



THE ROLE OF SUPPORTING FACTORS OF MANAGEMENT BY CREATIVITY IN ACHIEVING THE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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Abstract

The current paper is done to examine the role of supporting factors of management by creativity in achieving organizational excellence at the communications corporations. The data have been collected from a convenience sample of managers through a questionnaire, a total of 282 respondents was sent a questionnaire, usable questionnaires were 258. The data were analyzed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The results reveal that the two dimensions of factors of management by creativity (i.e., Systemic thinking, creative thinking) have a significant effect on the organizational excellence, while the other dimension, namely strategic thinking was found to have no significant effect. Moreover, managers' perceptions of management by creativity and organizational excellence at the communications corporations are about the average.

Keywords - Management by Creativity, Systemic Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Creative Thinking, Organizational Excellence, Communications Corporations, Syria.

Introduction

Science is still unable to describe the processes of mental activity and determine their paths and results by scientific accuracy known in scientific research, Jarwan (1999) and Khasawneh (2015) mentioned that we use only 1% of our mental capacity in solving the problems we face, may be more than that or less, but at best it will not exceed 4% (Alhasaneiah, 2009). It should be noted that the nature of contemporary challenges such as the complexity of organizations, globalization and innovation has forced the leaders of organizations to pay more attention to develop their thinking skills to cope with this flood of challenges (Weaver, 2014).

We can compare thinking with the human breathing process, as breathing is necessary for the continuation of life; thinking is similar to a natural activity indispensable to man in his daily life. Here we must ask the following question: Are we thinkers or not? Do we have the skills to think in front of the vast amount of information that humans face on a daily basis and the speed of aging? (Bornstein, 1996).

The answer to the above questions is in the producing thinking that leads to the institutional excellence of administrators, since all people think, but we need the thinking that magnifies the results, that we are talking about the types of thinking that support the creativity, as the organizations that want excellence need organizational and administrative structures and foundations that achieve the goals (Sharma & Talwar, 2007).

These policies emanate from new ideas that need to see the whole organization integrated into the future and to equip multiple solutions to the problems that impede the work towards excellence. These ideas are generated by the brain's preoccupation with creativity, by means of factors that support management by creativity, systemic thinking, creative thinking and strategic thinking (Sattouf, 2016).

Literature Review

1.1. Systemic Thinking

Peter Senge, who is an innovator of the idea of the learning organization with many scholars and thinkers agreed on the role of systemic thinking in developing the contemporary management (Ali, 2012). Sidney (2004) mentioned to systemic thinking as a method of understanding complex real case focuses on the relationships between all parts of the system rather than focusing on the same parts in a separate linear form.

According to Klaus (2004) observing many elements of the system at a certain time and continuously check of these elements to avoid focusing on one element rather than the rest of the elements. The process of collecting, interpreting and evaluating ideas and information for organizational sustainability and competitive advantages, i.e. the purpose of its use in the organization is excellence and continuity (Clark et al., 2012).

We conclude that the common factor in the previous definitions is that solution of complex problems, needs a comprehensive view of all elements of the system rather than a partial view, and that the problems of today cannot be solved in the same way as yesterday.

1.2. Strategic Thinking

There is broad understanding that strategic thinking is critical for the management and sustainability of organizations, but is often absent or at least significantly lacking, strategic thinking is important for developing the strategy and strategic management in the organization (Abraham, 2005; Graetz, 2002; Nuntamanop, et al., 2013). Which increases the importance of strategic thinking where Almaayta (2013) said that the achievement of excellence in the institutional performance of the organization is by following the strategic thinking method, where it supports the management to draw strategic plans to overcome its competitors.

Noubar and colleagues (2014) indicated that strategic thinking is a tool that helps the management to deal with problems and changes, prepare plans for next developments and create new future opportunities. Beatty & Quinn (2010) defined strategic thinking as a process that involves the collection, combination and filtration of information to generate new, relevant, focused and feasible ideas and strategies. Strategic thinking in a business context is a progressing procedure that evaluates the business and the ventures in which the organization is included; assesses its contenders and defines objectives and techniques.

