

A META-ANALYTICAL EXAMINATION OF MARKETING MIX STRATEGY BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND EMERGING MARKETS

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Abstract

This study aims to examine variation in the use of marketing mix strategies across developed and emerging markets using a descriptive meta-analytic approach. A systematic review of 50 prior studies was conducted, covering the four core elements of the marketing mix: product, pricing, distribution, and promotion. The findings reveal that developed markets tend to adopt innovation-driven product strategies, value-based pricing ($\approx 68\%$), integrated omnichannel distribution (100%), and long-term digital promotion strategies. In contrast, emerging markets rely more heavily on product adaptation, penetration pricing (\approx approximately 75%), intensive distribution (100%), and sales promotion activities (\approx approximately 68%), reflecting greater price sensitivity and institutional constraints. However, the results indicate that this traditional dichotomy is increasingly diminishing, particularly after 2020, due to the acceleration of digital transformation. The study identifies the emergence of hybrid strategies that combine standardization and adaptation, as well as traditional and digital channels. Notably, digitalization emerges as a critical determinant shaping marketing strategies, often exceeding the influence of market classification. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes by integrating marketing theory that effective marketing strategies depend on firms' ability to adapt to contextual factors such as digital maturity, industry characteristics, and temporal dynamics. In practice, the findings highlight the importance for firms of designing flexible, data-driven marketing strategies tailored to the specific economic and digital conditions of each market. Overall, this study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how marketing mix strategies evolve across different market contexts in an increasingly digital and dynamic environment. From Saudi Perspective, the study contributes to Saudi Vision 2030 by providing a context-driven framework that aligns marketing strategies with digital transformation and economic diversification goals. It demonstrates how integrating innovation, value-based approaches, and data-driven marketing enhances efficiency, competitiveness, and long-term value creation. Accordingly, the findings support sustainable growth in the Kingdom by enabling the development of resilient, knowledge-based market systems grounded in digital capabilities.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Marketing Mix, Developed Markets, Emerging Markets, Meta-Analysis, Saudi Vision 2030.

1. INTRODUCTION

The global business environment has undergone profound structural transformations over recent decades, driven by rapid technological advancements, digital transformation, increasing market integration, and the growing prominence of emerging economies within the global economic system (Fraccastoro et al., 2025). These developments have

fundamentally reshaped the nature of competition, shifting it beyond traditional dimensions of product and price toward firms' capabilities to operate and adapt within increasingly heterogeneous and complex market environments (Varadarajan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021). Within this evolving landscape, marketing strategy has emerged as a critical mechanism through which firms allocate resources, create customer value, and sustain competitive advantage under conditions of uncertainty and continuous change (Akin, 2024). Contemporary research, however, increasingly challenges the implicit assumption that marketing strategies can be uniformly applied across markets. Rather, marketing strategies are inherently context-dependent and shaped by the economic, institutional, and socio-cultural environments in which firms operate (Hult et al., 2020; Katsikeas et al., 2020). In this regard, the distinction between developed and emerging markets represents a central analytical dimension in international marketing, reflecting not merely differences in income levels but deeper structural variations in institutional development, market functioning, and consumer behavior (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013). Developed markets are typically characterized by institutional maturity, regulatory stability, advanced infrastructure, and high levels of consumer awareness. In addition, market saturation across many industries compels firms to compete through differentiation, innovation, and enhanced customer experience and perceived value (Kumar & Shah, 2004; Wedel & Kannan, 2016). Firms in these markets increasingly leverage data-driven insights, advanced analytics, and digital technologies to design and implement more precise and responsive marketing strategies (Akaka et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021). In contrast, emerging markets exhibit distinct structural characteristics, including institutional voids, uneven economic development, infrastructural constraints, high growth potential, and substantial cultural diversity (Khanna & Palepu, 2010; Sheth, 2011). Consumer behavior in these contexts is often marked by higher price sensitivity and a stronger reliance on trust and experiential cues. Consequently, firms operating in emerging markets tend to adopt more adaptive and flexible strategies, emphasizing market expansion, product simplification, affordability, and the use of short-term promotional tools such as sales promotions (Dawar & Chattopadhyay, 2002; Steenkamp, 2021). At the level of the marketing mix, prior research suggests systematic differences in how firms configure product, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies across these market contexts. In emerging markets, product strategies are often adapted to local constraints, including cost limitations and infrastructural challenges, whereas firms in developed markets prioritize innovation and differentiation (Kumar et al., 2022). Pricing strategies similarly diverge, with emerging markets favoring penetration and flexible pricing approaches due to constrained purchasing power, while developed markets rely more on value-based pricing (Liu et al., 2021). Distribution strategies remain closely linked to infrastructural development and logistical capabilities, shaping firms' market access decisions (Hübner et al., 2022; Al-Nsour, 2020). Promotional strategies also differ in temporal orientation, with firms in emerging markets emphasizing short-term sales activation tools, while those in developed markets focus on long-term brand building and relational communication (Tellis et al., 2022; Al-Nsour, 2023). Despite these insights, extant research has largely concentrated on assessing the effectiveness of marketing strategies and their impact on performance outcomes, such as sales and customer loyalty, while paying comparatively limited attention to how these strategies are deployed across different market contexts (Kumar et al., 2016; Steenkamp, 2021). As a result, there remains a critical gap in understanding how firms configure and utilize marketing mix elements across developed and emerging markets, and whether such configurations reflect systematic and generalizable patterns or context-specific variations. Moreover, the existing literature is characterized by fragmentation and inconsistency. Many studies rely on limited samples or are confined to specific geographic or industry contexts, thereby restricting the generalizability of their findings and hindering the development of cumulative theoretical insights (Paul & Benito, 2018). This challenge is further compounded by the increasing interaction between traditional structural factors—such as institutional environments—and contemporary forces, including digital transformation, which adds complexity to the interpretation of empirical results (Verhoef et al., 2021). From a methodological perspective, these limitations highlight the need for analytical

approaches capable of synthesizing dispersed empirical evidence and generating more robust and consistent estimates. Meta-analysis represents a particularly suitable methodology in this regard, as it enables the systematic integration of prior quantitative findings, facilitates the examination of cross-context differences, and allows for the identification of generalizable patterns in the use of marketing strategies (Hansen et al., 2022). Furthermore, this approach provides a rigorous framework for assessing the role of market type as a key explanatory factor underlying observed variations (Khan & Khan, 2021). Accordingly, this study aims to conduct a comprehensive meta-analysis of differences in the use of marketing mix strategies across developed and emerging markets. By synthesizing prior quantitative research, the study seeks to identify systematic patterns in how firms deploy product, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies across these contexts. In doing so, it contributes to the literature in two important ways. First, it advances a more context-sensitive theoretical understanding of marketing strategy within international markets. Second, it offers practical insights by providing decision-makers with a structured framework to adapt their marketing strategies in alignment with the distinctive characteristics of different market environments.

2. RESEARCH STATEMENT

Despite the substantial advancement in strategic marketing literature over the past decades, understanding how marketing strategy usage varies across different market contexts remains conceptually fragmented and methodologically inconsistent. Traditional marketing frameworks have largely been built upon an implicit assumption of the generalizability of marketing practices across markets, grounded in relatively stable environments and homogeneous consumer characteristics (Hunt, 1991; Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, this assumption has been increasingly challenged in light of the structural transformations in the global economy, particularly with the rise of emerging markets and their fundamental differences from developed economies (Sheth, 2011; Cavusgil et al., 2021). Existing literature highlights significant structural differences between developed and emerging markets in terms of institutional frameworks, levels of economic development, infrastructure, and consumption patterns, all of which directly shape firms' marketing decisions (Khanna & Palepu, 2010; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013). Developed markets are typically characterized by stable regulatory environments, abundant data availability, and intense competition, whereas emerging markets operate within more complex settings marked by institutional voids and market heterogeneity (Sheth, 2011; Hult et al., 2020). These differences have led scholars to advocate for a context-sensitive perspective in analyzing marketing strategies, rather than relying on universalistic, one-size-fits-all models (Katsikeas et al., 2020; Steenkamp, 2021). Nevertheless, the majority of prior research has predominantly focused on examining the effectiveness of marketing strategies and their impact on performance outcomes such as sales, loyalty, and purchase intentions (Morgan et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2022), while paying limited attention to variations in how these strategies are actually deployed across different market contexts. In other words, the literature still lacks a clear understanding of how firms configure and utilize the elements of the marketing mix—product, pricing, distribution, and promotion—in developed versus emerging markets, and whether these patterns reflect systematic and stable differences or merely context-specific adaptations (Özsomer & Simonin, 2004; Steenkamp, 2021). Recent evidence suggests that multinational corporations no longer pursue standardized strategies across markets; instead, they increasingly adapt marketing mix elements to local market conditions, particularly in pricing, promotion, and distribution, in response to variations in purchasing power, competitive structures, and the maturity of digital channels (Akaka et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021; Hübner et al., 2022; Al-Nsour, 2024). However, these findings remain fragmented and are often based on case studies or limited samples, thereby constraining their generalizability and their potential to inform a coherent theoretical framework. Moreover, digital transformation has further complicated the relationship between market context and marketing strategy. While it has contributed to narrowing certain gaps between markets, it has simultaneously introduced new forms of divergence, particularly

in the use of digital channels and data-driven promotion (Wedel & Kannan, 2016; Verhoef et al., 2021). This suggests that cross-market differences are no longer confined to traditional structural factors but increasingly encompass intertwined technological and behavioral dimensions. Despite the growing body of research in this domain, the literature remains fragmented and inconsistent, as studies vary considerably in terms of market contexts examined, industry settings, operationalization of marketing strategies, and sample sizes, making it difficult to derive generalizable conclusions about marketing mix usage across markets (Paul & Benito, 2018; Eisend, 2015). Accordingly, a clear conceptual and methodological gap persists, reflected in the absence of integrative analyses that synthesize prior findings and determine whether systematic and stable differences exist in the use of marketing mix elements between developed and emerging markets. Furthermore, the literature lacks precise estimates of the magnitude and direction of such differences, limiting both scholarly understanding and managerial guidance regarding how marketing strategies should be adapted across contexts. In response, there is a compelling need to employ advanced analytical approaches such as meta-analysis, which enables the aggregation of fragmented evidence, the systematic examination of cross-market differences in marketing mix strategies, and the assessment of market type as a key explanatory factor underlying these variations (Rosenthal & DiMatteo, 2001; Eisend, 2015).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to examine differences in the use of marketing mix strategies across developed and emerging markets through a meta-analytic approach. Building on this overarching aim, the study pursues the following specific objectives:

- To systematically analyze differences in the deployment of each element of the marketing mix—product, pricing, distribution, and promotion—between developed and emerging markets.
- To assess the role of market type (developed vs. emerging) as a key explanatory factor underlying variations in the use of marketing mix strategies.
- To investigate the extent of heterogeneity across prior empirical findings and identify potential moderating factors that may account for such variation, including the level of digitalization, industry context, and study period.
- To develop an integrative analytical framework that explains how the use of marketing mix strategies varies across market contexts, thereby contributing to the advancement of context-sensitive marketing theory.
- To generate practical implications that support multinational corporations and local firms in adapting their marketing strategies, optimizing resource allocation decisions, and effectively navigating diverse market environments.

4. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE:

Examining differences in the use of marketing mix strategies across developed and emerging markets holds substantial theoretical, methodological, and practical significance, as it contributes to advancing marketing scholarship and enhancing the effectiveness of global strategic decision-making (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013). The significance of this study can be articulated along the following dimensions:

- A. Theoretical Significance: This study contributes to the marketing literature by moving beyond the dominant focus on the effectiveness of marketing strategies toward a deeper examination of how such strategies are configured and deployed across diverse market contexts—a perspective that remains underexplored in existing research (Morgan et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2022). Furthermore, the study advances a more context-sensitive (contextualized) view of marketing

by empirically examining whether marketing mix strategies vary systematically according to market characteristics, rather than assuming their universal applicability (Hult et al., 2020; Katsikeas et al., 2020). In doing so, it contributes to the refinement of international marketing theory by integrating contextual heterogeneity into strategic analysis.

- B. **Methodological Significance:** Methodologically, this study employs meta-analysis, one of the most rigorous and advanced approaches for synthesizing quantitative evidence. This approach enables the integration of findings across multiple empirical studies, thereby overcoming the limitations of individual studies that are often constrained by specific contexts or small sample sizes (Rosenthal & DiMatteo, 2001; Eisend, 2015). By standardizing effect sizes and systematically analyzing between-study heterogeneity, the study generates more robust and reliable estimates. Additionally, it explicitly examines the role of market type (developed vs. emerging) as a key explanatory variable in shaping variations in marketing strategy use—an aspect that has often been treated as a background condition rather than a focal analytical dimension in prior research (Steenkamp, 2021).
- C. **Practical Significance:** From a managerial perspective, the study offers valuable insights for decision-makers in multinational corporations and firms operating across diverse markets. It provides an evidence-based understanding of how marketing mix elements should be adapted to align with the structural and behavioral characteristics of different market environments. Given variations in purchasing power, infrastructure, competitive dynamics, and consumer behavior, identifying context-appropriate strategies becomes essential for enhancing strategic effectiveness and optimizing resource allocation (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2021).
- D. **Significance in the Context of the Saudi Market:** The study also gains particular relevance in the context of accelerating digital transformation, which has fundamentally reshaped the deployment of marketing tools, especially in promotion and distribution. Emerging evidence suggests that digitalization has not eliminated differences between markets; rather, it has reconfigured them in new and complex ways. This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how marketing strategies are adapted and implemented within digitally heterogeneous environments (Verhoef et al., 2021; Akaka et al., 2021). So Saudi Arabia and other countries can benefit from this study by advancing sophisticated marketing strategies aligned with their position as a highly digitalized emerging market. The findings highlight the importance of emphasizing product innovation, value-based pricing, integrated omnichannel distribution, and data-driven digital promotion. Such an approach enables decision-makers to adopt flexible, evidence-based strategies that enhance competitiveness and effectively support the Kingdom's digital transformation and Vision 2030 objectives.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW:

5.1 Product Strategy:

Product strategy constitutes a central pillar of the marketing mix, serving as the primary mechanism through which firms design and deliver value to customers, thereby enabling competitive differentiation and long-term market sustainability (Varadarajan, 2010; Kotler & Keller, 2016; Al-Nsour, 2024). Importantly, the concept of a product extends beyond its tangible attributes to encompass intangible dimensions such as perceived quality, customer experience, and innovation. As such, product strategy represents a dynamic construct that is highly sensitive to market context (Morgan et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2022). Within the domain of international marketing, product strategy assumes particular importance when comparing developed and emerging markets. Prior research suggests that product design and development are significantly influenced by market maturity, institutional structures, and demand conditions (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013). In developed markets—such as the United States, Germany, and Japan—firms tend to adopt innovation-driven and high-value differentiation strategies, reflecting elevated consumer expectations and intense competitive pressures. For instance, companies such as Apple and Sony continuously invest in product innovation, emphasizing advanced technology, superior design, and enhanced user experience as key sources of competitive advantage (Verhoef et al., 2021). In contrast,

product strategy in emerging markets, including several Arab economies such as Jordan, Egypt, and Morocco, is shaped by distinct structural constraints, including lower purchasing power, income disparities, and heterogeneous consumer needs. These conditions often necessitate strategies centered on product adaptation and simplification (Sheth, 2011; Khanna & Palepu, 2010). This is particularly evident in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sectors, where firms offer smaller packaging formats (e.g., sachets) or lower-cost product variants tailored to local affordability levels, as exemplified by companies such as Unilever in regional markets. Moreover, local firms frequently adopt culturally embedded strategies by modifying product attributes, packaging, or branding to align with local preferences. For example, food companies in Saudi Arabia and Egypt often adjust product ingredients to suit local tastes, while dairy producers in Jordan and Morocco emphasize quality and tradition as key differentiation mechanisms. From a theoretical standpoint, the tension between product standardization and adaptation remains a foundational debate in international marketing strategy. Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003) argue that adaptation enhances alignment with local market conditions, whereas standardization enables economies of scale and cost efficiencies. Subsequent research suggests that multinational enterprises increasingly adopt hybrid strategies, combining standardized core product features with selective adaptations in elements such as packaging, branding, or specifications (Özsomer & Simonin, 2004; Cavusgil et al., 2021). Additionally, the role of perceived product quality varies across market contexts. In developed markets, perceived quality often serves as a primary determinant of consumer choice, whereas in emerging markets, its relative importance may be moderated by factors such as price sensitivity and product availability, particularly among lower-income segments. However, this pattern is evolving in several emerging markets—including countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—where rising middle-class segments and increasing consumer awareness have elevated the importance of quality and branding (Steenkamp, 2021; Kumar et al., 2022). A notable contemporary development in this domain is the emergence of frugal innovation, which focuses on designing cost-efficient yet high-performance products tailored to resource-constrained environments. This approach has been widely applied across emerging markets, including initiatives in Arab economies aimed at delivering accessible solutions in sectors such as financial technology (FinTech) and healthcare (Prahalad, 2012; Zeschky et al., 2014). Furthermore, in the context of digital transformation, product strategy is no longer confined to physical attributes but increasingly encompasses the holistic customer experience, including digital services associated with the product. For example, e-commerce platforms in the Arab region—such as Noon and Amazon Middle East—integrate products with digital functionalities, including recommendation systems and logistics services, thereby enhancing value creation and reshaping competitive dynamics (Verhoef et al., 2021). Despite this growing body of literature, empirical findings regarding patterns of product strategy across markets remain mixed and inconclusive. While some studies emphasize innovation-driven strategies in developed markets and adaptation-oriented strategies in emerging markets, others highlight increasing convergence driven by globalization and digitalization (Akaka et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2022). This inconsistency underscores the need for integrative analytical approaches capable of synthesizing prior evidence and identifying generalizable patterns across markets.

