# The Relationship between Strategic Leadership and Innovation Performance in the Private Universities of UAE

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**Abstract:**
The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between strategic leadership and innovation performance in the universities of UAE.A sample of 40 respondents is taken in this study. Since it's an empirical paper, various statistical tools were used to analyse and interpret the results. ANOVA, Independent sample t-test and linear regression have been used for this study. The results of the study show that there exists a relationship between strategic leadership and innovation performance but this relationship is dependent on demographic profile of the respondents. This paper can help the universities in the UAE to work in such a manner that can help in getting better performance. It will help the leaders of institutes what are the strategies to be implemented so as to help improve the performance. This paper would be useful for guiding the development and resolution of researchers' and practitioners' research questions and could help to strengthen the universities in UAE.

**Keywords:** *Strategic Leadership, Innovation performance, UAE..*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the past few decades the leaders of higher educational institutes are encouraged to understand, strategic management from businesses. University leaders have to face different types of difficulties as compared to the corporate leaders. The learning of leadership can go the other way too, private sectors can try to learn from the university leaders as they face a mix of difficulties. So as to be a successful leader the leader have to look beyond, they have to think critically and analytically. For handling the challenges of the university, strategic leadership is required which can merge the traditional strengths with the updated form of engagements. University members should draw on their organizations 'collegiality and shared purpose in promoting public-good awareness. These characteristics can also help market transition. Universities will link the implementation of science to tackle social, cultural, and environmental concerns, and how companies respond to solving those concerns.

It is organizational risk-taking, the size and scope of large companies and small firms 'creativity that turns work into value-for-society developments. As strategic university leaders develop ties with the private sector, they will ensure that researchers are not exposed to improper administrative activities, thus empowering them to be more involved. Their secret to success lies in partnering actively with the business sector while remaining transparent that the aim of this partnership is to advance the university's core academic goal. The effective universities have greatly strengthened their relationship with industry and changed the way they work, as well as the services they offer to students, staff and communities. There is synergy in the needs of colleges and businesses for leadership. There is a need for common expertise in managing big, diverse organizations. Universities have an interest in their students 'organizational efficiencies and business experience. Leading firms finance the study and show "working institutions" features.

University and business leaders find responsible practices and environmental obligations a top priority. Both recognize that there are benefits in volatile and dynamic settings, where creativity is a main goal, in being flexible and receptive to new challenges, and in approaches that develop rather than being set in stone. University and corporate officials seek to draw upon the opportunities of co-locating colleges and companies in clusters and districts for growth. Both leaders need judicious teamwork skills and the courage to resist

getting trapped in day-to-day problem-solving. Yet there are significant variations, too. Although university leaders need not care (and are less quickly sacked) about their asset values, they need to navigate a broader variety of customers, execute short-term, and plan for the very long-term because their employees are actively defending their self-determined science and education goals.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Strategic Leadership in Universities

Economic leadership and growth management are essential to creating and sustaining economic success in the 21st century. Strategic leaders have been consistently recognized for their important role in identifying opportunities and taking choices that impact systems of growth. The identification and development of resources for strategic executives brings tremendous market value. (Elenkov, D. S et al., 2005)Throughout methodological research, the relationships between leadership and creative factors have drawn that interest (Halbesleben et al., 2003; Sharma and Rai, 2003; West et al., 2003), but most of these analyses have not focused on individual political leaders (Antonakis and House, 2002).Nevertheless, progress has been made in studying the connection between the demo-graphic characteristics of strategic leaders and the innovation approach from the upper echelons perspective (Enns, Huff, and Golden, 2003;), but these studies have neglected to explicitly research real strategic leadership behaviors and their impacts on the cycle of organizational innovation. Top management and the broader global backdrop greatly affect policy actions and, by extension, organization's creativity. Current literature suggests that the socio-cultural environment is influencing both leadership practices and creativity processes (Elenkov, 2002; Schneider and Barsoux, 2003).

