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Abstract: *The paper examines environmental and economic peculiarities for business development in Dubai. Business development can be described as a strategic process, finding new ways for the business to grow, building partnerships for opportunities. For the past decade, the Emirate of Dubai has been considered as one of the best locations to start and grow a business. The aim of this paper is to present a framework for a survey of the extent to which the business development activities are carried out in UAE companies in terms of conceptualizing and developing growth opportunities. Some types of strategic partnerships (alliances) are noted with a view to the future development of the companies studied. General and specific conditions of the developed research are summarised. The paper is a part of a study on business development and strategic planning opportunities in Dubai and precedes a dissertation study.*

Keywords: *Business Development, Management, Business Economics*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, every successful company must have a business development strategy as companies realise that it is a very important moment to achieve new successes in the future. It is therefore a modern subject that can be studied and analysed from different angles.

Business development can be described as a strategic process, finding new ways for business growth, building partnerships for opportunities, etc. (Kelwig, 2023; Stefanov, 2021; Kolarov & Vasilksa, 2019). Business development activities are related to the implementation of a business development strategy.

In practice, the choice of business strategy (or business development strategy) is usually determined by the following factors (Papazov & Mihaylova, 2019):

- market;
- industry;
- products offered.
- technologies applied;
- position of the organisation or company in the market.

Factors that influence business development strategy are very important from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

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Within the framework of business development, United Arab Emirates (UAE) has implemented several policies and programmes to build a knowledge-based economy based on innovation and creativity. UAE companies are affected by these policies and programmes in their business development.

The National Strategy for Cultural and Creative Industries was launched in 2021 with the purpose of developing the cultural and creative industries sector, increasing its size and capabilities, making it one of the top ten industries in the country, and increasing its contribution to 5% of GDP by 2031. The strategy also aims:

- to enhance the country's position on the global cultural creativity map and global competitiveness indicators in the sector.
- to make the UAE an attractive destination for cultural innovators from around the world.
- to double the number of establishments operating in the sector.
- to attract talents and creators to settle and develop in the UAE.

In the UAE, the concept of business development is based on continuous information support and continuous acquisition and lifecycle support (Cialdini, 2021). The availability of well-structured and comprehensive published information is also important (Stoencheva, 2017; Panteleeva, 2016; Pepur, Peronjab & Laća, 2022) and related to competitiveness (Ivanova, 2017; Stoycheva, 2022).

Considering all the above remarks, the aim of the paper is to present the main ideas for an inquiry-based study to show the extent to which business development activities are carried out in UAE companies and how this relates to the process of discovering of growth opportunities.

SURVEY DESIGN FOR EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The idea is to study the extent to which the company design and distinct functions for business development. The purpose of the survey will be to investigate the opinion of organisations based in the Emirate of Dubai on business development and strategic management. The survey will be anonymous. The accumulated data will be used for research purposes related to the preparation of a doctoral thesis in the field of business development. The survey period will refer to the first half of 2023. The methodology of statistical observation will be applied. Fixation observation will be carried out to unveil the perception of individual aspects of the surveyed organisations. The forms of organisation are self-monitoring (collection of necessary information by means of interviews and note-taking) and correspondence form (by means of filling-in questionnaires). The descriptive method of statistical research will be used for questions 1 to 12. Semi-structured interview are foreseen to collect specific information needed (Kirova & Petrova, 2020; Zabunov, 2019).

In the course of an anonymous survey, about 150 companies from different production, consumer, service and technical sectors will be addressed. They can be classified as follows:

- 45 companies and institutions linked to the Federal Government.
- 15 regional companies and institutions linked to the Emirate of Dubai.
- 45 companies owned by UAE nationals.
- 37 companies owned by foreign nationals.
- 8 companies of mixed partnership (Emirati and foreign).

The purpose of the survey is to investigate the views of companies and business establishments located in the Emirate of Dubai on Business Development (BD). It includes the use of summary data for research purposes related to the preparation of a PhD thesis.

This following questions and possible answers will be used for the survey:

Q01. What is the ownership of your company?

Options	X-Mark
011 State (Government)	
012 Municipal	
013 Private (of a resident)	
014 Private (of a foreign person)	
015 Mixed	

Q02. What is the legal form of your enterprise?

Options	X-Mark
021 Joint stock company (JSC)	
022 Limited liability company (LLC)	
023 Sole proprietorship (sole trader)	
024 Other	

Q03. What is the size of your organization?

Options	X-Mark
031 Micro enterprise (01-09 employees)	
032 Small enterprise (10-49 employees)	
033 Medium-sized enterprise (050-249 employees)	
034 Large enterprises (more than 250 employees)	

Q04. What type of business is your company conducting?

Options	X-Mark
041 Business to consumer (B2C)	
042 Business to business (B2B)	
043 Business to government (B2G)	

Q05. Which type of innovation did you implement in your company in the last 3 years?

