

The strategic process and competitiveness of a consulting company in 2022, case: JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C.

El proceso estratégico y la competitividad de una empresa consultora en el año 2022, Caso: JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C.

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Resumen: La empresa consultora JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. no ha desarrollado un análisis exhaustivo de su proceso estratégico, lo que limita su consolidación en el sector consultoría. En ese sentido, el objetivo del presente estudio fue determinar la relación entre el proceso estratégico y la competitividad de la empresa consultora JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. en el año 2022. Se utilizó un enfoque cuantitativo, con un diseño no experimental, descriptivo y correlacional. La población estuvo conformada por 20 profesionales subcontratados por la empresa. Se aplicaron dos encuestas, validadas por expertos, cuyos coeficientes de confiabilidad mediante Alpha de Cronbach fueron 0.875 y 0.898 para las variables "proceso estratégico" y "competitividad empresarial", respectivamente. Los resultados, analizados con el software SPSS, mostraron una relación positiva significativa entre el proceso estratégico y la competitividad, con un coeficiente de correlación de 0.696, lo que permitió rechazar la hipótesis nula. Esto evidenció que el desarrollo adecuado del proceso estratégico incide positivamente en la competitividad de la empresa. Se concluyó que la mejora continua del proceso estratégico puede ser un factor clave para consolidar la posición de la empresa en el sector consultoría, proporcionando un marco efectivo para medir y optimizar su impacto en la competitividad.

Palabras clave: Proceso, Estratégico, Competitividad, Consultoría, Empresa.

Abstract: The consulting firm JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. has not conducted a thorough analysis of its strategic process, which limits its consolidation in the consulting sector. In this context, the objective of this study was to determine the relationship between the strategic process and the competitiveness of the consulting firm JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. in 2022. A quantitative approach was used, with a non-experimental, descriptive, and correlational design. The population consisted of 20 professionals subcontracted by the company. Two surveys, validated by experts, were applied, with Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients of 0.875 and 0.898 for the variables "strategic process" and "business competitiveness," respectively. The results, analyzed using SPSS software, showed a significant positive relationship between the strategic process and competitiveness, with a correlation coefficient of 0.696, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This demonstrated that the proper development of the strategic process positively influences the company's competitiveness. It was concluded that the continuous improvement of the strategic process could be a key factor in consolidating the company's position in the consulting sector, providing an effective framework for measuring and optimizing its impact on competitiveness.

Keywords: Process, Strategic, Competitiveness, Consulting, Business.

Introduction

After the restrictions implemented to curb the spread of COVID-19 were gradually lifted in Peru and the majority of the population received all three doses of the vaccine, the country's economy showed growth of 3.6% in 2022. This growth was due to several factors, including the recovery of the economic activities most affected by the pandemic, an increase in domestic demand driven by private spending and public investment, and favorable export dynamism in the context of high commodity prices and increased mining supply. (Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas, 2022).

During March 2022, the business services sector recorded a growth of 2.73% compared to the same month of the previous year, especially in scientific and technical professional activities and market research (INEI, 2022). Neyra et al. (2017) explain that companies demand consultancy services in times of economic uncertainty to maintain expected productivity and profitability. This boom in the consulting sector reflects how more companies are turning to specialist consultancy to strengthen their market position and expand or manage strategic projects.

It is important to point out that organizational or business consultancy is an advisory service that facilitates the promotion of productivity among collaborators, allows the detection of problems within the analyzed entity, and offers practical solutions to face them. It also improves the working environment and promotes innovation in its processes (Pozo et al., 2021).

In light of the above, the consulting firm JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. was created in February 2020 to offer consultancy services in the automotive sector. Despite being a new company, it has internationalized since 2022, working with companies such as Toyota del Perú S.A., Autonort Trujillo S.A.C., and Nissan Perú S.A.C. However, the company has not thoroughly analyzed its strategic process, which could limit its consolidation in the consultancy sector. It has not assessed whether its strategic objectives are being met or the environment is affecting its business processes.

In this context, the strategic process involves assessing a company's position by considering its functional areas, resources, and competitive environment, which determine its level of competitiveness. (Catachura, 2024). Good strategic planning can improve the competitiveness of consulting firms. The study's main contribution is developing an analytical framework for assessing and measuring the impact of the strategic process on JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C.'s competitiveness in 2022. A detailed analysis of competitiveness indicators and their relationship to the strategies implemented provides a framework that facilitates reviewing and adjusting the strategic process in the context of consulting firms. By identifying the most effective methods and their actual contribution to competitiveness, the study

Several research studies are relevant to this study. Vela y Germany (2020), in their research on a strategic expansion plan for a cooperative in Ucayali, conclude that there is a moderate relationship between strategic planning and business competitiveness, with a Spearman coefficient of 0.532 and a p-value < 0.01. On the other hand, Lobato, Vigo, and Palomino (2019) analyzed the strategic planning of Daewoo Electronics Peru and concluded that the company applies a generic strategy based on the cost approach. Arias (2019) found that strategic planning significantly impacts TATEPRO E.I.R.L.'s competitiveness, with a coefficient of determination of 95.40%. Soberón (2018), in its study on the relationship

between the strategic plan and the competitiveness of JSodel Ingenieros Servicios Generales, concluded that an adequate vision, mission, and internal and external analysis positively impact the company's competitiveness.

