



NATIONAL CULTURE AND STRATEGIC THINKING IN ORGANIZATIONS: REVIEW AND INFERENCES FROM THE GCC REGION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to draw on the existing literature of the strategic thinking. Then conduct a review of the studies that identified the obstacles of strategic thinking in Arab culture. This will enable to conclude with recommendations to draw the map of raising the level of strategic thinking. The urgent need to think globally instead confined internally then draw the lines which leads to this point. This study is the first theoretically based discussion to detail the specific obstacles required to pave the way to think strategically in Arab culture.

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INTRODUCTION

Strategic thinking in the Arab countries is both oppressed and maltreated, even though it is of the utmost importance, especially when the nations takes risks and confronted with variety of challenges. It is important to mention that the strategy industry expresses capabilities in thinking, rationality in management, and awareness of the origins of change. The meeting of this triangle in the formation of strategic insights is very important for stabilization and development of countries. Strategic thinking is essential to building civilizations and making transformations because it earns the leader an effective mind. "Culture eats strategy for lunch". This is an announcement of the board to check how the procedure will prompt disappointment paying little heed to hierarchical qualities, convictions, and suppositions. The reason for Strategic Thinking is to make a procedure that is a rational, binding together, integrative structure for choices particularly about bearing of the business and asset usage. To do it, key reasoning uses interior and outer information, subjective union of suppositions and recognitions. It is cognizant, unequivocal, and proactive and characterizes focused space for corporate vital bit of leeway. Moving from reaction and identifying maps to the potential of action and effectiveness, organizations must define the strategic areas of concern, which are the "core box" that constitutes a field of strategic awareness and the effectiveness

required to bring about the intended change. Apparently, strategic planning stems from the strategic thinking that represents the real vision and then gives the leader planning tools and set up projects. Therefore, thinking is based on the methodology and the way of thinking that ensures the good use of planning tools, so that thinking is an intangible tool representing the strategic mind, unlike strategic planning, which is the tool and concrete actions. We found that there is an urgent need in Arab culture to find out why there is a lack of strategic thinking ability that leads to the manufacture of an executable strategy. Clearly, it doesn't need extra efforts and tension to prove the extent of being Arab organizations outside the arena of competition on the level of manufacturing, trade and management in general. The lack of industry strategy that enables organizations to create competitive advantage. There is also an urgent need to diagnose the obstacles that prevent the development of strategic thinking and upgrading it to the level of need in the current era. Bonn (2005) noticed that strategic thinking was recognized by a board of specialists as one of the 10 most basic territories for future administration inquire about. It is also necessary to identify the paradigms that dominate the mentality of the Arab strategic thinker and whether there is any way and a certain training that will enable them to overcome these obstacles. Three purposes behind the strategic thinking hole have been proposed: an absence of comprehension of the idea in general; consistent specialist and theoretician disarray of the expression "vital deduction" with

"vital arranging" just as other key administration terms; and constrained advancement of key intuition among authoritative pioneers (Goldman and Casey, 2010). In the board writing the distinction between the two terms of strategic planning and strategic thinking which prompted the production of disarray in vital administration is not clarified (Heracleous, 1998). Mintzberg (1994) accepts that "planning does not be able to create key arranging since it includes logical, formal, official, and authority forms". He additionally recognizes that "strategic planning was not even in their full grown period with money related premiums and execution for associations". Altier (1991) demonstrates that strategic planning ought to leave and just strategic thinking can be supplanted in its position. "Strategic management goes about too when considered as an approach to learn not as a route for actualizing the rendition" (Goldsmith, 1996). "Strategic thinking is perceived as an individual action impacted by the setting inside which it happens" (Mintzberg, 1978). Researchers concur that while the goal of vital believing is to set up authoritative procedure and accomplish gainfulness and supportability, strategic thinking is frequently missing or if nothing else essentially ailing in hierarchical pioneers (Bonn, 2001; Steptoe-Warren *et al.*, 2011). This nonappearance is expected in huge part to recorded perplexity about the idea among the two researchers and experts, where the terms strategic thinking, strategic planning, and strategic management are utilized reciprocally, and strategic thinking is alluded to as both a thing and an action word (Steiner *et al.*, 1982). Therefore, "one of the most fundamental components in any hypothesis of leadership roles-building up vision-is hindered except if the deduction used to create it, strategic thinking, is energized by the association's way of life" (Goldman and Casey, 2010). The purpose of this study is to draw on the existing literature of the strategic thinking. Then conduct a review of the studies that identified the obstacles of strategic thinking in Arab culture. This will enable to conclude with recommendations to draw the map of raising the level of strategic thinking. The urgent need to think globally instead confined internally then draw the lines which leads to that points. An intensive Arab effort is needed to draw up a national strategy for the serious Arab entry into the future culture industry and in extending the future global communications network so that the Arab image will not fade, but become part of the perceptions and sensations of the new Arab generation, so as not to miss the dazzling cultural images presented by culture. Western technology and advanced techniques. Generally, the study dedicated to answer the following question: How the culture connect with into encourage or block the improvement of the capacity to think strategically in leaders, administrators, and others utilized by the organization?

