

## Strategic Planning Practices and It's Role on Employees' Innovative Behavior

An empirical study of employees' views at private hospitals in Iraqi Erbil city

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of strategic planning that is represented by three dimensions (top management support, technology and strategic goals) on employees' innovative behavior related to the employees' views at private hospitals in Iraqi Kurdistan Region Erbil city. A survey questionnaire has been used to collect data, and the questionnaires distributed randomly to (150) health staff comprising of a number of private hospitals, (146) of staff were able to fill and return the questionnaires however (142) of the questionnaires was suitable for the purpose of statically analyzing. The questionnaire encompassed two sections with 30 closed-ended questions. Data collected analyzed quantitatively by using SPSS program version 20. The results of study concluded that there is a moderate and positive correlation as well as a significant impact of strategic planning on employees' innovative behavior.

**Keywords:** *strategic planning, top management support, technology, strategic goals, and employees' innovative behavior.*

## Introduction

Strategic planning is the method of defining plans of an organization in support of achieving its mission (Parker, 2010, 3). It is one of the most valued and respected tools of management on behalf of turning organizational thoughts into reality. Studies indicate that organizations that employ strategic planning are more successful and effective than those that do not use (Sabri, 2010, 11). The usage of strategic planning according to St-Hilaire (2011, 42) is significant to organization's ability to preserve and achieve competitive advantage over other organizations. Hitt, et al (2001, 102) emphasizes that the exercise resources to achieve competitive advantage should be valuable, rare, and non-substitutable. Successful organizations employ the process of strategic planning to generate and illuminate the vision and mission of an organization's, as well as direct organizational decisions in relation to resource allocation to strengthen competitive positions and competing priorities (Abu Nada, 2006, 3). Douglas (2003, 100) states that any strategic plan without measurable and effective implementation is no plan at all.

Nowadays, organizations need innovation to be developed as well as have to be encouraged to increase their activities in the field of innovative by the patterns of behavioral (Sweetman et al. 2010). Lyon and Ferrier (2002, 471) indicate that organizations must become more innovative in order to compete in the global competition. Jung, et al (2003, 527) emphasizes that in order to affect directly and indirectly organizations' innovation, encouraging innovative behavior requires a top management support. Teece, et al. (1997, 511) states that employees' innovative behavior is a dynamic ability which might build, reconfigure, and integrate internal and external competencies to address fast environment changes. For this reason, the aim of this paper is to investigate the role of strategic planning on employees' innovative behavior according to employees' views at private hospitals in Iraqi Erbil city.

## Research Objectives:

The main objective of conducting this study is to investigate the role of strategic planning on employees' innovative behavior. In addition, the sub objectives derived from the main objective are:

- To examine the impact of strategic planning on employees' innovative behavior.
- To discover the correlation between strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior.
- To identify the strongest strategic planning factor impact on employees' innovative behavior.

## The significance of the Research Study:

- The significance of the current study is that it covers two of the important topics in the field of management, it addresses the important concepts of strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior.
- This study is one of the few studies that deal with the subject of strategic planning and its role on employees' innovative behavior.
- Arranging a theoretical framework of this study, through access to contemporary literature directly related to the study.
- Enhance employees understanding of the importance of strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior.

### **Research problem:**

Currently, business organizations facing many problems that require from the management and their leaders to think about reducing depending on traditional approach in order to attempts of solving problems, rather than attempts should be to employ creative approaches to achieve organizational goals. Organizations are working constantly to achieve success and maintain its success and survival, this makes it constantly strives to develop, improve and modify their strategies. These efforts lead to the availability of new opportunities, and to achieve continuous progress and development. Therefore, strategic planning is a necessary model for organizations that strives to enhance the reengineering business process as well as adaptation with the new model. In this regard the most important question is:

What is the role of planning strategic on employees' innovative behavior?

The branches of the main question are:

What is the role of top management support on employees' innovative behavior?

What is the role of technology on employees' innovative behavior?

What is the role of strategic goals on employees' innovative behavior?

