.176", which means that it is neutral, whereas supplier's input have a moderate level of controlling and effect on the competitiveness level, also the hypothesis test shows that there is a strong correlation between the bargaining power of suppliers' input and the competitiveness level at HES.
- **Level of competitiveness among the main regular universities:** this field tests all the aforementioned fields in order to identify the level of competitiveness among the regular

universities at HES in the Gaza Strip; it has a weight mean equal to "68.08", which means that the level of competitiveness is relatively high.

- **The advantages of universities:** this field consisting of chronological age, universities reputation, and universities resources and capabilities has a weight mean equal to "77.32", which means that the advantages of universities strongly effect on the level of competitiveness among the regular universities at HES in the Gaza Strip. On the other hand the hypothesis test shows that there are differences among the respondent toward the advantages of universities due to university name, and the differences in favor of the Islamic university of Gaza.

### **5.3 Recommendations:**

In light of the aforementioned results, the researcher recommends the following, wishing from the academic institutions and governments presented by MoHE to take them into account:

1. Universities should exploit their advantages of reputation, experience, and resources in its promotion to gain more benefits including profitability, and attractiveness.
2. Universities should enhance their resources and capabilities in line with HES requirements, and make innovations to attract student to its programs.
3. Government presented by MoHE should financially support universities in order to keep continue in providing higher education services.
4. AQAC should review the procedure of accreditation of new academic institution in order to assure that emerging universities are meeting the requirements of HES.
5. Future studies should study the competition level at HES in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank also by using a holistic approach includes all existed universities.
6. Porter's five forces model is convenient to analyze the competition level for industries. It is recommended that future studies should use other tools and models to achieve that purpose in order to support HES.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix (A): Questionnaire in Arabic



الجامعة الإسلامية - غزة  
الدراسات العليا - كلية التجارة

### صحيفة استبيان

"تحليل مستوى المنافسة لقطاع التعليم العالي باستخدام نموذج القوى الخمسة لمايكل بورتر"  
دراسة حالة (الجامعات النظامية التي تمنح درجة البكالوريوس في قطاع غزة)

السادة الكرام،،،،

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،،

نظراً لأهمية قطاع التعليم العالي في فلسطين وضرورة التعرف على محدداته، يقوم الباحث بتحليل مستوى جاذبية قطاع التعليم العالي من خلال الجامعات النظامية الفلسطينية التي تمنح درجة البكالوريوس في قطاع غزة عبر استخدام نموذج القوى الخمس لمايكل بوتر، وذلك لنيل درجة الماجستير وقدم تم اختياركم للإجابة على هذه الاستبانة لمركزكم الوظيفي وخبرتكم فيما يتعلق بمتطلبات قطاع التعليم العالي في قطاع غزة. لذا نأمل من حضرتكم قراءة استبانة الدراسة، والإجابة على جميع أسئلتها بوضع الدرجة المناسبة أمام البديل الذي يُعبر عن كل فقرة من فقرات الاستبانة، لتفي بالغرض الذي أعدت من أجله، والتكرم بتسليم الاستبانة بعد تعبئتها في خلال أسبوعين من تاريخ إرسالها.

آراؤكم وملاحظاتكم ستكون محل الاهتمام، وسيكون لها عظيم الأثر في إثراء هذه الدراسة، علماً أن استخدامها سوف يقتصر على أغراض البحث العلمي، وستعامل بسرية تامة. لذا أرجو منكم التكرم بتعبئة الاستبانة كما هو موضح في الصفحات التالية.

