

## Marketing Strategic Drift: Four Causes and Solutions

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### Abstract:

**Purpose:** The aim of this study is to explore key causes of marketing strategic drift and empirically testing the effects of these causes on marketing strategic drift. **Methodology:** A quantitative research design was used to achieve the purpose of this study through collecting data from a sample consisting of marketing managers in service enterprises. The key causes of marketing strategic drift were identified based on a direct review of the literature. **Findings:** Four key causes of marketing strategic drift were induced from the literature; customer, cognition, innovation, and change orientation. Testing the effects of these four independent variables using structural equation modeling by SmartPLS software pointed out that these variables have significant and negative effects on marketing strategic drift. **Value:** Service enterprises can avoid marketing strategic drift through finding solutions for customer, cognition, innovation, and change-driven causes of marketing strategic drift, i.e. becoming customer, cognition, innovation, and change-oriented enterprises.

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**Keywords:** Marketing strategic drift, customer orientation, cognition orientation, innovation orientation, change orientation.

## 1. Introduction

The changing nature of business environments gives rise to several problematic situations such as strategic drift in which organizations lose control and deviate from their intended directions. Numerous prior works enriched the literature through highlighting the importance of strategic drift. These works (e.g. Johnson et al., 2005; Soteriades and Avgeli, 2007; Dwyer and Edwards, 2009; Danciu, 2010; Dwyer et al., 2012; Zafirova, 2014; Sammut-Bonnic, 2014; Maosa, 2015; Gachanja et al., 2022; Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024) called organizations to be familiar with the symptoms and causes of strategic drift and capable to cope with change in their business environments. However, identifying the exact reasons for strategic drift is a challenging task (Dwyer and Edwards, 2009).

In 1988, G. Johnson (cited in Zafirova, 2014) notifies the importance of strategic drift as a strategy-related failure. It is a case in which an organization's strategy loses its effect (Danciu, 2010) and can do nothing to fit change in the business environment (Soteriades and Avgeli, 2007; Dwyer and Edwards, 2009; Gachanja et al., 2022; Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024). Hence, determining the causes of strategic drift, particularly in the marketing context, is very crucial to avoid such a phenomenon see table 1. Reviewing the literature to catch these causes revealed four key causes of marketing strategic drift fall under ignoring customers, decision-making cognitive maps, innovation, and change-driven organizational crises. Yet, few empirical studies were conducted to identify the effects of these causes.

Table 1. literature review summary of strategic drift

Author (s)	Phenomena	Strategic drift concepts	Methodology	Main results
Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024	Cognitive marketing and strategic drift: An exploration of cognitive bias in marketing decision-making	The consequences of strategic drift in marketing are substantial. Misaligned messaging, wasted resources, diminished customer engagement, and a decline in overall marketing effectiveness are just a few of the outcomes that can result from cognitive bias-induced decision-making errors	literature review	The potential consequences of strategic drift in marketing, such as misaligned messaging, diminished customer engagement, and suboptimal performance
Gachanja et al., 2022	Strategic drift and firm performance: A review of literature	Determinants of strategic drift: leadership complacency, marketing myopia, logical incrementalism and organizational commitment	literature review	There are relationships between strategic drift and the outcomes of firm performance,
Maosa, 2015	Determinants of strategic drift and their effect on performance	the determinants of strategic drift: strategic planning, leadership, responsiveness to change, culture, organizational	Applied methodology	the process of strategic planning should be consultative to ensure that structures align with strategy. the leadership and organization structure should be flexible to

		climate, innovation and communication.		facilitate prompt responses to environmental changes including political, technological, economic and natural factors
Zafirova, 2014	Strategic drift and strategic crisis management of organization	Reasons of strategic drift: changes in the expectations and the necessities of the consumers, changes in the structure of the market and the competition, changes in the micro-environment, and changes in the organizational strategies.	Analysis of theoretical research and practice	The organization's "strategic drift" leads to serious organizational crisis which first form that strategic crisis.
Dwyer and Edwards, 2009	Tourism products and service innovation to avoid strategic drift	The standard response of tourism organizations to changes in the remote environment can be characterized as 'strategic incrementalism'	literature review	There are seven areas of importance on which managers can focus to assist organization to avoid strategic drift: sustainable yield, customers, proactively adopting new technology, innovative culture, risk management, collaboration, and education and training

Therefore, this study was carried out to test the effects of customer orientation, cognition orientation, innovation orientation, and change orientation on marketing strategic drift from marketing managers' perspectives. We chose marketing managers as the respondents, rather than other managers of institutions because the marketing managers, are concerned with implementing strategic drift and making marketing decisions related to this strategy.. Its contribution to literature exists in drawing researchers and marketing practitioners' attention to principal causes of marketing strategic drift and their related solutions.

