

## Strategic Vigilance in Sports Clubs: Insights and Practices

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### Abstract

*This study explores the reality of strategic vigilance practices in sports clubs in Oman. A questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 162 participants which included members of boards of directors, club managers, sports activity directors, coaches, and players in Oman. Institutions show significant gaps in competitor analysis and communication with authorities, leading to a shortage of technological expertise that negatively impacts service promotion. Sports institutions prioritize continuous service development to retain existing clients and attract new ones. The study revealed a need to promote a culture of strategic vigilance among all employees in sports institutions in Oman. It emphasizes the necessity of engaging marketing specialists to address weaknesses within the institutions and contribute to the development of marketing vigilance.*

**Keywords:** *Strategic Vigilance, Sports Clubs, Insights.*

### Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving environment, traditional strategic planning alone is insufficient for anticipating future developments. The swift progress of information technology has resulted in overlapping interests among sports clubs, complicating the reliance on strategic plans. Long-term objectives often face unexpected challenges, emphasizing the need for adaptability in planning.

Strategic awareness plays a vital role in detecting subtle signals and shifts through systematic data collection and analysis. This proactive approach grants organizations a competitive edge by enabling them to capitalize on opportunities and address potential threats (Salmi, 2019).

As a dynamic information system, strategic awareness allows organizations to continuously monitor their surroundings, thereby enhancing decision-making and preserving a robust competitive position in an ever-changing landscape (Mariam, 2017; Najla, 2018).

Strategic awareness is essential for the effective management of sports clubs, as it enables them to assess the internal and external factors influencing their objectives. Evidence indicates that clubs that embrace strategic awareness are better equipped to adapt to market fluctuations and competitive pressures, leading to improved performance (Klein & Garcia, 2020).

Furthermore, strategic awareness extends beyond traditional planning; it allows clubs to respond quickly to emerging trends in the sports industry. By incorporating innovation into their strategic frameworks, clubs can significantly enhance the experiences of both players and fans, thereby strengthening their competitive advantage (Sullivan & Johnson, 2021). However, many clubs face challenges, including a limited recognition of the importance of strategic awareness and insufficient resources, which hinder effective implementation (Martinez & Thompson, 2019).

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Strategic awareness is essential for improving the performance of sports clubs in Oman and achieving long-term goals. Clubs are increasingly recognizing the need to evaluate internal strengths and external market conditions, enabling them to adapt strategies to the changing sports landscape (Al-Sharqi & Al-Hinai, 2022).

Implementing strategic awareness involves creating frameworks that integrate performance metrics and stakeholder feedback (Mansoor et al., 2024). Engaging fans, players, and sponsors helps clubs gather insights that guide decision-making, fostering transparency and community loyalty (Al-Harthy & Al-Mamari, 2023).

Moreover, the adoption of technology and data analytics is becoming more common. Utilizing data-driven insights allows clubs to identify trends and enhance both decision-making and the experiences of players and fans (Al-Maawali & Al-Farsi, 2021).

Competitive advantage is understood as a systematic approach to recognizing the activities that provide an organization with superior positioning compared to its competitors, leading to increased beneficiary satisfaction (Al-Had, 2015). Competitive intelligence complements this by systematically gathering and analyzing data about current and potential competitors, allowing organizations to anticipate behaviors and adapt accordingly (Said, Ahmed, 2010).

The adoption of strategic awareness is a key success factor in today's business landscape. Organizations that prioritize this awareness are proactive, continuously seeking innovation in production and marketing strategies rather than merely reacting to external events (Hanan Al-Sharif, 2018). This strategic function enables organizations to swiftly respond to market dynamics, enhancing their overall effectiveness (Salmi, Nasreen, 2019).

Ultimately, for sports clubs in Oman to sustain their competitive edge and achieve long-term goals, they must develop practical solutions that deepen their understanding of external influences and establish mechanisms for continuous monitoring and forecasting. This proactive approach to strategic awareness is essential for achieving a strong competitive position and is the foundation of this research.

## Study Objectives

The practice of strategic awareness in sports clubs in Oman can be examined through the following dimensions: competitive awareness, marketing awareness, technological awareness, and environmental awareness.

### *Study Questions*

What is the reality of strategic awareness practices in sports clubs in Oman?

