

نموذج مشروع خطة أطروحة للتسجيل لدرجة الدكتوراه

العنوان باللغة العربية:

دور الإدارة الاستراتيجية في تعزيز القدرة على التكيف مع التغيير في شركات الاستشارات الإدارية

ب. العنوان باللغة الإنجليزية:

The Role of Strategic Management in Enhancing the Ability to Adapt to Change in
Management Consulting Companies

Hosam Salem AlNajem

222000659

Management College

اسم الباحث :

الرقم الاكاديمي :

الكلية :

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Chapter One

1.Introduction

Given the dynamic and continuous changes that business environments around the world are generally exposed to, there has become an urgent need to adapt and respond to changes that occur as a result of the rapid events occurring in the dynamic business environment. Today's business world is changing faster than ever before, thanks to new technology, changing customer preferences, changing regulations and laws, and an increasing focus on sustainability (Moșteanu, 2024). Therefore, having a solid strategic plan is essential for long-term survival and growth, especially as conditions continue to change. To meet these challenges, successful strategic management is one of the most important key factors that significantly impact the success and sustainability of organizations and institutions (Alkhodary, 2023).

Strategic management is based on several theoretical frameworks that have evolved to focus on adaptability, innovation, and stakeholder management, which is important in companies and organizations experiencing rapid technological change. One of the most prominent of these theories prevailing in recent years is the top-down theory, which relies on management and the characteristics of managers (Kim, 2022). Top-down theory provides an effective means of understanding how a leader's personality and background influence company strategies. When companies understand this, they can make decisions and implement their strategies more effectively. Through this theory, organizations can build strong leadership teams, increase their flexibility in changing situations, and improve their performance even under difficult business conditions (Abatecola & Cristofaro, 2020). Another model related to strategic management is strategic management theory, which assumes that managers participate in sustainable planning and foster an organizational culture conducive to innovation (Amason & Ward, 2020). Strategic management theory is also extremely important when studying digital change, as it helps understand how companies use new technologies to maintain their competitiveness and provides a way to Clearly, to understand how companies adapt their strategies during difficult economic times or when sudden changes occur in the markets (Rêgo et al., 2021). By adopting these theories in the study, the foundations and controls for the strategic management necessary to bring about change in organizations can be established.

As for adapting to change, the term refers to the company making internal changes to “survive” and develop sustainably. This can occur in response to an external change in the external environment or because companies aim to improve performance. The company can adapt using several types of dynamic capabilities, including research, improvement, and alliances (Cristofaro et al., 2025).

Given the importance of strategic management in a rapidly changing business environment, the literature has included many studies that have examined the role of strategic management in organizations (Ferlie & Ongaro, (2022); ESvatosova, 2020)

and other studies that have addressed adaptation to change in organizations (Pescaroli et al., 2023; Sabuhari et al., 2020) in various fields. However, to date, the literature is largely lacking in studies that examine the impact of strategic management on adapting to change in organizations, which are in great need of adopting strategies of flexibility, strategic planning, and strategic vision in light of the rapidly changing environment in all sectors in general. In this study, the management consulting firms sector was chosen as a case study because management consulting firms are of particular importance because their success depends on their ability to quickly adapt to changing customer needs and market uncertainty. Consulting firms also constitute a link between management theory and practical application in other companies, and their success in adapting to change proves the effectiveness of tools and strategies that can be transferred to other sectors to improve their flexibility, as these companies operate in a rapidly changing world and often face challenges. Large, such as new technologies and changing markets, and because its main function is to provide strategic advice to clients, its ability to adapt to change is an example to be emulated in other sectors. There are no studies or research that have highlighted the management consulting sector, despite its importance. Therefore, it is very important to study how strategic management helps management consulting firms maintain their flexibility and adaptability. From an academic perspective, the choice of strategic management as a case study has not been addressed in relation to the subject of the study.

Given the importance of the study, it aims to explore the role of strategic management in enhancing adaptation to change in management consulting firms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, this study aims to answer the following question:

What is the impact of strategic management in enhancing adaptation to change in management consulting firms?

This study will contribute to enriching the academic literature and research studies. It will also serve as a framework that serves as a guide for companies on the optimal application of strategic management to keep pace with the changing business environment and enhance adaptation to change.