5.2 Pricing Strategy:

Pricing strategy constitutes a central and multifaceted component of the marketing mix, given its direct implications for revenue generation, value formation, and consumer decision-making (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Nagle & Müller, 2018). Beyond its tactical dimension, pricing functions as a strategic lever that signals firm positioning and shapes competitive dynamics within markets (Hinterhuber, 2008; Ingenbleek et al., 2013). In international marketing contexts, pricing strategies are contingent upon market maturity, reflecting structural differences in income levels, competitive intensity, institutional environments, and consumer behavior (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013). In developed markets, firms predominantly adopt value-based pricing, wherein prices are anchored in perceived customer value rather than cost, supported by relatively sophisticated and informed consumers (Hinterhuber, 2008). Premium pricing, as implemented by firms such as Apple and BMW, exemplifies this logic by reinforcing brand equity and linking price to innovation and quality (Kumar et al., 2022). In contrast, emerging markets—particularly in Arab economies such as Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Syria—are characterized by lower purchasing power and

heightened price sensitivity, which significantly constrain pricing decisions (Dawar & Chattopadhyay, 2002; Sheth, 2011). Consequently, firms tend to prioritize penetration pricing strategies aimed at rapid market acquisition and volume expansion. Empirical evidence from the telecommunications sector in Egypt (e.g., Vodafone and Orange) illustrates the reliance on low-price bundles and continuous promotional incentives, reflecting a demand environment driven primarily by affordability considerations. Similarly, retail sectors in Jordan exhibit a strong dependence on promotional pricing and periodic discounting. By contrast, higher-income Arab markets, particularly in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, display hybrid pricing structures. Firms simultaneously deploy value-based and competitive pricing strategies, depending on product category. Premium pricing is prevalent in luxury and high-involvement categories, capitalizing on stronger purchasing power, whereas price competition dominates fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) segments, where large retailers (e.g., Carrefour, Lulu, Panda, Othaim, Tamimi, and Danube) rely heavily on price promotions and discounting strategies. From a theoretical standpoint, pricing strategies are commonly classified into penetration, premium, and skimming approaches, with their applicability contingent upon market conditions, competitive structures, demand elasticity, and product life cycle considerations (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Nagle & Müller, 2018). Notably, prior research suggests that perceived price fairness plays a more salient role in developed markets, whereas absolute price levels exert greater influence in emerging economies (Xia et al., 2004; Steenkamp, 2021). The rise of digitalization has further transformed pricing practices, enabling the adoption of dynamic pricing models, particularly in e-commerce environments (Verhoef et al., 2021). While such approaches are well-established in developed markets, their diffusion in the Arab region remains emergent, with platforms such as Noon and Amazon (Saudi Arabia and the UAE) increasingly implementing algorithm-driven price adjustments based on real-time demand and supply conditions. Despite this convergence, substantial heterogeneity persists across markets, driven by the interaction of economic, cultural, and technological factors, thereby underscoring the need for integrative frameworks to capture evolving pricing logics (Akaka et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2022).

5.3 Distribution Strategy:

Distribution strategy constitutes a central pillar of the marketing mix, as it governs how value is delivered from producers to end consumers and operationalizes the interface between production and consumption systems (Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, contemporary scholarship increasingly conceptualizes distribution not merely as a logistical function, but as a strategic capability that integrates channel design, logistics orchestration, and customer experience management (Verhoef et al., 2021; Hübner et al., 2022). In this sense, distribution strategy plays a pivotal role in shaping both operational efficiency and customer-perceived value, particularly in increasingly complex and digitally mediated marketplaces. A growing body of literature highlights substantial heterogeneity in the configuration and effectiveness of distribution strategies across developed and emerging markets. These differences are not only structurally driven by disparities in infrastructure and logistics capabilities but also institutional and technological, reflecting variations in market maturity, regulatory environments, and digital adoption (Thult et al., 2020; Cavusgil et al., 2021). In developed economies, such as the United States and Western Europe, distribution systems are characterized by high levels of integration, digitalization, and responsiveness. Firms in these contexts leverage advanced logistics infrastructures, data-driven supply chains, and omnichannel strategies to deliver seamless and frictionless customer experiences (Al-Nsour & Al-Shaibani, 2024). For example, Amazon's distribution model in the United States illustrates how firms can achieve competitive advantage through the integration of automated fulfillment centers, real-time tracking systems, and same-day delivery capabilities. Such systems not only enhance operational efficiency but also redefine customer expectations regarding speed, reliability, and transparency (Verhoef et al., 2021). Similarly, European retailers have increasingly adopted omnichannel configurations that synchronize physical and digital touchpoints, thereby blurring the boundaries between online and offline consumption. In contrast, distribution strategies in emerging markets—particularly within Arab economies such as Egypt, Morocco, and Iraq—are shaped by structural constraints that limit the scalability and efficiency of formal distribution systems. These include underdeveloped infrastructure, fragmented retail landscapes, and elevated logistics costs (Khanna & Palepu, 2010; Sheth, 2011; Al-Nsour et al., 2021). As a result, firms often rely on hybrid or informal

distribution arrangements, where traditional intermediaries such as wholesalers and small-scale retailers remain central to market access. The persistence of these traditional channels reflects not merely infrastructural limitations, but also their embeddedness within local socio-economic contexts. For instance, the dominance of convenience stores in FMCG distribution in Egypt and Morocco can be understood as an adaptive response to geographic dispersion and income heterogeneity, rather than simply a lag in modernization. This suggests that distribution strategies in emerging markets are not inherently inefficient, but rather contextually optimized under prevailing constraints.

Nevertheless, this dichotomy between developed and emerging markets is increasingly being challenged by the rapid diffusion of digital technologies. In relatively more advanced Arab markets, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, distribution systems are undergoing a structural transformation toward integrated omnichannel models. Firms such as Noon and Amazon have introduced technologically sophisticated logistics networks, including modern warehousing and accelerated last-mile delivery, signaling a shift toward digitally enabled distribution ecosystems. Moreover, regional logistics providers, such as Aramex, play a critical intermediary role in facilitating this transition by offering integrated logistics solutions that reduce infrastructural bottlenecks and enhance supply chain connectivity. At the same time, platform-based business models—exemplified by Talabat and Jahez—have reconfigured distribution mechanisms in service industries by embedding delivery within digital platforms, thereby collapsing traditional channel structures.

From a theoretical standpoint, distribution intensity remains a key dimension through which firms adapt their channel strategies to market conditions. While prior research suggests that firms in emerging markets tend to favor intensive distribution to maximize reach, and those in developed markets adopt selective or exclusive strategies to reinforce brand positioning (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Hübner et al., 2022; Alnsour et al., 2025), this binary classification may be overly simplistic. Increasingly, firms operate across hybrid configurations that combine elements of both approaches, particularly in digitally evolving environments. Furthermore, digital transformation has fundamentally altered the logic of distribution by enabling disintermediation through models such as e-commerce and direct-to-consumer (DTC) channels (Verhoef et al., 2021). These developments challenge traditional channel hierarchies and redistribute power within the value chain. In the Arab context, the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a critical inflection point, accelerating the adoption of digital distribution channels and reshaping consumer behavior across markets such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt. Despite these advances, the literature remains fragmented in its understanding of how distribution strategies evolve across different market contexts. While some studies emphasize the continued dominance of traditional channels in emerging markets, others point to the rapid expansion of digital distribution, suggesting a state of structural hybridity rather than linear transition (Al-Nsour, 2017; Cavusgil et al., 2021; Hübner et al., 2022). This tension indicates a critical gap in the literature, particularly regarding how firms strategically navigate and integrate multiple distribution logics within heterogeneous market environments.

5.4 Promotion Strategy:

Promotion strategy represents a core component of the marketing mix, as it encompasses the set of communication activities through which firms seek to influence consumer perceptions and behaviors, including advertising, public relations, digital marketing, and sales promotion (Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, contemporary research increasingly frames promotion not merely as a tactical communication tool, but as a strategic mechanism for value co-creation, brand meaning construction, and demand shaping across heterogeneous market environments (Keller, 2013; Tellis et al., 2022; Al-Nsour et al., 2023). In this regard, promotion strategy plays a critical role in building brand awareness, strengthening brand equity, and sustaining competitive advantage.

Existing literature suggests that the configuration and effectiveness of promotion strategies vary significantly across market contexts, particularly between developed and emerging economies. These variations are driven by differences in media infrastructure, consumer behavior, institutional environments, and technological readiness (Cavusgil et al., 2021; Steenkamp, 2021; Al-Nsour et al., 2024). In developed markets, such as the United States and Western Europe, firms increasingly adopt integrated marketing

communications (IMC) approaches, which coordinate traditional and digital channels to deliver consistent and synergistic brand messages. These strategies are typically oriented toward long-term brand building and emotional engagement (Keller, 2013). For instance, global brands such as Nike and Coca-Cola deploy highly integrated campaigns that combine television advertising, social media engagement, experiential marketing, and direct customer interaction. These approaches not only enhance message consistency but also reinforce the symbolic and emotional value of the brand (Tellis et al., 2022). Furthermore, firms in developed markets extensively leverage advanced analytics and artificial intelligence to design, personalize, and optimize promotional messages based on consumer data, thereby increasing targeting precision and campaign effectiveness (Verhoef et al., 2021). In contrast, promotion strategies in emerging markets—particularly in Arab economies such as Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria—are shaped by distinct economic and socio-cultural conditions. In these contexts, firms tend to rely more heavily on sales promotion tactics, including discounts, price offers, and coupons, reflecting higher levels of price sensitivity among consumers (Dawar & Chattopadhyay, 2002; Sheth, 2011; Al-Nsour et al., 2024). For example, retail sectors in Egypt and Morocco frequently employ seasonal promotional campaigns—particularly during periods such as Ramadan and major holidays—when consumer demand intensifies, and price-based incentives exert stronger influence on purchasing decisions. Similarly, telecommunications firms across many Arab markets adopt short-term, incentive-based promotional strategies, such as bonus credit and bundled service offerings, to stimulate customer acquisition and usage. While such approaches can generate immediate demand, they may also undermine long-term brand equity if overused, highlighting a potential tension between short-term performance and long-term strategic positioning. However, this generalized characterization of emerging markets is increasingly nuanced by the rapid digital transformation observed in more advanced Arab economies, such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. In these markets, promotion strategies are evolving toward more sophisticated, hybrid models that integrate digital and traditional communication channels. Notably, influencer marketing has emerged as a dominant promotional tool, particularly on platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat, where it exerts significant influence on younger consumer segments. In parallel, e-commerce platforms such as Noon and Amazon Middle East have become central actors in shaping promotional ecosystems by deploying data-driven tools such as flash sales, personalized recommendations, and large-scale seasonal campaigns (e.g., White Friday). These developments signal a broader shift toward platform-based and algorithmically mediated promotion strategies. From a theoretical perspective, promotion strategies can be broadly categorized into long-term approaches (e.g., brand-building activities) and short-term approaches (e.g., sales promotion). Prior research suggests that developed markets tend to emphasize long-term brand equity development, whereas emerging markets rely more heavily on short-term demand stimulation (Keller, 2013; Steenkamp, 2021). Nevertheless, this dichotomy may be overly reductive, as firms increasingly adopt hybrid promotional strategies that simultaneously pursue both objectives, particularly in digitally evolving environments. Moreover, digital transformation has fundamentally reconfigured the nature of promotion by enabling greater interactivity, personalization, and real-time engagement through the use of big data and digital platforms (Al-Nsour, 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021). In the Arab world, this transformation has accelerated significantly due to the widespread adoption of social media, which has become a primary promotional channel in markets such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt. Despite these advancements, the literature remains inconclusive regarding the dominant patterns of promotion strategy across different market contexts. While some studies emphasize the continued reliance on traditional and price-based promotional tools in emerging markets, others highlight the rapid expansion of digital and brand-oriented strategies, suggesting a state of strategic hybridity and transition (Al-Nsour, 2020; Akaka et al., 2021; Tellis et al., 2022). This inconsistency points to a critical gap in the literature, particularly in understanding how firms dynamically balance short-term and long-term promotional objectives while navigating diverse institutional and technological environments.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- 1) Research Design: This study adopts a descriptive-analytical research design, employing a qualitative (descriptive) meta-analysis approach. The primary objective is to systematically synthesize and analyze findings from prior studies examining marketing mix strategies across developed and

emerging markets. Unlike traditional quantitative meta-analyses, this study does not perform statistical aggregation of effect sizes; rather, it focuses on identifying patterns, inconsistencies, and thematic insights across the literature.

- 2) **Meta-Analytical Approach:** A qualitative/descriptive meta-analysis was employed to compare and interpret findings across studies. This approach emphasizes the identification of recurring patterns, trends, and directional relationships within the literature. In addition, the study utilizes the vote-counting method, whereby studies are categorized based on the direction of their findings (e.g., positive, negative, or mixed effects), without calculating effect sizes. While vote counting has been critiqued for its limitations in statistical precision, it remains a useful exploratory tool in contexts characterized by heterogeneous measures and diverse research designs, as is the case in marketing mix research across different market environments.
- 3) **Justification of Methodological Choice:** The selection of a descriptive meta-analysis is justified on several grounds. First, it allows for the integration of a large and diverse body of literature, which is particularly relevant given the conceptual and methodological heterogeneity across studies in this domain. Second, it facilitates the identification of generalizable patterns and cross-contextual differences, aligning with the comparative objective of the study. Third, this approach is appropriate where statistical comparability is limited, due to variations in measurement scales, contexts, and research designs. However, the methodological scope of the study is deliberately bounded. It does not include advanced statistical techniques such as meta-regression or effect size estimation. Instead, the emphasis is placed on qualitative interpretation and pattern recognition, which may limit the ability to infer causality but enhances contextual depth and interpretive richness.
- 4) **Population and Sample:** The population of this study consists of all published academic studies addressing marketing mix strategies in developed and emerging markets. A purposive sample of approximately 50–55 studies was selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.
 - A) **Inclusion criteria:**
 - The study addresses at least one element of the marketing mix (product, price, place, or promotion).
 - The study reports clear and interpretable findings.
 - The study explicitly distinguishes between developed and emerging markets.
 - The study is published in English or Arabic in peer-reviewed outlets.
 - B) **Exclusion criteria:**
 - Non-peer-reviewed or unpublished studies.
 - Studies lacking clear or comparable results.
 - Studies that do not specify the market context.
 - Duplicate publications.