## Method

The researchers employed a descriptive survey method suitable for the nature of the study.

### The Population and Sample of the Study

The population includes board members, club managers, coaches, and players in the Sultanate of Oman. A random sampling method was used, and the study sample consisted of 162 members, including board members, coaches, and players in the Sultanate of Oman.

**Table.** Distribution of the Research Sample According to its Variables

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>LEVELS</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>GENDER</b>	<i>Male</i>	88	54.32
	<i>Female</i>	74	46.68

<b>TOTAL</b>			162	100.0
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	<i>experience</i>	> 5	62	38.27
		5-10	47	29.01
		< 10	53	32.72
<b>TOTAL</b>			162	100.0
<b>AGE</b>		20-25	45	27.78
		26-29	34	20.99
		30-35	41	25.31
		35 and older	42	25.92
<b>TOTAL</b>			162	100.0

### Data Collection Instruments

A questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection instrument.

### Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire

First: Validity of the Instrument: The validity was assessed using two methods

Content Validity: The researchers utilized expert judgment to evaluate the appropriateness of the dimensions and items.

Internal Consistency Validity: This was established by calculating the correlation coefficients between individual items and the total score of the dimension to which they belong (i.e., between the item score and the total score of items within the same dimension).

**Table 2.** Spearman Correlation Coefficient Between the Statements of the Questionnaire  
N = 14

<i>First</i>			<i>Second</i>			<i>Third</i>					
<i>M</i>	<i>Spearman</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Spearman</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Spearman</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Spearman</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	**0.806	0.00	10	**0.845	0.00	16	**0.821	0.00	22	**0.879	0.00
2	**0.905	0.00	11	**0.661	0.00	17	**0.895	0.00	23	**0.888	0.00
3	**0.902	0.00	12	**0.994	0.00	18	**0.923	0.00	24	**0.893	0.00
4	**0.870	0.00	13	**0.974	0.00	19	**0.947	0.00	25	**0.782	0.00
5	**0.877	0.00	14	**0.922	0.00	20	**0.793	0.00	26	**0.861	0.00
6	**0.835	0.00	15	**0.968	0.00	21	**0.882	0.00	27	**0.835	0.00
7	**0.845	0.00							28	**0.716	0.00
8	**0.858	0.00							29	**0.828	0.00
9	**0.914	0.00									

Table (2) shows a rise in the values of correlation coefficients, as the value of the correlation coefficient ranged from (0.661 to 0.947) and these values are significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms that all the statements of each axis are honest and measure what they were set for.

Second: Reliability: Reliability was established - Questionnaire re-administration method: The questionnaire was re-administered after a period of (15 days) to a sample of (15) participants randomly selected from the original population and outside the research sample

**Table 3.** Test-Retest Reliability n = 14

<i>Axis</i>	<i>(ICC)</i>	<i>95%</i>	<i>Kappa</i>	<i>sig</i>
<i>First</i>	0.987	0.927 – 0.992	0.852	0.000

<i>Second</i>	0.991	0.973 – 0.997	0.786	0.000
<i>Third</i>	0.990	0.942 – 0.993	0.697	0.000
<i>Fourth</i>	0.995	0.973 – 0.997	0.777	0.000

It is evident from the preceding table that there are no significant differences, and the reliability coefficient for the first dimension is 0.987, for the second dimension 0.991, for the third dimension 0.990, and for the fourth dimension 0.995. Additionally, the Cohen's kappa coefficient for reliability was 0.852 for the first dimension, 0.786 for the second dimension, 0.697 for the third dimension, and 0.777 for the fourth.

### *Implementation of the Study*

The questionnaire was administered to an exploratory sample of 15 respondents from March 5 to March 20, 2023. Following this, it was implemented with the primary research sample consisting of 162 individuals from March 25 to May 15, 2023.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 4.** Total Chi-Square and Percentages for First Dimension (N = 162)

