



The Investigation of strategic thinking effects on Improvement of organizational Performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company

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Abstract

The goal of present research is to investigate the impacts of strategic thinking on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. The method is descriptive research with the use of conducting survey investigation. The statistical population was the staffs of Isfahan Province Gas Company which were a number of 2573 at the time of study. Stratified sampling was used in this research. After determining the ratio of population (the number of staffs of companies in each city) the ration of each city to the total population was calculated and using the same ratio random sampling was applied. The sample size was 157 staffs of Isfahan Province Gas Company; with a consideration of 10% extra, 170 questionnaires were distributed of which 165 were returned. The Return rate of the questionnaires was 97%. So the final sample of this study was 165 persons and all the statistical analysis was based on this sample. The researcher developed a questionnaire about strategic thinking based on Liedtka model (28 tests) and used the questionnaire of organization's excellence standard about organizational performance (50 tests). The validity of this research was estimated 0.81 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Descriptive and inferential statistics (Kendall tau coefficient and Friedman Test) were used to analyze the data. The result demonstrated that main and sub hypotheses of this research were approved at the confidence level of 99%.

Keywords: Strategic thinking, organizational performance, liedtka model, systems perspective, hypothesis drive. intelligent opportunism, thinking in time.

Introduction

Continual improvement of organizations' performance creates a great force of synergy which can support plans for growth and development and provide opportunities for organizational excellence. Constant improvement of performance could not be achieved without investigating and measuring the progress and goal achievement, realizing the challenges ahead, receiving feedback about the implementation of the policies and identifying the areas that need improvement. Rapid and substantial changes of processes and political, economic and technological events in the post-industrial era have an extreme impact on the performance and behavior of an organization. Studies show that only a small number of managers especially in third world countries can cope with this type of changes and show a timely and suitable reaction and manage to organize the structure of the organization in accordance to the needed capabilities to confront the challenges and changes¹. In order to be in accordance with the increasing changes and taking steps toward the organizational plans, a change in the thinking process and a mental change in the managers of organizations are needed. When the organization confronts new issues the old methods lose their efficiency. Strategic thinking, like any other creative activity, would have better success when it follows specific principles and knowingly tries to avoid some deficiencies and shortcomings. So that effective factors could be

seen and from a vague and uncertain future solutions to problems could be provided, while considering effective factors, Strategic thinking is more than considering social, economic, political and technological processes and asks for managers who can determine the correlation between these factors². Strategic thinking enables the manger to determine the effective factors in reaching the desired goals and to recognize the ineffective factors and to find the reason behind them. Strategic thinking manifests in form of simple and deep rules and creates a particular mental model to be the base for daily decisions and general orientations of the organization and to create motivation and commitment for the organization and its beneficiaries. This motivation and commitment is created from a power which is in fact simple and interesting³.

As the organizations get more complicated and problems rise, the need to provide better solution and the use of stronger tools than strategic planning is felt. Since managers will have more effective performance using strategic thinking with a better understanding of the strategic plan. It could be said that strategic thinking as supplement to strategic planning is considered an appropriate organization's "leadership" approach and can help with a systematic confrontation with dilemmas, realizing opportunities, efficient allocation of scarce resources, and achieving desired results. Rapid and substantial changes of processes and political, economic and technological events in

the post-industrial era have an extreme impact on the performance and behavior of an organization. Studies show that only a small number of managers especially in third world countries can cope with this type of changes and show a timely and suitable reaction and manage to organize the structure of the organization in accordance to the needed capabilities to confront the challenges and changes¹. Strategic thinking is a vital management skill in the new millennium. A skill which empowers an organization to survive and grow in the extremely competitive today's environment². Strategic thinking is defined as "firm's strategic direction in creating proper behaviors so as to achieve superior performance". Previous studies on strategic thinking specifically mention types of behaviors which are within the organization and focus on production and distribution intelligence and marketing which are some of the key components of strategic thinking. Creating values and common behaviors across the organization is an important aspect of strategic thinking. When strategic thinking spreads in every level of an organization it becomes organizational culture. Organizational culture is defined as a model for values and shared beliefs which develops norms for behaviors within the organization.