وتقبلوا فائق الاحترام والتقدير

الباحث

محمد فرحات فرحات



## أولاً: بيانات عامة:

<b>المسمى الوظيفي:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> نائب عميد	<input type="checkbox"/> عميد كلية	<input type="checkbox"/> مساعد نائب رئيس الجامعة	<input type="checkbox"/> نائب رئيس الجامعة	<input type="checkbox"/> مساعد رئيس الجامعة	<input type="checkbox"/> رئيس الجامعة
<b>اسم الجامعة:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> جامعة فلسطين	<input type="checkbox"/> جامعة الأقصى	<input type="checkbox"/> جامعة الأزهر	<input type="checkbox"/> جامعة الإسلامية		
<b>عمر الجامعة:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> أقل من 5 سنوات	<input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 سنوات	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 سنوات	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 سنة فأكثر		

## ثانياً: فقرات الإستبانة:

يرجى وضع الدرجة التي تناسبك من 1 إلى 10 حيث كلما اقتربت الدرجة من 10 دل ذلك على الموافقة العالية على ما ورد في العبارة والعكس صحيح.

الدرجة	الفقرات	رقم
(1 - 10)		
	<b>المحور الأول: مستوى المنافسة الحالي لقطاع التعليم العالي</b>	
	1. عدد الجامعات التي تقدم خدمة التعليم العالي في قطاع غزة كبير مما يزيد من مستوى المنافسة الحالية.	
	2. الموارد والإمكانات المتاحة في الجامعة تناسب المؤسسات الأكاديمية فقط.	
	3. أعتقد أن الحكومة ستقوم بدعم الجامعة مالياً إذا وصلت إلى مرحلة العجز الشديد في تغطية نفقاتها.	
	4. يوجد لدى الجامعة قناعة إستراتيجية بالاستمرار في قطاع التعليم العالي بغض النظر عن حجم الإقبال أو التكاليف.	
	5. تؤثر الجامعات المحلية الأخرى على مستوى الرسوم الدراسية لبرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعات.	
	6. جودة ونوع البرامج الأكاديمية المقدمة لطلبة البكالوريوس من قبل الجامعات المحلية الأخرى عالية.	
	7. تصدر الجهات الحكومية قيود وقوانين تحد من خروج الجامعات المماثلة التي تمنح درجة البكالوريوس من قطاع التعليم العالي بسهولة.	
	8. التكاليف الثابتة لدى الجامعات مرتفعة (والتي يجب أن تدفع بغض النظر عن حجم الطلب).	
	9. القدرة الاستيعابية المتاحة لدى جامعتكم عالية	
	10. الجامعة لديها استغلال كامل للطاقة الإستيعابية لديها.	
	11. يوجد تنوع مناسب في عدد ونوع التخصصات المتاحة لدى الجامعة.	
	12. يوجد زيادة في مستوى إقبال الطلبة على الالتحاق ببرامج البكالوريوس لدى الجامعة.	
	13. لدى الجامعة مرونة مناسبة في تطبيق النظام الأكاديمي الخاص ببرامج البكالوريوس.	
	14. تتصف البرامج الأكاديمية المتوفرة لدى الجامعة بالتميز والجودة.	