<i>N</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total Chi-Square Value</i>	<i>sig</i>
<b>1</b>	91	56.17	53	32.72	18	11.11	49.37	P<0.00
<b>2</b>	68	41.98	80	49.38	14	8.64	45.78	P<0.00
<b>3</b>	55	33.95	74	45.68	33	20.37	15.59	P<0.00
<b>4</b>	70	43.21	47	29.01	45	27.78	22.24	P<0.00
<b>5</b>	56	34.57	49	30.25	57	35.19	17.47	P<0.00
<b>6</b>	51	31.48	68	41.98	43	26.54	6.04	P<0.00
<b>7</b>	72	44.44	56	34.57	34	20.99	13.48	P<0.00
<b>8</b>	81	50.00	53	32.72	28	17.28	26.04	P<0.00
<b>9</b>	54	33.33	54	33.33	54	33.33	12.58	P<0.00

It was evident that all statements were highly significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level. The researchers highlight the importance of competitive vigilance in adapting to rapid global changes in the sports sector to achieve excellence. A lack of distinguishing features among sports institutions in the Sultanate negatively impacts their competitive advantage. Competitive vigilance is essential for management and serves as a key step toward strategic vigilance, ultimately supporting sports clubs commercially.

This finding contrasts with studies by Shaltout (2020), Ibrahim (2022), Mokhtar (2021), Al-Otaibi, T., & Al-Qahtani, G (2015), which indicate high engagement in this area. Balasel (2018) describes competitive vigilance as the process of identifying current, potential, and new competitors while focusing on the competitive environment. This aligns with findings from Farag (2021), Attia (2017), Salah Al-Din (2020), Al-Kilani, Al-Moussawi, and Al-Jadrawi (2018) which reveal weaknesses in competitive vigilance, including challenges in identifying competitors' distribution channels and a lack of studies on their anticipated movements and threats.

Furthermore, competitive vigilance is critical for organizations aiming to thrive in dynamic environments (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Leveraging technology for market analysis can enhance this vigilance by providing real-time data on competitors (Chaffey, 2019). Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous learning within sports institutions significantly boosts competitive vigilance, enabling them to respond effectively to external challenges (Senge, 2006).

**Table 5.** Total Chi-Square and Percentages for Second Dimension (N = 162)

<i>N</i>	<i>AGREE</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>NEUTRAL</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>DISAGREE</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>TOTAL CHI-SQUARE VALUE</i>	<i>SIG</i>
<b>1</b>	56	34.57	71	43.83	35	21.60	12.11	P<0.00
<b>2</b>	63	38.89	64	39.51	35	21.60	10.04	P<0.00
<b>3</b>	50	30.86	57	35.19	55	33.95	9.48	P<0.00
<b>4</b>	62	38.27	72	44.44	28	17.28	19.70	P<0.00
<b>5</b>	70	43.21	53	32.72	39	24.07	8.93	P<0.00
<b>6</b>	96	59.26	20	12.35	46	28.40	55.26	P<0.00

It was evident that all statements were highly significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level. This significance can be attributed to the weak promotion and presentation of services to clients within sports institutions, coupled with a lack of technology specialists and insufficient training on utilizing technology to enhance vigilance in response to rapid market changes. Furthermore, ineffective communication with relevant authorities limits these institutions' awareness of new activities at both global and local levels.

These findings contrast with the results of Ibrahim (2022), Shaltout (2020), Mokhtar (2021), and Mohideen (2021), which indicate a substantial reliance on technology for ongoing client communication. However, the findings align with those of Farag (2021), Salah El-Din (2020), Ibrahim, A., & Dawood, F. (2017), and Ibrahim (2021), highlighting weaknesses in technological vigilance and the overall use of technology in sports institutions. This also aligns with Balasel (2018), who emphasizes the lack of encouragement and motivation for employees and underscores the importance of information as a strategic resource.

The integration of technology in sports organizations is crucial for enhancing service quality and client engagement (Hsu & Tsai, 2014). However, many institutions struggle due to inadequate staff training and technological expertise, which hinder their adaptability to market changes. Klein (2017) emphasizes that without proper training programs, sports organizations may struggle to maintain a competitive edge, ultimately affecting their overall performance.

