

MEASURING THE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC FLEXIBILITY IN THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF HEALTH: FIELD RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to test "the level of strategic flexibility as an important variable and impact on the performance of the Ministry of Health The current research variable has addressed in the recent period an increasing interest as it is an important subject affecting the future of organizations and the result of the rapid environmental variables that have greatly affected the organizations. In order to explain the strategic flexibility levels, a set of objectives were formulated, including the disclosure of the type and nature of the strategic flexibility of the Ministry of Health, so that field research was applied to a sample of managers and their assistants and heads of departments at the Ministry of Health. 90) Individual, The data collection through the questionnaire, and the use of field visits. Also used a number of statistical methods for data processing, including: arithmetic mean, standard deviation, alpha Cronbach coefficient, factor analysis assertive. The main findings were that the Ministry of Health had a decline in strategic flexibility levels. Especially in interactive flexibility The research concluded with a number of recommendations, the most important of which were: To increase and expand the interest in strategic flexibility levels by educating senior leaders in the ministry and employees.

Key Words: strategic flexibility, Interactive flexibility, Proactive flexibility

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

First: Research problem

Most researchers believe that the current time is a radically different time than before, Whether in terms of the environment, technology or intellectual skills required of the organizations. Which in turn influenced the Propositions ideas that are addressed, Which in turn influenced the Propositions ideas that are addressed, Which in turn influenced the Propositions ideas that are addressed, The majority of current studies focus on how to achieve proactive and adapt to rapid changes and radical inventions that threaten the organizational structure. Causing the deterioration of private sector organizations and causing administrative paralysis of the public sector, These variables have led to a great echo in the nature of administrative issues, especially strategy, As a result, administrative thought, especially after the 1990s, sought to adopt more vital and useful topics for organizations (strategic flexibility) that were consistent with the necessities of the current environment. Strategic flexibility has been the most successful solution for many public and private organizations in achieving their goals, more realistically through their interaction and anticipation of environmental

changes. Strategic flexibility has been the most successful solution for many public and private organizations in achieving their goals, more realistically through their interaction and anticipation of environmental changes. Based on what was mentioned, the researcher decided to test the level of strategic flexibility in the Iraqi Ministry of Health because it is one of the important ministries directly responsible for the health sector in Iraq, And to ensure a healthy society free of diseases and sudden deaths that may occur due to poor health care, So there are many challenges and a great responsibility to the Ministry of Health. As a result, it was chosen as a field for the current research. In order to identify the nature and levels of interest (strategic flexibility) in the Iraqi Ministry of Health?

Second: The importance of research

1. The importance of field research in the selection of the health sector, which is one of the most important sectors in the country, is highlighted. As it provides services of important social value to citizens. As well as its role in the rehabilitation of a society free of injuries and diseases. With some solutions to the problems experienced by the Ministry of Health through the analysis and interpretation of data in a variety of statistical means.
2. The importance of this research lies in its attempt to provide a database that can be employed in the Ministry of Health to meet current and future changes and to update its methods of work, in order to ensure its visibility and excellence with strategic flexibility.
3. To establish an organizational culture in the research sample, the importance of the active role exercised by the strategic flexibility on the overall performance of the ministry.

Third: Research Objectives

- 1 - Analysis of the philosophical implications of the intellectual consensus and differences in views on the current research variables and related to strategic flexibility.
2. Presenting and analyzing the nature and nature of the strategic flexibility of the Iraqi Ministry of Health.
- 3 - Attempt to direct the attention of the management of health organizations on the nature of the variable (strategic flexibility) and dimensions.
- 4- Presenting a number of conclusions and recommendations to the Ministry in light of the results of the practical situation

Fourth: Search Sample

The sample was used for the purpose of selecting "managers, assistant director and heads of departments" at the Ministry of Health. The total number of the research sample (90) people. (110) were distributed directly by the researcher for the sample. (8) were not answered. And 12 were not retrieved. Table (1) shows the characteristics of the research sample of (90) individuals.