Achieving of any plan and strategy depends on its innovativeness and surprise for the competitors and its move as per the changing dictates of the environment, failing which it may lead the management to bad results (Baloch & Inam, 2007).

1.3. Creative Thinking

Before listing the definitions presented by researchers for creative thinking it is important to clarify the confusion between creativity and creative thinking. We can simply say that creativity represents or expresses the result of creative thinking while the used method to creative is creative thinking, in other words, from the standpoint of systems theory, creative thinking can be considered as the stage of processes and creativity is the output (Puccio & Gonzalez, 2004).

Cross-thinking is based on breaking old ideas and generating new ideas or reorganizing them based on the mental processes that increase one's experience in problem solving (Honig, 2004). Creative thinking refers to something new and remarkable which has transformed something in a significant way (Meintjes & Grosser, 2010).

Creative thinking has been considered as a conjectural process, the elements of creative thinking include understanding, inadequate parts, gaps in intuitively obtaining information, problems and difficulties, to conjecture about these parts, gaps, problems and difficulties (Koray & Köksal, 2009).

1.4. Organizational Excellence

In an environment distinguished by risk, complexity, and strong competitiveness, organizations need to employ all their capabilities to make their staff capable to have knowledge and learning to achieve excellence (Durrach, et al., 2018). Organizational excellence is no longer an option for organizations, but it is imperative for those who want to survive and progress in a complex business environment. It simply means the process of making organizations better in excellence way and expansion (Attafar, et al., 2012). The term business excellence has appeared to be like organizational excellence with the difference that business excellence may be used more to private sector than organizational excellence in public sector (McAdam, 2000).

Grote (2002) has defined excellence as any act or activity done by someone that reinforces and strengthens the achievements of the organization. Alnaweigah (2013) and Alshalabe, et al., (2017) have defined it as the ability of companies to provide growth chances, and to create statuses that motivate, correct and face problems of performance effectively. (Aldilain, 2010) has defined it as the peak performance, which is better than the ordinary, the expected and the competition. In view of the urgent need for creative and innovative human resources that leads the organization towards the desired excellence, a typical human resource organization that routinely carries out its activities is destined to disappear (Sattouf, 2016). Ajaiif (2008) described the importance of institutional excellence as a style of life that can place in a small or large, governmental or private institution that manufactures a good or service.

In this study, we will concentrate on the elements of OE as suggested by (Hesseblin & Johnston, 2002; Qawasmeh, et al., 2013; Shanmugapriya & Rajamanogary, 2012) which based on management or leadership excellence, employees' excellence, organizational structure excellence, organizational culture excellence and strategy excellence.

Leadership excellence: It is clear the role of the organization's leadership in its success or failure, and thus excellence in its performance. Leadership is an essential and critical factor in all organizations, regardless of the sector in which they operate and the activity they exercise, some studies have highlighted the role of leadership in organizational excellence (John, 1999). According to (Bosalem, 2017; Alnosour, 2010) leadership excellence means the leader's ability to exploit organizational opportunities, provide development opportunities and accept challenging businesses in a way that helps the organization to cope with disordered processes and various crises.

Employees' excellence: The organization's management gives the managers the opportunity to highlight their work skills, believing that employees' excellence will lead to achieving organizational excellence. Giving employees sufficient powers and authorities and providing a positive climate, gives them self-confidence and their work is distinguished as a result (Noury et. al., 2017; Cristina & Colurcio, 2006). Burkhart (1993) has defined the employees' excellence as the degree of employees' enthusiasm to fulfill their duties and possessing mental abilities and creative qualities that help them to overcome the obstacles, and encourages others to participate effectively that promotes and facilitates accomplishing the overall objectives of the organization.

Organizational structure excellence: The appropriate organizational structure is a prerequisite for the organization to achieve its objectives of excellence; the organizational structure shows the relationships among all employees, making it easier for them to perform their tasks according to what is specified (Alnwaigah, 2014). Bateman & Organ (1983) and Almajaly (2009) explained the concept of organizational structure as the ability of the structural framework that links the parts of the organization and defines the relations between all the units and sections, cooperation between the parts of the organization and illustrates the lines of authority and responsibility in a manner that helps prepare the various activities to achieve the desired goals.