### **Theoretical Framework of the study**

The model (figure 1) illustrates the theoretical framework of the study, the model assumed a correlation and an impact of strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior. Strategic planning in this study is independent variable represents by three dimensions (top management support, technology, and strategic goals). Furthermore, employees' innovative behavior is dependent variable.

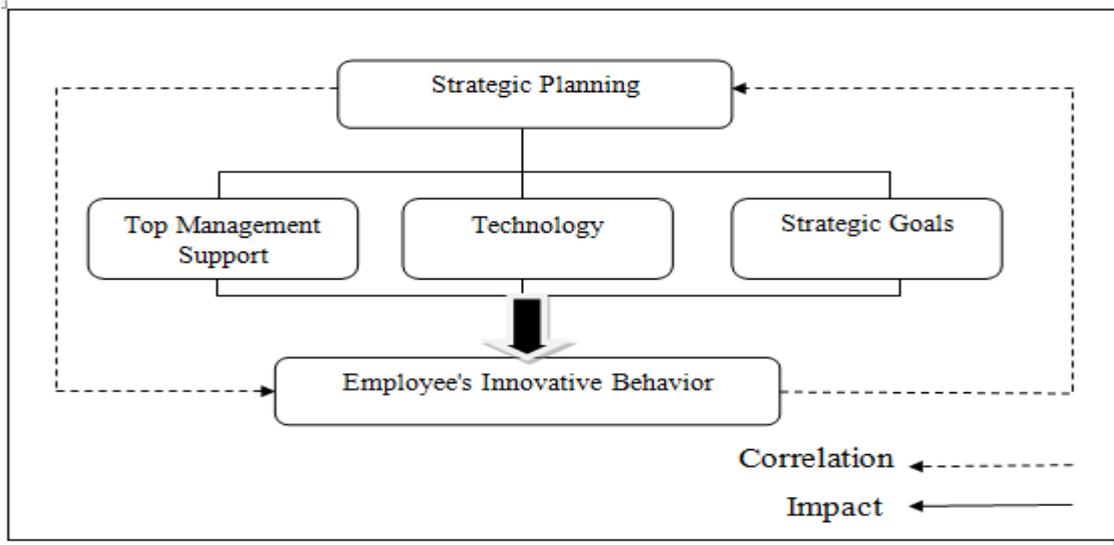


Figure (1) Theoretical Framework "Source: prepared by researchers"

### Survey Questionnaire

Data collected through a survey questionnaires comprising (30) closed-ended questions and organized into two sections; planning strategic questions, and employee's innovative behavior questions. Table (1) gives more details about the questionnaire instruments.

Table (1) Questionnaire Instruments

Variables	No. of Items	Source
<b>Strategic planning:</b> Top Management Support. Technology. Strategic goals.	7 7 7	(Sabri, 2010), (Marzouqah, 2014).
<b>Employees innovative behavior</b>	9	(Al-Asaff, 1995), (Al-Kubaesy, 2002), (Al-Mashut, 2011), (Scott & Bruce 1994).

"Source: prepared by researchers"

### Research Hypothesis

**The First Hypothesis:** there is a measurable positive correlation between strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior.

From this main hypothesis there are three sub-hypothesis as follows:

- There is a measurable positive correlation between top management support and employees' innovative behaviour.
- There is a measurable positive correlation between technology and employees' innovative behaviour.
- There is a measurable positive correlation between strategic goals and employees' innovative behaviour.

**The Second Hypothesis:** there is statistically a significant impact of strategic planning on employees' innovative behavior.

From this main hypothesis there are three sub-hypothesis as follows:

- There is statistically a significant impact of top management support on employees' innovative behaviour.
- There is statistically a significant impact of technology on employees' innovative behaviour.
- There is statistically a significant impact of strategic goals on employees' innovative behaviour.

