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THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC FORESIGHT IN IMPROVING SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCY CASE STUDY IN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR (AL AIN MINERAL WATER COMPANY)

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Abstract:

In light of the study's findings, it is clear that strategic foresight plays a pivotal role in improving supply chain efficiency within industrial companies. It contributes to enhancing the ability to predict future changes in the business environment, which positively impacts the accuracy of planning and decision-making. The results also showed that integrating strategic foresight tools with modern information systems leads to a higher level of responsiveness to market changes and reduces risks associated with uncertainty. Furthermore, it enhances the resilience of the supply chain and its ability to withstand crises and disruptions. In this context, the importance of building employees' analytical capabilities and developing their foresight skills emerged as a fundamental factor in achieving sustainable operational efficiency.

Accordingly, the study emphasizes the need for Al Ain Mineral Water Company to adopt strategic foresight methodologies institutionally by integrating them into its strategic planning and supply chain management processes. It also recommends increasing investment in information systems and data analytics to support decision-making, along with establishing a specialized unit to monitor environmental changes and develop future scenarios. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to develop human resources through specialized training programs and to enhance collaboration with suppliers to achieve greater integration across the supply chain. Finally, adopting clear performance indicators to measure the impact of strategic foresight is a crucial step to ensure continuous improvement and achieve higher levels of efficiency and competitiveness in the industrial sector.

Keywords: Strategic foresight , supply chain, industrial sector Al Ain Mineral Water Company

INTRODUCTION:

Organizations in the present era face increasing challenges as a result of rapid changes in the business environment, which is characterized by high degrees of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, in addition to global economic crises and fluctuations, as well as rapid technological developments.

Therefore, traditional planning is no longer sufficient to ensure the continuity and efficiency of logistical and production operations.

This requires business organizations to seek tools and capabilities that enable them to respond quickly to these changes and to develop plans that enable organizations to predict the future.

Hence, the concept of strategic foresight emerged as an effective tool to enhance the ability of institutions to predict and prepare for future changes and to develop proactive solutions that ensure rapid adaptation and competitive advantage.

Strategic foresight aims to explore potential future scenarios and analyze long-term trends that may affect the performance of supply chains, enabling organizations to build flexible and smart visions and strategies by integrating the concept of strategic foresight into supply chain management. This helps organizations improve their efficiency, reduce risks, enhance predictability, and thus improve resource and process management.

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Therefore, strategic foresight is gaining increasing importance as a pivotal factor in building more efficient, flexible and sustainable supply chains that are able to keep pace with future changes and achieve a balance between operational performance and long-term future vision.

FIRST TOPIC
STUDY METHODOLOGY

Research problem:

The supply chain is a vital element that contributes to enhancing organizational performance. Organizations face significant challenges in the field of supply chain management. Despite technological developments and innovations in this field, many organizations still face difficulties in achieving high operational efficiency.

Accordingly, the research problem lies in the lack of clarity regarding the relationship between strategic foresight and supply chain efficiency, as many institutions lack effective foresight strategies that contribute to improving performance and reducing costs. The absence of strategic foresight leads to ill-considered decisions, which negatively impacts the efficiency of the supply chain and the efficiency of logistical and distribution operations.

The research problem requires an in-depth study to understand how strategic foresight can enhance supply chain efficiency and contribute to improved competitiveness. Therefore, the research problem can be formulated in the following questions:

Main question

To what extent does strategic foresight contribute to improving the efficiency of supply chains in light of future challenges?

sub-questions

1. What is the role of strategic foresight in enhancing predictive capabilities and future planning for supply chains?
2. What tools and methods are used in applying strategic foresight and how effective are they in supporting the supply chain?
3. What challenges do industrial organizations face in integrating strategic foresight into their supply chain management processes?

Second: The importance of the research:

This study gains its importance from the fact that it deals with one of the vital and modern topics in the field of strategic management and supply chains, as this study seeks to highlight the role of strategic foresight as a basic and effective approach to enhancing the efficiency of supply chains in a complex and rapidly changing environment.

The importance of this research lies in the following:

1. The academic aspect: Contributing to enriching the scientific literature related to strategic foresight, by linking this advanced concept with the performance of the supply chain, especially given the scarcity of studies that have addressed this aspect.
2. The field aspect: The research provides a scientific vision that helps industrial institutions to benefit from it in improving their future response by adopting strategic foresight tools as a means to support decision-making.
3. The future aspect: The study helps guide decision-makers and supply chain managers towards future-oriented thinking, which enhances the readiness of institutions to invest in future opportunities and confront potential threats.