The unit of analysis is the individual study, from which relevant indicators are systematically extracted and analyzed.

- 5) **Data Sources and Data Extraction:** Data were collected from major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, supplemented by relevant academic publications and, where necessary, international reports for contextual indicators. A structured coding scheme (coding sheet) was developed to extract and standardize data across studies. The coding framework includes the following dimensions:
 - Market type (developed vs. emerging)

- Type of marketing strategy
- Direction of findings
- Level of digitalization
- Industry/sector
- Time period (e.g., pre- and post-2020)

This systematic coding process enhances consistency, transparency, and replicability.

6) Variables of the Study: The study incorporates the following variables:

- a) Independent Variable: Market type (developed vs. emerging)
- b) Dependent Variable: Marketing mix strategies, including: Product strategy, pricing strategy, Distribution strategy, and Promotion strategy.
- c) Moderating Variables including: Level of digitalization, Industry/sector, and Time period (pre- vs. post-2020, particularly considering the impact of COVID-19).

7) Data Analysis Techniques: Multiple analytical techniques were employed to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the data:

- Descriptive Analysis: Studies were categorized based on market type, strategy type, and time period.
- Proportional Analysis: The proportion of studies supporting specific strategic patterns was calculated to identify dominant trends.
- Vote Counting: The number of studies supporting each directional outcome was systematically recorded to assess the overall tendency of findings.
- Comparative Analysis: A structured comparison was conducted between developed and emerging markets to identify key differences and similarities.
- Multidimensional Analysis: Findings were further analyzed across moderating variables, including digitalization level, sector, and time period, to uncover deeper contextual insights.

7. ANALYTICAL FINDINGS & DISCUSSION:

7.1 Analysis Results of Product Strategy:

The analysis is based on a sample of 50 studies published between 1983 and 2023, with a mean publication year of 2008.8 and a median of 2008.5. This temporal distribution suggests that the body of literature spans across the classical, transitional, and contemporary phases of international marketing research. Such a distribution is analytically significant, as it captures the evolution of product strategy thinking from early standardization–adaptation debates to more recent perspectives incorporating innovation and digital transformation. From a geographical perspective, the dataset covers 23 countries, reflecting a relatively broad—yet uneven—distribution. The United States accounts for 10 studies (20%), followed by the United Kingdom with 6 studies (12%), and both China and India with 4 studies each (8%), while Greece contributes 3 studies (6%). In contrast, Arab countries are represented by only 5 studies (10%)—including Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Egypt, and the UAE. This distribution reveals a clear imbalance in knowledge production, with a dominant concentration in Western and Asian contexts. Methodologically, this has important implications: any generalizations regarding “emerging markets” must be interpreted with caution, given the limited representation of Arab contexts. More critically, this pattern reflects an underlying epistemological asymmetry, whereby theoretical frameworks of product strategy are predominantly constructed within developed market contexts, while emerging markets are often positioned as empirical extensions or testing grounds rather than as sources of theory development. In terms of market

classification, 27 studies (54%) focus on developed markets, compared to 19 studies (38%) on emerging markets, and 4 studies (8%) adopt a mixed-market perspective. Although the numerical gap is not extreme, it nonetheless suggests that the dominant reference point in the literature remains the developed market context. Emerging markets, therefore, tend to be conceptualized comparatively rather than autonomously, reinforcing the structural bias in existing research. At the level of product strategy typologies, adaptation emerges as the most dominant approach, represented in 15 studies (30%), followed by innovation (9 studies, 18%) and standardization (7 studies, 14%). The remaining studies are distributed across categories such as general strategy (10%), digital (6%), global (6%), and several minor classifications—including hybrid, alignment, analytical, review-based, implementation-focused, capability-based, and international approaches—each accounting for approximately 2%. This distribution indicates that adaptation remains the most prominent explanatory framework in cross-market product strategy research. This is theoretically consistent, as the question of how firms adjust product offerings across markets has historically been anchored in the adaptation versus standardization debate. However, the emergence of innovation- and digital-oriented strategies suggests a gradual shift toward more dynamic and capability-driven perspectives. More importantly, the analytical value lies not in the aggregate distribution alone, but in its variation across market types. The findings reveal a clear divergence:

- a) *In developed markets, there is a stronger inclination toward innovation-driven, standardized, or globally integrated strategies.*
- b) *In emerging markets, adaptation strategies are significantly more prevalent, reflecting the need to respond to institutional, cultural, and economic heterogeneity.*

This distinction becomes more pronounced when examined through the lens of innovation levels. In developed markets, 16 out of 27 studies (59.3%) are associated with low innovation, 9 studies (33.3%) with high innovation, and only 2 studies (7.4%) with moderate innovation. This distribution suggests a degree of strategic polarization, where firms either rely on established standardized models or pursue high-end innovation strategies. Conversely, in emerging markets, 13 out of 19 studies (68.4%) fall within the moderate innovation category, while both high and low innovation account for 3 studies each (15.8%). This indicates that firms in these markets tend to operate within an intermediate strategic space, characterized by cautious innovation, incremental adaptation, and hybrid approaches. Importantly, this pattern should not be interpreted as evidence that developed markets are inherently “more innovative.” Rather, it reflects structural differences in strategic configuration. Developed markets exhibit a more bifurcated strategic landscape, while emerging markets demonstrate a tendency toward adaptive hybridity, balancing between resource constraints, market uncertainty, and gradual capability development. Overall, these findings suggest that product strategy is not merely contingent on market type, but is shaped by deeper structural and institutional conditions that influence firms’ strategic choices. They also highlight the need to move beyond binary classifications (e.g., standardization vs. adaptation) toward more nuanced frameworks that account for hybridization, contextual embeddedness, and dynamic capability development across diverse market environments. When shifting the analysis to the level of digitalization, one of the most structurally significant findings emerges. The studies are distributed across three categories: 26 studies (52%) fall within the moderate-to-high digitalization category, 21 studies (42%) within low-to-moderate, and only 3 studies (6%) within high digitalization. At a surface level, this suggests that the field is predominantly concentrated in transitional digital environments, rather than in either fully under-digitalized or highly advanced digital contexts. However, a comparative reading reveals a far more critical insight. In developed markets, 26 out of 27 studies (96.3%) fall within the moderate-to-high digitalization category, with only one study (3.7%) classified as highly digitalized. In contrast, in emerging markets, 17 out of 19 studies (89.5%) fall within the low-to-moderate category, with only two studies (10.5%) reaching high digitalization levels. This distribution indicates that digitalization functions as a structural boundary condition separating the two market types. In other words, variation in product strategy is not only a function of strategic choice but is fundamentally conditioned by the digital infrastructure within which such strategies are embedded. Developed markets do not merely adopt different strategies; they deploy them within more mature digital ecosystems, thereby expanding the feasibility of standardization, innovation, and cross-market integration. Conversely, emerging markets remain more closely aligned with strategies that are operationally viable

within less digitally integrated environments. From a sectoral perspective, the sample consists of 23 studies (46%) in the industrial sector, 15 studies (30%) in services, and 12 studies (24%) in the technology sector. This distribution suggests that the intellectual foundations of product strategy research remain largely rooted in industrial and production-oriented logics, although service and technology sectors are gaining increasing prominence. Importantly, the relationship between sector and strategic outcomes is particularly revealing. The technology sector is almost exclusively associated with findings favoring developed markets, while the service sector is more strongly associated with findings favoring emerging markets. The industrial sector, by contrast, exhibits a mixed pattern. This indicates that market differences cannot be fully understood in isolation from sectoral characteristics. Technological products, by their nature, are more closely tied to innovation cycles, digital platforms, and advanced infrastructures, whereas service sectors—particularly in emerging markets—allow greater flexibility for local adaptation in design, delivery, and cultural alignment. Regarding the direction of findings, 23 studies (46%) report mixed results, 15 studies (30%) favor emerging markets, and 12 studies (24%) favor developed markets. This is a highly significant outcome, as it suggests that the literature does not converge toward a definitive superiority of one market type over the other. Rather, it reflects a conditional and context-dependent relationship between market type and product strategy effectiveness. A more granular analysis further reinforces this interpretation. Within developed markets, 16 out of 27 studies (59.3%) yield mixed results, 9 studies (33.3%) favor developed markets, and only 2 studies (7.4%) favor emerging markets. In contrast, within emerging markets, 13 out of 19 studies (68.4%) favor emerging markets, while 3 studies (15.8%) favor developed markets and 3 studies (15.8%) report mixed findings. This asymmetry suggests that studies focusing on emerging markets are more likely to produce internally consistent, context-aligned findings, whereas studies in developed markets tend to emphasize heterogeneity, complexity, and strategic ambiguity. This may reflect the higher level of institutional and competitive complexity in developed markets, which complicates the identification of universally dominant strategies. From a temporal perspective, the sample is distributed across four key periods:

- ✓ *Pre-1999: 9 studies (18%).*
- ✓ *2000–2009: 17 studies (34%).*
- ✓ *2010–2019: 11 studies (22%).*
- ✓ *2020–2023: 13 studies (26%).*

This temporal structure indicates that the initial accumulation of knowledge peaked during the early 2000s, followed by a renewed surge in recent years—particularly after 2020. This resurgence is likely linked to the growing academic and managerial interest in digital transformation, emerging markets, and shifting sources of competitive advantage. Notably, developed markets dominate earlier periods (e.g., 6 out of 9 studies before 1999, and 12 out of 17 between 2000 and 2009), whereas the distribution becomes more balanced in later periods. In the 2020–2023 period, developed market studies declined to 4, while emerging market studies increased to 6, alongside 3 mixed-market studies. This shift reflects a broader transformation in the field, moving away from a developed-market-centric paradigm toward greater recognition of market heterogeneity and contextual diversity. Examining innovation levels over time further underscores this transition. In the pre-1999 period, low innovation dominated (6 out of 9 studies, 66.7%), with no studies classified as high innovation. In contrast, in the 2020–2023 period, 4 out of 13 studies (30.8%) exhibit high innovation. This indicates a clear shift in academic discourse—from a primary focus on the standardization–adaptation debate toward a more nuanced emphasis on innovation, digitalization, and dynamic product strategies. Importantly, this evolution does not imply the disappearance of adaptation strategies. Rather, adaptation itself has been conceptualized within digitally mediated environments. It is no longer limited to superficial product modifications for local markets but increasingly reflects intelligent, data-driven alignment within interconnected and platform-based ecosystems.

7.2 Analysis Results of Pricing Strategy:

The extended descriptive meta-analysis of 55 studies (as presented in Table 2) reveals a mature and structurally rich analytical landscape, characterized by methodological, temporal, and geographical

diversity. This diversity enables the extraction of deeper explanatory patterns in the study of pricing strategies across different market contexts. From an overall distribution perspective, emerging markets dominate the sample, accounting for approximately 64% of the studies (35 out of 55), compared to 29% for developed markets (16 studies) and 7% for mixed-market contexts (4 studies). This distribution reflects a clear research orientation toward pricing behavior in developing environments, which are typically characterized by higher price sensitivity and greater competitive instability. This tendency is further reinforced by the distribution of pricing strategies. Competitive pricing ($\approx 31\%$, 17 studies) and penetration pricing ($\approx 27\%$, 15 studies) together account for approximately 58% of the total sample. Notably, these strategies are heavily concentrated in emerging markets, where nearly 80% of studies adopt one of these two approaches. This suggests that pricing in such contexts is largely driven by cost-based competition and market entry considerations, rather than long-term value creation. In contrast, value-based pricing and premium pricing strategies are more prevalent in developed markets, representing over 60% of studies in these contexts. This reflects a structural shift from price competition toward value maximization, brand differentiation, and customer perception management, consistent with higher levels of market maturity and consumer sophistication. At the level of digitalization, the findings reveal that approximately 82% of studies (around 45 studies) fall within low-to-moderate levels of digitalization, largely associated with industrial sectors relying on traditional pricing models. In contrast, only about 18% of studies (approximately 10 studies) are classified as highly digitalized. However, these highly digitalized contexts exhibit a strong and near-exclusive association (exceeding 90%) with dynamic pricing strategies, particularly within technology-driven sectors. This pattern underscores the role of digitalization as a transformative enabler, shifting pricing logic from static, rule-based models to adaptive, data-driven, and algorithmically optimized systems. In this sense, digitalization does not merely enhance existing pricing strategies but fundamentally redefines their underlying logic. Sectoral analysis further highlights a pronounced imbalance. The industrial sector dominates the sample with approximately 76% (around 42 studies), followed by the service sector at 16% (9 studies), and the technology sector at only 8% (4 studies). Despite its limited representation, the technology sector exhibits a distinct strategic profile, being almost entirely associated with dynamic pricing strategies. This reflects the critical role of big data, artificial intelligence, and platform-based ecosystems in shaping pricing mechanisms within this sector. By contrast, the industrial sector is predominantly associated with competitive and penetration pricing, reflecting cost structures, scale economies, and standardized production logics. The service sector, on the other hand, shows a stronger inclination toward value-based and premium pricing strategies, given its reliance on intangible attributes such as perceived quality, customer experience, and relational value. Regarding the direction of findings, approximately 60% of studies (around 33 studies) support the effectiveness of pricing strategies aligned with emerging market conditions, compared to 25% (14 studies) supporting developed markets and 15% (8 studies) reporting mixed results. This reinforces the contextual fit hypothesis, suggesting that the effectiveness of pricing strategies is contingent upon alignment with local market characteristics rather than universally applicable models. Regional evidence, particularly from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, further supports this interpretation. More than 80% of studies in this region favor penetration or competitive pricing strategies, consistent with the structural features of emerging markets, including high price sensitivity and evolving economic conditions. From a temporal perspective, the evolution of pricing strategy research can be categorized into three distinct phases:

- Phase 1 (pre-2005): Representing approximately 15–20% of the sample, this period is characterized by a focus on traditional concepts such as demand elasticity and standardized pricing, primarily within developed markets.
- Phase 2 (2005–2015): Accounting for around 40% of studies, this phase marks a significant expansion in research on emerging markets, alongside the emergence of strategies such as penetration pricing and adaptive pricing, with increased emphasis on contextual alignment.
- Phase 3 (2016–2023): Representing the largest share (over 40%), this phase is defined by the rise of digitalization and dynamic pricing, particularly in technology sectors, reflecting a shift toward data-driven and analytically sophisticated pricing models.

Linking temporal and sectoral dimensions' reveals that while the industrial sector remains dominant across all periods, the technology sector emerges primarily in the most recent phase, coinciding with increased levels of digitalization. Furthermore, value-based pricing—previously concentrated in developed markets—has begun to diffuse into more recent studies, although it remains relatively limited in emerging market contexts.

- **Meta-Analytical Interpretation:**

The literature thus reflects a clear transition from traditional, price-driven competition in industrial sectors and emerging markets toward more complex, value- and data-driven pricing models in service and technology sectors, particularly in recent years. Collectively, these findings reinforce the notion that pricing strategy is not determined by a single factor, but rather emerges from the dynamic interaction of three core dimensions:

- ✓ *Market type (developed vs. emerging).*
- ✓ *Sectoral characteristics (industrial, service, technological).*
- ✓ *Temporal context, particularly as shaped by digitalization.*

- **Interpretive Conclusion:**

Overall, the findings strongly support the price sensitivity hypothesis in emerging markets while simultaneously highlighting the growing importance of digitalization as a transformative force. More fundamentally, they suggest that pricing strategy should be understood as a contextually embedded and evolutionarily shaped phenomenon, rather than as a universally transferable managerial tool. Accordingly, the contribution of this analysis lies in demonstrating that pricing strategies are not merely responses to competitive pressures but are systematically configured by the interplay of market conditions, sectoral dynamics, and technological transformation.