**Table 6.** Total Chi-Square and Percentages for Third Dimension (N = 162)

<i>N</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total Chi-Square Value</i>	<i>sig</i>
<b>1</b>	40	24.69	77	47.53	45	27.78	14.93	P<0.00
<b>2</b>	53	32.72	64	39.51	45	27.78	11.24	P<0.00
<b>3</b>	48	29.63	60	37.04	54	33.33	13.33	P<0.00
<b>4</b>	61	37.65	61	37.65	40	24.69	15.55	P<0.00
<b>5</b>	39	24.07	84	51.85	39	24.07	25.00	P<0.00
<b>6</b>	36	22.22	90	55.56	36	22.22	36.00	P<0.00

It was evident that all statements were highly significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level. This can be attributed to the relatively limited focus of sports institutions on the services provided, resulting in insufficient monitoring of members' and visitors' needs, which is crucial for strengthening loyalty and benefiting the club. Sports

institutions must invest greater effort in retaining current members and increasing their numbers by developing marketing plans that align with changing needs and aspirations.

These findings contrast with those of Ibrahim (2022), Shaltout (2020), Mokhtar (2021), Mahmoud (2018), Attia (2017), and Mohideen (2021), which reported a high emphasis on marketing vigilance. Balasel (2018) emphasizes that marketing vigilance involves tracking evolving customer needs while fostering long-term relationships. This aligns with findings from Salah El-Din (2020) and Ibrahim (2021), indicating that some level of marketing vigilance is achieved in practice.

However, the results also reflect weaknesses in the institution's management regarding the monitoring and analysis of competitors' marketing activities. As highlighted by Al-Kilani, Al-Mousawi, and Al-Jidrawi (2018), there is a lack of sufficient attention to the competitive landscape.

**Table 7.** Total Chi-Square and Percentages for Fourth Dimension (N = 162)

<i>N</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total Chi-Square Value</i>	<i>sig</i>
<b>1</b>	46	28.40	62	38.27	54	33.33	12.37	P<0.00
<b>2</b>	56	34.57	80	49.38	26	16.05	27.11	P<0.00
<b>3</b>	73	45.06	46	28.40	43	26.54	10.11	P<0.00
<b>4</b>	57	35.19	63	38.89	42	25.93	14.33	P<0.00
<b>5</b>	63	38.89	59	36.42	40	24.69	12.22	P<0.00
<b>6</b>	60	37.04	67	41.36	35	21.60	10.48	P<0.00

It was evident that all statements were highly significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level. This can be attributed to the significance of both the internal and external environments of sports institutions, highlighting the importance of environmental vigilance in monitoring ongoing events at both local and global levels, which directly impact these organizations' strategies. Additionally, there is a pressing need for clubs to focus more on organizing sports conferences and seminars.

These findings contrast with those of Ibrahim (2022), Shaltout (2020), Mokhtar (2021), Al-Kilani, Al-Mousawi, and Balasel (2018), which indicate that management is fully aware of continuous environmental changes in the markets and recognizes the necessity of adapting appropriate strategies. In alignment with Ibrahim (2021), some degree of environmental vigilance has been realized in practice. However, studies by Farag (2021), Awabed and Talibah (2019), and Mahmoud (2018) reveal weaknesses in environmental vigilance due to the lack of a specialized entity to monitor, address, and enhance strengths. This is consistent with the findings of Salah El-Din (2020) and Abbas & Dawood (2018), which highlight the absence of ongoing oversight regarding demographic statistics and the challenges they present, ultimately leading to a deficiency in environmental vigilance and its impacts.

## Conclusions

Competitive vigilance is a fundamental pillar and an essential step toward achieving strategic vigilance. Despite its importance, there is a notable weakness among institutions in studying competitive vigilance, identifying distribution channels, and assessing anticipated movements and threats from competitors.

The lack of effective communication between sports institutions and relevant authorities, both globally and locally, results in a deficiency in technological specialists, which in turn weakens the promotion and presentation of services to clients.

Sports institutions aim to retain current visitors and increase future clients through continuous development and enhancement of the services offered.

The internal and external environments surrounding a sports institution significantly impact environmental vigilance, which, in turn, affects the strategies the institution must adopt and adapt to.

## Recommendations

Conduct further studies and research focusing on strategic vigilance within sports institutions in Oman.

Promote a culture of strategic vigilance among all employees in sports institutions in Oman and adopt it as an organizational culture while encouraging participation.

Allocate necessary resources to strengthen the strategic vigilance system in Oman.

Engage marketing specialists to address weaknesses and contribute to the development of marketing vigilance.

Establish committees within sports institutions dedicated to the field of strategic vigilance.

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