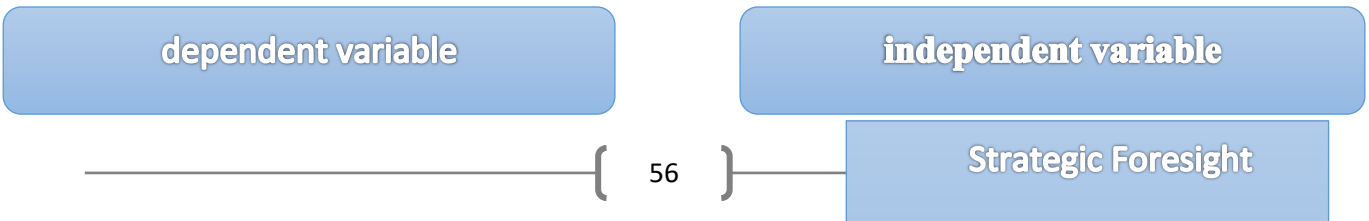
Third: Research objectives:

The research objectives are as follows:

1. Study and evaluation of the reality of strategic foresight in Al Ain Mineral Water Company.
2. Analyzing the relationship between applying strategic foresight and improving the efficiency of the supply chain.
3. Proposing mechanisms for activating strategic foresight within industrial institutions to enhance operational performance and competitiveness.

Fourth: The virtual search model:

A hypothetical model was designed that indicates a relationship between the dimensions of strategic foresight as an independent variable and the dimensions of the supply chain as a dependent variable, as shown in Figure (1) default search scheme



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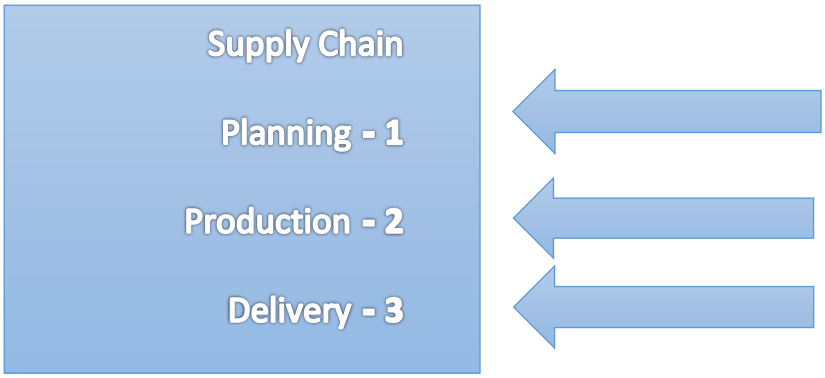

Fifth: Research hypotheses:

In order to achieve the study's objective, one main hypothesis and a number of sub-hypotheses were formulated, as follows:

Main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between strategic foresight and improved supply chain efficiency in industrial organizations. The following sub-hypotheses stem from this main hypothesis:

1. There is a statistically significant effect of applying strategic foresight in improving the decision-making process related to supply chain management.
2. There is a statistically significant effect of using strategic foresight tools in enhancing the predictive capability of the supply chain.

Sixth: The research community and its boundaries:

Al Ain Mineral Water Company is an industrial facility specializing in the bottling of healthy and mineral water, located within the industrial zone in Samarra district. It uses transformative manufacturing processes within the manufacturing sector according to the international classification ISIC and is considered one of the most prominent mineral water bottling plants in the district.

1. Human limitations: This study was limited to the senior management of Al Ain Mineral Water Company.
2. Spatial boundaries: This research was limited to Al Ain Mineral Water Company in Samarra District, Salah Al Din Governorate.
3. Timeframe: The research was conducted during the period between

SECOND TOPIC
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

First: Strategic Foresight:

1. The concept of strategic foresight:

The concept of strategic foresight has gained the attention of many scientists and researchers, as it has become more widespread, especially with the increasing speed of technological development and the state of environmental uncertainty surrounding organizations. It has gained importance in the efforts of researchers as a systematic process to explore and analyze future changes in the internal and external environments of the organization in order to enhance its ability to adapt and prepare for the future. Strategic foresight is considered "the art of long-term vision in organizations and is related to the long-term analysis of business environments, markets, and new technologies and their impact on organizational strategies and innovation" (Battistella, 2014:2).