## 1. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 1.1 Strategic drift

Strategic drift (SD) has been taken as a failure of existing organization's strategy to address the organization's competitive situation (Johnson et al., 2005), due to contradiction between changes in an organization's strategy and changes in its external environment (Johnson, 1988 cited in Zafirova, 2014, P.490), hence, SD refers to a situation arises when an organization develop its strategy not in step with the dynamics of the changing environment (Zafirova, 2014). Such a phenomenon results in an organization failure to recognize and react to the changes in its business environment as a result of its declining competitive actions (Sammur-Bonnic, 2014). Basically, SD has been deemed as a deviation of marketing strategy from its direction (Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024) when an organization working in or facing a changing business

environment and gradually loses touch with its environment, therefore, misses its ability to respond to change (Gachanja et al., 2022). Based on these definitions, marketing strategic drift (MSD) can be defined as a state in which a marketing strategy becomes out-of-date due to day-by-day decline in an organization's competitiveness and hence responsiveness to changes in its business environment. Such a definition indicates that the marketing strategy is already obsolete and cannot match the change-driven market requirements and customer preferences.

## **1.2 Causes of strategic drift**

SD is a phenomenon in which a marketing strategy loses its impact (Danciu, 2010) due to numerous factors. Soteriades and Avgeli (2007) indicated that SD is a result of an organization failure to observe and react to the changing external environment. Similarly, Dwyer et al. (2012) argued that SD happens once an organization's strategy increasingly moves away from diagnosing and addressing the changes in the external business environment. Despite the fact that many organizations endure making incremental improvement, but it is not adequate to keep with the environment's speedy rate of change (Gachanja et al., 2022). Reviewing the literature to explore the causes of SD revealed various sets of such causes.

Dwyer and Edwards (2009) summarized these causes under resistance to change as top management overlooking the organization's directions, implementing inappropriate strategies, depending on aspects such as price as a basis of competition instead of adding value to its customers, as well as paying no attention to market and customer requirements. According to Danciu (2010), SD occurs due to four types of changes: changes in customer needs and expectations, changes in the organization's strategies, changes in market structure and competition, and changes in the organization's macro environment. Sammut-Bonnic (2014) indicated that homogenization, i.e. homogenous mind set which impedes the organization's ability to recognize and adapt to the external changes in economy, technology, society, and regulatory environments, as well as resistance to change through adopting a defensive strategy concerned with reducing the risk of loss and costs to remain competitive, and increasing the chance of gaining a competitive advantage, in addition to lack of focus on the requirements of the external environment, and performance decline in terms of revenues, market share, profitability, and cash flow, as four key symptoms of SD. Sammut-Bonnic argued that SD causes are embedded in the characteristics of decision-making cognitive mapping process in

which decisions are made based on top management mental maps limited to partial information, past experience, and personal bias, and the organization's conservative culture in strategic thinking.

Studying the determinants of SD in commercial banks, Maosa (2015) indicated that strategic planning, organizational culture, organizational climate, organization's responsiveness to change, innovation and communication, along with leadership as key determinants of SD. Al-Hadrawi and Jawad (2024) emphasized the importance of cognitive biases in marketing decision making and identified four types of bias: conformation bias (marketing decision makers search for information that confirm their beliefs and selectively interpret market or customer data), anchoring bias (marketing decision makers focus on specific aspects such as competitor's production cost neglecting other important aspects such as product relevance to customer preferences), overconfidence bias (marketing decision makers overvalue their market knowledge, set overoptimistic forecasts, neglect competitive intelligence and market trends, resist change and avoid innovation and experimentation), and available heuristics (marketing decision makers depend on easily accessible market and customer data to meet customer immediate preferences disregarding their long-term strategic objectives).