Business success and loss are primarily based on the decisions taken by the executive leaders. Leadership style is a way of directing and inspiring individuals to reach corporate goals. Leadership style and innovation influences greatly affect market performance. Since members have a huge impact on organizational policy and innovation that is essential to the competitive environment. Leadership is an individual's capacity to lead and motivate a group of people to achieve those goals (Nejad& Rowe, 2009).Various leadership models have no doubt significant impacts on market elements such as creativity, systemic transformation, etc. (Ehigie &

Akpan, 2004).In this sense the need for strong leadership in a dynamic market climate is rising day by day. Strategic leadership is the power to persuade others to make decisions on a voluntary basis about short-and long-term growth, as well as the company's life (Nejad & Rowe, 2009).Strategic leaders promote and support creativity in the face of environmental change, as well as appreciation of the organization's capabilities to help the client in the short and the long term. Innovation is the best way for businesses to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and boost efficiency, according to Porter (1990).In today's corporate climate, market loss is a fact, considered to be a major and important aspect of modern corporate projects (Ucbasaran et al., 2013; Walsh and Cunningham, 2016).The leadership models employed are dynamic and transactional

### Innovation Performance in Universities

A surge of acceleration of transformation is generating new marketing movements in the era of globalization and technological development. Innovation is required to succeed and thrive in an environment. Creativity not only generates wealth for the good of people, organizations or community, but creativity will try innovative ways to address an unpredictable future and foresee it. Today, government leaders, corporate leaders and even institutional leaders are crying out for creativity, encouraging efforts to increase the quality of education, and through creativity, members will inspire and contribute to the successful execution of the organization (Lee, 2015).

Therefore, the initiative that a leader will consider will be able to note on enhancing the standard of education, school progress is not feasible without requiring significant changes in education, and educational advancement is unlikely to occur without any desire to adapt from the whole school organization. Easier developments created by managers are fairly tied to staff, since the creation of good education study and the advancement of colleges demonstrate specifically that there is a lack in reform and progress within the education organization, which is the responsibility of the manager. Innovation has a high value on creative leadership, says Gehani (2013) Globalization's interconnectedness, a increasing middle class and the rising number of higher education institutes are transforming the composition of higher education classrooms across Asia. Mobility among young people is

growing along with educational access strategies across social classes across the country. (Cheng Yi'en and Yang Peidong, 2018) This rise in all kinds of complexity is great for teaching and learning. We know that the different working groups are more successful, more imaginative and more inventive. (Cedric Herring, 2009) We know that ideas produced by different groups are of higher quality and that the level of critical thinking and decision-making is higher in groups that are exposed to "minority" views. Higher education institutions need to change to make room for more innovations in the classroom and for more kinds of individuals to be important and impactful. It allows higher education to shift physical, curricular, and pedagogical practices to encourage strategic leadership around diversity to inclusiveness. The aim is to directly leverage diversity and inclusion initiatives to provide the lifelong learning and critical thinking skills. The single transmission of information regarding material is no longer an acceptable method in higher education. Asking the learner to recall the subject material and appreciate it is not enough; it is only the beginning.

The challenge is that higher education improvements are uncommon, gradual and costly. Strategic institutional leadership is central to the cycle of transformation. When higher education institutions do not incorporate the variety of ideas and learners that reach their classes more thoughtfully, so those institutions risk no longer adequately training their students for success in a increasingly integrated society.

These are digital devices in the workforce to communicate with materials; the workforce needs imaginative and inventive problem solving; and the workplace needs cognitive tolerance to current tasks and problems. To order to offer these skills to Asian undergraduate students, we need to go beyond examinations, we need to go beyond instructional courses and we need to involve the previous experience of the graduates. Robert Aoun in Robot Evidence describes that good liberal education must improve numeracy, entrepreneurialism and innovation in learners if they are to be properly trained for the future of work. In Higher Education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, discusses how technology affects what students need to learn, particularly in the sense of South East Asia.

Western liberal arts education is being pursued in the twenty-first century in many areas of Asia, with greater frequency. An emphasis on critical thought and problem-solving guides the learning in these environments and mind patterns that combine mathematics with theory, and both students study the social and physical sciences. It's difficult to bring a change in higher education institutes. Strategic leadership in the field of higher education requires that a particular person or commission understand what obligation remains to promote diversity and inclusion independently from what was achieved in the organization before. Most of the research now conducted on campuses emanates from a particular institution's student affairs or residential life bureaus.