Literature Review

Strategy is an idea with military roots. These days, regions of key reasoning are profoundly respected and numerous creators like to utilize them (Farhangi and Dehghan, 2011). The foundations of Strategic Thinking (deliberate examination of the present status and future bearing of its plan) has been considered since the start of the twentieth century. The literature has advised authoritative pioneers and administrators for their absence of strategic thinking and asked its advancement to improve association execution (Bonn, 2001, 2005; Essery, 2002; Liedtka, 1998; Mason, 1986; Mintzberg *et al.*, 1998; Tovstiga, 2010; Zabriskie and Huellmantel, 1991). Casey and Goldman (2010) propose "strategic thinking is a

dynamic, intuitive, and iterative procedure that incorporates thinking and activity". These perspectives expand key deduction past an exclusively subjective procedure, preparing for seeing practices occupied with when thinking deliberately and lining up with the premise of creating competency models. Literature on strategic thinking, which presents abilities as single words, for example, "visionary," "imaginative," and "diagnostic," concentrating on intuition related aptitudes and isolating them from technique plan and execution (for example Hanford, 1995; Nuntamanop *et al.*, 2013). While the conduct portrayals spoke to an expansive range of exercises and were coordinated, they generally disregarded the specialized aptitudes and instruments of key deduction in investigating and orchestrating data; there was no notice of how data was considered, only that it was (Goldman and Scott, 2016). We can characterize key intuition for this examination as theoretical, frameworks arranged, directional, and pioneering thinking prompting the disclosure of hierarchical techniques (Hanford, 1995; Liedtka, 1998; Mintzberg, 1978). Mintzberg (1994, p. 108) depicted figuring out how to think strategically as a "muddled procedure of casual picking up," recommending that strategic thinking is a capacity created and adjusted after some time.

Culture and strategic thinking

Culture is a unique idea applied over numerous scholarly and social fields with changing logical implications. Kotter (2001) agrees that "endeavors to characterize culture are various as well as shift significantly, leaving various thoughts regarding what precisely it is". Culture frames the establishment of techniques and influences the components of the correspondence procedure and vital connections. On the off chance that the association can actualize procedures to exploit its qualities, all things considered, the board can be effectively executed and would have the option to play out any progressions exceptionally quick. Authoritative culture may contradict the new procedures which will prompt disarray. To this end, "authoritative culture ought to be such that individuals show enthusiasm for planning systems" (David, 2002). Utilization of strategic thinking causes us to settle on the correct choice before an activity. Strategic thinking empowers directors to evaluate the dangers, advantages, and expenses of their choices. "Culture has been then again characterized as the way wherein a gathering of individuals takes care of issues and accommodates issues" (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). Hofstede 1980-2001 presents an exceptional and valuable characterization framework to comprehend national culture and characterized culture as "the aggregate programming of the psyche; that recognize the individuals from one gathering from another. As indicated by Hofstede "programming begins inside the family; at school, at the work environment, and in both the nearby and expanded living network". Researchers contend that there various kinds of societies which are cultural, national, authoritative, and sexual orientation societies, that are profoundly installed in people's cerebrums contrasted with cultural and word related culture (Hofstede, 2011). A few examinations have been led in the previous two decades by specialists, for example, Bonn (2001), Casey and Goldman (2010), and Liedtka (1998) to conceptualize strategic thinking. To this end, it may be well expressed that strategic thinking is the aftereffect of creative mind and dream of directors and requires human instinct and inventiveness while strategic planning is a lot of strategies and diagnostic methodology. Strategic management methods can

go about as an impetus for strategic thinking however we should perceive that these systems ought to be kept away from to restrict the inventive personality (Goldsmith, 1996).