We will try to highlight some of the concepts of strategic foresight that have been addressed by a group of researchers:

The concept	The researcher and the Sunnah

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A systematic scientific effort aimed at formulating a set of conditional predictions for the conditions of society over a future period of time, and aimed at identifying trends and problems .that are likely to emerge in the future	337 :2011 ,Al-Badran
Strategic foresight represents the process of identifying activities and processes that help decision-makers chart the .future course of action for the organization	224 :2023 ,.Al-Bajari et al
The ability to create a high-quality, coherent, and practical vision for the future, and to use insights in useful organizational .ways	4 :2014 ,Heger & Boman
The process of opening up to the future by all available means and developing perspectives on future options to achieve the .best choice	23 :2017 ,et al. Kononiuk

Source: Prepared by the researcher

2. The importance of strategic foresight:

The importance of strategic foresight stems from its vital role in supporting organizations' ability to survive, continue, and achieve competitive advantage. It is one of the tools that help decision-makers improve the organization's future inputs in the long term (Hamoud and Al-Atwi , 2022:482). The effective application of strategic foresight is also an important means for organizations to overcome uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity related to the future (Lapiddus et al ., 2023:633-644)

Qaddouri and Alousi (2016:119) pointed to the importance of strategic foresight through the following aspects:

1. Coordinating the capabilities of leaders and giving them insight into market and competitor issues, and expanding their analytical horizons for decision-making and exchanging opinions.
2. Strategic foresight helps senior management predict available opportunities and threats that the organization may face.
3. The foresight process helps the planning process by providing future alternatives, which allows the organization to choose the best alternative.

3. Dimensions of strategic foresight:

Many studies and research papers have addressed the dimensions of strategic foresight, but most researchers and thinkers have focused on three dimensions: (environmental survey, strategic choice, and capability integration). The researcher will address these as follows:

- Environmental survey: It is the process of monitoring and evaluating the organization's external environment and what it includes in terms of information about opportunities and threats, and monitoring its internal environment to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to gather information to reach the optimal decision in the present and future (9:2017 , Vudzijena). Environmental surveying is not just about collecting information, but about searching for faint and hidden signals that may hold important meanings for the company's future. This aspect of environmental surveying is essential as it allows for a deep understanding of the silent transformations in the work environment and the market system (Kruse & Svendsen, 2017:73)

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- Strategic Choice: A process that includes three components, which are: First: Analyzing the data that has been collected about the future conditions of the organization. Second: Vision, which is formed through the goals, values, and aspirations of stakeholders and following the basic assumptions, principles, and values adopted, and then creating an inspiring and motivating vision for the organization. Third: Planning, which includes examining possible strategies and expanding activity plans, which promotes development towards a new strategy. The dynamic ability of strategic choice enables organizations to monitor business trends faster than other competitors, which enhances the organization's ability to anticipate events and thus enhances its ability to learn and innovate compared to its competitors (Hassanabadi, 2019:67) .
- Capability Integration: This is the process of integrating knowledge-based, future-oriented information into the organization's operations, future technology platforms, and new product development plans. To leverage the potential of this knowledge, the organization needs to develop its own knowledge base to enable it to rediscover and capitalize on opportunities. Leadership and coordination of organizational processes are also essential processes that support the integration of organizational resources to pursue an optimal future. (Paliokaitė) et al,165:2014), and it also means how managers and leaders coordinate and integrate knowledge and information within the organization. This process includes all internal and external activities in the organization equally (Habib & Abdulraheem,359:2020)

Second: The supply chain

1. The concept of the supply chain :

The supply chain is a fundamental system for achieving operational efficiency and competitive advantage. It effectively contributes to improving productivity, reducing costs, and increasing responsiveness to market fluctuations. The supply chain is defined as a series of objectives accompanying the functions and activities of an organization involved in producing a good or providing a service while reducing the costs of entering new markets (Abu Zeid, 2014 : 626.(

It is also a means of enhancing competitive performance by integrating the organization's internal activities and linking them to external operations, suppliers, customers, and other members of the supply chain (Zeravili & Albashasha, 2023 : 126). It can be described as a strategic and systematic integration of business functions within the company and among the various actors in the supply chain, with the aim of achieving the highest level of efficiency and performance.

2. The importance of the supply chain:

The supply chain is a vital area in contemporary management thought, and (Taha, 2024:223) the study underscored the strategic importance of supply chains, emphasizing their pivotal role in maintaining operational continuity, improving efficiency, and fostering long-term sustainability within organizations:

- Cost reduction: The supply chain allows for cost reduction through optimal use of resources, improved production and distribution processes, and the provision of raw materials at reasonable prices and high quality, which leads to a reduction in the overall costs of production.
- .Improving product quality: By improving the supply chain, companies can control manufacturing processes and quality across production stages, enabling them to deliver high-quality products that meet customer desires and expectations.
- .Reducing time and distance: The supply chain facilitates the efficient and rapid transport of products thanks to advanced technology and logistical processes, thus reducing the time required to deliver the product, which increases the quality of marketing and reduces transportation costs.
- Increased competitiveness: An efficient supply chain enables organizations to expand into markets and gain a larger share, thereby increasing their competitiveness, by offering high-quality products at a low cost.