Culture excellence: Borghini (2005) discovered that a proper communication structure, interpersonal relationships, motivation, stimulation and values as part of the organization's culture affect organizational excellence positively.

Strategy excellence: The clarity of the strategy of the organization in a manner that ensures the actual operational steps to translate the mission and achieve the vision is an important element to achieve organizational excellence, especially if it is based on sound and scientific strategic thinking Hasony (2010). According to (Prajogo et al., 2008; Fok-Yew, et al., 2013) there is a high positive impact of the operational strategy on the operational excellence of the organizations.

1.5. The Relationship between Study Variables and Hypotheses Development

This part discussed the studies were conducted in different sectors the relationship between supporting factors of management by creativity and the organizational excellence. Where these concepts are considered of contemporary issues that have received an increasing importance and turned to be vital issues in management. The researchers have found few studies linking these variables.

Sattouf (2016) indicated to existence a significant impact of supporting factors of management by creating in the dimensions of organizational excellence (i.e. Leadership excellence, employees' excellence, organizational structure excellence, organizational culture excellence and strategy excellence) at managers of communications company. Birgili (2015) explained the dimensions of creative thinking as synthesizing, articulation and imagination, and mentioned to its general characteristics as flexibility, wondering, open to criticism, rationalism, thinking fast and being suspicious. While Seidel & Rosemann (2008) explained the steps needed in managing creativity process as four steps, identification of the main creative and non-creative tasks, task-level-analysis, process-level-analysis and monitoring.

Nuntamanop and colleagues (2013) concluded in their study the characteristics of strategic thinking as the conceptual thinking ability, visionary thinking, creativity, analytical thinking ability, learning ability, synthesizing ability, and objectivity. While Al-Shahry (2010) has studied the elements of strategic thinking that the assessment of the current situation, strategy formulation, applying of strategy and review and evaluate the strategic practices of strategic thinking. However, Aiyad (2014) discovered high levels of systemic thinking of female graduates in the program of preparing the technology teacher at Al-Aqsa University, and its rise in the systematic analysis, systemic recombination and systemic cognition, he also found that the systemic thinking improves the complex problems' solving ability.

Moreover, some studies found a correlation between the students' average marks and the systemic thinking (Elyaqubi, 2010) and some studies discussed the impact of strategic thinking characteristics (personality, capabilities and organizational properties) on the stages of business processes re-engineering (Ahmed, 2014).

A research undertaken by Aldilain (2010) found too high level of understanding of the dimensions of excellence in business organization, and discovered an impact for administrative empowerment on business organization excellence in Jordanian Telecom. Al-Kharsha and colleagues (2013) revealed that workers' perceptions of the organizational excellence were high, and change elements (advanced technology, tasks and duties, Organizational structure, human resources) affected on organizational excellence.

In the study conducted by Eskildsen et al, (1999) discussed three theories of business excellence, and the creative process as it applies to corporate performance. A framework is devised by which the dynamic interplay between learning, creativity, and business excellence is explained.

In the same context Alshalabe and colleagues (2017) they studied Organizational Excellence with its six criteria (i.e. Leadership, strategy, people -employees, partners and resources, processes and outcomes (results of individuals, clients' results and results of the community).

Based on the aforementioned review, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

H₁: There is a significant effect of systemic thinking on the organizational excellence.

H₂: There is a significant effect of strategic thinking on the organizational excellence.

H₃: There is a significant effect of creative thinking on the organizational excellence.

Methodology

1.6. Procedures: To determine effect supporting factors of management by creativity (i.e., systemic thinking, strategic thinking, and creative thinking) on the organizational excellence has been using the descriptive analytical method. In this quantitative study the target population was selected of the managers of the communications corporations in Syria. Where the data were collected through questionnaires. From the 282 questionnaires 258 respondents had responded to the questionnaire.