Arab culture role in strategic thinking

The challenges facing Arab society require the spirit of keeping pace with the internal transformations and the cognitive development in this age, which is characterized by productive efficiency and diversity, and emphasizes the need to combine scientific vision and intellectual effort,

Hofstede's cultural dimensions and strategic thinking: As indicated by Hofstede (2011) the meaning of societies is "aggregate programming of the psyche recognizing the individuals from one gathering or class of individuals from others." Furthermore, Hofstede (1986) contends that this "psychological writing computer programs" is an approach to get, request, and use ideas that speaks to a culture. Hofstede built up a model that comprises of a few measurements that together make up each culture. These measurements are power separation, manliness versus gentility, independence versus cooperation, long versus momentary direction, guilty pleasure versus restriction, and vulnerability shirking.

Uncertainty avoidance and strategic thinking: Hofstede (1981), discovered Arab score huge number in Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) (68) which are overwhelming Hofstede Dimension qualities for the nations in this area. They are likewise exceptionally rule-situated with laws, guidelines, guidelines, and controls so as to decrease the measure of vulnerability. The high Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) positioning of 68, demonstrates the general public's low degree of resilience for vulnerability. It unequivocal how much people manages the vulnerability and equivocalness throughout everyday life. This measurement illustrates "how much individuals from a general public feel awkward with vulnerability and equivocalness, driving them to help convictions promising sureness" (Hofstede, 2001). This discoveries in accordance with the past writing (e.g., Geletkaycz, 1997; Shnieder, 1989; Robertson, Al-Khatib, and Al-Habib, 2002), estimations of high vulnerability shirking ought to be relied upon to prompt less readiness for grasping change. With an end goal to limit or diminish this degree of vulnerability, severe standards, laws, strategies, and guidelines are embraced and executed. A definitive objective of these populaces is to control everything so as to dispense with or maintain a strategic distance from the unforeseen. Because of this high Uncertainty Avoidance trademark, the general public does not promptly acknowledge change and is very hazard unfriendly. John Dewey (1910), clarified the significance of vulnerability in deduction. He outlined the stun of coolness created disarray and suspended conviction, in any event immediately in light of the fact that it is startling, it was a stun or an interference waiting be represented, at that point difficulties the psyche with the goal that it makes conviction at all dubious (Dewey, 1910). Vulnerability brought about by the two segments of progress and developing multifaceted nature and uncertainty of data are systematized in the present condition of worry in the present associations and at last prompts disappointment for the association. In these circumstances, the methodology which works as a valuable instrument decides the general course for the association (Rahimnia and Sadeghian, 2011). Strategic thinking is a decent approach for making procedure in the present business

condition. This methodology in the serious aggressive conditions and unusual market conduct is considered as an extraordinary preferred position (Ghafarian and Kiani, 2010). Late examinations have distinguished the absence of vital deduction among senior administration as an influencing factor in the hierarchical presentation. "The presence of key speculation prompts affecting basic leadership in the organizations" (Goldman, 2012). The capacity to think strategically is fundamental for pioneers and directors at various authoritative levels (Goldman, 2010). This vital ability can assist directors with understanding, recognize, foresee, and control future occasions (Golmohammadi *et al.*, 2013).

Long-Term orientation and strategic thinking: Hofstede and Bond (2001) clarified that societies with a Long-Term Orientation (LTO) are described by qualities, for example, industriousness, adjustments of customs to new conditions, steadiness toward moderate outcomes and the possibility that most significant occasions in life will happen later on. Hofstede characterized this measurement as "cultivating of ideals situated towards future prizes, specifically, tirelessness and frugality" (2001, p.359). Middle Easterner culture have low score dependent on Hofstede's figuring rules for this measurement. The low LTO score demonstrates that the members in the present example esteem progressively prompt satisfaction of their needs and have an a lot more grounded spotlight on spending, investigative reasoning (Aldulaimi, Sailan, 2012).

Reflective thinking: Historically, scholars have pointed out that most modes of contemplative thinking are condemned in Islamic culture as a kind of philosophy that leads to deviating from the constants of thinking in Islamic doctrine (Aldulaimi, 2016). Indeed, many of the leaders of the organizations are in the process of implementation to rise to senior leadership positions in institutions without the ability to reflective thinking to find it difficult to imagine the possibilities of the decision-making process and go to what is mastered by the executive thinking. Emotional freedom outside the framework of the paradigm and the possession of a sense of comfort and freedom of thought is necessary to prepare future thinkers by subjecting them to early education and training programs that qualify them to play such a role in the future. Executive thinking is available at all times and requires no effort in principle. It is a dominant pattern and inherited human behavior. Strategic thinking is a recessive and unconventional pattern in different environments. And we realize that strategic error cannot be compensated no matter how much we cost. Critical thinking is the way to challenge inherited ideas and the ability to review them. It begins by asking deep and great questions and finding answers by using the analytical methodology, which is able to build and install the components of the strategy by means of its joints and the technical ability to imagine and define the stages of planning to create a convincing work in accordance with coordinated coordination.