Other insights on the causes of SD can be found in the literature. Dwyer and Edwards (2009) suggested five actions to avoid SD including valuing customers, adopting new technologies, collaborating with industry stakeholders, adapting innovative culture, besides educating and training employees. Sammut-Bonnic (2014) indicated that organizations are requested to establish early warning systems, develop strategic resilience, inspire organizational flexibility, and adapting activities such as reassuring managerial culture and skills, rewarding positive change initiatives, carrying out industry benchmarking and market research, paying more attention to competitors and customers' behaviors, as well as monitoring their performance indicators. Al-Hadrawi and Jawad (2024) believed that organizations have to formulate effective marketing strategies considering diverse viewpoints, making data-driven decisions, maintain organizational flexibility, encouraging innovative strategic marketing, prioritizing long-term objectives, accepting change, setting reasonable estimations of sales, competitors' capabilities, and bearing in mind customer needs and preferences along with market trends.

It can be induced based on the above-mentioned studies that customer orientation is a key foundation of MSD, i.e. neglecting adding value to customer (Dwyer and Edwards, 2009), SD occurs due to changes in customer needs and expectations (Danciu, 2010). Cognitive orientation is another main origin of MSD (Sammut-Bonnic, 2014; Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024). Innovation orientation is also a key cause of MSD (Dwyer and Edwards, 2009; Maosa, 2015; Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024). Consequently, the current study considers these three types of orientation as key reasons of MSD. Firstly, customer orientation means prioritizing customers over other stakeholders (Juliana et al., 2024), particularly when making organizational decisions (Zhang et al., 2024). It refers to developing products and services in line with customer changing needs (Manville et al., 2012) and regarded as a crucial reaction to changes in turbulent business environments and help firms avoid SD (Dwyer and Edwards, 2009). Secondly, cognition orientation as a key determinant of an organization ability to respond to changes in its business environment, refers to managers' dependence on their abilities to interpret change in the business environment and having alternative uses of the organizations' resources when making strategic decisions (Mostafiz et al., 2019; Noman et al., 2024). Thirdly, innovation orientation, as an essential factor for strategic success, can be achieved through adopting new technologies, managerial systems, skills and resources to gain a competitive advantage (Zhou et al., 2005; Al Maazmi et al., 2024). It was established that developing novel products and services or new uses of existing products and services support organizations to attain their strategic goals (AlTaweel & Al-Hawary, 2021).

As the current arguments are change-related in the strategic marketing context, highlighting the importance of change orientation is essential. According to Ramnarayan (2011), organizational change is two types: organizational improvement (maximizing the present organizational performance in a given environment) and organizational adaptation (re-aligning an organization to the changes in its external environment). Thus, organizations can be divided in terms of their change orientation into improvement-oriented and adaptation-oriented organizations. For organizations to make effective strategic changes, dynamic capabilities, particularly, change capabilities are essential; as these capabilities involve an organization's knowledge of its external environment and business opportunities, as well as change planning and implementation (Schweiger et al., 2016). Therefore, organizations are required to

develop their change capabilities to be ready for coping with the hostile business environment.

## 2. Research hypotheses and theoretical model

On the basis of the above-mentioned literature, four key MSD-interrelated causes can be induced: customer orientation, cognition orientation, innovation orientation, and change orientation. Overall, it was expected that these causes are significantly linked to MSD and can be developed to sidestep MSD. That is, organizations can avoid MSD when the effects of these four causes on MSD are significant and negative meaning that customer, cognition, innovation, and change orientations play a pivotal role in eliminating or at least reducing MSD. In order to explore the effects of these causes on MSD from the marketing managers' perspectives in service enterprises, four research hypotheses, as rendered in Figure 1, were suggested:

H1: MSD is significantly and negatively related to customer orientation.

H2: MSD is significantly and negatively related to cognition orientation.

H3: MSD is significantly and negatively related to innovation orientation.

H4: MSD is significantly and negatively related to change orientation.

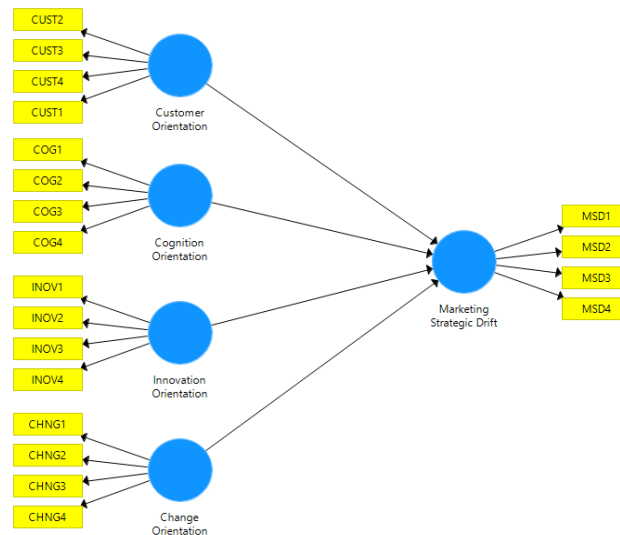


Figure 1. Research theoretical model

## 3. Research Methods

### 3.1 Research sample, data collection and analysis

The population of the current research encompasses all managers of marketing departments in service medium enterprises in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, . As such a population size is large, a minimum sample size should be 382 individuals (Pahi &