| % The ratio | the number | Distribute the property | The information | ت |
|--|-----------------------------|---|------------------|---|
| %67.8 %32.2 | 61 29 | Male female | Sex | 1 |
| % 100 | 90 | Total | | |
| %1.1 %32.2 %32.2 %34.5 | 1 29 29 31 | Less than30 40-31 50-41 and over51 | Age | 2 |
| %100 | 90 | Total | | |
| %2.2 %2.2 %27.8 %20.0 %35.6 %12.2 | 2 19 25 1832 11 | 5years and less 10-6 15-11 20-16 25-21 and more 25 | Years of service | |
| %100 | 90 | Total | | |
| %5.6 %62.2 %15.6 %8.9%7.8 | 5 56 14 7 8 | diploma BA Higher Diploma .M.A .Ph.D | Qualification | 4 |
| %100 | 90 | Total | | |

Table (1) Characteristics of the research sample

Fifth: Approved statistical methods

For the purpose of analyzing the data of the research and testing hypotheses, the use of a set of programs programs are ready (SPSS v.23, AMOS v.23), and in this regard has been used a set of statistical tools, which were divided into the following totals: (Alpha-Cronbach): (Spearman - Brown) (Split-Half).)Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

THE THEORETICAL SIDE

First: Strategic Flexibility

That environmental changes are accelerating under uncertaintyHas forced many organizations to make and make important decisions in a timely manner, To maintain their organizational levels, management practices in a stable environment are not suitable for the changing dynamic environment. In spite of the strategic management functions, it is to work on managing strategic

change, whether it is continuous change, gradual or dramatic, or intermittent changes. (Thompson and Martin, 2005: 11) But this has become inadequate recently. So to respond to this environment, administrators focused on adopting strategic flexibility. The concept of strategic flexibility has become a need and not an objective for any organization to apply in organizations, whether public or private. In particular, the inevitability of rapid change in the external environment has become a reality since the late 1990s and has led to enormous pressure on organizations. (Das, 1995: 60). These pressures have forced organizations to adapt to confront rapid changes in the competitive environment. By analyzing kinetic interactions between different environmental variables, Strategic flexibility is a multidimensional concept and requires many strategic actions and tools to ensure an efficient level of prediction, analysis, monitoring and control of environmental variables. (Jubouri, 2011: 87) These variables and challenges were the result of a combination of factors such as global competition, shortening the life cycle of services and products, and pressure of workers from many offers by other organizations. All of these factors have greatly affected all organizations and one solution is to have a strategic flexibility that simulates and addresses these challenges (Chan et al., 2015: 2) Which have brought about many problems for organizations. Identifying these problems and making changes to correct them are often major challenges, Which have brought about many problems for organizations. Identifying these problems and making changes to correct them are often major challenges. For example, after the Organization finally recognizes a problem that has been in place for about a year, action is beginning to correct it and another year is often needed to achieve the change. However, if it takes two years to admit the mistake, it will take four years to resolve the problem. "This result is referred to as the" squares rule "(for example, $1 \times 1 = 1$; $2 \times 2 = 4$) This "law" suggests that longer, unrecognized or unresolved problems will bring more damage to the organization, with solutions to address the damage. (Shimizu & Hitt, 2004: 44) The term "strategic flexibility" has recently been widely used to indicate the Organization's potential to respond effectively to various aspects of the competitive environment. The objective of the traditional strategy was to formulate the best possible strategy. This objective became unrealistic in the current uncertain environment, so the organizations began to improve their chances of success by creating the strategic flexibility afforded by the possibility of pursuing alternative courses of action or various strategic options. (Sanchez, 1997: 72) Especially when the organization finds itself faced with new situations of importance, new activities that may have to improve its plan, divide its strategy, reorganize or renew services or products, or perhaps invent or apply new technologies (Skeibrok and Svensson, 2016: 60) (Shimizu & Hitt, 2004: 45) supports this approach by saying that moving with high flexibility and speed according to environment variables and making mistakes is much better than moving slowly and fearing the unknown.