Literature Review: Some of researchers emphasize that In order to be in accordance with the increasing changes and taking steps toward the organizational plans, a change in the thinking process and a mental change in the managers of organizations is needed¹. When the organization confronts new issues the old methods lose their efficiency. Strategic thinking, like any other creative activity, would have better success when it follows specific principles and knowingly tries to avoid some deficiencies and shortcomings. So that effective factors could be seen and from a vague and uncertain future solutions to problems could be provided, while considering effective factors, Strategic thinking is more than considering social, economic, political and technological processes and asks for managers who can determine the correlation between these factors. The result of this study shows that despite major efforts such as strategic planning documents in the municipality of Tehran, there is a meaningful gap between the current status and effective factors in organization, which is inevitable. Mintzberg considers a clear distinction between strategic thinking and strategic planning and states: Strategic planning isn't strategic thinking⁴. He believes that strategic planning is focused on analysis and deals with interpretation, expansion of details and formulation of current strategies. While strategic thinking emphasizes on combination and using intuition and creativity to develop a consistent image of the organization. He says, strategic planning is a process which should take place after strategic thinking. In the article "Linking strategic practices and organizational performance" state that there is a list of strategic actions which affect organizational performance significantly. In the article "The Impacts of Strategic Behaviors on Performance" conclude that higher performance is observed in samples that exhibited a higher level of strategic behavior⁵. In "The Relationship between Strategic Orientation, Service Innovation, and

Performance" state that although the relationship between expenses based orientation and innovation in service is not confirmed the relationship between customer orientation and competitor-based thinking and innovation in service is confirmed⁶. Also, the relationship between innovation in service and performance is confirmed.

Research Hypotheses: The presence of systems perspective has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. The presence of intent focus has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. The presence of hypothesis-driven process has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. The presence of intelligent opportunism has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. The presence of thinking in time has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company.

Methodology

This research is conducted using survey investigation with the use of stratified method. Stratified sampling is used to gather data about one or several traits in a time frame (a day, some weeks, a month) and describes the population based on one or more variables. The method is descriptive research with the use of conducting survey investigation. In fieldwork, the needed data was gathered using questionnaires and they were analyzed with SPSS software. In the level of descriptive statistics some of the measures that were used to describe the data set were frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation and in the level inferential statistics Kendall tau test and Friedman test were used. Literature based study were used for gathering the rest of data. The questionnaire was designed according to the conceptual model of the research in 50 questions. You can see the structure of the questionnaire in table 1. The Likert scale was used in the questionnaire and the format was from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (1-5 scores).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire. The result was 81.37 percentile which showed the reliability of the questionnaire.

$$ra = \frac{J}{J-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum sJ^2}{s^2} \right)$$
$$ra = \frac{78}{78-1} \left(1 - \frac{23.41}{119.11} \right) = 0.8137$$

Where: ra= Cronbach's alph coefficient, J= number of questions, SJ²= variance of test questions, S2= the variance of the observed total test.

Regarding testing the reliability of the content, the questionnaire

was given to the supervisor and relevant experts. After taking into consideration the amendments and using research literature, the questionnaire was arranged and distributed. The statistical population was the Gas Companies of Isfahan Province which are shown in table-2.

Since the statistical population was limited, the following method was used to determine the sample size:

$$n = \frac{Nt^2S^2}{Nd^2 + t^2s^2}$$

In which n is the number of samples, S² variance estimation, N statistical population size, d possible accuracy, t unit normal variable correspondent to confidence level.