2. Study problem

While the importance of strategic management in improving organizational performance has proven effective (Islami, 2021; Ferreira et al., 2020; George et al., 2019), its implementation on the ground remains problematic, especially when organizations are trying to adapt to change (Ansell & Boin, 2019; Thorén & Vendel, 2019). Persistent barriers, such as organizational inertia and resistance to change, often undermine improvement initiatives (Nilsen et al., 2020; Mansaray, 2019; Weiner, 2020). Although recent studies have explored adaptation as an independent concept (Heggstad et al., 2019; Alexander & Fernandez, 2025), there are clear, but not vague,

gaps that are not specifically studied. (1) There is a lack of empirical research that directly examines how strategic management practices enable adaptation, rather than focusing solely on performance outcomes in Saudi Arabia, which represents the geographical context of the study. The literature has been limited to addressing strategic management in companies and institutions, without addressing its effectiveness in breaking resistance to change and adapting to the labor market (Ali, 2019; Mohammed, 2017). (2) The relationship between strategic management and adaptation within management consulting firms that undergo and facilitate change has not received much attention, especially in Saudi Arabia. One study analyzed, designed, and implemented a management information systems consulting firm (Alomari et al., 2019) without addressing any of the study variables (strategic management or adaptation to change). Abdullah, 2024, also mentioned the challenges and difficulties facing the strategic management companies sector in Saudi Arabia due to weak strategic management. A report presented by the ILaf website (2025) revealed the decline of management consulting firms and their reduced efficiency in providing solutions due to management problems, including reliance on foreign experts without proper planning and developing management strategies that are compatible with local reality. Foreign experts are not familiar with the local reality, which created a management gap that led to a lack of flexibility to keep pace with emerging changes. Another study examined how consulting firms share knowledge with clients in the Arab world without addressing strategic management practices or adapting to change (Huang et al., 2022). (3) There is a noticeable absence of studies specific to the context in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, despite the urgent need for organizational adaptation in light of Vision 2030. This study aims to address these gaps by examining the intersection of strategic management and adaptation within Saudi management consulting firms. This focus is justified given the dual role of these firms as examples of adaptation to change (Sierra Group, 2024). Using an in-depth case study methodology using quantitative and qualitative methods, the research seeks to: (a) integrate strategic management theory with organizational adaptation models, (b) develop relevant guidelines. In the context of Saudi companies, and (c) proposing practical metrics for assessing adaptive readiness, the study thus provides practical and timely insights for practitioners aiming to overcome resistance to change, while also contributing to the academic discourse on strategic resilience in emerging markets.

3. Study Questions

Based on the problem statement presented, this study attempts to answer the following main question:

- Does strategic management have an impact on enhancing adaptability to change in a management consulting firm?

The following sub-questions arise from the main question:

1. Does strategic planning have an impact on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm?
2. Does innovation management have an impact on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm?
3. Does strategic vision have an impact on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm?
4. Does resource management have an impact on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm?
5. Does strategic planning have an impact on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm?
6. Does innovation management have an impact on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm?
7. Does strategic vision have an impact on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm?
8. Does resource management have an impact on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm?

4. Importance of the study

A. Theoretical Significance

Alenezi et al. (2021) stated that change management in Saudi institutions and companies suffers from weak success, and leaders face numerous challenges, including employee resistance. The Saudi public sector is undergoing widespread changes under

the government's reform agenda, Vision 2030. However, there is little research on organizational change in the Arab world; what exists is in-depth and pays little attention to the roles of leaders. Therefore, this study serves as a starting point for exploring solutions and strategies that can achieve successful adaptation to change in Saudi management consulting firms, which have not been addressed in previous studies. This will be done by examining strategic management, which is currently considered a promising solution for confronting change (Henry, 2021). Therefore, this study chose strategic management to measure its impact on adapting to change, by selecting a Saudi consulting firm as a case study, as a reference for all clients and companies to provide solutions for dealing with adapting to change in a dynamic environment. This study contributes to opening the way for researchers and academics to further research and improve this field. The theoretical significance of the study also stems from establishing a theoretical framework for strategic management and its role. In adapting to change in companies, this opens up a research area for researchers to conduct more in-depth studies in this field. This study can be considered a reference for developing research related to the topic of the study. In addition, this study adds a new dimension to the literature through its application to management consulting firms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a context that has not received sufficient research.