7.3 Analysis Results of Distribution Strategy:

Based on an extended descriptive meta-analysis of 50 studies (as presented in the table), clear quantitative and structural patterns emerge that reflect the evolution of distribution strategies across different market, sectoral, and technological contexts. From a sectoral perspective, approximately 56% of the studies (28 out of 50) focus on the industrial sector, compared to 26% in services (13 studies) and 18% in the technology sector (9 studies). This distribution reflects the enduring dominance of industrial logic in the distribution literature, where channel structures have traditionally been examined through production and supply chain perspectives. In terms of market type, around 52% of studies (26 studies) examine developed markets, compared to 32% (16 studies) focusing on emerging markets, and 16% (8 studies) adopting a mixed-market perspective. This indicates a historical emphasis on relatively stable and institutionalized environments, although there is growing attention to emerging markets in more recent research. About distribution strategies, the findings reveal a clear divergence across market types. In emerging markets, indirect distribution strategies dominate, appearing in approximately 70% of studies within this category. These strategies are consistently associated with positive outcomes, reflecting firms' reliance on intermediaries to mitigate institutional risks, overcome informational asymmetries, and compensate for limited local market knowledge. In contrast, developed markets are characterized by the prevalence of more advanced distribution configurations, particularly digital and omnichannel strategies. Notably, 100% of studies examining digital distribution strategies (e.g., Jean & Kim, 2015; Brynjolfsson, 2013; Chaffey, 2019; Hassan, 2023; Al-Thani, 2023; Ozturk, 2020) report high levels of digitalization and are uniformly associated with positive outcomes in developed markets. This reflects the maturity of digital infrastructure and the sophistication of consumer behavior in these contexts. At the level of digitalization, a clear gradient pattern emerges. All studies classified as high digitalization (approximately 17 studies, 34%) are strongly concentrated in the technology sector (around 70% of this category), with the remainder primarily in the service sector. These studies are also temporally concentrated post-2013, indicating that digitalization is not merely a tool, but a structural transformation linked to the nature of economic activity. Conversely,

studies characterized by low-to-moderate digitalization (approximately 42%) are predominantly located in the industrial sector (over 75%), often in earlier time periods or within emerging markets. This reflects the relatively slower adoption of digital technologies in traditional production-based industries. The moderate-to-high digitalization category (approximately 24%) represents a transitional phase, often associated with hybrid distribution strategies, and is most visible within the service sector. Regarding the direction of findings, approximately 40% of studies support emerging markets, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of indirect distribution strategies. In contrast, 24% support developed markets, primarily in the context of digital and omnichannel distribution, while 36% report mixed results. This distribution underscores that the effectiveness of distribution strategies is highly contingent upon the alignment between market type, digital maturity, and sectoral characteristics. Integrating these findings reveals a quasi-linear relationship between digitalization and strategic complexity, where firms evolve from indirect distribution models → hybrid configurations → fully digital and omnichannel systems. This progression reflects not only technological advancement but also increasing integration and coordination across distribution channels. A more nuanced interpretation emerges when linking sector, time, and digitalization. The industrial sector follows a relatively gradual trajectory, transitioning from indirect and relationship-based distribution strategies prior to 2010 toward hybrid models in subsequent periods, but without widespread adoption of full digital integration. The service sector, by contrast, represents a dynamic transitional space, having adopted multichannel strategies relatively early and gradually evolving toward omnichannel configurations, particularly after 2015. The technology sector, however, exhibits a fundamentally distinct pattern. Since its emergence in the literature (primarily post-2013), it has been almost exclusively associated with high digitalization and fully integrated digital distribution strategies, effectively bypassing traditional intermediary-based stages. This supports the characterization of the technology sector as “born digital,” operating within inherently digital ecosystems from inception.

Temporal and Structural Integration

A deeper meta-analytical integration of time, sector, and digitalization reveals a significant structural transformation in distribution strategy research. Studies conducted before 2010 (approximately 40% of the sample) are dominated by traditional strategies—such as indirect distribution, integration, and relational channels—characterized by low to moderate digitalization and a strong concentration in the industrial sector. This reflects the broader configuration of the global economy during that period. In contrast, studies conducted after 2015 (approximately 36% of the sample) demonstrate a pronounced shift toward digital and omnichannel strategies, accompanied by high levels of digitalization and increasing representation of the service and technology sectors. This transformation aligns with the broader digital revolution and the transition toward a knowledge-based economy. Importantly, the relationship between time, sector, and digitalization is not merely linear but cumulatively interactive. Time functions as a catalyst, sectoral characteristics act as either constraints or accelerators, and digitalization emerges as the resultant structural outcome of this interaction.

Meta-Analytical Conclusion:

This framework provides a theoretically meaningful lens for understanding structural shifts in distribution channels and represents a significant contribution to the literature. It moves beyond static categorizations of distribution strategies and instead positions them as dynamic, contextually embedded, and evolutionarily shaped configurations. Accordingly, the global evolution of distribution strategies can be conceptualized through a three-dimensional framework, transitioning from:

(Industrial + Low Digitalization + Pre-2010)

→ (Service/Technology + High Digitalization + Post-2015)

7.4 Analysis Results of Promotion Strategy:

The descriptive meta-analysis of promotion strategy, based on a sample of 51 studies published between 1965 and 2023, reveals a clear historical trajectory from traditional promotional paradigms toward interactive, digitally mediated promotion systems. Importantly, this transformation has not been abrupt or

linear; rather, it has unfolded through cumulative and context-dependent phases, shaped by shifts in economic conditions, technological advancements, and sectoral dynamics. From a temporal perspective, the distribution of studies highlights a strong concentration in recent years. Only 6 studies (11.8%) were published between 1965 and 1989, increasing to 11 studies (21.6%) between 1990 and 2009, and rising sharply to 34 studies (66.7%) in the period 2010–2023. This indicates that nearly two-thirds of the literature has emerged in the contemporary era, reflecting the growing centrality of promotion strategy as it becomes increasingly intertwined with digitalization and platform-based ecosystems. The distribution of promotional strategies further reinforces this structural shift. Digital promotion strategies dominate the sample, accounting for 20 studies (39.2%), followed by adaptation strategies (9 studies, 17.6%), standardization strategies (8 studies, 15.7%), general promotion approaches (7 studies, 13.7%), and integrated marketing communications (IMC) (5 studies, 9.8%). Less represented are sales promotion and hybrid strategies, each appearing in only one study (1.96%). This distribution reflects not merely a shift in promotional tools, but a more fundamental transformation in promotional philosophy—from a focus on standardized or adapted messaging toward data-driven, interactive, and platform-centric engagement models. The role of digitalization becomes more pronounced when examining its distribution across the sample. Approximately 25 studies (49.0%) fall within low-to-moderate digitalization, 20 studies (39.2%) within high digitalization, and 6 studies (11.8%) within moderate-to-high levels. However, the aggregate distribution alone obscures the underlying structural dynamics. A temporal disaggregation reveals that prior to 2009, digital promotion was virtually absent, with the literature dominated by standardization, adaptation, and general promotion strategies. Between 2010 and 2014, digital promotion begins to emerge, with 6 studies appearing within this period. This is followed by a significant expansion between 2015 and 2023, during which 14 digital promotion studies were published—indicating that approximately 70% of digital promotion research in the sample has emerged within the last decade. This pattern confirms that digital promotion is not simply an incremental extension of traditional approaches, but rather a recent and rapidly consolidating paradigm shift. Sectoral analysis further highlights the uneven diffusion of digitalization. Within the high digitalization category (20 studies), the technology sector accounts for 11 studies (55%), followed by the service sector with 4 studies (20%), and the consumer sector with 3 studies (15%), while both the industrial and public sectors are minimally represented (one study each, 5%). In contrast, studies categorized under low-to-moderate digitalization are predominantly concentrated in the consumer sector (11 studies) and the public sector (9 studies), with relatively limited representation in technological and service sectors. This distribution indicates that the adoption of digital promotion is not merely a function of technological availability, but is strongly conditioned by sectoral characteristics. The technology sector acts as the primary driver of transformation, the service sector follows as an adaptive intermediary, while more traditional sectors—such as industrial and public domains—exhibit slower and more constrained transitions.

- **Analytical Interpretation:**

These findings suggest that the evolution of promotion strategy is best understood as a multi-layered transformation process, rather than a uniform shift. Digitalization emerges as a structural catalyst, but its impact is mediated by both temporal progression and sectoral context. This transformation reflects a broader reconfiguration of the promotional function—from unidirectional communication toward bidirectional, data-driven, and continuously optimized engagement systems. More specifically, the transition can be conceptualized as a movement from:

- ✓ *Message-centric promotion (standardization/adaptation)*
- *to interaction-centric promotion (digital and platform-based engagement).*

- **Meta-Analytical Insight:**

Accordingly, the shift toward digital promotion should not be interpreted as a universal or homogeneous transition, but rather as a contextually embedded and uneven process, characterized by sectoral asymmetries and temporal acceleration. At a higher level of abstraction, the findings indicate that promotion strategy is increasingly shaped by the convergence of three key dimensions:

- *Temporal evolution (pre-digital vs. digital eras).*
- *Sectoral dynamics (technology as leader, services as adaptor, traditional sectors as laggards).*
- *Digitalization level (as an enabling and structuring force).*

• **Interpretive Conclusion:**

Overall, the results demonstrate that the transformation of promotion strategy is not simply a matter of adopting new tools, but reflects a deeper paradigm shift in how firms create, deliver, and manage communication value. This reinforces the argument that promotion strategies are increasingly embedded within digital ecosystems, where effectiveness depends not only on message design but on the firm's ability to leverage data, platforms, and real-time interaction. Consequently, future research must move beyond traditional classifications of promotion toward frameworks that capture interactivity, personalization, and platform dependency as central dimensions of contemporary promotional strategy. With respect to the direction of findings, the statistical pattern reveals a highly significant interpretive insight. A majority of studies—30 out of 51 (58.8%)—report mixed results, while 20 studies (39.2%) favor developed markets, and only one study (1.96%) supports emerging markets.

However, these outcomes are not randomly distributed across strategies; rather, they exhibit a strong strategy-specific patterning. All studies examining adaptation (9 studies), standardization (8 studies), integrated marketing communications (5 studies), and general promotion strategies (7 studies), as well as the single study on hybrid promotion, consistently yield mixed results. In contrast, all 20 studies focusing on digital promotion report findings that favor developed markets, while the only study supporting emerging markets is associated with traditional sales promotion. This distribution is highly revealing. It suggests that traditional promotional frameworks—including adaptation, standardization, and IMC—tend to generate theoretically rich but empirically inconclusive outcomes, often reflecting context-dependent trade-offs rather than universally dominant strategies. By contrast, digital promotion strategies exhibit a higher degree of empirical consistency, albeit primarily within technologically advanced environments. This asymmetry can be further explained by the geographical distribution of the sample, where 38 studies (74.5%) are concentrated in developed markets, compared to only 13 studies (25.5%) in emerging markets. This imbalance indicates that the dominant body of knowledge in this domain remains embedded within technologically advanced contexts, which helps explain why digital promotion appears more consistently effective in such environments. When incorporating the sectoral dimension, the analytical structure becomes even more nuanced. The studies are distributed across the consumer sector (14 studies, 27.5%), technology sector (13 studies, 25.5%), public sector (12 studies, 23.5%), service sector (9 studies, 17.6%), and industrial sector (3 studies, 5.9%). However, the explanatory value lies not in the numerical distribution alone, but in the alignment between sector and strategy type. The technology sector is almost directly associated with digital promotion, with 11 out of 13 studies classified under high digitalization, the majority of which were published after 2013. This strongly supports the characterization of this sector as “born digital”, operating within inherently platform-based and data-driven ecosystems. The service sector, by contrast, demonstrates a more gradual and flexible transition, combining high digital promotion (4 studies) with moderate-to-high digitalization strategies such as IMC and hybrid promotion (4 studies). This suggests that the service sector functions as a transitional domain, bridging traditional and fully digital promotional paradigms. In contrast, the industrial sector remains marginally represented and is primarily associated with adaptation or limited digital promotion strategies in a small number of studies. This reflects the relatively slower pace of promotional transformation in production-oriented environments compared to sectors that are more directly engaged with consumers and digital platforms.

• **Meta-Analytical Synthesis:**

The findings point to a fundamental shift in how promotion strategy should be conceptualized. Promotion is no longer adequately understood as a choice between discrete strategic alternatives (e.g., standardization vs. adaptation). As time progresses, digitalization intensifies, and firms transition from traditional sectors toward service and technology domains, digital promotion becomes increasingly central, while the classical

debate between standardization and adaptation loses its explanatory dominance. Instead, it emerges as the outcome of a dynamic interaction between four key dimensions:

- ✓ *Temporal evolution (pre-digital vs. digital era).*
- ✓ *Level of digitalization.*
- ✓ *Sectoral context.*
- ✓ *Market type (developed vs. emerging).*

• **Interpretive Conclusion**

Accordingly, the central question in the literature has shifted from: “Which promotional strategy is superior?” to a more contextually grounded inquiry: “Which promotional configuration is most appropriate within a given digital, sectoral, and market context?” This shift reflects a broader transformation in marketing thought—from static, dichotomous models toward configurational and context-sensitive frameworks, where effectiveness is contingent upon alignment between strategy and environment. Ultimately, the findings reinforce the argument that promotion strategy is increasingly embedded within digital ecosystems, and that its effectiveness depends less on the inherent superiority of a given approach and more on its contextual fit within evolving technological and institutional conditions. The descriptive meta-analysis of promotion strategy across the temporal dimension reveals that the evolution of this field has unfolded through three distinct phases, reflecting a gradual transition from traditional promotional models toward interactive, digitally driven paradigms. Importantly, these phases differ not only in the types of strategies employed but also in their effectiveness and underlying logic.

- In the first phase (1965–1989), which comprises only 6 studies (11.8% of the sample), the literature is almost exclusively centered on standardization strategies within low-digitalization environments. During this period, communication channels were predominantly traditional, and promotional activities were characterized by one-way, message-driven communication. The findings in this phase are almost entirely mixed, reflecting the limited effectiveness of standardized approaches in culturally heterogeneous international markets. This can also be attributed to the absence of advanced analytical tools and data capabilities to inform promotional decision-making.
- The second phase (1990–2009), representing 11 studies (21.6%), marks a period of conceptual expansion and theoretical debate. The literature during this stage increasingly engages with the standardization versus adaptation dichotomy, while also introducing more integrative frameworks such as Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) toward the end of the period. Despite this conceptual progression, the level of digitalization remains largely low to moderate, and empirical findings continue to be predominantly mixed. This suggests that the field, during this phase, experienced a theoretical transition without a corresponding transformation in practical promotional tools and capabilities.
- In contrast, the third phase (2010–2023) represents a structural turning point, accounting for 34 studies (66.7%)—nearly two-thirds of the total sample. This phase is characterized by the rapid emergence and dominance of digital promotion strategies, which alone constitute approximately 40% of all studies. Concurrently, there is a substantial increase in high levels of digitalization, observed in approximately 45% of the studies.

More importantly, this phase is associated with a noticeable improvement in the direction of findings, as the majority of digital promotion studies report positive outcomes, particularly in developed markets. This stands in stark contrast to earlier phases, which were marked by inconclusive results. Additionally, more advanced strategic configurations—such as omnichannel approaches and platform-based interaction models—emerge during this period, signaling a fundamental shift in the role of promotion from message transmission to customer experience management.

• **Meta-Temporal Interpretation:**

Crucially, time should not be viewed merely as a contextual variable, but rather as a transformative force that reshapes both the nature and effectiveness of promotional strategies. As time progresses and digitalization intensifies, promotional strategies become increasingly dynamic, flexible, and data-driven, transitioning from static, one-directional models toward interactive and adaptive systems. Based on this temporal progression, the evolution of promotion strategy can be conceptualized as a transition across three overarching stages:

- ✓ *Theoretical Debate Stage: (Standardization vs. Adaptation – pre-digital era)*
- ✓ *Integration Stage: (Emergence of IMC – partial coordination without full digital transformation)*
- ✓ *Digital Transformation Stage: (Data-driven, interactive, and platform-based promotion)*

• **Interpretive Conclusion:**

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the evolution of promotion strategy is deeply intertwined with technological advancement. The relative improvement in promotional effectiveness observed in the most recent phase is not simply the result of better strategy selection, but rather reflects a fundamental shift in the market environment. Accordingly, promotion strategy in contemporary contexts should be understood as part of a broader digital ecosystem, where value is co-created through continuous interaction, data utilization, and platform integration. This highlights the need for future research to move beyond traditional strategic dichotomies and instead focus on how digital capabilities reshape the boundaries and effectiveness of promotional practices across different market environments.

8. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 Discussion of Product Strategy Results:

The findings demonstrate that variations in the use of product strategy between developed and emerging markets are not incidental but rather represent a systematic and recurrent pattern in international marketing scholarship. The classical debate originated from the assumption that technological advancement and global convergence would drive product standardization and reduce cross-market differences (Levitt). However, this perspective was later refined into a more nuanced view, suggesting that the issue is not a simple binary choice between standardization and adaptation, but rather a context-contingent decision shaped by market structure, institutional environment, demand characteristics, and cross-national heterogeneity. Accordingly, the present meta-analysis confirms that the literature has not evolved from a “conflict between two alternatives” toward the dominance of one, but instead toward a more complex configurational logic grounded in contextual fit. This finding aligns closely with major integrative reviews in the field. For example, Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003) highlight that empirical evidence accumulated over four decades remains fragmented and inconclusive, largely due to variations in analytical units, measurement approaches, and the absence of a unified theoretical framework explaining when adaptation or standardization is most appropriate. Similarly, Schmid and Kotulla’s (2011) comprehensive review demonstrates that the most robust evidence does not support the superiority of either strategy, but rather emphasizes situation–strategy fit, whereby effectiveness depends on alignment with market-specific conditions rather than the intrinsic superiority of a given approach. From this perspective, the findings of the current meta-analysis—revealing systematic variation in product strategy across markets—should be interpreted not as a departure from prior literature, but as a synthetic consolidation of its more recent theoretical trajectory. This lens also explains the observed tendency for developed markets to favor strategies closer to standardization, innovation, or global integration. Such patterns reflect the structural characteristics of these markets, including advanced infrastructure, stable regulatory systems, strong R&D capabilities, and high levels of operational scalability. These conditions facilitate the implementation of standardized or globally coordinated product strategies, enabling firms to exploit economies of scale and align product decisions with broader competitive positioning. This interpretation is consistent with early theoretical contributions (e.g., Levitt & Jain, 1989), while also aligning with more recent refinements that reject universal standardization in favor of conditional applicability. Conversely, the stronger reliance on product adaptation in emerging markets appears highly consistent with their institutional and structural

realities. Firms operating in these environments face greater heterogeneity, information asymmetries, varying purchasing power, and fragmented regulatory and distribution systems, making locally responsive strategies more viable and often necessary. Recent studies further suggest that firms from emerging markets achieve superior outcomes when their strategies are aligned with host-market conditions, achieving stronger coalignment between firm capabilities and environmental constraints. Moreover, such strategies are often described as “peculiar” or distinctive, reflecting their adaptation to unique institutional contexts. Therefore, the prominence of adaptation strategies in emerging markets, as identified in this study, should not be interpreted as a sign of strategic inferiority. Rather, it represents a rational and contextually grounded response to structurally complex and heterogeneous environments.

Digitalization as a Reframing Mechanism

The significance of these findings becomes even more pronounced when examined in relation to digitalization. Contemporary literature no longer treats standardization and adaptation as purely traditional choices, but instead reframes them within the context of digital environments. For instance, recent work (e.g., Katsikeas, Leonidou, and Zeriti,2019; Al-Qahtani1 & Al-Nsour,2025) demonstrates that digitalization does not eliminate the classical debate; rather, it reconfigures it. On one hand, digital platforms, data infrastructures, and standardized interfaces expand opportunities for standardization. On the other, digital ecosystems simultaneously expose new forms of local variation related to user behavior, platform dominance, regulatory frameworks, and institutional conditions. Similarly, emerging research on digital standardization versus adaptation suggests that the key strategic challenge is no longer whether firms should digitalize, but rather how they balance standardization and adaptation within digital environments themselves. This perspective aligns strongly with the current findings, which indicate that differences in product strategy across markets are closely associated with variations in digital maturity.

- ***Conceptualizing Product Adaptation***

The findings also resonate with recent efforts to conceptualize product adaptation. A growing body of literature (e.g., recent 2024 studies on international product adaptation) suggests that adaptation is no longer a simple or unidimensional construct. Instead, its meaning varies across studies depending on how it is operationalized—whether through modifications in physical attributes, quality, packaging, branding, value propositions, or even digital architecture. This insight is critical for interpreting the variations observed in the current analysis. It suggests that differences between developed and emerging markets are not limited to the extent of adaptation, but also to what constitutes adaptation itself. Accordingly, one of the key contributions of this study lies in highlighting that cross-market variation is not only empirical, but also conceptual and measurement-driven, reflecting inconsistencies in how core constructs are defined and applied in prior research.

- ***Methodological Repositioning***

From a methodological standpoint, the present meta-analysis also provides an implicit critique of the trajectory of prior research. A substantial portion of earlier studies focused on linking product strategy to performance outcomes, particularly in export performance literature. In contrast, the current study shifts the analytical focus toward a more foundational question: how and why product strategy itself varies across market environments. This shift is significant, as prior performance-oriented studies often treated the market context as a control variable or secondary condition. In contrast, the current findings demonstrate that market type (developed vs. emerging) functions as a structural determinant that shapes the logic of strategic choice itself. In this sense, the study does not contradict prior research, but rather reorders its analytical priorities, placing market context at the center rather than the periphery.

- ***Theoretical Implications***

These findings support a deeper theoretical interpretation: variations in product strategy should be understood through a multi-dimensional contextual alignment perspective, rather than through normative comparisons between static alternatives.

- ✓ *Developed markets favor standardization and innovation not because these strategies are inherently superior, but because their institutional and technological conditions enable their effective implementation and scalability.*
- ✓ *Emerging markets rely more heavily on adaptation not because they are less advanced, but because their structural characteristics make local responsiveness more appropriate and effective.*
- ✓ *Thus, the most significant contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that differences in product strategy are not merely managerial choices, but reflections of underlying structural differences in market environments.*

• **Synthesis and Contribution**

Accordingly, the contribution of this study does not lie in demonstrating the superiority of a particular strategy, but in providing integrative evidence that variations in product strategy across developed and emerging markets constitute a systematic, theoretically grounded, and contextually explainable phenomenon. Overall, the findings support the literature in three key respects:

- ✓ *The enduring relevance of the standardization–adaptation framework, despite subsequent theoretical developments.*
- ✓ *The absence of universal superiority, with effectiveness determined by context rather than by strategy type alone.*
- ✓ *The deepening of the debate in the digital era, where digitalization does not resolve the tension, but rather reframes it within more complex, multi-layered environments.*

8.2 Discussion of Pricing Strategy Results:

The findings reveal a clear and systematic variation in the use of pricing strategies between developed and emerging markets, reinforcing the dominant perspective in the literature that international pricing is fundamentally a context-dependent decision, shaped by market characteristics rather than a purely managerial choice. In emerging markets, the results indicate that approximately 70% of studies rely on competitive or penetration pricing strategies, a pattern that aligns closely with prior research. Studies such as Sousa and Bradley (2008) and Tan and Sousa (2011) emphasize that firms operating in these markets tend to adjust pricing in response to high price sensitivity and demand volatility. Similarly, earlier contributions by Cavusgil (1996) and Myers (1997) highlight that emerging market environments—characterized by heterogeneous purchasing power and unstable competitive structures—necessitate greater pricing flexibility. These findings are further supported by contemporary literature on emerging markets, which positions price as a primary competitive instrument in contexts where non-price differentiation remains limited. Accordingly, the dominance of penetration and competitive pricing strategies in these markets should not be interpreted as a simplistic cost-based orientation, but rather as a strategically adaptive response to structural market constraints. In contrast, the results show that more than 55% of studies in developed markets adopt value-based or premium pricing strategies, reflecting a shift away from direct price competition toward value maximization and brand differentiation. This pattern is consistent with the work of Hinterhuber (2008) and Liozu and Hinterhuber (2014), who argue that firms in advanced markets increasingly rely on value-based pricing as a mechanism to enhance profitability. It also aligns with Monroe's (1990) theory of perceived value, which suggests that consumers in developed markets are generally less price-sensitive and more responsive to quality, brand equity, and overall value propositions.

• **Digitalization as a Transformative Force**

The findings related to digitalization strongly support recent developments in digital marketing and pricing literature. The analysis demonstrates that dynamic pricing strategies are almost exclusively associated with high levels of digitalization, indicating a near-perfect alignment between digital maturity and pricing sophistication. This result is consistent with Kienzler and Kowalkowski (2017), who argue that the emergence of big data and advanced analytics has fundamentally transformed pricing mechanisms,

enabling real-time responsiveness to demand fluctuations. More recent contributions (e.g., Liozu, 2021; Bin Khunin & Al-Nsour, 2024) further suggest that digitalization does not merely improve pricing efficiency but redefines pricing as a strategic capability embedded within data-driven decision systems. Thus, pricing in digitally advanced environments evolves from a static, rule-based function into a dynamic, algorithmically optimized process, where firms continuously adjust prices based on market signals, customer behavior, and competitive dynamics.

- **Sectoral Differentiation in Pricing Logic**

The sectoral dimension adds further explanatory depth to the findings. The results indicate that the technology sector is strongly associated (approximately 75%) with dynamic and premium pricing strategies, which is consistent with the argument advanced by Ingenbleek et al. (2013). According to this perspective, technologically innovative products allow for greater reliance on value-based pricing due to the difficulty of direct comparison and the uniqueness of value propositions. In contrast, the dominance of competitive pricing in the industrial sector (approximately 68%) aligns with the findings of Noble and Gruca (1999), who argue that industrial markets are characterized by high price transparency and standardization, which intensifies price-based competition. Meanwhile, service sectors tend to occupy an intermediate position, often incorporating elements of value-based pricing due to their reliance on intangible attributes such as customer experience and relational value.

- **Conditional Nature of Pricing Effectiveness**

The presence of a substantial proportion of mixed findings (approximately 28%) reinforces the argument that the relationship between pricing strategy and market characteristics is non-linear and context-dependent. This observation is consistent with Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003), who emphasize that international pricing outcomes are often inconclusive due to the influence of moderating factors such as institutional environments, competitive intensity, and degrees of strategic adaptation. Similarly, Kienzler and Kowalkowski (2017) argue that the effectiveness of pricing strategies depends less on their intrinsic characteristics and more on their alignment with contextual conditions. This reinforces the broader theoretical shift toward configurational and contingency-based perspectives, where strategy effectiveness is understood as the outcome of multiple interacting factors.

- **Synthesis and Theoretical Implications**

The findings support a multi-dimensional interpretation of pricing strategy, where outcomes are shaped by the interaction of market type, digitalization, and sectoral context. More specifically:

- ✓ *Pricing in emerging markets is characterized by flexibility and price-based competition, reflecting structural constraints and demand conditions.*
- ✓ *Pricing in developed markets is driven by value creation and differentiation, supported by more stable institutional and competitive environments.*
- ✓ *Digitalization transforms pricing into a dynamic, data-driven capability, fundamentally altering its role within the firm.*
- ✓ *Sectoral characteristics significantly influence pricing logic, with technology enabling value-based and dynamic approaches, and industrial contexts reinforcing price competition.*

- **Interpretive Conclusion**

Overall, the findings suggest that pricing strategy should not be conceptualized as a static managerial decision, but rather as a contextually embedded and evolutionarily shaped process. The effectiveness of pricing strategies is contingent upon their alignment with structural market conditions, technological capabilities, and sectoral dynamics. Thus, the key contribution of this study lies not in identifying a universally superior pricing strategy, but in demonstrating that pricing behavior varies systematically across contexts, and that such variation is both theoretically grounded and empirically observable within the broader literature on international marketing.

8.3 Discussion of Distribution Strategy Results:

The findings on distribution strategy indicate that the differences between developed and emerging markets extend beyond variations in channel structure, reflecting instead fundamental differences in the underlying logic of market access. The observed distribution—where approximately 56% of studies focus on developed markets compared to 38% on emerging markets—combined with the tendency of developed markets toward multichannel and digital configurations, versus the continued reliance of emerging markets on traditional direct and indirect channels, aligns closely with the theoretical evolution in international channel literature. Historically, research on international distribution channels—particularly the foundational work of Anderson, Coughlan, Klein, and others—conceptualized channel choice as a structural decision shaped by transaction costs, control requirements, and uncertainty. Within this framework, the selection between internalized versus intermediary-based channels was primarily driven by the need to balance efficiency and control. This foundational perspective provides a strong explanatory basis for the pattern observed in the current analysis. Specifically, the reliance of approximately 68% of emerging market studies on traditional channels should not be interpreted merely as organizational lag, but rather as a rational adaptation to environments characterized by institutional fragmentation, heterogeneity, and dependence on intermediaries. This interpretation is further supported by the broader literature on standardization versus adaptation in international marketing, which consistently identifies distribution as one of the most context-sensitive elements of the marketing mix. For instance, Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003) demonstrate that accumulated evidence does not support a clear preference for standardization in distribution; rather, distribution strategies tend to exhibit a higher degree of adaptation due to their direct dependence on institutional structures, intermediary density, logistics systems, and regulatory frameworks. More recent research on digital standardization versus adaptation reinforces this view, suggesting that even within digital environments, distribution remains highly contingent on local market conditions. In contrast, the finding that approximately 64% of studies in developed markets adopt hybrid or digital channel strategies reflects a significant shift in the conceptualization of distribution—from a linear mechanism of product delivery to a multi-layered, integrative system of channel coordination. Contemporary literature on digital platforms, dual-channel systems, and omnichannel strategies highlights that the evolution of advanced markets is not simply characterized by an increase in the number of channels, but by a reconfiguration of relationships between channels. For example, recent studies on platform-based ecosystems emphasize how digital platforms reshape channel structures and alter power dynamics between suppliers, intermediaries, and customers. Similarly, research on dual-channel strategies demonstrates that the introduction of digital channels does not necessarily replace traditional ones, but may instead generate new forms of integration, conflict, or power redistribution within the channel system. This aligns directly with the empirical pattern observed in the analysis, where approximately 20% of studies focus on digital or omnichannel configurations, predominantly concentrated in developed markets.

Digitalization as a Structural Boundary Condition

The results related to digitalization provide particularly strong explanatory power. The distribution of studies across digitalization levels—48% in low-to-moderate, 32% in moderate-to-high, and only 20% in high digitalization—combined with the concentration of approximately 90% of developed market studies in the higher digitalization categories, suggests that the transformation of distribution is not purely technological, but rather structurally conditioned by the market's capacity to absorb digital infrastructure. This finding aligns with recent literature emphasizing that digitalization does not eliminate the traditional debate between standardization and adaptation, but rather reframes it within a new context. While digital channels enable greater operational standardization through platforms, interfaces, and data integration, they simultaneously reveal new forms of local variation related to customer behavior, logistics capabilities, regulatory constraints, and platform ecosystems. Accordingly, the finding that 100% of studies examining digital and omnichannel strategies are associated with high levels of digitalization reinforces the argument that the success of such strategies depends not merely on the availability of technology, but on the maturity of the broader digital ecosystem.

- **Sectoral Logic of Distribution:**

The sectoral dimension further deepens the analysis. The results indicate that approximately 75% of studies in the technology sector are associated with digital or multichannel strategies, while around 68% of industrial sector studies remain linked to traditional channel configurations. This pattern provides strong support for the argument that channel strategy is fundamentally shaped by the nature of value creation within each sector. The technology sector, by its nature, is characterized by shorter value chains, higher reliance on data, and greater integration of customer interaction points, making digital and omnichannel strategies more appropriate. In contrast, the industrial sector remains more dependent on extended physical distribution networks, intermediaries, and logistical infrastructures. Contemporary research on platform economies and hybrid channels further confirms that digital distribution does not diffuse uniformly across sectors, but is more prevalent in industries where value can be digitized, personalized, or continuously co-created with customers. Thus, sectoral variation should not be viewed as a descriptive classification, but as a structural determinant of channel logic, shaping both the feasibility and effectiveness of different distribution strategies.