Considering the uncertainty of the population variance, the initial study was done by distributing 30 questionnaires and studying trait variance. Hence the sample size formula was determined as follows.

$$n = \frac{2573 \times (1.96)^2 \times (0.659)^2}{2573 \times (0.10)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times (0.659)^2} = 157$$

Therefore the sample size for this research was 157 staffs of Isfahan Province Gas Company; with a consideration of 10% extra, 170 questionnaires were distributed of which 165 were returned. The Return rate of the questionnaires was 97%. So the final sample of this study was 165 persons and all the statistical analysis was based on this sample. Stratified sampling was used in this research. After determining the ratio of population (the number of staffs of companies in each city) the ration of each city to the total population was calculated and using the same ratio random sampling was applied.

Definitions and contents of Research: Organizational Performance: The literal meaning of performance is quality or mode of a function. Therefore organizational performance is a general structure which refers to how an organizational operation is done. The most famous definition of performance is presented by Neely et. al. "The process of quality explanation of efficiency and effectiveness of past actions"⁷. According to this definition performance is divided in two parts: i. Efficiency, which describes how an organization uses resources in course of producing services or products; in other words the desirable and real combination of inputs to produce specific outputs; and ii. Effectiveness, which is used to show how much of organization's objectives have been achieved⁸.

Table-1
The structure of the questionnaire

Variables	components	The numbers of question in the questionnaire	Relevant Hypothesis
Strategic Thinking	Systems perspective	1-6	All hypothesis
	Intent Focus	7-14	
	Hypothesis Drive	15-17	
	Intelligent Opportunism	18-24	
	Thinking in Time	25-28	
Organizational Performance	Leadership	1-5	First sub hypothesis
	Policy and Strategy	6-9	Second sub hypothesis
	Human Resources	10-14	Third sub hypothesis
	Partnerships and Resources	15-19	Fourth sub hypothesis
	Procedures	20-26	Fifth sub hypothesis
	Customers' Results	27-35	
	Human Resources' Results	36-40	
	Society Results	41-43	
	Performance Key Results	44-50	

Table-2
Statistical population by cities

Department	Official	Direct contract	Third party	Total
Khomeini Shahr Gas Department	25	13	44	82
Na'eenGas Department	6	8	31	45
District 2 (Eastern) Gas Department	30	10	46	86
District 1 Gas Department	28	13	48	89
District 3 Gas Department	33	21	71	125
Kashan Gas Department	29	26	115	170
AranandBidgol Gas Department	7	12	24	43
Falavarjan Gas Department	21	13	54	88
District 4 Gas Department	30	26	92	148
Daran Gas Department	18	14	106	138
Golpayegan Gas Department	18	10	36	64
Khansar Gas Department	7	3	16	26
Ardestan Gas Department	5	8	34	47
Tiran and Karun Gas Department	7	4	24	35
ShahinShar and Meymeh Gas Department	27	14	50	91
Najaf Abad Gas Department	28	7	52	87
ZarinShar Gas Department	30	18	72	120
Dolat Abad Gas Department	14	12	36	62
Shahreza Gas Department	25	25	103	153
Mobarakeh Gas Department	26	10	54	90
Central Department	382	155	247	784
sum	796	422	1355	2573

An Introduction on Strategic Thinking: Strategy (like other management concepts) would become history if it was not for its “modern” approaches. The reason behind this misfit is the nature of “classical” approach with today’s business environment. Today’s business environment is definable with properties like complex and nonlinear changes, discontinuous and mutational changes, constant paradigm changes, and non-classified competition. These properties weaken the accuracy of future environment predictions. The basis of strategic planning

is prediction of future environment (opportunities and threats) and where there is a big gap between the prediction (planning time) and the reality (executing time) the efficiency will be lost. Strategic planning needs a stable environment, environmental factors in balance with continuous changes, and understandable and predictable actions and reactions, therefore in the absence of such conditions its efficiency shrinks. Today’s business conditions are not suitable for strategic planning:

In strategic planning the work forms according to internal and environmental data without measuring how much these data are reliable and trustworthy. In the today's complex conditions of business, an accurate and complete understanding of environment is difficult and in some cases impossible.

The basis of strategic planning is prediction of trends of affairs; but inconsistent changes like technological, social or political changes are unpredictable.