#### **Literature Review:**

#### **Strategic planning:**

Strategic planning is an advanced stage of strategic management phases. It has evolved and changed planning system in general, which is besides representing the substance in the development of the management system (Sabri, 2010, 14). It is one of the most valued and respected tools of management for turning dreams of an organization into reality (Abu Nada, 2006). Daft (2003:214) defined strategic planning as locating the master plan which defines the organization's activities and distribution resources whether financial or spaces for employees or other necessary facilities in order to achieving organizational goals. Hellriegel et al (2005) emphasized that strategic planning is the process of identifying external and internal environments for organizations, make a decision on a vision along with mission, developing overall goals, allocating resources to achieve the goals of organizations, and creating and selecting general strategies to be pursued. It is an umbrella term according to Mulhare (1999, 325) for a variety of formal approaches to the management of organisational decision-making. Policastro (2003, 1) proposed that strategic planning is an adequate and appropriate method that determine the long-term goals and directed the organization to achieve its goals. It consists of a set of underlying processes that are intended to create or manipulate a situation to create a more favorable outcome for an organization (Taiwo and Idunnu, 2010, 74). Barry (1986) states that strategic planning is the process of determining what an organization proposes to be in the future and how it will get there. The strategic planning objective is to align the activities of organization with its

environment, thereby providing for its success and continuing survival (Obeng& Ugboro, 2008, 29).

Strategic planning has two functions. Firstly, the allocation of rare resources in accordance with the requirements of the competitive environment. Secondly, it promotes and strengthens the financial capacity of the organization (Mara, 2000). Steiner (1979, 71) stressed that strategic planning is based on four important elements and they are; future decision-making, process, philosophy, and structure. While, Sabri (2010, 18) indicates that there are a number of elements that determine the meaning and the success of the strategic planning process which they are; process, systematic, continuous, members of leaders, procedures and operations. Frizsell et al, (2004) identified the goals of strategic planning as following:

1. It can improve and develop the overall performance of the organization.
2. Guarantees growth and development in long term.
3. It helps to reduce risks (uncertainty).
4. It determines as well as directs the strategic tracks of the organization.
5. It determines and directs investment decisions followed by expansion, growth and profitability.
6. Helps to deal with problems in a manner crisis management rather than reactive approach.

In formulating strategic plans, Minzberg (1994) highlighted some processes and they were: environmental analysis, resource analysis, determination of the extent to which strategy change is required, decision-making, implementation, and control. Strategic planning is required to focus effort and promote coordination of activities (Owolabi& Makinde, 2012, 29). Dauda, et al (2010, 98) stated that the practices of strategic planning improve both company market share and the profitability of the organization. As a result, they propose that the concepts of strategic planning should be adopted by business organizations.

### **Strategic Planning Benefits:**

Strategic planning provides several benefits of the organization as following:

1. Enables the organization to identify opportunities and risks, analyze the strengths and weaknesses, determine the appropriate alternatives, and make the right decisions to achieve the desired goals (Schermerhorn, 2001).

2. To clarify the strategic direction, priorities for the foundation, the receipt and understanding of the strategic intent, and regulatory response (Fraser & Stupak, 2002, 1119).
3. Improve profitability; achieve communication, and leadership in the industry (Larsen et al, 2000, 278).
4. Determine the objectives of the organization, which would contribute in enhancing the performance of the organization (Hoffman, 2007).

### **Top Management Support:**

Top Management Support refers to willingness of senior management in the organization and persuades it to support the changes that will occur in the organization (Jawda, 2009). Top Management Support improves employees' innovative behavior through setting the objective of innovation for individuals and direct encouragement (Wang and Hong, 2010, 110). Furthermore, communication is considered to be the main technique that top management can transfer the concept of management to the individuals and effects employees' behavior (Wang and Duan, 2014, 174).

### **Technology:**

Tools that are based on the computer, which is used by individuals to work with the information, support information, and information processing requirements of the organization.

### **Strategic goals:**

Refers to the goals and objectives that organization is trying to achieves through a certain period of time ranging from 3-5 years, as well as focus on the goals of outputs and results that organization is trying to accomplish, these goals and objectives are consistent with the mission, vision and values of the organization (Al-Sairafi, 2008).