Second: Dimensions Of Strategic Flexibility

After studying the basic pillars of strategic flexibility and studying the dimensions of strategic flexibility, The researcher was based on the (Eryesil et al 2015) Which included interactive flexibility and proactive flexibility. Interactive flexibility is an imperative need to be made by successful organizations through their ability to adapt to and respond to the surrounding environment and achieve strategic alignment. Between its internal environment and its external environment. As well as

the proactive flexibility that allows the organization to continuously review the relationship between the organization and the surrounding environment so that it can influence the environment through its innovative and proactive behavior. Therefore, the researcher adopted these two dimensions due to what was presented previously and also because they are more compatible with the work of the Ministry of Health.

Here is an explanation of each dimension of the current research:

1 .Interactive Flexibility

Is the ability to respond effectively and quickly to changes as they occur (Celuch et al, 2007: 189) It is also known as the organization's ability to respond directly to any environmental changes. As these organizations are characterized by the ability to adapt to the variables through the exploitation of opportunities or the existence of special protection activities in them against the changes with the repair of damage. This type of interactive flexibility is a kind of strategic flexibility that is particularly appropriate during crises. Which comes with the difficulty of predicting the variable and the time it occurs, Here comes the role of proactive flexibility that may reduce the risk of crisis, but interactive flexibility is the best solution when crises occur (Eryesil and Beduk, 2015: 3463) Interactive flexibility can also be defined as the ability to interact and adapt to any changes in the environment. The objective of interactive strategic flexibility is to improve and expand existing technology, capacities and models that can provide organizations with greater flexibility to capitalize on existing resources. (FAN et al., 2012: 712) In studying the current situation of the Iraqi organizations, they find that they have become weak and poor in their production due to their impact on the environmental variables and the intensity of the competition faced by the world-class industrial companies. Why are Iraqi organizations unable to cope with the global business environment?" The answer is simply linked to poverty in its interaction with the highly changing environment (Al-Anzi, 2015: 193) It is therefore clear that the active role that interactive flexibility can offer to organizations, both public and private, takes into account the organization's relevance to environmental variables as well as the organization's impact on its structure. (Fan et al., 2013: 189),

2-Proactive Flexibility

I have Is the ability of the organization to predict future variables (Celuch et al., 2007: 190) also known that they have the ability to create and seize opportunities And be prepared for permanent environmental conditions uncertain, The exercises are also a strategy in the light of environmental changes. Organizations with proactive resilience view the environment as a resource of organizational excellence (Eryesil and Beduk, 2015: 3463) Pre-emptive flexibility enable them to capture opportunities before others and maintain their agility by developing their proactive capacity to respond to dynamic environmental requirements. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to have modern technology that is effective in increasing the reaction of the Organization (FAN et al., 2012: 712) At the same time, proactive strategic flexibility is not without risk, but it gives the organization the opportunity to enhance performance to a large extent, especially when there are environmental pressures. (Fan et al., 2013: 188) In order for the organization to avoid the great risk of

proactiveness that may produce wrong decisions, it must take a strategic position that enables it to prepare, prepare or react to future market conditions and respond to waves of change.

THE PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK OF RESEARCH

First: Results of the test of normal distribution of data:

Table 2 shows the results of the normal distribution test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which is known in this field at the level of the variable and the studied dimensions that are included in the hypothesis test models. Table (2) shows that the value of the significance of the variable and the dimensions of the research is Greater than significance (0.05) This indicates that the data follows the natural distribution of both (strategic flexibility, interactive flexibility and proactive flexibility) If the results of the test are not significant, accept the hypothesis of natural distribution and reject the alternative hypothesis and vice versa (Pallant, 2001: 58)

| Table (2) Results of the normal distribution test of the research variables | | | | | | |
|---|----|------|---------------------------------|----|------|-------------------------|
| Variables | | | | | | |
| Shapiro-Wilk | | | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Variables |
| Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. | |
| .984 | 90 | .315 | .200* | 90 | .063 | Strategic flexibility |
| .974 | 90 | .066 | .162 | 90 | .083 | Interactive flexibility |
| .986 | 90 | .475 | .200* | 90 | .077 | Proactive flexibility |

Source: Preparing the researcher based on SPSS V.23 outputs

Second: truth the measurement tool search

The concept of the instrument's reliability refers to the ability to accurately and reliably measure the construction to be measured, ie, the extent to which the measuring instrument represents the characteristics that exist in the phenomenon under investigation. This side has three axes: Split-half, the consistency between components of the scale (alpha-cronbach), the construction truth of a test for the measuring instrument ,the empirical analysis.