The basis of strategic planning is "analysis" and this type of thinking (convergent thinking) lacks the necessary power for "creativity" (divergent thinking) which is the theme of transformational strategies. Henry Mintzberg has frequently mentioned this reality in his articles saying that strategic plans due to their analytical nature produce "plans" not strategies and what makes strategies efficient is creative synthesis⁴.

Strategic planning is a type of modeling from the real world which formulates strategy processing information on important internal and external factors. The complex environment of today's business cannot be modeled using a simple linear pattern which questions the accuracy of the resulted strategy. Ian Turner, an associate professor at Bruner University says about this: "our ability in future prediction is very limited. Because even the smallest change in the seemingly unrelated matters can cause major changes in the entire system. How in a world which is rapidly changing and there is no control over vital resources, organizations can formulate and operate strategies"⁹. Strategic planning models with choosing some factors (environmental and internal) and leaving out other seemingly unimportant factors follow reductionism; therefore it is not suitable for modeling nonlinear changes of today's business.

Strategic Thinking: Rapid and substantial changes of processes and political, economic and technological events in the post-industrial era have an extreme impact on the performance and behavior of an organization. Studies show that only a small number of managers especially in third world countries can cope with this type of changes and show a timely and suitable reaction and manage to organize the structure of the organization in accordance to the needed capabilities to confront the challenges and changes¹. In order to be in accordance with the increasing changes and taking steps toward the organizational plans, a change in the thinking process and a mental change in the managers of organizations is needed. When the organization confronts new issues the old methods lose their efficiency. Strategic thinking, like any other creative activity, would have better success when it follows specific principles and knowingly tries to avoid some deficiencies and shortcomings. So that effective factors could be seen and from a vague and uncertain future solutions to problems could be provided, while considering effective factors, Strategic thinking is more than considering social, economic, political and technological processes and asks for managers who can

determine the correlation between these factors². There are many definitions for strategic thinking in strategic management literature. Some authors have used the concept of strategic thinking for other concepts like strategic planning and strategic management. For example Nilson says: "the effort for improvement has changed strategic planning in a way that it would be appropriate to call it strategic management or strategic thinking"¹⁰. Mintzberg considers a clear distinction between strategic thinking and strategic planning and states: Strategic planning isn't strategic thinking. He believes that strategic planning is focused on analysis and deals with interpretation, expansion of details and formulation of current strategies⁴. While strategic thinking emphasizes on combination and using intuition and creativity to develop a consistent image of the organization. He says, strategic planning is a process which should take place after strategic thinking. Garratt has the same perspective. He believes that strategic thinking is a process with which senior managers can take a distant from procedures and daily crisis, therefore creating a different approach from the organization and environment. From an overall perspective, strategic thinking is an "insight and understanding of the current situation and utilizing opportunities." This insight helps to identify market realities and rules correctly and timely and to create innovative and valuable solutions for them. Some other definitions of strategic thinking is mentioned bellow. Strategic thinking is a vital management skill in the new millennium. A skill which empowers an organization to survive and grow in the extremely competitive today's environment². Strategic thinking is designing actions based on new learning. Strategic thinking is a mental synthesis which provides an integrated view of business in mind using creativity and intuition⁴. Strategic thinking is a constant process which acts to clarify ambiguity and give meaning to a complex environment. This process contains situation analysis and a creative combining of results in form of a successful strategic plan. Therefore, it seems strategic thinking is a new subject which has been studied and investigated in recent years. In this research we are trying to measure the thinking in managers for achieving a criterion and overall indicator. Several models have been suggested for strategic thinking. Each of these, concentrate on some aspects of formation process and concepts of strategic thinking. We have used Five Elements of Thinking Strategically (Liedtka model) in this research to investigate strategic thinking of Isfahan Province Gas Company staffs.

Liedtka Model: Ms Jeanne Liedtka presented a model for strategic thinking which she believes is a base for creating new strategies and can change the competition rules drawing a completely different perspective of the current situation. This model is made up five elements.