Similarly, Alvites (2018) showed that strategic planning optimizes Tel and Net Solution S.A.C.'s competitiveness, increasing its strength by 12.6% to 15.3%. Finally, Guevara (2017) analyzed Inversiones Belén Star S.A.C.'s competitiveness using tools such as Porter's Five Forces and the PEST matrix and concluded that adequate internal and external analysis is crucial to developing effective strategies.

Taken together, all these studies highlight the importance of the strategic process in company success and sustainability. This process enables a long-term vision that guides key decisions. It facilitates adaptation to a changing business environment, where identifying opportunities and threats is essential for growth.

Furthermore, in contrast to previous studies, which focused on companies in various sectors, this paper offers a unique contribution by focusing on the relationship between the strategic process and competitiveness within the specific context of a consulting firm. (JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C.). This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the impact of strategies tailored to the consultancy's unique challenges, providing an evaluative framework that can be useful both for the company under analysis and for other consultancies in the sector.

The strategic process is divided into several phases: formulation, implementation, and evaluation. The formulation includes the development of strategies that align resources with organizational objectives. Implementation refers to executing those strategies, while evaluation measures their effectiveness and feeds back into the strategic cycle. (Acevedo y Linares, 2014). Ballou (2004), the strategic process is interactive and iterative, involving multiple actors and generating constant feedback.

External assessment is key to understanding the influences of the environment on the organization, which is done using tools such as PEST analysis and the External Factor Evaluation Matrix (EFEM). This analysis helps to identify opportunities and threats, providing a basis for strategy formulation. (De Los Ríos, Fujiki, Julca and Repetto, 2017). In turn, the internal assessment, conducted through the AMOFHIT functional analysis, identifies strengths and weaknesses in key areas of the company, which allows the construction of the Internal Factors Assessment Matrix (IFAM). This matrix is essential to align internal strategies with organizational objectives.

Method

Quantitative research aims to explore or describe concepts (variables) or to relate or compare them with other concepts (variables). (Hernández et al., 2014). The deductive method was used, starting from general facts, such as reviewing and analyzing the company's processes and documents. JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C., The analysis of their strategic process and their competitiveness. This made it possible to formulate and test hypotheses; in this respect, Hernández et al. (2014) point out that hypotheses are at the heart of the quantitative-deductive approach.

The research was basic; Vara (2014) indicates that this type of study 'investigates the relationship between variables' and 'diagnoses a business reality.' It was descriptive, given that it sought to 'measure or collect information independently or jointly on the concepts or variables.' (Hernández et al., 2014). The variables investigated were 'the strategic process and business competitiveness.' It was also correlational, aiming to 'find out the relationship or degree of association between two or more variables.' (Hernández et al., 2014), and non-experimental, as the variables were not manipulated.

The population consisted of twenty professionals subcontracted by the company for the development and execution of the projects in 2022. The sample was a non-probabilistic census sample, as the entire population, i.e., the twenty professionals, was included.

SPSS software in its test version was used for data analysis, and the data collection instrument was developed through a literature review and validated by three experts. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, yielding a value of 0.875 for the 'strategic process' survey and 0.898 for the 'business competitiveness' survey.

The first survey comprised 17 items in four dimensions: External Evaluation, Internal Evaluation, Objectives, and Strategic Evaluation. The second survey comprised 19 items in six dimensions: Production and Operations, Quality Assurance, Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Human Resources, and Information Systems.

On the other hand, this study's methodology was designed to accurately analyze the relationship between the strategy process and competitiveness in JC Ingeniería y Consultoría S.A.C. The choice of the quantitative approach, together with the deductive method, allows the relationship between specific variables to be explored and verified, providing a solid basis for making inferences about the impact of the strategic process on competitiveness.

SPSS software was also selected because it can perform advanced statistical analyses and facilitate the application of correlational and reliability tests, which are essential in a study that seeks to establish relationships between variables.

Finally, the survey was chosen as a data collection instrument because it was necessary to obtain detailed insight into business professionals' perceptions and experiences regarding the strategic process and competitiveness.

Results

Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between the strategic process and the competitiveness of a consulting firm since the data did not meet the normality required to use parametric correlations. This was confirmed by the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, which indicated a non-normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). Table 1 y 2 presents the distribution plot showing the non-normality of the data, which justified the use of the non-parametric Spearman's Rho statistic.

Table 1. Normality tests.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistician	gl	Sig.	Statistician	gl	Sig.
Competitiveness of a company	,361	20	,000	,637	20	,000
Strategic process	,276	20	,000	,780	20	,000

a. Lilliefors significance correction

Table 3 shows the correlation results between the variables 'strategic process' and 'competitiveness of a consulting firm'.