1- The consistency between components of the scale (Alpha Cronbach)

This test is used to measure the degree of consistency of the answers of the interrogator to all the questions on the scale. To the extent that each question measures the same concept, these questions are interrelated, and the most common test for measuring the degree of The consistency between components of the scale is the scale called the Cronbach Alpha coefficient. (Cicaran Alpha: 294, 2009). By using Cronbach Alpha, Table 3 shows the consistency between the components of the scale at the level of the dimensions and the strategic elasticity, all of which have exceeded the Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficients to the acceptable minimum (0.70) The consistency between the components of the scale and the stability of the required in the event of repeated testing.

Table (3) Results of consistency between components of the scale

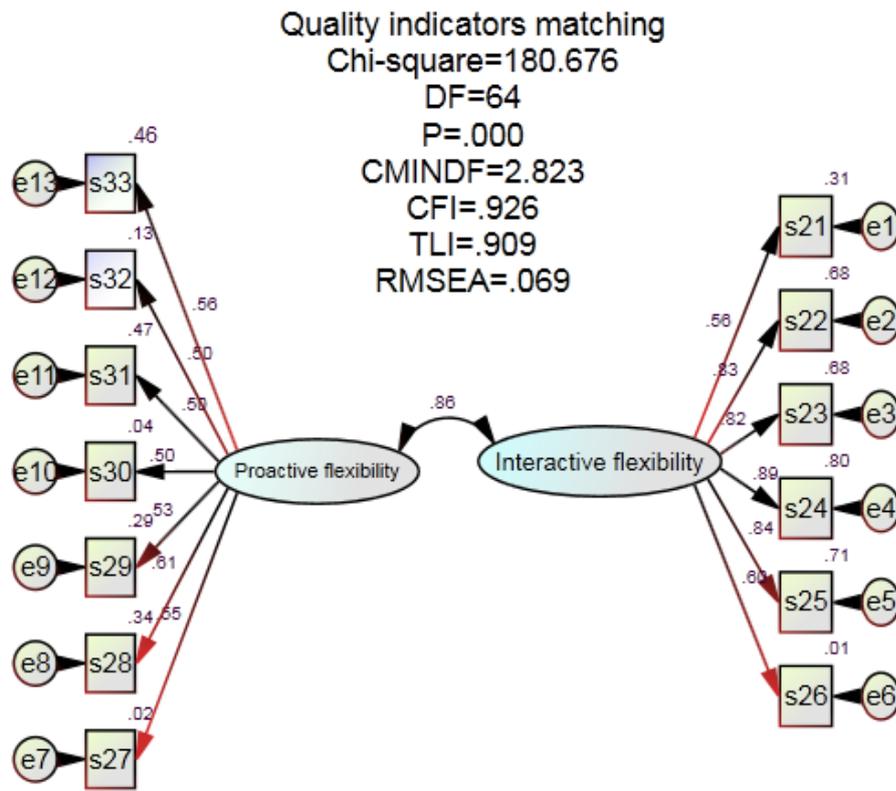
| The Cronbach alpha coefficient for strategic flexibility | Alpha Cronbach's coefficient of strategic flexibility | the scale |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| 0.953 | Strategic flexibility | |
| | 0.953 | Interactive flexibility |
| | 0.956 | Proactive flexibility |

2- Internal consistency of the Split-half Reliability Tests

The internal consistency of the standards is an indication of the homogeneity of the components of the measure that measures a particular concept or theory. That is, questions should be interrelated with each other as a group that measures a particular concept. Meaning that the sample understands the total meaning of the scale and each of the questions that comprise it. (Sikaran, 2009: 294). It is possible to identify the internal consistency of the scale by identifying the correlation between the constituent questions or by the confidence tests in the two halves of the measure (Split-half Reliability Tests), which will be adopted by the researcher, The correlation between the scores of the individual questions and the scores of the marital questions in the questionnaire and the correlation coefficient is corrected by the Spearman -Brown equation. If the coefficient of constancy (0.67) according to the equation is sufficient for the research on which the questionnaire is based, The questionnaire reached (0.89).