<b>المحور الثاني: (مستوى القيود والمعيقات التي تحد دخول جامعات جديدة إلى قطاع التعليم العالي)</b>	
1.	بناء وتأسيس الجامعات يحتاج إلى رأس مال كبير.
2.	كي تكون الجامعة مجدية اقتصادياً لابد من وجود طاقة استيعابية كبيرة - (عدد الطلبة، القاعات والمختبرات الدراسية، عدد الكادر الأكاديمي) - للطلبة في التخصصات المختلفة.
3.	تفرض الجهات الحكومية المختصة قيوداً وعوائق قانونية - مثل التراخيص - تحد من دخول جامعات جديدة لقطاع التعليم العالي الذي يمنح درجة البكالوريوس للطلبة.
4.	لدى الجامعة برامج أكاديمية ذات سمعة وشهرة حسنة متعددة تستقطب الطلبة للالتحاق بالجامعة.
5.	نظراً لخبرة الجامعة، تتوفر لدى الجامعة ميزات اقتصادية مثل الحصول على التكنولوجيا والموارد البشرية من الأكاديميين والإداريين بتكاليف قليلة يصعب على الجامعات الجديدة الحصول عليها بسهولة.
6.	ستقوم الجامعة بتخفيض رسوم الطلبة في حال تم دخول جامعات جديدة لقطاع التعليم العالي الذي يمنح درجة البكالوريوس
<b>المحور الثالث: قوة الطلبة على التحكم واتخاذ القرار</b>	
1.	يهتم الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة بمستوى جودة ونوعية البرامج المقدمة لهم.
2.	يستفيد الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة بالامتيازات الأخرى من الخدمات التي تقدمها الجامعة بشكل كبير مثل (التعليم المستمر، الأندية، المكتبة العامة، شؤون الطلبة، المقصف)
3.	يستطيع الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة الحصول على معلومات حول تكاليف الخدمات المقدمة لهم.
4.	هناك ارتفاع في مستوى توقف الطلبة عن الدراسة في الجامعة خلال العام الدراسي.
5.	يتوفر لدى الطلبة معلومات كافية عن البرامج الأكاديمية المحلية تمكنهم من الاختيار بسهولة.
6.	تتميز برامج البكالوريوس لدى الجامعة بتشجيع الطلبة للالتحاق بالجامعة والاستمرار بها حتى تخرجهم.
7.	لدى الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة حوافز مختلفة تشجعهم على الاستمرار بالجامعة.
8.	يستطيع الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة الانتقال إلى جامعة أخرى بسهولة.
9.	هناك مخاطرة عالية - (معادلة المواد التي درسها الطالب) - تقع على الطلبة في حال انتقالهم من الجامعة لجامعة أخرى.
10.	يسعى الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة إلى تقليل تكلفة الحصول على خدمة التعليم العالي بكافة الطرق المتوفرة.
11.	لدى الطلبة الملتحقين ببرامج البكالوريوس في الجامعة القدرة على الاستغناء عن خدمة التعليم العالي المقدمة له.
12.	زيادة مستوى الجامعات الناشئة حديثاً أثر سلباً على طلبات الالتحاق في الجامعة.
<b>المحور الرابع: قدرة الموردين على التحكم واتخاذ القرار</b>	
1.	عدد الموردين الذين يساهمون في تزويد الجامعة بالأثاث والتجهيزات التقنية المستخدمة في التدريس كبير.
2.	عدد دور النشر التي تزود الجامعة بالكتب والمراجع العلمية كبير.

3.	يوفر المدرسون كتب ومراجع علمية كاملة وسهلة ذات جودة عالية من دور نشر مختلفة.
4.	تركز الجامعة على الدرجات العلمية العالية في تقديم خدمة التعليم العالي لطلبة البكالوريوس
5.	يمكن للجامعة الاستغناء عن بعض المدرسين الذين يعملون لديها من أصحاب الدرجات العلمية المختلفة بسهولة.
6.	يقوم المدرسون بتأليف مؤلفات علمية ذات جودة عالية تستخدم في التدريس.
7.	يتوفر في سوق العمل عدد كافٍ من الأكاديميين حملة الدكتوراه لتقديم خدمة التعليم العالي للطلبة.
<b>المحور الخامس: (المميزات الإيجابية للجامعة)</b>	
<b>العمر الزمني:</b>	
1.	يُعتبر العمر الزمني للجامعة عاملاً مهماً في تحديد حجم الإقبال على الجامعة والالتحاق في برامجها.
2.	يؤثر مستوى خبرة الجامعة على حجم إقبال الطلبة على برامجها.
<b>سُمعة الجامعة:</b>	
1.	تتميز الجامعة بسُمعة حسنة بين الجامعات في قطاع التعليم العالي تؤثر بشكل فعّال على حجم إقبال الطلبة على الجامعة.
2.	تسعى الجامعة لاستثمار وترويج سمعتها الجيدة لتحقيق التميز في قطاع التعليم العالي بشكل فعّال.
3.	لدى الجامعة برامج وأدوات وخطط متبعة لتحسين صورة الجامعة في المجتمع.
<b>موارد وإمكانات الجامعة:</b>	
1.	لدى الجامعة طاقم أكاديمي مؤهل وذو خبرة عالية.
2.	لدى الجامعة طاقم إداري مهني ذو خبرة عالية.
3.	لدى الجامعة قاعات دراسية مجهزة بأثاث ووسائل تعليمية جيدة ومناسبة لمتطلبات خدمة التعليم العالي المقدمة للطلبة.
4.	لدى الجامعة مختبرات علمية جيدة وكافية تناسب كافة تخصصات الجامعة وتلبي احتياجات الطلبة العلمية بكفاءة.
5.	لدى الجامعة مساحات خضراء واسعة في ساحات الحرم الجامعي ونوادي مخصصة للترفيه وممارسة الأنشطة اللامنهجية.
6.	تعتمد الجامعة على موارد مالية متنوعة في تمويل تنفيذ برامجها وخططها الإستراتيجية.
7.	تعتمد الجامعة على رسوم الطلبة كمورد رئيس في تمويل تنفيذ برامجها وخططها الإستراتيجية.