Systems perspective: Liedtka believes that a strategic thinker should have a mental model of the complete end to end system of value creation and understands the interdependencies within it. Strategy is a holistic and integrated approach even though it has many various activities.

Intent focus: strategic intent provides the focus that allows the individuals within an organization to marshal and leverage their energy, to focus attention, to resist distraction, and to concentrate as long as it takes to achieve a goal.

Intelligent opportunism: There must be room for intelligent opportunism that not only furthers intended strategy but also leave open of the possibility of new strategies emerging. In strategic thinking seeking opportunities and using them is an important principle.

Thinking in time: Strategy is not driven by future intent alone. Strategy links past, present and future. This oscillation between past, present and future is essential for the execution of strategy. In this type of thinking future should be created based on current capabilities (which are the past achievements of the organization).

Hypothesis-driven: In an environment of ever-increasing information availability and decreasing time to think, the ability to develop good hypotheses and to test them efficiently is critical. The ability to work well with hypotheses is the core competence of the best strategies. This concept is one of the factors that distinguish strategic thinking from strategic planning. This process using a chain of rational statements like “what if...?” and “if A, then B” creates an effective connection between creative synthesis (hypothesis making) and analytical tools (hypothesis test).

Organizational excellence models with business excellence are used as strong tools to measure the level of systems deployment in different organizations. The European Quality Award which is developed by European Foundation for Quality Management and is known as EFQM model has gained global recognition. Strong systems perspective, careful consideration of organizational process-based management and result orientation of EFQM model is very informative and operative for Iranian organizations which normally face serious issues in these areas. EFQM excellence model as a comprehensive model in measuring performance abilities of organizations determines the success of organizations in reaching excellence by design and implementation of an evaluation system of organization’s performance, their intelligent mobility in designing optimal path, optimal implementation of objectives, investigation of findings and measuring the effectiveness of taken actions. This framework consists of two separate factors which are generally classified as “enablers” and “results”. Enablers are: leadership, staffs, policies and strategies, resources, beneficiaries and procedures. Results are: results obtained from people, results obtained from customers, results obtained from society and key results of performance. The theory supporting this framework is that enablers are like levers that managers can use to facilitate reaching their desired results. Considering Liedtka model in strategic thinking and EFQM model in organizational performance, the conceptual model of present study is as follows. Organizational excellence models with business

excellence are used as strong tools to measure the level of systems deployment in different organizations. The European Quality Award which is developed by European Foundation for Quality Management and is known as EFQM model has gained global recognition. Strong systems perspective, careful consideration of organizational process-based management and result orientation of EFQM model is very informative and operative for Iranian organizations which normally face serious issues in these areas. EFQM excellence model as a comprehensive model in measuring performance abilities of organizations determines the success of organizations in reaching excellence by design and implementation of an evaluation system of organization’s performance, their intelligent mobility in designing optimal path, optimal implementation of objectives, investigation of findings and measuring the effectiveness of taken actions. This framework consists of two separate factors which are generally classified as “enablers” and “results”. Enablers are: leadership, staffs, policies and strategies, resources, beneficiaries and procedures. Results are: results obtained from people, results obtained from customers, results obtained from society and key results of performance. The theory supporting this framework is that enablers are like levers that managers can use to facilitate reaching their desired results.

Results and Discussion

In hypothesis testing of this study, first the association between each components of strategic approach and each component of organizational performance as well as the association of each component of strategic approach with variables of organizational performance was studied. Kendall tau coefficient has been used to test the hypothesis. If the sum of sig is less than 0.05 the association is significant. The correlation test was held in the range of 0.01 and 0.05. Description of hypothesis testing has been shown in relevant tables for each hypothesis separately.

First hypothesis: The presence of systems perspective has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company.

Second hypothesis: The presence of intent focus has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company.

Third hypothesis: The presence of hypothesis drive has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company.