3- The Predicative analysis of the strategic flexibility axis

Figure 1 shows the predicative analysis of the strategic Flexibility which consists of two model main dimensions Which consists of (13) paragraphs As it is clear that the honesty of closeness For all the paragraphs of the strategic Flexibility axis is greater than (0.50) This indicates the veracity of the statements and that the quality indicators of the extracted matches are close to the Goodness .of Fit indicators and gives a good indicator for all other statistical analyzes.



Source: AMOS V.23

Figure (1) The full model of the Maronite Axis Strategy

As shown in Table 4, which represents the regression weights, the standard error, the critical values and the level of significance of the strategic elasticity axes, all CR values are greater than 1.96. Most of the model estimates are statistically significant (0.05).

| Table (4) slope weights, standard error, critical values and significance level for the removal of strategic flexibility | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-----|--|
| Paragraphs | Dimensions | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P | |
| s21 | Interactive flexibility | .564 | | | | |
| s22 | | .829 | .286 | 5.601 | *** | |
| s23 | | .811 | .310 | 5.487 | *** | |
| s24 | | .901 | .330 | 5.734 | *** | |
| s25 | | .842 | .305 | 5.662 | *** | |
| s26 | | .603 | .198 | 3.045 | *** | |
| s27 | Proactive flexibility | .550 | | | | |
| s28 | | .614 | .198 | 6.331 | *** | |
| s29 | | .528 | 2.974 | 1.178 | *** | |
| s30 | | .504 | 1.242 | 2.464 | *** | |
| s31 | | .502 | .211 | 6.728 | *** | |
| s32 | | .503 | .128 | 4.227 | *** | |
| s33 | | .559 | .167 | 6.377 | *** | |

Source: by the researcher based on the outputs of Amos.23

Third: To present and analyze the results according to the sample answers

In Table 5, it is generally clear that after the pre-emptive elasticity, the mean (3.15) and the standard deviation (0.87) and the interactive elasticity (3.00) and a standard deviation (0.98). This indicates that there is a clear decline in the Ministry of Health in adopting the flexibility of the interactive and proactive, noting that it often works to formulate its strategy in the light of previous plans and this is not a weak point And the increase of reliance on these plans is a weak point, and the researcher noted that most of the plans are in light of the results of the previous plans, so the continuation of the ministry in this way will lose the element of proactive and seize opportunities, on the other hand, the Ministry of Health does not enjoy the flexibility of interactive high level and Especially in terms of adoption of change as a fundamental concept in the drawing The Ministry's training operations are routine training courses and do not fall within the objective of preparing them for future changes. This is because the ministry suffers from the difficulty of reading the environmental variables. The researcher also found that the organizational structure suffers from bureaucracy and high official Prevents it from being characterized by interactive flexibility and that any structure characterized by these specifications and is characterized by stagnation will prevent any attempt sought by the ministry in order to be flexible.

Table (5) The arithmetic mean and the standard deviation of the sample responses investigated about the strategic Flexibility variable

| STANDARD DEVIATION | MEAN | PROACTIVE FLEXIBILITY | | STANDARD DEVIATION | MEAN | INTERACTIVE FLEXIBILITY | |
|--------------------|------|--|----|--------------------|------|---|---|
| | | | | | | | |
| 0.91 | 3.21 | The Ministry is formulating its strategy based on previous plans | 7 | 0.90 | 3.13 | The Ministry adopts change as a fundamental concept in its strategy for the future. | 1 |
| 0.80 | 3.49 | The Ministry invests technology to obtain acceptability within its new standards | 8 | 0.98 | 3.23 | The Ministry is formulating its strategy in a flexible manner | 2 |
| 0.88 | 3.27 | The Ministry provides services faster than in other ministries | 9 | 1.06 | 3.21 | The Ministry's leaders are concerned with the training and training of workers to cope with environmental changes. | 3 |
| 0.89 | 2.83 | The ministry adopts the philosophy of "anticipating events" in planning. | 10 | 1.07 | 2.86 | The Ministry's structure is highly flexible in its response to environmental changes | 4 |
| 0.91 | 3.16 | The Ministry has adequate preparations for the negative factors affecting it in the external environment | 11 | 1.04 | 3.08 | The Ministry continuously seeks to strengthen its capabilities for every new and unexpected opportunity in a rapidly changing environment | 5 |
| 0.88 | 2.88 | The ministry monitors enough funds to invest in unexpected opportunities | 12 | 0.86 | 2.47 | The Ministry conducts change processes in a close manner | 6 |
| 0.85 | 3.24 | The Ministry takes all possibilities into consideration when formulating future strategies | 13 | | | | |
| 0.87 | 3.15 | The middle ground | | 0.98 | 3.00 | The middle ground | |