Options	X-Mark
051 Technological innovations (product and/or process innovations)	
052 Marketing (e.g., entering new markets, new promotional campaigns, etc.)	
053 Organizational innovations (e.g., significant organizational changes)	
054 All types of innovations mentioned above	
055 None of the innovations mentioned above	

Q06. What competitive strategy do you use in developing your business? (Mark with an "X")

Options	X-Mark
061 Cost leadership strategy (offering a low-priced mass product to a broad market, manufactured by a standard technology)	
062 Differentiation strategy (offering a high-quality product to a narrow market, manufactured by a intrinsic technology)	
063 Mixed (hybrid) strategy (a combination of the above-mentioned strategies)	

Q07. What is the extent to which the following Business Development activities are carried out in your company (relating to the concept and development of growth opportunities)?

№	Options	Never	Rarely	Often	Regularly	Always
	<i>Prior to executive decision (conceiving and crafting)</i>					

071	We use business plans or similar documents for the preparation of growth opportunities.					
072	We use business models or similar methods for explicating 'How do we make money?'					
073	We have designated people to integrate intelligence across business functions, such as R & D, production, and marketing.					
074	We have designated people preparing growth opportunities for senior management.					
075	We have designated people to conduct final due diligence, if necessary, prior to the executive decision to pursue growth opportunities.					
<i>After the executive decision (supporting and monitoring)</i>						
076	The people who prepared a growth opportunity support the implementation of it.					
077	We have designated people with knowledge about the growth opportunity monitoring and reporting on its progress to senior management.					

Q08. In your company, what is the degree to which are designated and distinct function does business development? Tick the description that most describes your company.

№	Options	X-Mark
081	We have no distinct business development activities – be they labelled as such or not.	
082	Our business development is a non-planned activity carried out by management.	
083	Our business development is an acknowledged activity with task description, but no full-time employee assigned.	
084	Our business development is done by one or more full-time employees, but we have no separate organizational unit.	
085	Business development is a distinct organizational unit comprising full-time, experienced business developer(s).	

Q09. In case of appointment a BD specialist (a business developer) in your company, what professional experience did he/she possess before hiring him/her? (Multiple choices are possible!)

№	Options	X-Mark
091	Had practical industry-specific experience.	
092	Had practical technology/product/service experience.	
093	Had experience with senior management?	
094	Had experience with middle management?	
095	Had experience with multiple specialist business functions?	
096	Our company haven't hired a business developer yet	

Q10. What best characterizes the market orientation of your company?

Nº	Options	X-Mark
101	Either: Our business objectives and strategy are driven primarily by customer satisfaction.	
102	Or: We change our product offerings when our competitor has changed his/hers.	
103	Either: We continually try to discover additional needs of our customers of which they are unaware.	
104	Or: We search more often for opportunities to innovate our production or distribution methods than our competitors do.	

Q11. Which of the following types of strategic partnerships (alliances) would you be interested in participating in view of the future development of your company?

Nº	Options	X-Mark
111	Joint venture	
112	Public-private partnership	
113	Non-equity strategic alliance	
114	Equity strategic alliance	
115	No interest in participating in a strategic partnership	

Q12. To what extent do you need additional legal-economic consultation in the chosen area of strategic partnership?

Nº	Options	X-Mark
121	I don't need any further information	
122	I just need some advice on some issues	
123	I need advice on a wider range of issues	

The framework of the survey was designed according to the general and specific conditions described below.

The general conditions to which the developed questionnaire (survey) responds can be summarised as follows:

- It is subordinate to the aim and objectives of the specific development and the related study.
- It creates the possibility to cover all the units to be observed.
- It has the possibility of being processed electronically using spreadsheet software.
- It provides the opportunity to express an opinion on the specific question, which will help in the subsequent evaluation and analysis of the data.

The specific conditions to which the developed questionnaire (survey) responds can be summarised as follows:

- All questions are simple, clear, and precise. There is an opportunity to comment in the comment line at the end of the question, which supports subsequent data analysis.
- All questions are clearly understood.
- The order of the questions is determined by the interdependence of the questions and by considerations of convenience in completing the questionnaire.
- There is a clear way of completing the answers.
- Questions are clearly distinguished from each other.
- Consistency has been achieved between the respondents and the compiler in terms of visual comfort when completing and reading the questions.

- The questionnaire should be completed by the manager, the chief accountant, or the person most familiar with the specifics of the organisation's strategic orientation.

CONCLUSION

In terms of the importance of each question in the business development framework, the ideas behind each question can be summarised. Question 1 collects information on the type of ownership of the enterprise, which is then used in the analysis and formulation of the results. Questions 2 to 5 are related to the legal form and size of the organisations, the type of business and the innovations implemented, and their purpose is to check the extent to which business development is related to these. Questions 6 to 8 relate to the competitive strategy used in business development, the extent to which business development activities are carried out in the enterprise and the extent to which business development is a designated and separate function. Question 9 tries to find out what professional experience the business developer had before being hired, if the investigated enterprise has appointed a business developer in its enterprise. Questions 10 to 12 relate to the points that best characterise the market orientation of the company, types of strategic partnerships in which the organisations are interested in participating with a view to future business development. The aim is to find out to what extent the enterprises need additional legal-economic advice in the chosen area of strategic partnership.

Thus, the three main components related to business development, i.e., markets, strategy, and relationships, are covered by the framework of the business development study.

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