1.7. Sample Description: 77.5% of respondents were from male and 22.5% of respondents were from female. 81.4% of respondents have a bachelor's degree. Most of the respondent's age lies between 45 to 60 years, also most of the respondent's experience lies between 10 to 20 years.

1.8. Measures: The scale of supporting factors of management by creativity containing 11 items. It was developed based on the study of Sattouf (2016). Where this variable includes 3 factors (i.e. Systemic thinking 4 items, strategic thinking 4 items, and creative thinking 3 items). The scale of organizational excellence was adopted from a study of Sharma and Talwar (2007) that contain 5 items.

1.9. Statistical Methods : In the current study the program of (AMOS) has been used to test of the hypotheses using (EFA, CFA, and SEM) methods, in addition to some descriptive statistics by the program of (SPSS).

Results

The findings of the current study are described below:

Table I: Skewness, Kurtosis, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlations

Symbol	Variables	SK.	KU.	ME.	SD.	SYT	STT	CRT	ORE
SYT	Systemic Thinking	-.437	.698	3.65	.720	1			
STT	Strategic Thinking	-1.24	2.15	3.62	.726	.363**	1		
CRT	Creative Thinking	-.726	1.43	3.79	.737	.504**	.245**	1	
ORE	Organizational Excellence	-.196	-.180	3.72	.700	.653**	.255**	.631**	1

Notes: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01, ME. = Mean, SK. = Skewness, KU. = Kurtosis, Sample Size = 129

Table I Exhibits The Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, And Correlation Matrix Of The Study Variables. This Table Shows The Following

1. The data have a normal distribution, where the skewness and kurtosis values exist in the acceptable range (-3 to +3) according to Ghasemi and Zahediasl (2012).
2. Results of descriptive statistics of supporting factors of management by creativity show that the mean of all the factors is above the average. Where creative thinking was the highest mean (3.79), systemic thinking (3.65), strategic thinking (3.62), respectively. Also mean of organizational excellence was about the average (3.72).
3. All values of standard deviations were low, this means that there is no dispersion in respondents' answers.
4. The relationship between each two variables of the study variables is significantly and positively correlated at level 0.01. And the coefficient of correlation between all the variables less than 0.80, which means there is no merge between items according to Hair, et al., (2006).

Table II: Exploratory Factor Analysis of Research Model (EFA)

Factors	Items Number	Loadings > 0.50	Variance > 0.05	Reliability > 0.60	Tolerance > 0.05	VIF < 10	Others Scales
Systemic Thinking	SYT1	.768	18.86	.835	.685	1.459	KMO = 0.875 > 0.6 Bartlett's Test = 002.02, Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 Cumulative Variance = 68.24 > 0.60
	SYT2	.686					
	SYT3	.857					
	SYT4	.632					
Strategic Thinking	STT5	.789	15.86	.787	.863	1.158	
	STT6	.761					
	STT7	.757					
	STT8	.763					
Creative Thinking	CRT9	.823	14.48	.797	.742	1.348	
	CRT10	.841					
	CRT11	.556					
Organizational Excellence	ORE12	.590	19.03	.858			
	ORE13	.517					
	ORE14	.801					
	ORE15	.858					
	ORE16	.700					

To determine the variables of the study have been used the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) through the principal components by the Varimax method. (EFA) revealed the existence of four variables through the entered items as shown in Table II (i.e. Systemic Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Organizational Excellence). In view of Table II, it is noted that all conditions of (EFA) have been achieved

Table II revealed the values of Cronbach's Alpha for all the variables were within the acceptable range (>0.60). Same the table indicated that all values of tolerance were greater than 0.05 and all of values Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) less than 10 according to Hair, et al., (2006) had achieved multicollinearity condition of independent variables.