### **Employees' innovative behavior:**

In an organizational setting, innovation is the initiation, adoption and implementation of new activity or ideas. Therefore, innovative behavior is the creative perform, although innovation is the early or first employ of an idea by organizations with desire achieving objectives (Tsai, 2011, 155). Crant (2000, 437) states that innovation is a form of employee proactive work behavior. Furthermore, employees' innovative behavior is great significance to effectiveness and survival of organizational (Pieterse et al, 2009). It is a set of positive behaviours that lead to the generation of new ideas or new ways of working (Al-Kubaesy, 2002). It is a multi-stage process of problem recognition, building support for ideas, and idea implementation (West and Farr, 1989, 18), (Scott & Bruce, 1994, 585), Janssen (2004, 350), (Carmelli et al, 2006, 80). Dress and Pickens (2000, 20)

argues that innovation is a critical success factor whether an organization is fails or successful.

Kanter (1988, 176) identified three stages relevant to employees' innovative behavior, and they are: idea generation, coalition building, and implementation. Amabile, (1988) indicates that employees' innovative behavior is considered to be largely a motivational issue. Amabil further indicates that these behaviors besides being influenced by factors like skills and knowledge. Khalili et al (2015) stated that employee innovative behavior is the number one top management ability and proficiency. Managers of innovation according to Vroom and Jago (2007) are people who motivate followers and exert influence to work collaboratively to perform creative results.

Janssen, (2000), and De Jong & Den Hartog (2007) identified some examples of innovative behavior such as designing new ideas for difficult issues, identifying performance gaps, searching out new working techniques, methods, technologies or instruments. Li and Zheng (2014) divided the employee's innovative behavior motivation into external and internal factors. External factors comprise the top management support, and open team environment. While, internal factors including the ability as well as innovative personal traits to contribute in innovation.

Many researchers concluded that top management support strongly impacts employees' innovative behavior (Thamain, 1996), (McDonough, 1993), (Yuan and Woodman, 2010). Employees are unlikely to display innovative behavior unless they are supported and rewarded. Getz and Robinson (2003) concluded that in an organization approximately (%80) of the ideas are initiated by employees. Consequently, the more top management supports and rewards an employee's innovative behavior as well as trusts and listens employee's judgment, the more effort employees will put into being innovative (Ramus, 2001). A number of factors have been studied as motivator towards employees innovative behavior, such as job characteristics and top management support for innovation (Axtell et al. 2000), the relations between supervisors and subordinates, and employees differences (Janssen, 2003), social group context, and organization culture and climate (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Mission and objective interdependence (Vegt & Janssen 2003). In addition, Li and Zheng (2014) divided the factors that affecting employees' innovative behavior into individual level, and organizational level. On the individual level, it includes organizational commitment and psychological capital. On the organizational level, it includes organizational innovation atmosphere, leadership, social capital, and work characteristics.

## Methodology

This study use analytical descriptive method, since this method is considered to be the most used in humanities and social studies. The context of this study is private hospitals. Survey design was adopted for this study as research design. This study implemented survey manner in form of using questionnaires to health staff of private

hospitals in Iraqi Erbil city. Five point Likert scale implemented, and the thirty items of the questionnaire rated (1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree, 3= Uncertain, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree) was administrated. Collected data were analyzed using (SPSS) version 20, the statistical analysis that used in this study comprising descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), Pearson's correlation coefficients (determine the correlations between study variables along with testing the first hypothesis), and multiple regression analysis was used to analysis the second hypothesis of the study. Questionnaires were used and randomly distributed to (150) health staff comprising of a number of private hospitals in Iraq Erbil city. However, (146) of staff were able to fill and return the questionnaires as well as (142) of the questionnaires was suitable for the purpose of statically analyzing. The table below (table 2) illustrates the distribution of study sample.

**Table (2) Distribution of study sample**

Hospital Name	Number of Distributed Questionnaires	Number of Returned Questionnaires	Response Rate %
Welfare Hospital	25	24	16.90
Soran Private Hospital	25	22	15.49
Sardam Private Hospital	25	24	16.90
Zheen international Hospital	40	38	26.76
Al-Rahma Private Hospital	35	34	23.95
Overall	150	142	94.66

**"Source: prepared by researchers"**

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Reliability Analysis**

For the purpose of this study, Cronbach's alpha as it is showed in table (3) was administrated to test the reliability of the scale, which indicated how well the items measuring a concept hang together as a set, and it is equal to 0.952 for the whole questionnaire, which is considered to be high reliability (Sekaran, 2005).