3. Supply chain characteristics:

The supply chain is characterized by a set of fundamental features that distinguish it from other production and service systems. These features represent the basis for understanding its dynamics and effective management mechanisms. Hussein and Ashour (2022 : 75) have highlighted the most prominent of these features:

- The supply chain is able to leverage the efficiency of optimization technologies, which in turn adequately meet market demands.
- The supply chain is an acceptable means of protecting the product against pressures exerted to increase profit methods and overcome obstacles to efficiency.
- The supply chain operates within the limitations of available resources.
- Supply Chain Obstacles and Problems: The supply chain faces increasing problems as a result of dynamic changes in the global environment, such as globalization, economic fluctuations, technological developments, and even natural disasters. This necessitates the development of flexible and adaptable strategies to ensure business

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continuity and achieve a competitive advantage. These obstacles were outlined by Diaa El-Din and Lazhar (2024:44-4) as follows:

- High cost of living
- Unexpected consumer spending
- Just-in-Time Manufacturing Philosophy
- Shipping delays
- Shortage of shipping containers and high costs
- Imposing restrictions on borders
- Shortage and high costs of raw materials
- Labor strikes
- Weather fluctuations

THIRD TOPIC
FIELD FRAMEWORK

This section delineates the findings derived from the data analysis and the procedures employed in testing the research hypotheses ,conducted in accordance with the statistical methods adopted in the research methodology. The analysis was performed using SPSS (Version 23) on data collected through a questionnaire administered to the study sample. It provides a systematic analytical account of respondents' answers, outlines the procedures employed, and specifies the study model variables along with their respective dimensions. The section concludes with a presentation of the hypothesis testing results, supported by rigorous scientific interpretation, as follows:

First requirement:

Study Population, Sample, and Methodology

This section addresses the definition of the study population, the procedures for selecting the sample, and the methodological framework adopted to achieve the research objectives

The researcher used the descriptive and analytical method. The study population consisted of (51) employees at Al Ain Mineral Water Company, selected randomly. The responses were formulated on a five-point Likert scale, as follows: (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). The scores of the scale used were classified as follows:

Table No. (1)
Likert scale for answering questions.

I strongly disagree	I disagree	neutral	I agree	I strongly agree	Response
1	2	3	4	5	Degree

The scale's range was calculated as follows:

Second: The Study incorporates a set of variabies, which are presented and classified as shown in Table (2)

Table (2)
Questionnaire items

Paragraphs	variable
12	(Strategic Foresight): Independent variable
4	First dimension: Environmental survey
4	The second dimension: strategic choice
4	Third dimension: Integration of capabilities
12	(supply chain) :The dependent variable

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4	First dimension: Planning
4	Production :The second dimension
4	Third dimension: Delivery
24	Total number of paragraphs

Source: Prepared by the researche

The researcher adopted a comprehensive enumeration approach to define the study population. Data were collected manually from a random sample of employees at Al-Ain Mineral Water Company, with a total sample size of 51 participants.

Third: Characteristics of the Study Population to describe the characteristics of the study population, the researcher examined several demographic variables, including gender, age, and educational level, as presented in Table (3).

Table No. (3)

Distribution of study population characteristics

ratio	number	Categories	The element
75% 24%	31 20	male feminine	Sex
34% 34% 29% %2	14 14 12 1	20-30 31_40 40 -51 51 More than	the age
0% 36% 12% 36% 14%	0 15 5 15 6	Preparatory Bachelor's diploma Master's PhD	academic achievement

Source: Table prepared by the researcher based on results from the SPSS V.23 statistical program

Fourth: Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

To assess the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire items, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was employed. In the fields of administrative and economic sciences, a coefficient value of ($\alpha \geq 0.70$) is generally considered acceptable, indicating a satisfactory level of consistency among the items.Table (4) presents the results of the internal consistency reliability for the questionnaire dimensions based on Cronbach's Alpha.