Hamid, 2015). Using an online five-point Likert questionnaire anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to gather research data, 450 electronic questionnaires were applied through email; the response rate was at 87% for a total of 391 valid questionnaires were collected based on convenience sampling technique. This technique is restricted to participants' availability at a given time (Etikan et al., 2016). Numerous prior works (e.g. Moslehpour et al., 2021; Kulikovskaja et al., 2023; Dinc-Cavlak & Ozdemir, 2024) carried out online surveys to harvest research data for marketing studies. Research data was analyzed via SmartPLS software due to its efficacy in predicting endogenous variables (O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2005; Jannoo et al., 2014)

### **3.2 Research measures**

Twenty items were developed based on prior related works as shown in Table 2 and used to measure research variables, i.e., the independent variables were evaluated by sixteen items, and the dependent one was measured by four items. The items of customer orientation were linked to customer needs, expectations, value and changing needs (Dwyer & Edwards, 2009; Danciu, 2010). The items of cognition orientation evaluated managers' mindset in terms of ability to interpret environmental changes, provide alternative uses of resources, and make decisions based on relevant information apart from personal bias (Ramnarayan, 2011; Manville et al, 2012; Sammut-Bonnic, 2014). Innovation orientation was measured referring to innovation culture, adoption of new systems and technologies, as well as development of current services and introduction of novel services (Schweiger et al., 2016; Mostafiz et al., 2019; Gachanja et al., 2022). Change orientation was assessed through organization alignment to change, positive change initiatives, change planning and implementation, and change capabilities (Zafirova, 2014; Al-Hadrawi & Jawad, 2024). Finally, MSD was gaged on the basis of the organization responsiveness to change, along with customer orientation, innovation orientation, bias-influenced decisions, and change-oriented capabilities (Zafirova, 2014; Al Maazmi et al., 2024).



Table 2. Research measures

Variables	Codes	Items	Author (s)
Customer orientation	CUST1 CUST2 CUST3 CUST4	Paying great attention to customer needs. Adding value to customers. Awareness of customer changing needs. Developing services in line with customer expectations.	Dwyer and Edwards (2009), Danciu (2010),
Cognition orientation	COG1 COG2 COG3 COG4	Ability to interpret change in business environment. Having alternative uses of the organization's resources. Avoiding personal bias when making strategic decisions. Using relevant information to make strategic decisions.	Ramnarayan (2011). Manville et al (2012), Sammut-Bonnic (2014),
Innovation orientation	INOV1 INOV2 INOV3 INOV4	Establishing innovation-related organizational culture. Adopting new systems and technologies. Developing the existing services. Introducing new novel services.	Schweiger et al. (2016), Mostafiz et al. (2019), Gachanja et al. (2022),
Change orientation	CHNG1 CHNG2 CHNG3 CHNG4	Re-aligning the organization to the changes in its environment. Rewarding positive change initiatives. Willingness and ability to plan and implement changes. Building change-oriented capabilities.	Zafirova (2014), Al-Hadrawi and Jawad (2024),
marketing strategic drift	MSD1 MSD2 MSD3 MSD4	No or slow response to changes in the business environment. Neglecting customer needs and introduction of novel services. Strategic decisions are affected by managers' personal bias. Ignoring building change-oriented capabilities.	Zafirova (2014), Al Maazmi et al. (2024).