**Table (3)**  
**Reliability Statistics**

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Top Management Support.	7	.784
Technology.	7	.850
Strategic Goals.	7	.900
Employees Innovative Behavior.	9	.941
Whole Questionnaire.	30	.952

"Source: prepared by researchers"

### Descriptive Statistics:

The table below (4) shows the descriptive analysis. The answer of top management support, technology, strategic goals, and employee's innovation behavior explain agreeableness. Therefore, it means that all the strategic planning elements will enhance the employee's innovation behavior. Furthermore, the element of top management support was the most important factor stimulating to impact employee's innovation behavior with a rate of 78.49% agreement. In contrast, strategic goals were the least important factor to employee's innovation behavior with a rate of 74.06% agreement.

**Table (4) Descriptive Statistics**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rate of agreement	Rank
Top Management Support	142	3.9245	.67193	78.49	1
Technology	142	3.7344	.76744	74.69	2
Strategic Goals	142	3.7032	.81704	74.06	3
Employee's Innovative Behavior	142	3.4460	.73046	68.92	

"Source: prepared by researchers"

### Pearson Correlation analysis:

Table (5) shows the result of analysis carried out to test the first hypotheses along with its sub-hypotheses. To test the correlation among the study variables; Pearson's (r)

correlation was calculated. The correlation coefficient for the data revealed that variables tested were positively and significantly related. In the table (5) the correlation matrix explains that strategic planning were positively correlated with employee's innovative behavior as the value of the correlation coefficient was above moderate (.686<sup>\*\*</sup>) at the level of significance (0.01) and reached the value of significant at (0.000). Therefore, the first hypotheses accepted which states that there is a measurable positive correlation between strategic planning and employee's innovative behavior.

The independent variables (top management support, technology, and strategic goals) were positively correlated with employee's innovative behavior at the value of significant (0.00). Moreover, the table shows that strategic goals achieved the highest positive correlation with employee's innovative behavior. On the contrary, technology has the weakest correlation with employee's innovative behavior. Consequently, the sub-hypotheses were accepted as well.

**Table (5) Pearson Correlation analysis**

Variables	Top Management Support	Technology	Strategic Goals	Strategic Planning
Employee's Innovative Behavior	.591 <sup>**</sup>	.487 <sup>**</sup>	.759 <sup>**</sup>	.686 <sup>**</sup>
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000

**\*\***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**"Source: prepared by researchers"**

### Regression Analysis

This study conducted a multiple linear regression analysis in order to examine the impact of strategic planning and its variable (top management support, technology, and strategic goals) on employee's innovation behavior.

Therefore, the regression model becomes:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby:  $\beta_0$  is the regression intercept;  $\beta_1 - \beta_3$  are the regression coefficients; Y is the dependent variable (employee's innovative behavior); X1 is top management support; X2 is technology; and X3 is strategic goals.

Strategic planning illustrates 47% of the employee's innovative behavior as characterized by R Square. Thus, this means that other elements not studied in this study contribute 53% of the employee's innovative behavior.

**Table (6) Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.686 <sup>a</sup>	.470	.466	.53359	.470	124.236	1	140	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic planning

**"Source: prepared by researchers"**

The significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. As a result, the model is statistically significance in predicting how Strategic planning impacts on employee's innovation behavior. At 5% level of significance, the F calculated was 124.236, which explains that the overall model was significant. Consequently, the main second hypotheses is accepted which states that there is statistically a significant impact of strategic planning on employees innovative behavior.