The important crucial element in assessing creativity is identifying a metric scale. With this it was sought to establish a metric that could be used to evaluate expectations, skills, of creativity and growth. A scale for managers of schools was developed. They applied this analysis to 216 managers at the department. He employed factor analysis to understand the efficacy of this research. He determined there would be 4 sub-levels, for example input management, project management. He determined after the review that the scale generated in this study should be used to identify and quantify the attitudes and skills of school administrators in the education sector in terms of creativity. They have used the scale in this study which is being developed. Göl & Bülbül (2012) performed another analysis using the same scale. They tried to figure out how teachers view the concepts of creativity management in the education sector. The research was conducted in 68 primary schools in Kirklareli, with 396 students. Researchers also used class, age, and professional seniority as variables that influence the attitudes of teachers. As a result, gender does not produce a clear difference in expectations, but age and degree of professional seniority may make a difference in certain cases. As a kind of creativity measuring research, Çuhadar et al.(2018) attempted to describe the relationship between the pre-service teachers 'individual creative and techno pedagogical education skills. They made an enquiry about the issue. They brought this experiment into effect at Trakya University. The candidates are pre-service teachers in 10 separate teacher preparation systems that are senior graduates. To render research, they used one-paired t-test and one-way ANOVA test. As a result they found the gender component and it did not affect the problem dramatically. It cannot make a noticeable difference.

## III. METHODOLOGY

For data collection a questionnaire was used. The study's three major scales, i.e. strategic leadership practices (using Jooste and Fourie's 7-item instrument 2009) and creativity efficiency (using Wang & Ahmed's 4-item instrument 2004), were assessed on a five-point Likert scale varying from firmly accepted to strongly disagree. SPSS version 23 was used for data processing and all experiments were performed at a sense standard of 5 per cent. Descriptive figures have been used to identify core demographic features of the survey. An independent-sample t-test was used to check the theoretical assumptions of gender for equality of means. ANOVA was used to compare the means. Linear regression was also used to examine the effect of hypothesized frameworks. The number of respondents is 40 which are working in various universities across UAE.

## IV. DISCUSSION

A descriptive approach was used to describe the demographic variables of the study (see table 1). From a population size of 40 faculty members, 29 were men while as 11 were women who met the inclusion criteria and were enrolled. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents (50%) are in the age group, more than 40 years, while 31.8% are of the ages between 30 and 40. 18.2 % respondents fall in the category 20 and 30 years.

### Table 1: Descriptive of Demographics

|  | Gender | Mean | Std. Deviation | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 2.1125 | .62062 | 72.7 |
|  | Female | 2.0833 | .64627 | 27.3 |
| Age | 20-30 | 1.50 | .577 | 18.2 |
|  | 30-40 | 2.25 | .886 | 31.8 |
|  | >40 | 2.67 | .577 | 50.0 |
| Teaching Experience | 0-5 years | 2.25 | .957 | 9.1 |
|  | 5-10 years | 3.00 | .000 | 31.8 |
|  | 10 and more years | 2.71 | .488 | 59.1 |

Table 2 represents descriptive for strategic leadership and innovation performance. The descriptive of both the variables were fairly in the range, Strategic Leadership (2.1045) and Innovation Performance (2.5303)

### Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Variables

|  | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strategic leadership | 2.1045 | .61216 | 40 |
| Innovation Performance | 2.5303 | .53664 | 40 |

A further analysis to compare the means between male and female levels on the major study variables using an independent-samples test was carried out (See Table 3 below). Thus, for strategic leadership behaviours and innovation performance the sample variances were assumed to be equal (p>0.05). The mean for male was higher as compared to female respondents. As regards innovation performance the mean of female was higher as compared to male. Since the sig value is more the .05 thus there is a significant difference male and female as regards innovation performance.

### Table 3. Independent Sample t-test on the variables with gender as factor

|  | Mean | SD | SD Error Difference | Df | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 2.1125 | .6206 2 | .15515 | 8.70 9 | .09 7 | .83 7 |
| Female | 2.0833 | .6462 7 |  |  |  |  |
| **Strategic Leadership** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Male | 2.4792 | .5013 9 | .25998 | 7.34 5 | .72 1 | .33 7 |
| Female | 2.6666 7 | .6516 8 |  |  |  |  |
| **Innovation Performance** |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 4 shows results of a one-way ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey HSD test for comparing mean differences of ordinal categorical demographic variables (gender, age and teaching experience) on the theoretical constructs. From the results there are statistically significant differences between the groups as a whole (all p>0.05) In terms of age, multiple comparisons show that groups differed from each other. The Tukey post-hoc test shows that older faculties (>40 years) have higher levels of strategic leadership behaviours (mean=2.2816) and innovation performance (mean=2.7619) than faculty member which were younger (20-30 and 30-40 years). In terms of teaching experience with regards to strategic leadership the faculty member with highest experience had higher levels. (10 and more) the mean is 2.3538 which is higher than the faculties with