Convergent thinking and divergent thinking: The expansion of human perception takes place through the liberation of the human mind from the capture of time and space so that the horizons of its potential and its possibilities expand. Learning about different environments and living with them expands the perception and moves the individual from narrow vision to expanding experience. Institutions that conduct an internal dialogue without internal depth and

external expansion remain locked in stereotypical thought. The strategic mind enables the leader to identify and construct goals, insight and logic in analyzing things and their weight as well as the ability to sense the environment. The mind is not built in the future. Strategic thinking is one of the acquired qualities that can be possessed by any individual with good training and knowledge.

Dependency on Allah (God): While the religious, which is very influential in the Arab culture, faith: it is based on monotheism and belief in God and his teachings. Fatalism while doing what is possible: A Muslim believes that everything is from God and that nothing happens without God's will. However, this belief is tightly coupled with the belief that one is required to do what can be done to the extent of his/her potential. This in fact can be seen in twofold: the first part is about believing in fate and destiny which is related to accepting the outcomes of one's actions rather than being passive. The latter however is concerned with doing what is possible (to one's potential). This dimension is found in most Arab models, as with Ibn Khaldun in "highpurpose orientation (impact of religion)". A deep-seated-respect for tradition and for the past. The culture of dependence and passive surrender and the explanation of everything that happens to man with fate and destiny, evading responsibility. Ibn Rushd's vision to solve this problem, which he mentioned in his book (Revealing the methods of evidence in the doctrines of religion). Ibn Rushd considered the human act in nature as dependent on its completion on three elements, respectively: Will (which means having a desire to have something to do, or to start an event).The existence of internal causes in man (meaning that the person has the physiological ability to initiate the event, or do the deed or work).Approval of the act for external reasons (meaning that the act that man wants to do is compatible with the laws of nature).

History and Environment: Researchers have had conflicting understandings of the advancement of individual reasoning abilities: the perspective on innately decided breaking points to singular information limit (i.g. Jaques and Celement, 1991) and the perspective on gaining of abilities as a voyage from student to capable (e.g. Ericsson, 1996). The two perspectives concur that individual improvement by means of instruction and experience. The absence of Arab strategic thinking, one of the biggest disaster shortcomings we have suffered in Arab countries for decades, is one of the fundamental reasons that explain our inability to face and deal with dangers and challenges. Unfortunately, such thinking need to develop in our Arab organizations. On the other hand, this strategic thinking is one of the major sources of power in the Western countries, and the big powers in general.

Conclusion

The motivation behind this research effort planned to respond to the inquiry: How the culture connect with into encourage or frustrate the improvement of the capacity to think strategically in leaders, chiefs, and others utilized by the organization? Arab culture is surrounded by the rule of Islam. Islam has sketched out the rules to frame effective collaboration among business and laborers and among colleagues at the work environment (Aldulaimi, 2016). Therefore, Islam impact the way people think and look at the situation in general (Abdeldayem and Aldulaimi, 2018). Thinking is the most important human resource skill. Many people believe that they are very

competent in the practice of thinking, which makes them do not think to make any effort to develop their competence in thinking (Edward D Bono, 2017). We understand that the more critical need is not just learn strategic management and strategic planning in organization, but there is a serious need to change the way that the Arab strategic thinkers think. Strategic thinking refers to the availability of the necessary skills and abilities to exercise management functions Strategy to provide the author with the ability to examine and analyze the elements of the internal and external environment of the institution and make accurate predictions with the possibility of formulating strategies and take appropriate decisions as quickly as required.Strategic planning is linked to vision and the ability to visualize think not perceived therefore, dealing with unseen things typically related the way how people deal with unknown aspects. Culture is the factor that dominating this area of future thinking. The main recommendation of this study is the importance of development of strategic thinking in Arabic organization because it is vital to sustain development in economic and social institutions. The world tend to depend on the knowledge economy and there is importance to adopt long term plan to maintain projects to enhance the investment and development. Create the culture of strategic thinking within schools and train the early classes in schools to practicing the strategic planning and thinking at the end. Establish the process of have a long-term vision for the future and its possibilities and different scenarios in all areas, whether it concerns the future of each individual country, or the future of the region and its developments and issues in general. In other words, you have a picture of the different expectations of what may happen in the medium and long term based on the study of various aspects and considerations and expectations of local, regional and international.

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