**Table (7) ANOVA analysis**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	35.373	1	35.373	124.236	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	39.861	140	.285		
	Total	75.234	141			

a. Dependent Variable: employee's innovative behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic planning

**"Source: prepared by researchers"**

Regression equation;

$$Y = .641 + X_1 0.643 + X_2 0.463 + X_3 0.679$$

The regression equation above has established that taking variables into account (top management support, technology, and strategic goals) constant at zero employees' innovative behavior will be .641. The results presented illustrates that statically there is a

significant impact of top management support on employees' innovative behavior as explains by a coefficient of .643 as shown by a p-value of 0.000. Furthermore, statically there is a significant impact of technology on employees' innovative behavior as shown by a coefficient of .463 and a p-value of 0.000. Finally, the results explain that statically there is a significant impact of strategic goals on employees' innovative behavior as demonstrates by a coefficient of .679 and a p-value of 0.000. Consequently, from the regression results it can be concluded that top management support, technology, and strategic goals has significant impact on employees' innovative behavior and hence the sub-hypotheses are accepted.

**Table (8) Regression Analysis**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.641	.256		2.506	.013
	Top Management	.643	.074	.591	8.670	.000
	Technology	.463	.070	.487	6.589	.000
	Strategic Goals	.679	.049	.759	13.812	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee's innovative behavior

**"Source: prepared by researchers"**

**Discussion:**

The achievement of organizations objectives requires identifying an opportunities and threats existing in the market which requires owning technology along with highly efficient information systems. Therefore, interesting to this factor is reflected positively on the performance of employees. Yukl (2002) concluded that employees' innovative behavior influenced by managers which is consider being a powerful source. However, the outcomes of Zhou and Shalley (2003), Anderson et al. (2004), and De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) argue that in the workplace, employees' innovative behavior depends much on their interaction with others.

The outcomes of this study showed that increased interest to strategic planning will encourage and supportive employees to be innovative. Hence, employees feel motivated to take advantage of their influence in order to carry out innovative work activities. Janssen (2005) found that manager support positively affect employees' innovative behavior. Parker (1998) found that self efficacy have a positive impact on employees' innovative behavior. Al-Shaexaly (2013) concluded that there is a significant impact of strategic planning on performance efficiency of non-profit organizations in Jordan. Hammami and Sheikh (1995) concluded that among Jordanian managers there is a proper understanding of strategic

planning including 59% of them. While, 41% of managers are not familiar with the correct meaning of this concept. Al-Shammari (1998) found that only 39% of the Jordanian business organizations are applying strategic planning. French, et al (2004) found that there is a strong relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance. Hoffman (2007) concluded that there is a relationship between strategic planning and the process of performance. Besides, there is a measurable role of organizational culture in this relationship. De Jong & Den Hartog (2007) found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' innovative behavior. While, Reuvers, et al. (2008), and Afsar, et al. (2014) concluded that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. Earlier studies may have different perception or different research designs of the concepts strategic planning and employees' innovative behavior along with highlighted its significant to organizations. Likewise, the result of this study is essential since strategic planning is required to contribute to an innovative climate as well as motivate and encourage employees' innovative behavior.

## Conclusion

This study examined whether employees' innovative behavior is influenced by strategic planning, and to what extent the relationship between employees' innovative behavior and strategic planning. Therefore, the following research question was formulated: what is the role of planning strategic on employees' innovative behavior? Results of this study confirmed that strategic planning represents by three dimensions (top management support, technology, and strategic goals) is able to influence employees' innovative behavior. The success of the implementation of the strategic planning in organizations continued strongly by top management support, as this support plant a purse will move to the administrative levels which will reflect the commitment of the whole organization. Moreover, strategic goals are the results that the organization is seeking to achieve through its activities.

## Recommendation:

- Tom management support and commitment in organizations to the strategic planning process, because of their effect on the level of performance over the long term.
- Organizations should work to strengthen strategic planning elements through the development the information of managers and employees.
- Organizations should adopt a management philosophy and organizing methods to support strategies of strategic planning by senior management through the appropriate environment that stimulates, enhance the behaviour of employees, and support teamwork's.
- Organizations should rewards outstanding employees, value their efforts and encourage them to make more efforts in order to employees' be more innovative.
- Organizations should make strategic planning a part of the organizational culture which can be exploited to achieve competitive advantages.

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