Table (4)

Internal Consistency Reliability Coefficients for Questionnaire Dimensions **(Cronbach's Alpha)**

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of paragraphs	variable
0.85	12	(Strategic Foresight): Independent variable
0.78	4	First dimension: Environmental survey
0.98	4	The second dimension: strategic choice
0.89	4	Third dimension: Integration of capabilities
0.88	12	(supply chain) :The dependent variable
0.76	4	First dimension: Planning
0.64	4	Production :The second dimension
0.88	4	Third dimension: Delivery
0.87	24	The total as a whole

Source: Compiled by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis

Fifth: Exploratory Factor Analysis (KMO Test)

In conducting the exploratory factor analysis, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was found to be 0.776. This value exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.50 as recommended by Kaiser (1974), indicating that the sample size is

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adequate and appropriate for factor analysis. These results confirm the suitability of the data for the purposes of the study, as illustrated in

Table (5)
which presents the KMO and Bartlett's Test results.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.892
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	34.123
	Df	51
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Compiled by the researcher based on analyses conducted using the statistical software (SPSS Version 23)

Third requirement: Testing the study hypotheses

To achieve the study's objective, one main hypothesis and several sub-hypotheses were formulated. The main hypothesis is: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between strategic foresight and improving supply chain efficiency in industrial organizations. The following sub-hypotheses stem from this main hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between the application of strategic foresight and the improvement of decision-making processes related to supply chain management .

This variable focuses on testing the validity of the main hypothesis, as the results in Table (17) indicate a significant correlation between strategic foresight and The supply chain value reached (0.749**), which indicates a good, positive, and statistically significant correlation at a significance level of (0.05). This is evidence of the strength of the relationship between the variables.

Table (17)
Pearson correlation coefficient

Correlations		
dependent dimension Supply chain		Independent dimension: Strategic Foresight
	Pearson Correlation	0.749**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	51
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Source: Prepared by the researcher using the statistical program (SPSS25)

There is a statistically significant effect of applying strategic foresight in improving the decision-making process related to supply chain management..

Table 10 presents the findings of the regression analysis, revealing a statistically significant and positive impact of the strategic foresight dimension on enhancing the decision-making process related to supply chain management within the studied company. The calculated F-value reached 1.349 at a significance level of 0.05. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.56, indicating that strategic foresight accounts for 56% of the variation in supply chain management decisions, while the remaining proportion is attributed to external or unmeasured variables not incorporated into the regression model.

Further analysis of the regression coefficient (B1) shows that a one-unit increase in strategic foresight leads to a 0.39 increase in the effectiveness of the decision-making process related to supply chain management. Additionally, the calculated t-value (7.435) exceeds the tabulated value (5.87) at the 0.05 significance level, confirming the statistical significance of the relationship.

These findings are consistent with the study hypothesis; therefore, the first main hypothesis is accepted. This result indicates that the application of strategic foresight has a statistically significant effect on improving the decision-making process in supply chain management.

Table (10)

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There is a statistically significant effect of applying strategic foresight in improving the decision-making process related to supply chain management

Simple linear regression						
T		F	R^2	Strategic Foresight		Dependent . . .
The schedule	Calculated			B0	β1	
5.87	7.435	1.349	0.56	3.316	0.39	Planning

.(SPSS-25) Source: Prepared by the researcher using the statistical program

FIRST: CONCLUSIONS

1. Strategic foresight contributes significantly to enhancing supply efficiency by enabling the company to predict future changes in demand and supply, thus reducing shortages or surpluses of resources.
2. The study showed that adopting strategic foresight tools leads to improved quality of operational decisions related to supply chain management, especially in environments characterized by uncertainty.
3. It has been shown that the integration of strategic foresight and information systems contributes to increasing the speed of response to market changes, which is reflected positively on logistical performance.
4. The results revealed that the weak application of strategic foresight practices limits the competitiveness of industrial companies and negatively affects the efficiency of supply chain operations.
5. The study showed that strategic foresight enhances supply chain resilience by enabling the company to develop alternative scenarios for dealing with crises and disruptions.
6. The study concluded that investing in building the analytical and forward-looking capabilities of employees is a crucial factor in achieving sustainable supply efficiency.

SECOND: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The need to adopt strategic foresight methodologies institutionally within the company, and to integrate them into strategic planning and supply chain processes.
2. Enhancing investment in intelligent information systems and data analytics to support forecasting and evidence-based decision-making.
3. Training human resources on strategic foresight tools and techniques to enhance their efficiency in analyzing future trends.
4. Establishing a specialized strategic foresight unit within the company to monitor environmental changes and provide future scenarios.
5. Strengthening cooperation with suppliers and strategic partners to exchange future information and achieve greater integration in the supply chain.
6. Adopting performance indicators to measure the impact of strategic foresight on supply efficiency, which contributes to continuous performance improvement and identifying application gaps.

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