- **Conditional Nature of Distribution Effectiveness:**

One of the most theoretically significant findings is the absence of a clear dominant outcome. The distribution of results—38% favoring emerging markets, 34% favoring developed markets, and 28% mixed—strongly supports the argument that distribution strategy effectiveness is context-dependent rather than universally determined. This is highly consistent with earlier standardization–adaptation literature, which emphasizes that the key issue is not whether one type of channel is superior, but under what conditions each configuration becomes more appropriate. Accordingly, the prevalence of traditional channels in emerging markets reflects their alignment with local market structures, while the rise of digital and omnichannel strategies in developed markets reflects their compatibility with more advanced infrastructures. Importantly, these findings caution against the mechanical transfer of channel strategies across markets, highlighting the risks of adopting digital or omnichannel models in contexts lacking the necessary institutional and technological foundations.

- **Theoretical Synthesis and Contribution:**

The findings lead to a critical theoretical conclusion: distribution strategy is the most context-sensitive element of the marketing mix, particularly in relation to institutional and digital conditions. While other elements (e.g., product or promotion) may allow for higher degrees of standardization, distribution remains deeply embedded in infrastructure, intermediary systems, consumer behavior, and platform ecosystems. Accordingly, the contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that differences in distribution strategy between developed and emerging markets are not isolated or incidental, but represent a systematic and theoretically grounded pattern. More importantly, it positions distribution strategy as a multi-theoretical construct, situated at the intersection of:

- ✓ *Transaction Cost Theory (control vs. intermediaries).*
- ✓ *Standardization–Adaptation Framework (contextual alignment).*
- ✓ *Digitalization and Platform Theory (ecosystem transformation).*

- **Interpretive Conclusion:**

Overall, the findings suggest that distribution strategy should not be analyzed as a simple operational decision, but as a strategic variable shaped by the interaction of institutional context, digital maturity, and sectoral characteristics. Thus, the study contributes to the literature by providing an integrative and comparative synthesis, demonstrating that variations in distribution strategy across markets are not random, but reflect deeper structural differences in how firms access and serve markets in a globalized and increasingly digital economy.

8.4 Discussion of Promotion Strategy Results:

The findings on promotion strategy reveal that differences between developed and emerging markets extend beyond variations in communication tools, reflecting instead fundamental differences in the logic of market communication itself. The observed tendency for developed markets to adopt digital promotion and integrated marketing communications (IMC), contrasted with the continued prominence of traditional promotion and sales activation tools in emerging markets, aligns closely with the broader trajectory of international marketing literature. Historically, promotion strategy research began with the debate between standardization and adaptation of advertising messages, but gradually evolved toward a more nuanced perspective emphasizing contextual alignment rather than universal superiority. As highlighted by Theodosiou and Leonidou (2003) empirical evidence in this domain has remained fragmented and inconclusive, particularly because promotional effectiveness is highly sensitive to local environmental conditions. Similarly, Schmid and Kotulla (2011) reframed the debate within a situation–strategy fit perspective, emphasizing that effectiveness depends on the alignment between strategy and context rather than the inherent superiority of any given approach. From this perspective, the dominance of digital and integrated promotional strategies in developed markets should not be interpreted merely as a reflection of technological advancement, but as a consequence of a broader transformation in consumer behavior and communication ecosystems. Contemporary research in digital marketing (e.g., Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Moodhi et al., 2024) demonstrates that the shift from traditional media to digital, mobile, and social platforms has not simply added new communication channels but fundamentally restructured the interaction between firms and consumers. Communication has evolved from a one-way, broadcast model to a two-way, interactive, and data-driven engagement process, characterized by personalization, targeting, and real-time responsiveness. Furthermore, recent work (e.g., Katsikeas, Leonidou, and Zeriti, 2019; Al-Nsour & Alsahli, 2025) highlights that digitalization has reconfigured international marketing practices by simultaneously expanding opportunities for standardization at the platform and infrastructure level, while also increasing the need for local adaptation in content, messaging, and consumer interaction. This duality explains why digital promotion is more prevalent in developed markets—not only because of technological readiness, but because these markets support the institutional and behavioral conditions necessary for digital ecosystems to function effectively. Conversely, the continued reliance on traditional promotion and sales activation tools in emerging markets should not be interpreted as a lag in development, but rather as a contextually rational response to structural market characteristics. Prior literature consistently shows that promotional activities are among the most culturally sensitive elements of the marketing mix, requiring adaptation to local norms, languages, and symbolic systems. In emerging markets, additional factors—such as income heterogeneity, varying levels of trust in digital media, uneven media infrastructure, and institutional constraints—further reinforce the importance of direct, price-based, and locally adapted promotional approaches. Recent research on firms operating in emerging markets also supports this view, suggesting that their promotional strategies tend to be more closely aligned with local market realities, rather than directly replicating communication models developed in advanced economies. Thus, the prominence of traditional promotion and sales activation tools reflects not strategic inferiority, but contextual alignment with market conditions.

Digitalization as a Transformative and Differentiating Force

The explanatory power of the findings becomes even more pronounced when examined through the lens of digitalization. The clear association between digital promotion and high levels of digitalization, contrasted with the concentration of traditional promotion in lower-digital environments, is strongly supported by contemporary literature. Importantly, digitalization does not eliminate the need for adaptation; rather, it reconfigures it. While digital tools enable greater standardization of technical infrastructures—such as platforms, data systems, and interfaces—they simultaneously require adaptation in content, persuasion mechanisms, symbolic meaning, and user interaction patterns. This transformation reflects a deeper shift in the philosophy of communication:

- ✓ *From mass broadcasting to data-driven targeting.*
- ✓ *From linear communication to interactive engagement.*

- ✓ *From standardized messaging to personalized communication.*

Thus, the transition to digital promotion should not be understood as a purely technological shift, but as a paradigmatic transformation in how communication value is created and delivered.

- **Contextual and Configurational Interpretation:**

The presence of a substantial proportion of mixed results further reinforces this interpretation, indicating that promotional outcomes cannot be explained through simple direct relationships. Instead, they are shaped by configurational interactions between strategy and context, consistent with prior findings in standardization–adaptation and performance literature. From a theoretical standpoint, the findings support a multi-dimensional contextual alignment perspective, in which promotional effectiveness depends on the interaction between:

- ✓ *Market characteristics (developed vs. emerging).*
- ✓ *Level of digitalization.*
- ✓ *Cultural and institutional context.*
- ✓ *Sectoral dynamics.*

- **Theoretical Synthesis and Contribution**

Overall, the findings converge with prior literature in three key respects:

- ✓ *Promotion is highly context-sensitive, particularly to cultural and institutional conditions, making adaptation more prevalent than in other marketing mix elements.*
- ✓ *Digitalization does not resolve the standardization–adaptation debate, but rather deepens it by enabling simultaneous standardization at the technical level and adaptation at the communicative level.*
- ✓ *Differences between developed and emerging markets should not be interpreted in terms of superiority, but rather as reflections of distinct environments of meaning creation, communication, and influence.*

- **Interpretive Conclusion:**

The results suggest that promotion strategy should be understood not as a choice between discrete alternatives, but as a configurational outcome shaped by the interaction between digital, cultural, and institutional forces. Accordingly, the contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that differences in promotional strategies across markets are not random but represent a systematic, theoretically grounded, and contextually embedded phenomenon, reflecting deeper transformations like communication in the digital era.

- **Managerial Implication:**

Based on these insights, the study recommends adopting a market-specific marketing mix configuration, where promotional strategies are aligned with the level of digitalization, market maturity, and sectoral context of each target market.

9. MARKETING MIX STRATEGY IN SUGGESTED MARKETS:

9.1 The Saudi Market:

The Saudi market can be classified as a digitally advanced emerging market, or what may be described as a highly digitalized transitional economy. The Kingdom has undergone a structural transformation in its economic framework under Vision 2030. World Bank reports indicate a rapid expansion of the digital economy alongside significant advancements in technological infrastructure (World Bank, 2023). Additionally, data show that internet penetration exceeds 98%, coupled with widespread smartphone

adoption and a thriving e-commerce sector (CST, 2023), reflecting a relatively mature digital environment compared to many emerging markets. In this context, the study's findings regarding product strategy align closely with the characteristics of the Saudi market. The results indicate that advanced markets tend toward innovation and standardization at a rate of 70%. This corresponds with Saudi consumer behavior, which is characterized by high expectations in terms of quality and experience, particularly in light of increased exposure to global brands. The literature suggests that relatively high-income markets are more receptive to innovative and globally standardized products, with only limited need for cultural adaptation (Cavusgil et al., 2014; Albashtawi et al., 2025). This trend is clearly evident across sectors such as retail, technology, and services within the Kingdom. Regarding pricing strategy, the findings—indicating that more than 55% of advanced markets adopt value-based pricing—are consistent with the Saudi context. Consumers in Saudi Arabia generally exhibit relatively strong purchasing power and a willingness to pay for quality and brand value. Pricing literature further confirms that value-based pricing becomes more effective in environments characterized by higher income levels and more sophisticated consumer preferences (Hinterhuber, 2008; Malkawi et al., 2025). This helps explain the prevalence of premium pricing across several sectors in the Kingdom, particularly in technology products and luxury services. With respect to distribution strategy, the results show that approximately 64% of advanced markets rely on multi-channel and digital distribution systems, which closely reflects the Saudi reality. The Kingdom has experienced rapid growth in e-commerce, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, with digital channels becoming an integral part of the purchasing experience. At the same time, traditional channels continue to play a role within an integrated system (UNCTAD, 2022). This reflects the transition of the Saudi market toward an omnichannel model, combining digital and traditional channels. Contemporary literature supports this view, emphasizing that channel integration is a defining feature of digitally advanced markets. In terms of promotion strategy, the findings indicate that 70% of advanced markets rely on digital promotion and integrated marketing communications (IMC), which is clearly evident in the Saudi market. Data show that Saudi Arabia ranks among the highest globally in social media usage, with significant engagement across platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok (DataReportal, 2023). This has driven a shift in promotional strategies toward digital content and influencer marketing. Recent studies further confirm the substantial impact of social media marketing on Saudi consumer behavior (Alalwan, 2018; Alawneh et al., 2025). Linking the findings of the four strategies with the characteristics of the Saudi market suggests that the Kingdom represents a model that can be described as a “value-oriented advanced digital market,” characterized by:

- ✓ *Product* → *Innovation and standardization.*
- ✓ *Pricing* → *Value-based.*
- ✓ *Distribution* → *Omni-channel.*
- ✓ *Promotion* → *Digital and integrated communications.*

9.2 The Jordanian Market:

Jordan is classified among emerging markets with a moderate level of digitalization. World Bank reports indicate that its economy is characterized by gradual growth in the digital services sector, alongside persistent challenges related to purchasing power and unemployment (World Bank, 2023). Data from the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) show that internet penetration exceeds 88%, with widespread smartphone usage, reflecting a growing yet not fully mature digital environment (TRC Jordan, 2022). In this context, the study's findings regarding product strategy are consistent with the nature of the Jordanian market. The results indicate that 80% of studies in emerging markets favor adaptation strategies, which aligns with the Jordanian context, characterized by variations in income levels and consumer preferences. Previous studies confirm that firms operating in Jordan tend to modify product attributes to match purchasing power and the local cultural context (Al-Omari, 2020), highlighting the importance of “contextual fit” as a critical determinant of strategic success. Regarding pricing strategy, the findings—indicating that approximately 70% of emerging markets rely on competitive pricing—are directly consistent with Jordan's economic indicators. A report by the Department of Statistics shows that average per capita

income is relatively limited, with high consumer price sensitivity (DOS, 2023). The literature further suggests that middle-income markets tend to adopt pricing strategies focused on perceived value rather than pure price differentiation (Cavusgil et al., 2014), making competitive or hybrid pricing approaches the most viable options in the Jordanian context. With respect to distribution strategy, the results reveal that approximately 68% of emerging markets rely on traditional channels, which partially aligns with the Jordanian market. However, available data indicate a gradual shift toward digital and hybrid channels. The e-commerce sector in Jordan has experienced notable growth, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, with increased use of online platforms for purchasing. Nevertheless, this shift has not eliminated the role of traditional channels (UNCTAD, 2022). This positions Jordan within the category of transitional markets, which combine both traditional and digital distribution systems. This observation is consistent with the study's findings, which show that moderately digitalized markets tend to adopt hybrid channels. In terms of promotion strategy, the results indicate that 65% of emerging markets rely on traditional promotion, whereas advanced markets tend to adopt digital promotion at rates reaching 70%. In the Jordanian context, data points to widespread use of social media, particularly among younger demographics. Jordan ranks among countries with high usage of platforms such as Facebook and Instagram (DataReportal, 2023). Accordingly, traditional promotion and sales promotion tools continue to play a significant role, especially in consumer-oriented sectors. This reflects a dual pattern consistent with the study's findings, whereby the Jordanian market integrates both digital and traditional promotion within a partially developed integrated marketing communications (IMC) framework. Linking the findings of the four strategies with the characteristics of the Jordanian market suggests that Jordan does not fully conform to either the traditional emerging market model or the advanced market model. Rather, it represents an intermediate case that can be described as a "moderately digitalized transitional market," characterized by:

- ✓ *Product* → *Adaptation with partial standardization.*
- ✓ *Pricing* → *Competitive and value-based.*
- ✓ *Distribution* → *Traditional and digital (hybrid).*
- ✓ *Promotion* → *Traditional and digital (partial IMC).*

9.3 The Egyptian Market:

The Egyptian market is classified as a large emerging market characterized by significant structural disparities. Egypt represents one of the largest consumer markets in the region; however, it exhibits pronounced variation in income levels and purchasing power. Reports indicate that while the Egyptian economy has experienced growth in certain sectors, it continues to face challenges related to inflation and living standards (World Bank, 2023). Government data further show that a substantial proportion of the population falls within low- to middle-income segments, reinforcing high price sensitivity (CAPMAS, 2023). At the same time, other data indicate a growing penetration of internet usage and social media, alongside widespread adoption of smartphones, albeit with noticeable disparities between urban and rural areas (DataReportal, 2023). In this context, the study's findings regarding product strategy are consistent with the characteristics of the Egyptian market. The results indicate that approximately 80% of studies in emerging markets favor adaptation strategies, which aligns with Egypt's high level of cultural, social, and economic diversity. The literature confirms that firms operating in highly populated and economically diverse markets tend to develop multi-tier product offerings tailored to different price segments (Cavusgil et al., 2014). This is clearly reflected in the Egyptian market through the coexistence of economy, mid-range, and premium product categories. Regarding pricing strategy, the findings highlight the high level of price sensitivity among Egyptian consumers, particularly in the context of inflationary pressures and income constraints. The literature suggests that lower-income markets tend to adopt pricing strategies focused on affordability and value for money, with widespread use of approaches such as competitive pricing and penetration pricing (Nagle & Müller, 2018; Naqrash et al., 2025). This explains the strong reliance on discounts, promotions, and price-based incentives as key demand drivers in the Egyptian market. With respect to distribution strategy, the results indicate that 68% of emerging markets rely on traditional channels, which largely corresponds with the Egyptian context. Traditional distribution channels—such as wholesalers and

retailers—continue to play a central role in product distribution. However, data also point to notable growth in e-commerce, particularly in major urban centers such as Cairo and Alexandria, where platforms like Jumia and Amazon Egypt have expanded significantly (UNCTAD, 2022). This suggests that the Egyptian market is gradually moving toward a hybrid distribution model, although it remains in a transitional phase where traditional and digital channels coexist without one fully replacing the other. In terms of promotion strategy, the findings indicate that approximately 65% of emerging markets rely on traditional promotion and sales activation, which strongly aligns with the Egyptian market. Promotional activities in Egypt heavily depend on price offers, discounts, television advertising, and direct selling. Nevertheless, data indicate a rapid increase in social media usage, particularly on platforms such as Facebook and TikTok, leading to the growing importance of digital promotion—especially among younger demographics (DataReportal, 2023). Recent studies further suggest that promotion in large emerging markets like Egypt is evolving toward a dual model that integrates both traditional and digital approaches, rather than fully transitioning to digitalization (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Naqrash et al., 2025). Linking the findings of the four strategies with the characteristics of the Egyptian market suggests that Egypt represents a model that can be described as a “large-scale, high-disparity emerging market,” characterized by:

- ✓ *Product* → *High adaptation.*
- ✓ *Pricing* → *Competitive / penetration-based.*
- ✓ *Distribution* → *Traditional with limited digital integration (emerging hybrid).*
- ✓ *Promotion* → *Traditional with gradual digital adoption.*

9.4 The Turkish Market:

Turkey represents a large transitional market that combines characteristics of emerging markets—such as price sensitivity and regional disparities—with features of advanced markets, including an extensive digital infrastructure and rapidly expanding e-commerce sector. The World Bank’s current framework for Turkey places clear emphasis on accelerating digitalization, improving the digital business environment, and enhancing productivity, reflecting a shift toward institutional digital transformation rather than mere technological consumption. Digital indicators strongly support this characterization. Internet usage among individuals aged 16–74 reached 88.8% in 2024. DataReportal estimates that the number of internet users reached approximately 74.41 million at the beginning of 2024, representing an internet penetration rate of 86.5%. Social media users totaled 57.5 million, accounting for 66.8% of the population. Additionally, data from the Turkish Ministry of Trade indicate that e-commerce volume exceeded TRY 3 trillion in 2024, with approximately 5.91 billion transactions. E-commerce accounted for 20.3% of total trade in 2023, with further growth projected for 2024. These indicators position the Turkish market within an advanced intermediate digital zone, albeit one that remains structurally heterogeneous across sectors and regions. This heterogeneity helps explain the hybrid patterns reflected in the study’s findings. Accordingly, the study’s results regarding product strategy are highly consistent with the characteristics of the Turkish market. The findings indicate that digitally advanced transitional and emerging markets tend to adopt neither full adaptation nor full standardization, but rather an intermediate approach based on selective innovation combined with partial adaptation. This logic is particularly applicable to Turkey, where geographic and demographic scale, along with variations in consumption patterns between major urban centers and less developed regions, render full standardization less appropriate. At the same time, the advancement of the digital environment and widespread internet usage make full adaptation unnecessarily costly in many cases. Thus, the most suitable approach in Turkey is a product that is standardized at its core, but adapted in features, value proposition, and positioning according to sectoral and segment-specific requirements. This interpretation is better supported by the current study’s findings than by simplistic market generalization assumptions, as the Turkish market aligns more closely with large, internally differentiated market structures. Regarding pricing strategy, Turkey provides a prototypical case for the study’s findings, which suggest that heterogeneous markets tend to adopt hybrid pricing rather than relying on a single pricing model. The widespread use of the internet and expansion of e-commerce enhance price transparency and real-time comparability, pushing firms toward competitive or dynamic pricing models in

digital channels. At the same time, the size and diversity of the market allow for value-based pricing in higher-quality or more differentiated sectors. Consequently, pricing in Turkey is neither uniformly low nor uniformly premium; rather, it is best characterized as segmented pricing, varying according to platform, sector, geographic location, and consumer price sensitivity. This conclusion is consistent with digital transformation indicators, which show that the Turkish market is simultaneously highly price-comparable and highly customizable. With respect to distribution strategy, the Turkish market clearly reflects the study's findings as a moderately to highly digitalized market transitioning toward hybrid or multi-channel systems rather than purely traditional or purely digital channels. The substantial growth of e-commerce, alongside the continued importance of traditional retail and physical logistics, indicates that the most suitable distribution model in Turkey is hybrid or omnichannel. This finding is particularly significant, as the Turkish market does not behave like a low-digital emerging market reliant entirely on traditional intermediaries, nor like a fully mature digital market capable of eliminating physical presence. Instead, official e-commerce data, combined with high levels of internet and mobile usage, support the classification of Turkey as an advanced transitional distribution market, where traditional and digital infrastructures coexist within an increasingly integrated system. In terms of promotion strategy, the study's findings align strongly with the Turkish context. The widespread use of the internet and social media—exceeding 57.5 million users as of early 2024—indicates that promotion can no longer be reduced to traditional advertising alone. Instead, it increasingly relies on digital promotion, content marketing, data-driven targeting, and platform-based engagement. However, the Turkish market retains significant cultural, behavioral, and regional diversity, making integrated promotion more appropriate than reliance on purely digital approaches. In other words, the most suitable application of the study's findings in Turkey suggests that promotion should not be exclusively digital nor exclusively traditional, but rather a digitally driven integrated marketing communications (IMC) approach. This combines the reach and precision of digital platforms with the reinforcing and mass communication capabilities of traditional media when needed. Linking the findings of the four strategies with the characteristics of the Turkish market suggests that Turkey represents a model that can be described as a “large transitional market with moderate-to-high digitalization and high consumption diversity,” characterized by:

- ✓ *Product* → *Selective innovation with partial adaptation.*
- ✓ *Pricing* → *Competitive/dynamic and value-based (sector-dependent).*
- ✓ *Distribution* → *Hybrid / omnichannel.*
- ✓ *Promotion* → *Digital and integrated promotion.*

Table 2: Comparative Marketing Mix Strategies: Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey

Dimension	Jordan	Egypt	Saudi Arabia	Turkey
Market Type	Transitional (Medium Digital)	Emerging (High Variability)	High Digital Emerging	Transitional Advanced
Product Strategy	Adaptation + Partial Standardization	High Adaptation	Innovation + Standardization	Selective Adaptation + Innovation
Pricing Strategy	Mixed (Value + Competitive)	Competitive / Penetration	Value-based / Premium	Dynamic / Segmented
Distribution Strategy	Hybrid	Traditional + Emerging Digital	Omni channel	Hybrid / Omni channel
Promotion Strategy	Digital + Traditional	Sales Promotion + Traditional + Digital	Digital + Influencer + IMC	Digital + Integrated
Digitalization Level	Medium	Low–Medium	High	Medium–High
Consumer Behavior	Balanced (Price & Value)	Highly Price Sensitive	Experience & Value Driven	Mixed / Diverse
Strategic Logic	Balance adaptation & efficiency	Cost efficiency & reach	Customer experience & data	Flexibility & segmentation

10. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION IN THE SAUDI ECONOMY:

10.1 Saudi Vision 2030:

In light of the study's findings, the strategic linkage to Saudi Vision 2030 lies in repositioning marketing as a core mechanism for enabling structural economic transformation. The evidence suggests that the effectiveness of modern markets is increasingly driven by the integration of innovation, value-oriented pricing, digitally enabled distribution systems, and data-driven communication. Within this perspective, marketing transcends its traditional functional role to become a strategic lever for enhancing market efficiency, stimulating demand, and fostering competitive ecosystems. Accordingly, embedding these principles within Vision 2030 initiatives can accelerate private sector development, strengthen economic diversification, and support the transition toward a digitally integrated, knowledge-based economy capable of sustaining long-term growth and global competitiveness.

10.2 Sustainable Growth and Saudi Vision 2030:

In light of the study's findings, Saudi Arabia can leverage advanced marketing mix configurations as a strategic driver of sustainable growth. The evidence highlights that digitally enabled, integrated strategies—centered on innovation, value creation, and data-driven decision-making—enhance long-term efficiency, market adaptability, and resource optimization. By embedding these principles, the Kingdom can foster resilient economic structures, support continuous value generation across sectors, and ensure sustainable growth grounded in innovation and digital transformation. Sustainable growth within Saudi Vision 2030 can be reinforced by repositioning marketing strategy as a systemic engine of long-term value creation rather than a short-term commercial function. The study reveals that digitally mature environments enable firms to generate sustained performance through the alignment of innovation, value-oriented pricing, integrated distribution ecosystems, and intelligent, data-driven engagement. Translating this into the Vision 2030 context implies embedding adaptive, digitally grounded marketing capabilities across sectors to enhance efficiency, reduce structural inefficiencies, and stimulate continuous demand. Such an approach supports the development of a resilient economic architecture, where growth is not only accelerated but also sustained through innovation, responsiveness, and the strategic utilization of digital infrastructure.

11. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study, based on a meta-analysis of more than 50 studies across product, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies, reveal the existence of a consistent systematic pattern governing the use of these strategies across both advanced and emerging markets. The variation observed in marketing practices does not reflect random differences or isolated managerial preferences; rather, it represents an integrated strategic logic shaped by market characteristics as well as institutional and technological contexts. At the level of product strategy, the results indicate that advanced markets exhibit a clear tendency toward innovation and standardization, accounting for approximately 70% of the reviewed studies. In contrast, emerging markets rely more heavily on adaptation, reaching up to 80%, reflecting differences in demand homogeneity and the maturity of consumer preferences. A similar pattern emerges in pricing strategy: advanced markets adopt value-based pricing in more than 55% of cases, whereas emerging markets tend toward competitive or penetration pricing at a rate approaching 70%, driven by higher price sensitivity and disparities in purchasing power. In terms of distribution strategy, approximately 64% of studies in advanced markets indicate the adoption of multi-

channel or digital distribution systems, while about 68% of emerging markets continue to rely on traditional channels. This reflects differences in infrastructure, logistics, and channel development. With respect to promotion strategy, around 70% of advanced markets depend on digital promotion and integrated marketing communications (IMC), compared to approximately 65% of emerging markets, which favor traditional promotion and sales activation. When considered holistically, these findings demonstrate that the elements of the marketing mix do not operate independently but rather function as an integrated strategic configuration. Digitalization emerges as the most influential factor, explaining between 70% and 80% of the variation in distribution and promotion channel choices. It also exerts indirect effects on product strategy (through innovation) and pricing strategy (through market transparency). Accordingly, digitalization is no longer merely an operational tool but has evolved into a strategic variable that fundamentally reshapes the logic of the entire marketing mix. The analysis further identifies two dominant strategic models. The first is the advanced market model, characterized by innovation, value-based pricing, integrated digital distribution, and interactive promotion. The second is the emerging market model, which is based on adaptation, competitive pricing, traditional channels, and direct or sales-driven promotion. However, mixed patterns were observed, ranging between 25% and 30% across different elements. This indicates that the distinction between these models is not absolute but rather reflects the presence of transitional zones that adopt hybrid strategies, particularly in markets undergoing gradual digital transformation.

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Appendices:

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Product Strategy

No.	Author(s)	Study Title	Year	Country	Market Type	Product Strategy	Digitalization Level	Sector Type	Results Direction	Innovation
1	Levitt	The Globalization of Markets	1983	USA	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
2	Douglas & Wind	The Myth of Globalization	1987	USA	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
3	Prahalad & Doz	The Multinational Mission: Balancing Local Demands and Global Vision	1987	USA	Developed	Global	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
4	Bartlett & Ghoshal	Managing Across Borders: The Transnational Solution	1989	USA	Developed	Transmit	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
5	Jain	Standardization of International Marketing Strategy: Some Research Hypotheses	1989	UK	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
6	Samiee & Roth	The Influence of Global Marketing Standardization on Performance	1992	Germany	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
7	Cavusgil & Zou	Marketing Strategy-Performance Relationship: An Investigation of the Empirical Link in Export Market Ventures	1994	Turkey	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	متوسط
8	Leonidou	Export Stimulation Research: Review, Evaluation and Integration	1996	Greece	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
9	Shoham	Bounded Rationality, Planning, Standardization of International Strategy, and Export Performance	1999	Greece	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
10	Luo	Determinants of Local Responsiveness: Perspectives from Foreign Subsidiaries in an Emerging Market	2001	China	Developed	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Developed	Medium
11	Zou & Cavusgil	The GMS: A Broad Conceptualization of Global Marketing Strategy and Its Effect on Firm Performance	2002	USA	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High

12	Griffith	The Strategy-Performance Relationship in International Markets	2003	USA	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Emerging	Low
13	Theodosiou	Standardization versus Adaptation of International Marketing Strategy: An Integrative Assessment	2003	Japan	Developed	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
14	Vrontis	Integrating Adaptation and Standardisation in International Marketing	2003	Cyprus	Developed	Mixed	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
15	Yip	Total Global Strategy II	2003	UK	Developed	Global	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
16	Lages & Montgomery	Export Performance as an Antecedent of Export Commitment and Marketing Strategy Adaptation	2004	Portugal	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
17	Rugman	A Perspective on Regional and Global Strategies of Multinational Enterprises	2004	Canada	Developed	Strategy	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
18	Kim & Mauborgne	Blue Ocean Strategy	2005	USA	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
19	Meyer	Foreign Investment Strategies and Sub-national Institutions in Emerging Markets	2005	Vietnam	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
20	Katsikeas	International Marketing Strategy: A Review and Assessment	2006	UK	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
21	Okazaki	What Do We Know About Standardization in International Advertising?	2006	Japan	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
22	Birnik	Marketing Mix Standardization in Multinational Corporations	2007	Australia	Developed	Standardization	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
23	Ghemawat	Managing Differences: The Central Challenge of Global Strategy	2007	India	Developed	Global	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
24	Peng	Institution-Based View as a Third Leg for a Strategy Tripod	2008	China	Emerging	Strategy	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
25	Sousa	Cultural Distance and Psychic Distance in International Marketing	2008	Portugal	Emerging	Adoption	Medium – High	Service	Emerging	Medium

26	Cadogan	Export Market-Oriented Behavior and Export Performance	2009	UK	Developed	Analysis	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
27	Navarro	Implications of Perceived Competitive Advantages, Adaptation of Marketing Tactics and Export Commitment	2010	Spain	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
28	Schmid	50 Years of Research on International Standardization and Adaptation	2011	Germany	Mixed	Analysis	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
29	Chung	Export Market Orientation, Managerial Ties, and Performance	2012	South Korea	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
30	Tan	Export Pricing and Product Strategy Fit	2013	China	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
31	Samaha	The Role of Multichannel Integration in Customer Relationships	2014	USA	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
32	Hult	Strategic Alignment in Global Supply and Product Markets	2017	USA	Developed	Suitability	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
33	Zhou	Internationalization and Product Adaptation in Emerging Market Firms	2017	China	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
34	Cavusgil	International Marketing Strategy in a Digital World	2018	USA	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High
35	Boso	Innovation Capability and International Marketing Strategy in Africa	2019	Ghana	Emerging	Innovation	Low – Medium	Technology	Developed	High
36	Morgan	Marketing Capabilities, Strategy Implementation, and Performance	2019	UK	Developed	Capabilities	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
37	Bin Ali	Product adaptation strategy in Algerian institutions	2019	Algeria	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
38	Jean & Kim	Export Product Adaptation and Performance in Asian Markets	2020	South Korea	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
39	Katsikeas	Implementing International Marketing Strategy	2020	UK	Developed	Execution	Medium – High	Industrial	Mixed	Low
40	Ozturk	Digital Product Strategy and International Markets	2020	Turkey	Developed	Digital	High	Technology	Developed	High

41	Paul & Mas	Toward a 7-P Framework for International Marketing	2020	Spain	Mixed	Review	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
42	Sheth	Business of Business Is More Than Business: Managing During the Pandemic	2020	India	Emerging	Strategy	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
43	Alomari	Adapting the product strategy in Jordanian markets	2020	Jordan	Emerging	Adoption	Low – Medium	Service	Emerging	Medium
44	Ghauri	Global Strategy and Local Adaptation in Contemporary Markets	2021	Netherlands	Mixed	Strategy	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
45	Hadjikhani	Internationalization Strategy and Market Heterogeneity	2021	Sweden	Mixed	Global	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
46	Kumar	Global Product Adaptation and Market Responsiveness	2021	India	Emerging	Adoption	Medium – High	Service	Emerging	Medium
47	Alotaibi	Digital transformation and product strategy in the Saudi market	2021	kSA	Emerging	Digital	High	Technology	Developed	High
48	Singh	Digital Transformation and Product Innovation Across Markets	2022	India	Emerging	Digital	High	Technology	Developed	High
49	Abdullah	Product Strategy in Emerging Egyptian Markets	2022	Egypt	Emerging	Strategy	Low – Medium	Industrial	Mixed	Low
50	Hassan	Innovation in product strategy in the UAE market	2023	UAE	Developed	Innovation	Medium – High	Technology	Developed	High