#### 4. Data analysis and results

##### 4.1 Reliability, validity and model fitness

Construct reliability was tested by Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR), validity was valued by the variables' factor loadings and the average variance extracted (AVE), and model fit was appraised by the determination factor ( $R^2$ ), the effect size ( $f^2$ ) and Stone-Geisser ( $Q^2$ ) indicators. Values of alpha coefficient and CR should be more than 0.70, factor loadings should be higher than 0.70, and AVE values should be above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017).  $R^2$  values were accepted as weak (0.25), moderate (0.50), and substantial (0.75),  $f^2$  values were regarded as weak (0.02), moderate (0.15), and large (0.35), moreover,  $Q^2$  values should be above zero (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2019). These results explain that the questionnaire items measure what they were designed to measure, and that their results are accurate. The results of reliability, validity and model fit of the current study are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of reliability, validity and model fitness

Variables	Items	Reliability		Validity		Model fit	
		$\alpha$	CR	FLs	AVE	R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>
Customer orientation	CUST1 CUST2 CUST3 CUST4	0.838	0.904	0.801 0.871 0.802 0.804	0.672	-	0.041
Cognition orientation	COG1 COG2 COG3 COG4	0.845	0.895	0.817 0.857 0.865 0.758	0.681	-	0.051
Innovation orientation	INOV1 INOV2 INOV3 INOV4	0.875	0.913	0.801 0.867 0.904 0.822	0.726	-	0.022
Change orientation	CHNG1 CHNG2 CHNG3 CHNG4	0.859	0.904	0.787 0.858 0.878 0.829	0.703	-	0.086
marketing strategic drift	MSD1 MSD2 MSD3 MSD4	0.848	0.898	0.751 0.917 0.812 0.829	0.688	0.243	Q <sup>2</sup> = 0.166

## 4.2 Hypotheses testing

The results of hypotheses testing indicate that customer, cognition, innovation, and change orientations have negative effects on MSD, meaning that these variables when effectively applied reduce MSD. An initial model contains the effect of customer orientation on MSD revealed that customer orientation showed a significant negative effect on MSD ( $\beta_{\text{customer orientation}} = -0.282$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Adding cognition orientation to this model reduced the significant effect of customer orientation ( $\beta_{\text{customer orientation}} = -0.223$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) on MSD and showed a significant negative effect of cognition orientation on MSD ( $\beta_{\text{cognition orientation}} = -0.293$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). In a third model consists of customer orientation, cognition orientation, and innovation orientation, it was found that innovation orientation exerted a significant negative effect on MSD ( $\beta_{\text{innovation orientation}} = -0.191$ ,  $P < 0.00$ ) considering that the effects of customer orientation and cognition orientation were reduced ( $\beta_{\text{customer orientation}} = -0.205$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $\beta_{\text{cognition orientation}} = -0.205$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Introducing change orientation in a fourth model, which the final research model, as displayed in Figure 2 and Figure 3, pointed out that change

orientation significantly and negatively affected MSD ( $\beta_{\text{change orientation}} = -0.263$ ,  $P < 0.00$ ). In this final model the effects of customer orientation, cognition orientation, and innovation orientation on MSD were reduced ( $(\beta_{\text{customer orientation}} = -0.180$ ,  $P < 0.00$ , ( $\beta_{\text{cognition orientation}} = -0.210$ ,  $P < 0.00$ , ( $\beta_{\text{innovation orientation}} = -0.140$ ,  $P < 0.00$ ). Such results indicate that change orientation is the most influential factor in reducing MSD, followed by cognition orientation, customer orientation, and innovation orientation.

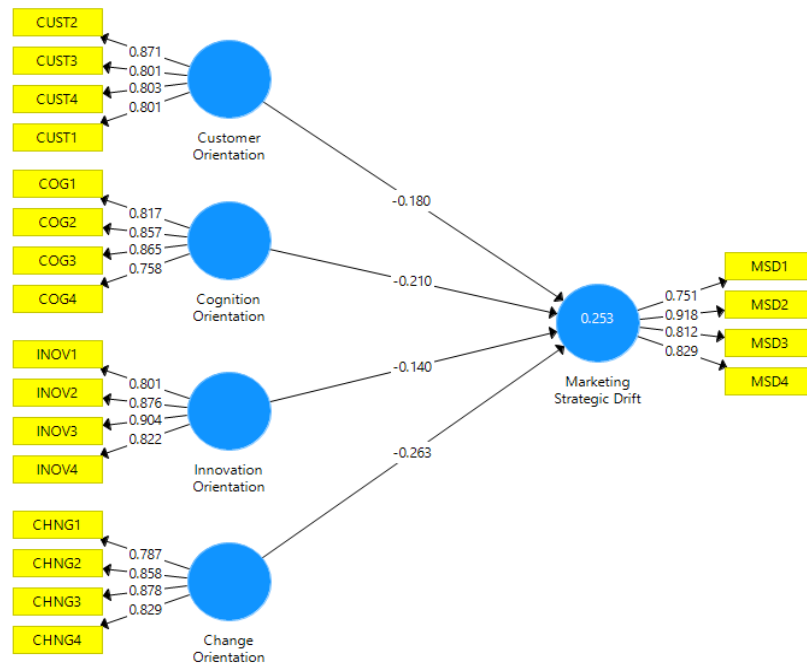


Figure 2. Research structural model (PLS algorithm)