## **Appendix (B): Questionnaire in English**

**The Islamic University of Gaza  
Higher Studies- Faculty of Commerce**



### **Questionnaire**

## **"Competitive Analysis of Higher Education Sector by Adapting Porter's Five Forces Model"**

**An applied study on the regular universities, which grant bachelor degree in the Gaza Strip**

**Dear All.....**

Due to the importance of higher education sector in Palestine and the need to identify its determinants, the researcher, to obtain the master degree, analyzes the competition level of higher education sector through the regular Palestinian universities, which grant bachelor degree in the Gaza Strip by adapting the five forces model of Michael Potter. You have been chosen to answer this questionnaire because of your position and experience in the requirements of higher education sector in the Gaza Strip. Therefore, we hope that you will read the questionnaire and answer all the questions by putting the appropriate grade for each alternative that reflects each statement of the questionnaire. This procedure aims at fulfilling the purpose for which this questionnaire was prepared, and we will be highly appreciated upon handing over it within two weeks of the receiving date.

Your feedback and comments would be a matter of interest and they will have great impact regarding the enrichment of this study. Please note that its use will be limited to scientific research purposes. Moreover, the questionnaire will be treated confidentially.

Therefore, I kindly ask you to fill in the questionnaire as shown in the following pages.

**Please accept our best regards**

Researcher  
Mohammed Farahat

❖ **First: General Information:**

<b>Job Title:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> University President	<input type="checkbox"/> Assistant to University President	<input type="checkbox"/> Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/> Assistant to Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/> Dean	<input type="checkbox"/> Vice Dean
<b>University Name:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Islamic University	<input type="checkbox"/> Al-Azhar University	<input type="checkbox"/> Al-Aqsa University	<input type="checkbox"/> Palestine University		
<b>University Age:</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 5- less than 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11- less than 15 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 years and more		

❖ **Second: Questionnaire Items:**

Please, put the grade that you see appropriate form 1 to 10. Wherever the degree was close to 10, this indicates high approval on what was stated in each item and vice versa.

NO.	Items	Grade (1-10)
<b>The first Section: (The level of rivalry among existing universities)</b>		
1.	Number of universities that offer higher education service in the Gaza Strip is large, which increases the level of current competition.	
2.	Resources and capabilities available at the University suit the academic institutions only.	
3.	I think that the government would financially support the university if it has a financial deficit to cover its expenditure.	
4.	The university has a strategy to continue in higher education sector, regardless of the size of demand or costs.	
5.	Other local universities affect on the level of education fees for the academic programs at universities.	
6.	Quality and type of academic programs rendered to students by other local universities are high.	
7.	The government issued restrictions and laws that limit the exit of the similar universities that grant bachelor degree from higher education sector easily.	
8.	Fixed costs of the universities are high (which must be paid regardless of the size of the demand).	
9.	The available capacity at your university is high.	
10.	The university has a full exploitation of its capacity.	
11.	There is a variety in the number and type of specializations available at the university.	
12.	There is an increase in the demand level for students who want to enroll at bachelor programs at the university.	
13.	The university has appropriate flexibility in applying the academic bachelor programs.	
14.	University academic programs are characterized by being outstanding and with a high quality.	