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Preface

The final conclusions that emerged from the extrapolation of the intellectual side of the research variables and the results of the field side will be clarified. And make appropriate recommendations for those findings relevant to the research variables

First: Conclusions

1- There is a clear decline in the level of interactive flexibility, the ministry does not respond to environmental variables quickly because the strategies adopted are stable and inflexible strategies, which do not have alternative strategies most often. Moreover, its structure has affected it negatively, especially the routine procedures, in order to take official approvals in all the functions of the ministry, even if there are emergencies. Which is not implemented only after taking official approvals and this is illogical under the jurisdiction of the ministry, which relates to the lives of citizens, which requires to be characterized by high flexibility and interactive with the events facing them.

2- There is also a decline in the levels of proactive flexibility in the Ministry of Health, despite its interest in adopting technology for the advancement of environmental events, but this is not enough, and the basic principles of proactive and neglected, especially in the formulation of alternative plans, As well as the lack of seriousness in adopting the philosophy of changing events and anticipating events, so continuing this way will make the ministry suffer from continuing problems, which are surprised by the most often because it did not anticipate events or take precautions.

3- The results showed that the Ministry of Health suffers from a decline in strategic flexibility levels, especially in interactive flexibility. As they find that they lack the appropriate flexibility in order to keep up with the changes. Therefore, the ministry, while remaining on these measures, will suffer from the improvement of its performance for the better, due to failure to address the rigid plans, Sudden.

Second: Recommendations

1 - Interest in the activation of alternative plans by the beginning of each year more than one plan "for the best situation, the natural situation, the worst case" and these three plans are completed at the beginning of the year, the Minister approves the proposed plan of the three plans, and When the ministry is exposed to sudden events that may threaten its current plan, the minister should immediately approve the transition to the second plan prepared previously. And therefore the walk on this measure will help the ministry to interact with environmental variables first hand.

2- the result of routine rigid used by government institutions, including the Ministry of Health, this routine has caused a lot of delay in the event of emergencies, so when facing the ministry and hospitals cases critical such as explosions or spread epidemics or other cases give full authority to

the head of the department and In a temporary manner when the emergency occurs and authorizes the Director-General's powers when the direct contact is apologized at the time of the event to the superior

3 - As a result of the financial crisis experienced by the government ministries, including the Ministry of Health, the researcher believes that the ministry can improve the infrastructure of hospitals and promote the current reality, which is through the investment of funds collected from the auditors, especially after the recent decision of the Ministry of Health to raise financial fees Due to the financial deficit and this investment is made through the direct disbursement of these wages to the hospital itself. The money can be transferred to money that is unrestricted in its use and can be spent by the administration without restrictions. That is, without going to the ministry's center and thus to the Ministry of Finance and the hospital with the income is a need for it, so as long as there is a service providing and generating profits there should be expenses for this service in order to continue and develop at the same time.

4. The Ministry should adopt the method of managing results, which is a periodic review of the general and sub-objectives, and the extent to which they are achieved. This review should be every 3 months in order to achieve interactive flexibility according to environmental developments. Continue with predefined goals or be updated in the light of new variables.

5. In order to activate the strategic flexibility levels within the ministry, not one employee should be assigned to perform one task, but rather empower the staff and increase their skills to do more than one task within the ministry. This will ensure that all tasks are completed at all times even if the employee is absent. for some reason.

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