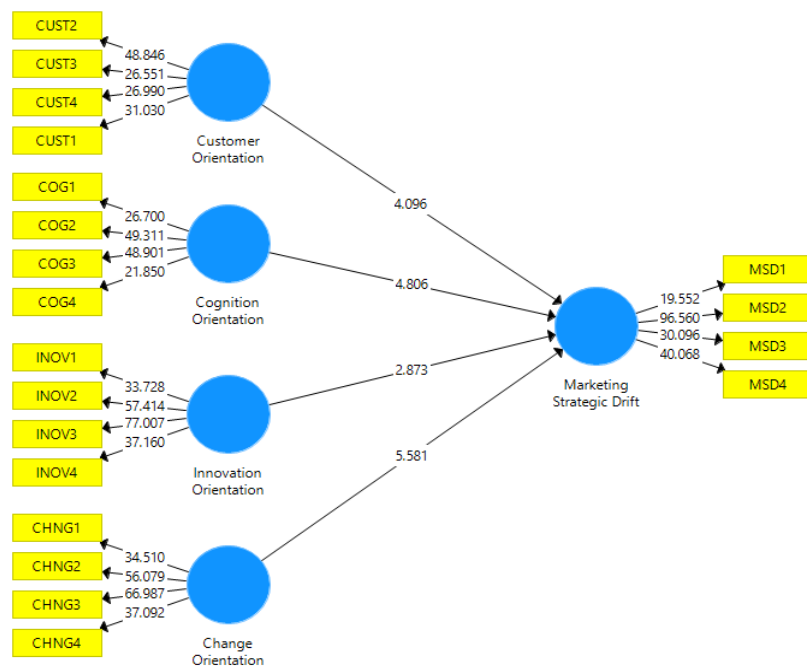


Figure 3. Research structural model (Bootstrapping)

In sum, the current research hypotheses as illustrated in Table 4 were supported by the current research data.

Table 4. Results of hypotheses testing

Hypotheses				$\beta$ -value	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Customer orientation	→	MSD	-0.180	0.3992	0.000	Accepted
H2	Cognition orientation	→	MSD	-0.210	4.874	0.000	Accepted
H3	Innovation orientation	→	MSD	-0.140	2.909	0.004	Accepted
H4	Change orientation	→	MSD	-0.263	5.681	0.000	Accepted

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of four independent variables, i.e. customer orientation, cognition orientation, innovation orientation, and change orientation on marketing strategic drift as a dependent variable. Absence of any variable of these independent variables has been identified, based on the literature, as a key cause of marketing strategic drift; a state in which marketing strategy of an organization becomes insufficient to cope with changes in its business environment. Hence, four hypotheses were introduced to test the effects of these causes on marketing strategic drift. On the basis of the perspectives of marketing managers in service enterprises, it was found that these hypotheses were supported.

In line with prior works on the causes of marketing strategic drift, customer orientation had a significant negative effect in this regard. Such a result indicates that a customer-oriented marketing strategy is a key solution to avoid marketing strategic drift. According to Soteriades and Avgeli (2007), strategic drift represents an organization's inability to cope with changes in its business environment. An example of such changes includes changes in customer needs and expectations (Danciu, 2010). Thus, ignoring customer needs, preferences and requirements results in marketing strategic drift (Dwyer and Edwards, 2009). By virtue of the current result, the first cause of marketing strategic drift was named customer-driven marketing strategic drift. Moreover, the current results showed that cognition orientation had a significant negative effect on marketing strategic drift. This result concludes with an important reason for marketing

strategic drift. Previous works (Mostafiz et al., 2019; Noman et al., 2024) conceptualized managers' cognition orientation as their abilities to make decisions based on cognitive capabilities such as interpreting change in the business environment and providing alternative uses of the organization's resources to cope with different changes. Sammut-Bonnic (2014) argued that strategic drift is linked to managers' mental maps in which partial information and personal biases are dominant in addition to the organizational conservative culture in strategic thinking. Al-Hadrawi and Jawad (2024) highlighted the importance of cognitive biases when making marketing decisions, including selectively interpretation of market and customer data, using irrelevant information to make marketing decisions, ignoring product relevance, customer requirements, and market trends, setting overoptimistic estimations, and neglecting the organization's long-term objectives. Relying on the present result, the second cause was named cognition-driven marketing strategic drift.