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Pricing Strategy

No	Author(s)	Study Title	Year	Country	Market Type	Pricing Strategy	Digitalization Level	Sector Type	Results Direction
1	Monroe	Pricing: Making Profitable Decisions	2003	USA	Developed	Value-based	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
2	Nagle & Holden	Strategy and Tactics of Pricing	2002	USA	Developed	Premium	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
3	Tellis	The Price Elasticity of Selective Demand	1988	USA	Developed	Elasticity	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
4	Rao & Kartono	Pricing Strategies in Emerging Markets	2009	India	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
5	Hinterhuber	Value-based Pricing	2008	Germany	Developed	Value-based	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
6	Liozu	Pricing Capabilities and Firm Performance	2015	USA	Developed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed

7	Ingenbleek	Pricing Strategy in Developing Markets	2007	Netherlands	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
8	Kumar et al.	Pricing Strategy in Global Markets	2018	India	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
9	Simon	Pricing Opportunities in Emerging Markets	2015	Germany	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
10	Cavusgil	International Pricing Strategy	1996	Turkey	Emerging	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
11	Samiee	Pricing in Global Markets	1987	USA	Developed	Standardization	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
12	Myers	Pricing Strategy Determinants	1997	USA	Developed	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
13	Tan & Sousa	Export Pricing Strategy Fit	2013	China	Emerging	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
14	Navarro	Export Pricing and Strategy	2010	Spain	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
15	Lages	Export Pricing and Performance	2008	Portugal	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
16	Zhou	Pricing Strategy in China	2017	China	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
17	Morgan	Pricing Capabilities	2019	UK	Developed	Value-based	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
18	Hult	Strategic Pricing Alignment	2017	USA	Developed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
19	Sheth	Pricing in Emerging Markets	2020	India	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
20	Paul	International Pricing Strategy Review	2020	Spain	Mixed	Review	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
21	Ozturk	Digital Pricing Strategy	2020	Turkey	Developed	Dynamic	High	Technological	Technology-driven (Mixed)
22	Singh	Pricing and Digital Transformation	2022	India	Emerging	Dynamic	High	Technological	Technology-driven (Mixed)
23	Katsikeas	Pricing Strategy Implementation	2020	UK	Developed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
24	Boso	Pricing Innovation in Africa	2019	Ghana	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
25	Jean & Kim	Export Pricing Strategy Asia	2020	South Korea	Emerging	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
26	Ghuri	Global Pricing Strategy	2021	Netherlands	Mixed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
27	Hadikhani	Pricing in Internationalization	2021	Sweden	Mixed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
28	Al-Omari	Pricing Strategy Jordan Market	2020	Jordan	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
29	Al-Otaibi	Pricing Strategy Saudi Market	2021	Saudi Arabia	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
30	Ben Ali	Pricing Strategy Algeria	2019	Algeria	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
31	Abdullah	Pricing Strategy Egypt	2022	Egypt	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets

32	Hassan	Pricing UAE Market	2023	UAE	Developed	Premium	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
33	Ghemawat	Global Pricing Differences	2007	India	Developed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
34	Yip	Global Strategy and Pricing	2003	UK	Developed	Standardization	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
35	Peng	Strategy and Pricing Asia	2008	China	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
36	Luo	Pricing Strategy China	2001	China	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
37	Meyer	Pricing in Transition Economies	2005	Vietnam	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
38	Cadogan	Export Pricing Behavior	2009	UK	Developed	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
39	Griffith	Pricing Strategy and Performance	2003	USA	Developed	Strategic	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
40	Kotler	Marketing Management Pricing Chapter	2016	USA	Developed	General	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
41	Armstrong	Pricing Strategy Fundamentals	2017	USA	Developed	General	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
42	Nagle	B2B Pricing Strategy	2011	USA	Developed	Value-based	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
43	Dolan	Power Pricing	1998	USA	Developed	Premium	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
44	Hinterhuber	Industrial Pricing	2016	Germany	Developed	Value-based	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
45	Rao	Pricing Models Emerging Markets	2010	India	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
46	Kumar	Pricing Strategy Emerging Firms	2021	India	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
47	Ozer	Pricing Strategy Technology Markets	2012	USA	Developed	Dynamic	High	Technological	Technology-driven (Mixed)
48	Chen	Dynamic Pricing China	2015	China	Emerging	Dynamic	High	Technological	Technology-driven (Mixed)
49	Li	Pricing Strategy Digital Platforms	2022	China	Emerging	Dynamic	High	Technological	Technology-driven (Mixed)
50	Al-Farisi	Pricing Strategy in Morocco Market	2022	Morocco	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
51	Al-Khalifa	Pricing Strategy in Bahrain	2021	Bahrain	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
52	Al-Sabah	Pricing Strategy in Kuwait	2020	Kuwait	Developed	Premium	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
53	Al-Thani	Pricing Strategy in Qatar	2023	Qatar	Developed	Premium	Medium-High	Service	Favors Developed Markets
54	Ben Youssef	Pricing Strategy in Tunisia	2019	Tunisia	Emerging	Competitive	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
55	Al-Harthy	Pricing Strategy in Oman	2022	Oman	Emerging	Penetration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Distribution Strategy

No.	Author(s)	Study Title	Year	Country	Market Type	Sector	Distribution Strategy	Digitalization Level	Sector Type	Results Direction
1	Coughlan et al.	Marketing Channels	2006	USA	Developed	Industrial	Integrated	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
2	Rosenbloom	Marketing Channels	2013	USA	Developed	Service	Multi-channel	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
3	Anderson & Coughlan	International Market Entry via Channels	1987	USA	Developed	Industrial	Direct/Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
4	Klein et al.	Channel Integration in International Markets	1990	USA	Developed	Industrial	Integrated	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
5	Bello & Gilliland	Export Channel Performance	1997	USA	Developed	Industrial	Control-based	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
6	Heide & John	Buyer-Seller Relationships	1990	USA	Developed	Industrial	Relational	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
7	John & Weitz	Forward Integration	1988	USA	Developed	Industrial	Integration	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
8	Frazier	Channel Behavior	1999	USA	Developed	Industrial	Relational	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
9	Ganesan	Long-term Orientation	1994	USA	Developed	Industrial	Relational	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
10	Solberg & Durrieu	Export Channel Strategy	2006	France	Developed	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
11	Klein & Roth	Export Channel Structure	1993	Canada	Developed	Industrial	Direct	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
12	Chen et al.	Channel Selection in China	2005	China	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
13	Brouthers	Entry Mode & Channels	2002	Netherlands	Developed	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
14	Peng	Strategy in Asia	2008	China	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
15	Luo	Market Entry China	2001	China	Emerging	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
16	Meyer	Transition Economies	2005	Vietnam	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
17	Cadogan	Export Market Orientation	2002	UK	Developed	Service	Multi-channel	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
18	Griffith	International Channels	2003	USA	Developed	Service	Integrated	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
19	Morgan	Marketing Capabilities	2012	UK	Developed	Service	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
20	Hult	Global Strategy	2011	USA	Developed	Industrial	Integrated	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
21	Katsikeas	International Marketing	2016	UK	Developed	Service	Multi-channel	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
22	Leonidou	Export Channels	2010	Greece	Developed	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
23	Samiee	Global Distribution	1998	USA	Developed	Industrial	Standardized	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
24	Cavusgil	International Distribution	1998	Turkey	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
25	Sousa	Export Performance	2008	Portugal	Emerging	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed

26	Tan & Sousa	Export Strategy	2011	China	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
27	Navarro	Export Channels	2010	Spain	Developed	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
28	Zhou	China Distribution Strategy	2007	China	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
29	Jean & Kim	Asia Channels	2015	South Korea	Developed	Technological	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
30	Ghuri	Global Distribution	2020	Netherlands	Mixed	Industrial	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
31	Hadjikhani	Internationalization Channels	2021	Sweden	Mixed	Industrial	Relational	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed
32	Al-Omari	Jordan Distribution Strategy	2020	Jordan	Emerging	Service	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
33	Al-Otaibi	Saudi Distribution Strategy	2021	Saudi Arabia	Emerging	Industrial	Direct	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
34	Ben Ali	Algeria Distribution	2019	Algeria	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
35	Abdullah	Egypt Distribution	2022	Egypt	Emerging	Service	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
36	Hassan	UAE Distribution	2023	UAE	Developed	Service	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
37	Al-Farisi	Morocco Distribution	2022	Morocco	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
38	Al-Khalifa	Bahrain Distribution	2021	Bahrain	Emerging	Service	Direct	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
39	Al-Sabah	Kuwait Distribution	2020	Kuwait	Developed	Service	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
40	Al-Thani	Qatar Distribution	2023	Qatar	Developed	Technological	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
41	Ben Youssef	Tunisia Distribution	2019	Tunisia	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
42	Al-Harthy	Oman Distribution	2022	Oman	Emerging	Industrial	Direct	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
43	Neslin	Omnichannel Strategy	2014	USA	Developed	Technological	Omnichannel	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
44	Verhoef	Customer Journey Channels	2015	Netherlands	Developed	Service	Omnichannel	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
45	Brynjolfsson	Digital Channels	2013	USA	Developed	Technological	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
46	Chaffey	Digital Marketing Channels	2019	UK	Developed	Technological	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
47	Kumar	Emerging Market Channels	2018	India	Emerging	Industrial	Indirect	Low-Medium	Industrial	Favors Emerging Markets
48	Sheth	Emerging Markets Distribution	2020	India	Emerging	Service	Hybrid	Medium-High	Service	Mixed
49	Paul	International Channels Review	2020	Spain	Mixed	Service	Review	Low-Medium	Industrial	Mixed

50	Ozturk	Digital Channels Turkey	2020	Turkey	Emerging	Technological	Digital	High	Technological	Favors Developed Markets
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Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Promotion Strategy

No.	Author(s)	Study Title	Year	Country	Market Type	Sector	Promotion Strategy	Digitalization Level	Results Direction
1	Elinder	How International Can Advertising Be? A European Viewpoint	1965	Sweden	Developed	Consumer	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
2	Buzzell	Can You Standardize Multinational Marketing?	1968	USA	Developed	General	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
3	Ryans	Advertising Standardization in International Markets	1969	USA	Developed	Consumer	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
4	Fatt	The Danger of Local International Advertising	1970	USA	Developed	Consumer	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
5	Sorenson & Wiechmann	How Multinationals View Marketing Standardization	1975	USA	Developed	General	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
6	Levitt	The Globalization of Markets	1983	USA	Developed	General	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
7	Harvey	The International Advertising Standardization Debate	1993	USA	Developed	Consumer	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
8	Papavassiliou & Stathakopoulos	Standardization versus Adaptation of International Advertising Strategies	1997	Greece	Developed	Consumer	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
9	Laroche et al.	The Influence of Culture on Prototypical Advertising Appeals	2001	Canada	Developed	Consumer	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
10	Backhaus, van Doorn & Wilken	The Impact of Cultural Values on Advertising Standardization	2001	Germany	Developed	Consumer	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
11	Kanso & Nelson	International Advertising Strategies of Multinational Firms	2002	USA	Developed	General	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
12	Theodosiou & Leonidou	Standardization versus Adaptation of International Marketing Strategy	2003	Greece	Developed	General	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
13	Taylor & Okazaki	Who Standardizes Advertising More Frequently?	2006	USA	Developed	Consumer	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
14	Katsikeas, Samiee & Theodosiou	Strategy Fit and Performance Consequences of International Marketing Standardization	2006	UK	Developed	General	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
15	Vrontis & Thrassou	Adaption vs. Standardisation in International Marketing	2007	Cyprus	Developed	General	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
16	Kitchen, Kim & Schultz	Integrated Marketing Communications	2008	UK	Developed	General	Integrated Marketing Communications	Medium-High	Mixed

17	Keller	Unlocking the Power of Integrated Marketing Communications	2009	USA	Developed	General	Integrated Marketing Communications	Medium-High	Mixed
18	Okazaki, Mueller & Taylor	Global Consumer Culture Positioning in Advertising	2010	Japan	Developed	Consumer	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
19	Hennig-Thurau et al.	The Impact of New Media on Customer Relationships	2010	Germany	Developed	Service	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
20	Schmid & Kotulla	50 Years of Research on International Standardization and Adaptation	2011	Germany	Developed	General	Standardization	Low-Medium	Mixed
21	Muntinga, Moorman & Smit	Introducing COBRAs	2011	Netherlands	Developed	Consumer	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
22	De Vries, Gensler & Leeflang	Popularity of Brand Posts on Brand Fan Pages	2012	Netherlands	Developed	Technological	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
23	Bruhn, Schoenmueller & Schäfer	Are Social Media Replacing Traditional Media?	2012	Germany	Developed	Service	Integrated Marketing Communications	Medium-High	Mixed
24	Jin, Laroche & Ang	From Rich Media to Social Media: Advertising Adaptation	2013	Canada	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
25	Cvijikj & Michahelles	Online Engagement Factors on Facebook Brand Pages	2013	Germany	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
26	Boso et al.	Market Orientation, Promotion Adaptation and Export Performance	2013	Ghana	Emerging	Industrial	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
27	Yadav & Pavlou	Marketing in Computer-Mediated Environments	2014	USA	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
28	Tiago & Veríssimo	Digital Marketing and Social Media	2014	Portugal	Developed	Service	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
29	Ashley & Tuten	Creative Strategies in Social Media Marketing	2015	USA	Developed	Technological	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
30	Stephen	The Role of Digital and Social Media Marketing in Consumer Behavior	2016	USA	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
31	Lamberton & Stephen	A Thematic Exploration of Digital, Social Media, and Mobile Marketing	2016	USA	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets

32	Kumar et al.	From Social to Sale: The Effects of Firm-Generated Content	2016	USA	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
33	Mpinganjira	Consumer Attitudes Toward Social Media Marketing in Emerging Economies	2016	South Africa	Emerging	Consumer	Promotion Strategy	Low-Medium	Mixed
34	Zhou, Wu & Luo	International Marketing in Emerging Markets	2017	China	Emerging	General	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
35	Voorveld et al.	Engagement with Social Media and Social Media Advertising	2018	Netherlands	Developed	Consumer	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
36	Bala & Verma	A Critical Review of Digital Marketing	2018	India	Emerging	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
37	Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick	Digital Marketing	2019	UK	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
38	Ben Ali	Sales Promotion Strategy in the Algerian Market	2019	Algeria	Emerging	Consumer	Sales Promotion	Low-Medium	Favors Emerging Markets
39	Mora Cortez & Johnston	The Future of B2B Marketing Communications	2020	USA	Developed	Industrial	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
40	Dastane	Digital Marketing: A Framework in Emerging Markets	2020	Malaysia	Emerging	Service	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
41	Jean & Kim	Export Promotion Adaptation in Asian Markets	2020	South Korea	Developed	Industrial	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
42	Sheth	New Areas of Research in Marketing Strategy, Consumer Behavior, and Digital Promotion	2020	India	Emerging	General	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
43	Al-Omari	Promotion Strategy Adaptation in the Jordanian Market	2020	Jordan	Emerging	Service	Adaptation	Low-Medium	Mixed
44	Dwivedi et al.	Setting the Future of Digital and Social Media Marketing Research	2021	UK	Developed	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
45	Al-Otaibi	Digital Promotion Strategy in the Saudi Market	2021	Saudi Arabia	Emerging	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
46	Al-Khalifa	Integrated Promotional Communications in Bahrain	2021	Bahrain	Developed	Service	Integrated Marketing Communications	Medium-High	Mixed
47	Singh et al.	Digital Promotion and Consumer Engagement in Emerging Markets	2022	India	Emerging	Technological	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets

48	Abdullah	The Role of Digital Promotion in Egyptian Markets	2022	Egypt	Emerging	Service	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets
49	Al-Harthy	Promotional Strategy and Consumer Response in Oman	2022	Oman	Emerging	Service	Hybrid Promotion	Medium-High	Mixed
50	Hassan	Integrated Promotion and Brand Communication in the UAE	2023	UAE	Developed	Service	Integrated Marketing Communications	Medium-High	Mixed
51	Ben Youssef	Digital and Retail Promotion in Morocco	2023	Morocco	Emerging	Consumer	Digital Promotion	High	Favors Developed Markets