less experience. For innovation performance the faculties with mid-level experience were higher as compared to with most and least experience. (mean= 2.8889) The significance difference between the entire variable in strategic leadership and innovation performance was higher than 5% therefore there was significant difference among variables.

**Table 4: ANOVA Tukey post hoc on variables**

| Variable | Strategic Leadership | | Innovation Performance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean | Significance | Mean | Significance |
| Male | .004 | .924 | .153 | .479 |
| Female | .393 | | .295 | |
| Age | | | | |
| 20-30 | 1.800 | .366 | 2.4040 | .483 |
| 30-40 | 2.000 | | 2.4722 | |
| >40 | 2.2816 | | 2.7619 | |
| Teaching Experience | | | | |
| 0-5 years | 1.7500 | .277 | 2.5000 | .274 |
| 5-10 years | 1.7429 | | 2.8889 | |
| 10 and more | 2.3538 | | 2.3419 | |

From the three hypothesized frameworks, the results show that statistically significant positive linear relationships/effects exist between the variables. The enter method was utilized for evaluating these models. The Durbin-Watson test for auto-correlation was used to test the assumption of homoscedasticity and normality of residuals. Results of the simple linear regression models are presented table 5.

To determine whether there exists a statistically significant positive linear relationship/effect of strategic leadership behaviors on competitive advantage, a simple linear regression model was examined. Strategic leadership behaviors were modeled as an explanatory/independent variable and this resulted in a significant model). The model fit and the summary statistics are presented in Table 5. In this model, strategic leadership behaviors explained a significant amount of the variance in innovation performance. Durbin-Watson d = 1.646 is between the two critical values of 1.5 < d < 2.5 and therefore wecan assume that there is no first order linear auto-correlation in our linear regression data.

**Table 5: Simple linear regression, summary for strategic leadership and innovation performance**

| Source | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | .798 | .798 | 2.528 | .149 |
| Residual | 7.071 | .354 | | |
| Total | 7.870 | | | |

| Model Summary | |
|---|---|
| Observation | 40 |
| R(Est. standard error) | .319 |
| $R^2$ | .101 |
| F Change (Sig. F Change) | 2.258 |
| Durbin Watson | 1.646 |

### V. DISCUSSION

Throughout this study the aim was to examine the relationship between the determinants influencing universities in the context of the UAE, paying attention to two determinants: a) strategic leadership and b) innovative performance. This research reinforces previous analysis that has put leadership as the key to the way organizations run (Alhadid 2016). In essence, the study contributes to the literature by showing those factors that can be determinants for success within universities in UAE. Essentially, the research adds to the literature by explaining certain variables that could be determinants of achievement within UAE universities. In such a situation, the need is not only for a response from the leadership, but a strategic insight that makes the company succeed (Wendy 2012).Universities will be creative by strategic leadership (Alhadid 2016).As a result, political leaders should use the lack of capital surrounding them to help their companies evolve (Goksoy et al. 2013).The research and its findings therefore align with the context of the UAE and the concerted policy in promoting the growth of universities. The thesis associates with this cause and hopes that this research will contribute to this continuing yet significant debate by defining the relationships between strategic leadership and innovation results. Essentially, the research applies to some of the essential factors already

identified by universities identified in literature (Aslan et al 2011) by demonstrating the interrelationship of the determinants in question. Therefore, our results magnify the importance of strategic leadership and excellence in creativity as internal skills (Akbari et al 2014) that can produce improved performance for the company when combined with technology (Mohutsiwa 2012).Through the results of this report, the associated existence of strategic leadership practices, and innovation performance within universities are argued for. While UAE strives to promote education sector in the post-democratic dispensation process, our results raise understanding of the concerns that any future private university might need to address as a foundation for success.

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