Furthermore, the results found that innovation orientation had a significant negative effect on marketing strategic drift, implying that innovation orientation is a main cause of marketing strategic drift. Innovation has been determined as one of the most common determinants of strategic drift (Maosa, 2015). Al-Hadrawi and Jawad (2024) added that avoiding innovation when taking marketing decisions is one aspect of managers' overconfidence bias. For Dwyer and Edwards (2009), adapting innovative culture is a significant activity that organizations should pursue to avoid strategic drift. Totally, innovation orientation is a key factor to ensure strategic success (Zhou et al., 2005; Al Maazmi et al., 2024; AlTaweel & Al-Hawary, 2021). Based on the current research result, the third cause was entitled innovation-driven marketing strategic drift. Finally, the results revealed that change orientation had a significant negative effect on marketing strategic drift, which means that change orientation is another central cause of marketing strategic drift. It should be noted that the effect of change orientation was the highest in comparison with the effects of customer orientation, cognition orientation, and innovation orientation on marketing strategic drift. Basically, the essence of marketing strategic drift is a change gap between marketing strategy and the business environment in which the organization's strategy does not suit or fit the changes in the business environment (Zafirova, 2014) or, in other words, it deviates its direction (Al-Hadrawi and Jawad, 2024) or goes away from addressing the forces of the business environment (Dwyer et al., 2012). Therefore, the organization loses its

ability to respond to such changes, and this might be due to the fact that the organization response to change is slower than the accelerated rate of change in the business environment (Gachanja et al., 2022). In order to avoid strategic drift, organizations should be improvement-oriented and adaptation-oriented organizations (Ramnarayan, 2011) and should develop change capabilities to continue coping with business environment hostility (Schweiger et al., 2016). In accordance with the current result, the fourth cause was termed change-driven marketing strategic drift. In summary, it was concluded that there are four key causes of marketing strategic drift: customer, cognition, innovation, and change-driven causes and can be tackled through focusing on customer needs and preferences as well as changes in such needs (customer orientation), relying on relevant information, managers past experiences to build effective mental maps to make marketing decisions (cognition orientation), improving processes and services and developing new services (innovation orientation), and adapting the enterprise to the change in its business environment through possessing change-directed capabilities such as the ability to recognize changes and business threats and opportunities and performing the essential effective actions (change orientation).

## **6. Implications, limitations, and future research**

On the ground of the current results, a gap in the literature on marketing strategic drift should be narrowed as this study empirically deduced four key causes of marketing strategic drift, which are customer, cognition, innovation, and change-driven causes. Such a contribution to literature helps researchers investigating marketing strategic drift considering these principal causes and calling them to explore other causes. Practically, the current results invite marketing managers to pay more attention to the causes of marketing strategic drift and the required actions to avoid such a phenomenon. For example, enterprises should be aware of customer changing needs and expectations and make every effort to find solutions to cope with these changes, make marketing decisions based on accurate estimations of market and customer information and true interpretations of changes in the business environment apart from managers' personal biases. Besides that, innovation-oriented culture which encourages adopting new systems and technologies, developing the current services and introducing new services is pivotal action to meet the changing requirements of the business environment. On top of that, enterprises should be change-oriented entities through willingness and

ability to plan and implement change initiatives, rewarding these initiatives, and developing change-related capabilities by which managers can align the enterprise to the change in its environment when detecting any signals of strategic drift. However, the current results are limited to the perspectives of marketing managers in service enterprises and the measurements of customer, cognition, innovation, change orientations as well as the marketing strategic drift. Therefore, future works are required to investigate marketing strategic drift using samples from other sectors and refining the current measurements of research variables. Furthermore, the current study did not cover the symptoms of marketing strategic drift such as marketing performance decline, so, further works are demanded to explore these symptoms and their effects on marketing strategic drift. Conduct future studies to explore other dimensions of strategic marketing drift, and explore other factors that influence strategic marketing drift.

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