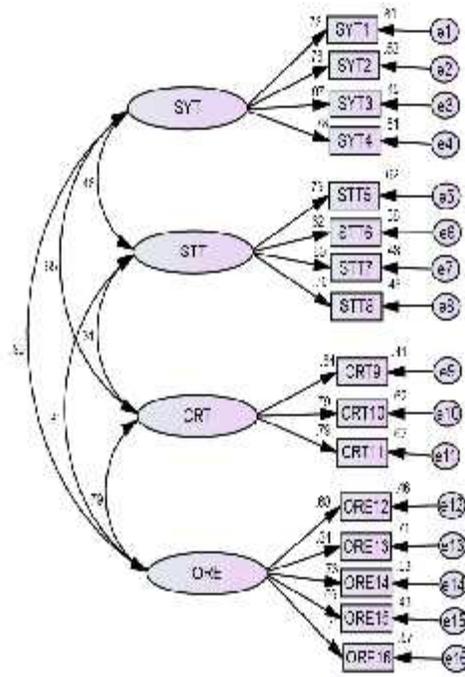


Figure I. CFA Measurement Model

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) revealed four variables, after that confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 24.

CFA was used to confirm the exploratory factor model by determining the goodness of fit between hypothesized model and sample data as shown in figure 1.

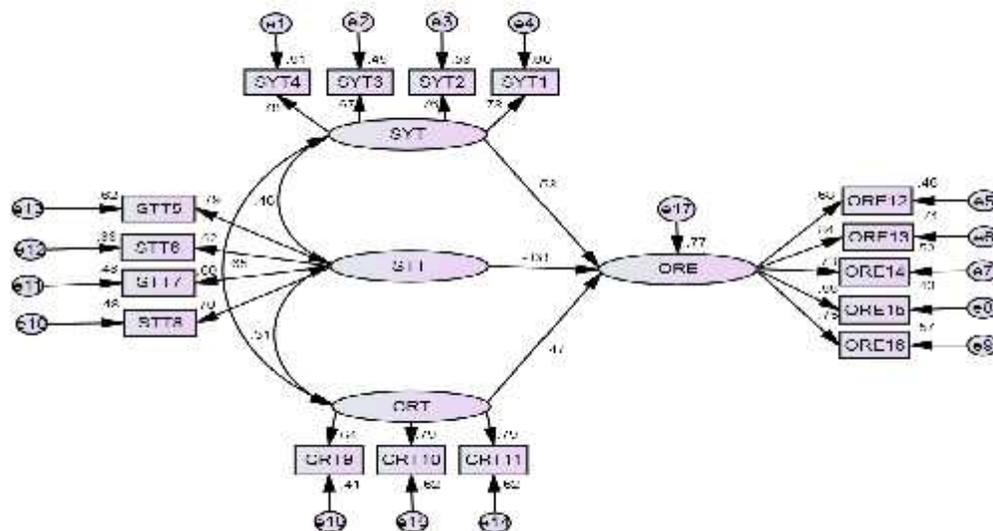


Figure II. Structural Equation Model

For testing the hypothesized relationships between the variables in this study, structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied to the data as shown in figure II.

Table III: Model Fit Indices

Indices	Symbol	Indices Values	Criteria
Chi-Square (P=0.000)	($X^2= 173.8$)	(DF= 98)	<0.05
Chi-Square/Degree of Freedom	CMIN/DF	1.774	< 5
Root Mean Square of Approximation	RMSEA	0.078	< .08
Root Mean Square Residual	RMR	0.050	< 0.1
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	0.919	> 0.9
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	0.900	> 0.9
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	0.921	> 0.9
Normed Fit Index	NFI	0.935	> 0.9
Parsimony Normed Fit Index	PNFI	0.682	> 0.5
Goodness-of-Fit Index	GFI	0.951	> 0.9
Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index	PGFI	0.613	> 0.5

The results mentioned in Table III indicate a good fit of the model that was tested according to Kline (1998). Thus we can say that the results of confirmatory factor analysis were positive.