Table 2. Correlation between 'strategic process' and 'competitiveness of a consulting firm'.

		Strategic process	Competitiveness of a company
Spearman's Rho	Strategic process	Correlation coefficient	1,000
		Sig. (bilateral)	,001
		N	20
Competitiveness of a company		Correlation coefficient	,696**
		Sig. (bilateral)	,001
		N	20

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).

The correlation coefficient of 0.696 indicates a significant positive relationship between the strategic process and the consulting firm's competitiveness. Since the p-value (0.001) is less than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, concluding that there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

Two surveys were conducted to measure the variables 'strategic process' and 'enterprise competitiveness.' The first survey assessed four dimensions of the strategic process (External Assessment, Internal Assessment, Objectives, and Strategic Assessment), while the second survey covered six dimensions of enterprise competitiveness (Production and Operations, Quality Assurance, Marketing, Accounting, and Finance, Human Resources, and Information Systems).

The reliability of both instruments was measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with the following results being obtained:

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha of the surveys.

Variable	Dimensions	Ítems	Alpha de Cronbach
Strategic process	External evaluation, Internal evaluation, Objectives, Strategic evaluation, Strategic assessment	17	0.875
Business competitiveness	Production and Operations, Quality Assurance, Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Human Resources, Information Systems, and Information Systems.	19	0.898

Cronbach's Alpha values indicate good internal consistency for both instruments, with a value above 0.7, suggesting that the surveys were reliable in measuring the variables of interest.

All four dimensions (External assessment, internal assessment, objectives, and strategic assessment) were assessed and showed a significant positive relationship with competitiveness. The internal and external evaluation revealed that the company adequately aligns its diagnosis and strategic goals.

Regarding Business Competitiveness, the six dimensions assessed (Production and Operations, Quality Assurance, Marketing, Accounting, Finance, Human Resources, and Information Systems) indicated that the company has improved in key areas that directly influence its competitiveness. Diversification of its portfolio and international expansion were mentioned as strengths, although opportunities for improvement were identified in Human Resources and Information Systems.

Discussion

The present study improves and complements the findings of Vela et al. Germany (2020), developed a strategic expansion plan to optimize the competitiveness of a cooperative in Ucayali. The relationship in Vela and Germany study had a moderate relationship between the variables strategic plan and enterprise competitiveness with a Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.532; the present study in a consulting firm found a stronger correlation of 0.696, suggesting that a well-developed strategic process can have a more significant impact on competitiveness. In addition, the sample covered key personnel in the execution of the projects, providing a more detailed focus on the internal processes that impact competitiveness.

It is suggested that this study be replicated in other companies in the consulting sector to assess the consistency of the findings and to explore the impact of additional variables, such as technological innovation and organizational culture, on business competitiveness.

One of the main limitations of the present study was related to the sample; although it included all relevant staff, it needed to be bigger, limiting the statistical analysis and the representativeness of the results.

Conclusions

The analysis of the study reveals that, in the year 2022, the consulting company's strategic process has proven to be a determining factor in its level of competitiveness. The positive correlation between the strategic process and competitiveness supports the idea that long-term strategy planning and execution are directly linked to market success. The acceptance of the alternative hypothesis reflects the importance of considering the strategic process as a fundamental tool for the development and competitive position of the company in the sector.

Furthermore, the analysis suggests that the consulting firm has effectively integrated the strategic process into its day-to-day operations, reflected in its ability to diversify its portfolio and embark on a process of internationalization. Expansion into international markets and the incorporation of new lines of solutions indicate a coherent alignment of strategies with long-term objectives.

The results of the study, in terms of Spearman's correlation coefficient of 0.696, show a strong positive relationship between the strategic process and the competitiveness of the consulting firm. This correlation, when compared to the study of Vela y Germany (2020), which reported a coefficient of 0.532, suggests that in the context of a consulting firm, a well-structured strategic process has a noticeable impact on its competitiveness. The results reinforce the relationship between the key components of the strategic process (mission, vision, strategic objectives, internal and external analysis) and business competitiveness indicators.

Analysis of the company's strategic process also reveals the effectiveness of its decisions and actions over the long term. The ability to adapt to changing market conditions and anticipate emerging trends are key aspects that highlight the robustness of its strategic process. Focusing on 'Knowledge Management' and 'Innovation' as strategic pillars provides a solid basis for decision-making that drives competitiveness, enabling the company to differentiate and stand out in a dynamic business environment.

On the other hand, future studies could extend the sample and include other consultancies to analyze the consistency of these results in different organizational environments. Furthermore, it is recommended to explore the role of additional variables such as technological innovation and organizational culture, factors not considered in this research but that could enrich the understanding of business competitiveness. Integrating additional metrics or standards, such as ISO, could provide a more detailed framework for assessing the implementation and impact of long-term strategies.

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