Fourth hypothesis: The presence of intelligent opportunism has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company

Fifth hypothesis: The presence of thinking in time has a significant impact on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company

Table-3
Association of system perspective with components of organizational performance

Kendall tau test	Components of organizational performance		Systems perspective
There is a significant association between systems perspective and leadership.	Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.269**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and policy and strategy.	Policy and strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.212**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and human resources.	Human resources	Correlation Coefficient	.410**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and partnerships and resources.	Partnerships and resources	Correlation Coefficient	.309**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and procedures.	procedures	Correlation Coefficient	.286**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and customer results.	Customers' results	Correlation Coefficient	.140*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.015
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and human resources results.	Human resource's results	Correlation Coefficient	.320**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and society results.	Society's results	Correlation Coefficient	.289**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between systems perspective and performance key results.	Performance key results	Correlation Coefficient	.049
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.378
		N	165

* The correlation on level is 5 percentile significant. ** The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

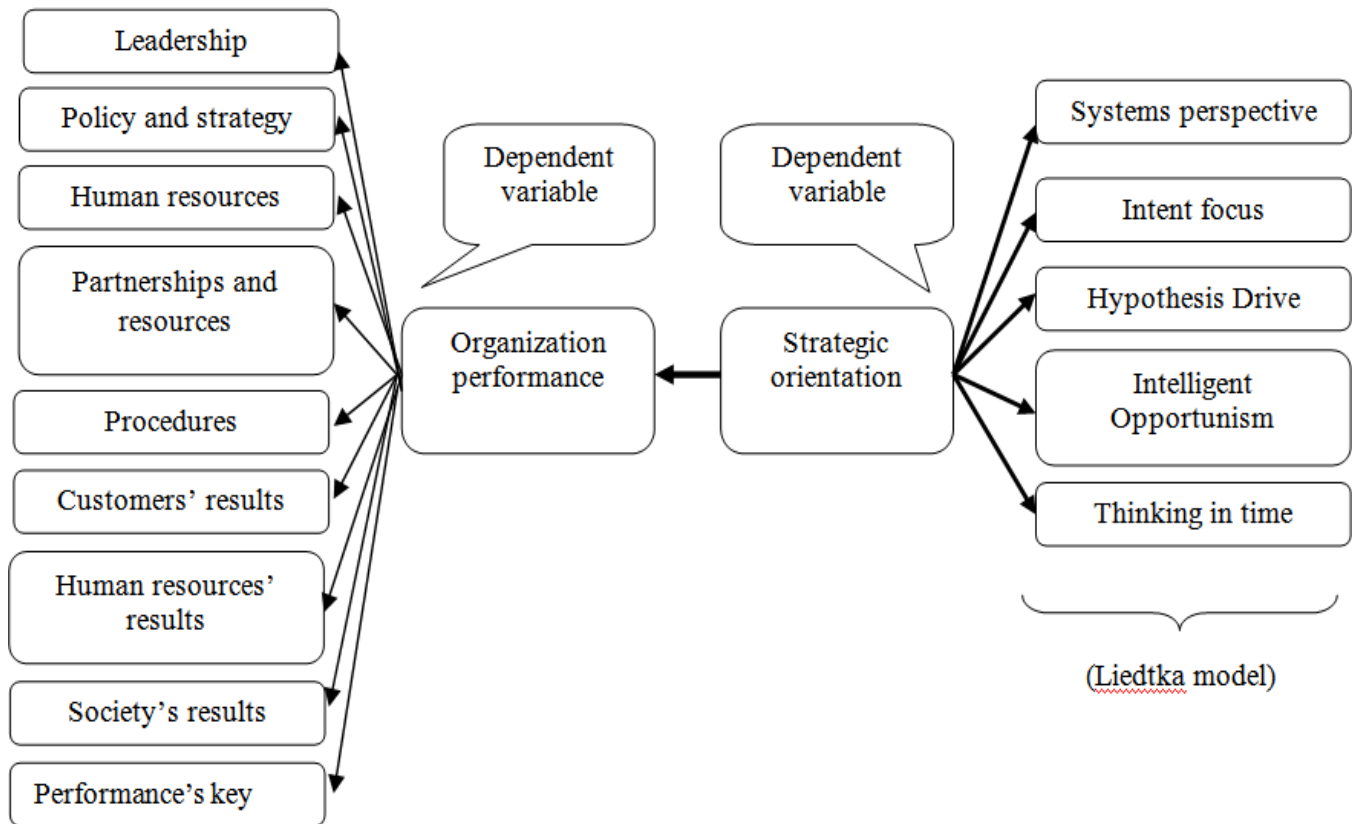


Figure-1
 Conceptual model of research

Table-4
 The association of systems perspective with organizational performance

Kendall tau test result			Systems perspective
There is a significant association between systems perspective and organizational performance.	Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.342**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165

** The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-5
 The association of intent-focus with components of organizational performance

Kendall tau results	Organizational performance components		Intent focus
There is a significant association between intent focus and leadership.	Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.358**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and policy and strategy.	Policy and strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.196**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
		N	165

Kendall tau results	Organizational performance components		Intent focus
There is a significant association between intent focus and human resources.	Human resources	Correlation Coefficient	.398**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and partnerships and resources.	Partnerships and resources	Correlation Coefficient	.331**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and procedures.	procedures	Correlation Coefficient	.402**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and customer results.	Customers' results	Correlation Coefficient	.174**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and human resources results.	Human resource's results	Correlation Coefficient	.429**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and society results.	Society's results	Correlation Coefficient	.317**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intent focus and performance key results.	Performance key results	Correlation Coefficient	.084
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.144
		N	165

** The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-6
The association of intent-focus with organizational performance

			Intent focus
There is a significant association between intent focus and organizational performance.	Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.409**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165

** The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-7
The association of hypothesis-drive with components of organizational performance

Kendall tau results	Organizational performance components		Hypothesis drive
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and leadership.	Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.354**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and policy and strategy.	Policy and strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.293**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and human resources.	Human resources	Correlation Coefficient	.408**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and partnerships and resources.	Partnerships and resources	Correlation Coefficient	.305**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and procedures.	procedures	Correlation Coefficient	.344**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and customer results.	Customers' results	Correlation Coefficient	.090