Table IV: Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Structural Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Results
H ₁	SYTORE →	.449	.109	4.139	***	Supported
H ₂	STTORE →	-.067	.066	-1.024	.306	Not Supported
H ₃	CRTORE →	.389	.098	3.973	***	Supported

Notes: *** = significance smaller than 0.001 Critical ratio (CR) is >1.96, then the path is significant at 0.05

Table IV shows the results of hypothesis testing for all dimensions of supporting factors of management by creativity (i.e., SYT, STT and CRT) with organizational excellence (ORE). Where the dimensions of supporting factors of management by creativity (i.e., SYT and CRT) have a positive and significant impact on organizational excellence (ORE), while the other dimension (STT) has not significant impact on organizational excellence (ORE). Thus that two hypotheses were accepted (H₁ and H₃), while the second hypothesis was rejected (H₂).

Discussion

The findings show the mean values of supporting factors of management by creativity (i.e. Systemic thinking, strategic thinking, and creative thinking) at the Syrian communications corporations are about average. Where creative thinking is the strongest factor, then systemic thinking, and strategic thinking is weakest factor. This means that the managers of the Syrian communications corporations have medium awareness about the factors that support the management by creativity, especially creative thinking because it is one of the basic necessities in the management of enterprises and businesses. Through it can regenerate energy of thought and ambitions and provide new services to customers to achieve excellence of the institution. This result is consistent with study (Ali, 2012; Nuntamanop, et al., 2013), and varies by study (Al-Shahry, 2010; Ashi, 2013).

Similarly, the managers of the Syrian communications corporations aware organizational excellence within the medium range, attributed to poor development of the skills of managers and the absence of incentives and rewards system and the lack of training courses in these corporations. This result is consistent with studies (Alshalabe, et al., 2017; Durrah, et al., 2014; Hannawi, 2015), and varies by study (Abu Kaawd & Alrabia, 2013; Al-Kharsha, et al., 2013).

The results of the current study indicate that the two dimensions of supporting factors of management by creativity, namely, systemic thinking and creative thinking have a positive and significant effect on the organizational excellence. These findings contribute in knowing the important points for increasing the organizational excellence through the supporting factors of management by creativity. This is attributed to the fact that most managers at all management levels have a level of knowledge and creativity; encourage them to work to increase organizational excellence in the corporations. This result is consistent with study (Sattouf, 2016).

Implications and Future Research

Despite being highlighted from many researchers, the Syrian crisis is not studied well in the literature. The present study has been very perspicacious in understanding the supporting factors of management by creativity in achieving the organizational excellence. Syrian crisis is in a transitional stage that carries features of many models. As we see from the findings that despite all the reasons why Syria region is different from the rest of the world, the results to some extent were logical.

The factors that support the management by creativity contribute in achieving organizational excellence, so the managers need to learn and apply these factors in accomplishing their business. Where these factors constitute a key element in achieving the desired organizational excellence of the organization.

An appropriate mechanisms for implementation are encouraging the managers to exercise these factors, spreading the culture of creativity, developing thinking skills, focusing on ideas rather than focusing on behaviors, searching for creative solutions, thinking of the depths of causes, activating communication among managers to share experiences and knowledge, and selecting advanced training programs to enhance managers' ability to reach organizational excellence.

For further future research should add other variables that were not mentioned in the present study, such as building a system of creative management in public organizations, the role of organizational learning in achieving organizational excellence, building a model of organizational excellence in private companies.

Limitations

The current study includes two variables, but this study has some limitations that should be considered for further research. First limitation is that the data was collected through a questionnaire during the Syrian crisis, which may be effect on the results. Second limitation is limited to the managers working only at the Syrian communications corporations in the public sector. Third limitation is that the supporting factors of management of creativity include three factors, i.e. systemic thinking, strategic thinking, and creative thinking.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore the new point of views in the grounds of these variables. The study results found that two factors of supporting factors of management by creativity (i.e. Systemic thinking, and creative thinking) have a significant impact on organizational excellence. Plus, the creative thinking factor was the most aware by respondents, followed by the strategic thinking factor, then the systemic thinking factor. In this study two hypotheses are accepted and it explores a new path to increase the organizational excellence at the Syrian communications corporations. This indicates that by systemic thinking, strategic thinking, and creative thinking, the excellence of any organization can be grown.

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