<b>The Second Section: (The level of restrictions and constraints that limit the entry of new universities to higher education sector)</b>		
1.	Universities establishment requires big capitals.	
2.	In order to be economically feasible for the university, the university should have a large capacity of students, classrooms, laboratories and sufficient number of academic staff in different specializations.	
3.	The government imposes restrictions and legal barriers such as; licenses limit the entry of new universities into higher education sector.	
4.	The university has outstanding academic programs and reputation that attract students to enroll.	
5.	According to the experience of the university, it has the economic advantages such as access to technology and human resources of academic and administrative staff with low costs that be difficult for the new universities to get them easily.	
6	The university will reduce fees for students in case of new universities entry into higher education sector.	
<b>The Third Section: (Students power to control and take decisions)</b>		
1.	Students, who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university interested in the quality level of programs provided to them.	
2.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university gain benefit greatly from the privileges of other services rendered by the university such as; continuing education, clubs, public library, student affairs and cafeteria.	
3.	Students who are enrolled in undergraduate programs at the university can obtain information about service costs provided to them.	
4.	There is an increase in the level of students who stop their study at the university during the academic year.	
5.	The students have sufficient information about the local academic programs that enable them to make their decision easily.	
6.	Bachelor programs at the university are characterized by being encouraging for students to enroll in the university and to continue until the graduation.	
7.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have motivations to encourage them to continue in the university.	
8.	Students enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university can move to another university easily.	
9.	The students will face a high risk represented in holding the responsibility of equivalencing courses upon moving to another university.	
10.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university seek to reduce the cost of obtaining the service of higher education by all the available means.	
11.	The students who are enrolled in the bachelor programs at the university have the ability to dispense with the service of higher education provided to them.	
12.	The increasing number of the newly emerged universities at higher education sector has a negative impact on applying for admission in the university.	
<b>The Fourth Section: (Suppliers' input power to control and take decisions )</b>		
1.	The number of suppliers who contribute in providing the university with furniture and technical equipments used in teaching is large.	
2.	The number of publishing houses that provide the university with books and scientific references is large.	

3.	The teachers provide curricula, which are easy to understand with high quality from different publishing houses.	
4.	The university depends on high academic degrees to provide its services concerning higher education for undergraduate students.	
5.	The university could easily continue without some of the working teachers who have different academic titles.	
6.	The teachers write high-quality curricula used in teaching.	
7.	There is a sufficient number of PhD holders available at higher education sector to provide the service of education for undergraduate students.	
<b>The Fifth Section: (The advantages of the universities)</b>		
<b>University chronological Age:</b>		
1.	The chronological age of the university is an important factor in determining the volume of demand for enrollment in the university.	
2.	The level of university experience, through its age, affects on the size of demand of its bachelor degree programs.	
<b>University reputation:</b>		
1.	The university has a good reputation among the universities at higher education sector, which strongly affects on the demand size of students on its bachelor degree programs.	
2.	The university effectively seeks to invest and promote its reputation for achieving outstanding rank at higher education sector.	
3.	The university has programs, tools and adopted plans to improve its image in the community.	
<b>University resources and capabilities:</b>		
1.	The university has a high-qualified and a well-expert teaching staff.	
2.	The university has a professional a well-expert administrative staff.	
3.	The university has well-equipped classrooms with furniture and teaching aids, they are appropriate to the requirements of higher education service provided to students.	
4.	The university has good scientific laboratories for all specializations to efficiently meet the scientific needs of students.	
5.	The university has large green areas in its campus; in addition to, clubs specified to entertainment and extra-curricular activities.	
6.	The university depends on various financial resources to finance its programs and to implement its strategic plan.	
7.	The university depends on the students' fees as a main resource to finance the implementation of its programs and strategic plan.	

### Appendix (C): List of referees

<b>No.</b>	<b>Referee's name</b>
1.	Prof. Dr. Yusuf Ashour
2.	Dr. Samir Safi
3.	Dr. Rushdi Wadi
4.	Dr. Samy Abo El-Rous
5.	Dr. Saif Odah
6.	Dr. Yusuf Bahar
7.	Dr. Akram Samour
8.	Dr. Nafez Barakat