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.124
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and human resources results.	Human resource's results	Correlation Coefficient	.429**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and society results.	Society's results	Correlation Coefficient	.353**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and performance key results.	Performance key results	Correlation Coefficient	.119*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.037
		N	165

**The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant. * The correlation on level is 5 percentile significant.

Table-8
The association of hypothesis-drive with organizational performance

Kendall tau test result			Hypothesis drive
There is a significant association between hypothesis-drive and organizational performance.	organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.446**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165

** The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-9
The association of intelligent opportunism with components of organizational performance

Kendall tau results	Organizational performance components		Intelligent Opportunism
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and leadership.	Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.431**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and policy and strategy.	Policy and strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.235**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and human resources.	Human resources	Correlation Coefficient	.462**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and partnerships and resources.	Partnerships and resources	Correlation Coefficient	.229**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and procedures.	procedures	Correlation Coefficient	.456**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and customer results.	Customers' results	Correlation Coefficient	.126*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and human resources results.	Human resource's results	Correlation Coefficient	.456**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and society results.	Society's results	Correlation Coefficient	.315**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and performance key results.	Performance key results	Correlation Coefficient	.057
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.305
		N	165

**The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant. * The correlation on level is 5 percentile significant.

Table-10
The association of intelligent opportunism with organizational performance

Kendall tau test result			Intelligent Opportunism
There is a significant association between intelligent opportunism and organizational performance.	Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.461**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165

**The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-11
The association of “thinking in time” with components of organizational performance

Kendall tau results	Organizational performance components		Thinking in time
There is a significant association between thinking in time and leadership.	Leadership	Correlation Coefficient	.393**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and policy and strategy.	Policy and strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.236**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and human resources.	Human resources	Correlation Coefficient	.380**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and partnerships and resources.	Partnerships and resources	Correlation Coefficient	.376**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and procedures.	procedures	Correlation Coefficient	.398**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and customer results.	Customers’ results	Correlation Coefficient	.143*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.016
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and human resources results.	Human resource’s results	Correlation Coefficient	.409**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and society results.	Society’s results	Correlation Coefficient	.673**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165
There is a significant association between thinking in time and performance key results.	Performance key results	Correlation Coefficient	.145*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
		N	165

Main Hypothesis: The presence of strategic thinking has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company.

After investigating the hypothesis using Friedman test, the components of Liedtka model effective on organizational performance was rated. The ranks of factors and statistics of Friedman test are specified in tables 14 and 15.

Conclusion

The presence of system perspective has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, system perspective has a significant association with all the components of organizational performance, except for key results of performance which is not significant at 98% level. Additionally, systems perspective has the highest association with human resources and the lowest significant association with customers' results. Moreover, the association of systems perspective with organizational performance is positive and significant at 1% error level. Therefore, the first sub hypothesis of this research indicating the significant impact of systems perspective on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved.

The presence of intent focus has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, intent focus has a significant association with all the components of organizational performance, except for key results of performance which is not significant at 95% level. Additionally, intent focus has the highest association with human resources and the lowest significant association with customers' results. Furthermore, the association of intent focus with organizational performance is positive and significant at

1% error level. In other words, the second sub hypothesis of this research indicating the influence of intent focus on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved at the confidence level of 99%.

The presence of hypothesis drive has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, hypothesis drive has a significant association with all the components of organizational performance, except for customers' results which is not significant at 95% level. Additionally, hypothesis drive has the highest association with human resources and the lowest significant association with key results of performance. Moreover, the association of hypothesis drive with organizational performance is positive and significant at 1% error level. Therefore, the third sub hypothesis of this research indicating the influence of hypothesis drive on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved at the confidence level of 99%.

The presence of intelligent opportunism has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, intelligent opportunism has a significant association with all the components of organizational performance, except for key results of performance which is not significant at 95% level. Additionally, intelligent opportunism has the highest association with human resources and the lowest significant association with customers' results. Moreover, the association of intelligent opportunism with organizational performance is direct and significant at 1% error level. Therefore, the fourth sub hypothesis of this research indicating the influence of intelligent opportunism on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved at the confidence level of 99%.

Table-12
The association of thinking in time with organizational performance

Kendall tau test result			Thinking in time
There is a significant association between thinking in time factor and organizational performance.	Organizational performance	Correlation Coefficient	.492**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	165

**The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-13
Correlation between strategic thinking and organizational performance

Kendall tau test result			Organizational performance
There is a significant association between organizational performance and strategic thinking.	Strategic thinking	Correlation Coefficient	.437(**)
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	164

**The correlation on level is 1 percentile significant.

Table-14
Rankings of Factors

Average Rank	
3.12	System perspective
3.33	Intent focus
2.20	Hypothesis drive
2.38	Intelligent opportunism
3.97	Thinking in time

Table-15
Rankings of Friedman Statistics

165	Number
138.692	Chi-squared
4	Degrees of freedom
.000	Significance level

The presence of thinking in time has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, the thinking in time element has a significant association with all the components of organizational performance, except for customers' results and key results of performance which are not significant at 95% level. Additionally, intelligent opportunism has the highest association with society's results and the lowest significant association with customers' results. Moreover, the association of thinking in time element with organizational performance is direct and significant at 1% error level. Therefore, the fifth sub hypothesis of this research indicating the influence of thinking in time element on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved at the confidence level of 99%.

The presence of strategic thinking has a significant impact on the improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company. Considering the results of hypothesis testing, the association of strategic thinking with organizational performance is direct and significant at 1% error level. In other words the presence of strategic thinking improves the organizational performance. Therefore the existence of an association between these two variables is accepted. In fact, the main hypothesis of the research indicating the significant impact of strategic thinking on improvement of organizational performance in Isfahan Province Gas Company is approved.

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