B. Applied Importance:

Abdullah (2024) stated that a large percentage of employees in the consulting sector (especially non-Saudis) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia do not possess the experience, knowledge, and skills necessary to guide organizations to achieve their strategic goals. They fall into a trap, similar to what many large companies in this sector have fallen into: a lack of knowledge or disregard for the culture of the organization or the culture of the country, which may be the greatest obstacle to implementing the strategies and plans that are drawn up and convincing leaders of them. This is due to weak strategic management and resistance to change policies. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in developing a guiding framework for the management consulting sector in general and institutions in particular in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It includes directives and recommendations for improving strategic management across various dimensions, highlighting its role, and developing solutions to address resistance to change in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the aim of making sectors more inclusive. Management consulting is ready to keep pace with Vision 2030 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

5.Study objectives

The aim of this study is to conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis to examine the relationship between strategic management and adaptability to change, using a management consulting firm in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a case study. Based on the main objective, the following sub-objectives will be achieved. The following sub-objectives emerge from the main objective:

1. Study the impact of strategic planning on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.
2. Study the impact of innovation management on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.
3. Study the impact of strategic vision on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.
4. Study the impact of resource management on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.
5. Study the impact of strategic planning on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.
6. Study the impact of innovation management on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.
7. Study the impact of strategic vision on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.
8. Study the impact of resource management on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.

6.Study hypotheses

Based on the study questions, the main hypothesis was formulated as follows:

H₁: There is a statistically significant effect at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of strategic management on enhancing adaptability to change in a management consulting firm.

From this main hypothesis, the following sub-hypotheses emerge:

H_{1,a}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of strategic planning on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.

H_{1,b}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of innovation management on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.

H_{1,c}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significant level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of strategic vision on enhancing resilience in a company. Management Consulting

H_{1,d}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of resource management on enhancing resilience in a management consulting firm.

H_{1,e}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of strategic planning on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.

H_{1,f}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of innovation management on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.

H_{1,g}: There is a statistically significant effect at a significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of strategic vision on enhancing continuous learning in a management consulting firm.

$H_{1,h}$: There is a statistically significant effect Statistical significance at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for resource management to enhance continuous learning in a management consulting firm

7. Study Concepts

Based on a review of the literature, previous studies, and the subject matter of the study, the following technical and operational definitions can be presented:

A. Terminological Definitions:

The Main Independent Variable and its Sub-variables

- Strategic Management: Strategic management can be defined as the dynamic process of formulating, implementing, evaluating, and monitoring strategy to achieve a company's strategic objectives (Rêgo et al., 2021).
- Strategic Vision: A strategic vision is a clear vision and ambitious goals that define the organization's sustainable objectives and favorable future state. It can be viewed as a guide for all stakeholders involved. The strategic vision articulates what a company seeks to achieve within a specific timeframe, taking into account challenges and opportunities (Niemand et al., 2021).
- Resource Management: Resource management refers to the effective organization, allocation, utilization, and management of a company's resources to achieve its strategic objectives. These resources include financial assets, human resources, physical assets, and technological infrastructure (Harijanto et al., 2022).
- Innovation Management: Innovation management refers to the systematic process of stimulating, leading, and implementing innovative ideas, products, services, or processes within a company to achieve sustainable strategic objectives and competitive advantage. It requires an emerging environment that stimulates creative thinking, identifies innovation opportunities, and allocates resources to project innovations (Agustian et al., 2023).
- Strategic Planning: Strategic planning is a structured process through which a company defines its sustainable goals, identifies key actions to achieve those goals, and

allocates resources to implement those plans. It requires establishing a clear vision, assessing the internal and external environment, setting strategic objectives, and ongoing monitoring to ensure alignment with overall strategic objectives (Malik, 2023).

Main Dependent Variable:

1. Adapting to Change: Adapting to change refers to the process by which a company adjusts its practices, constitution, processes, and culture to respond effectively to internal and external changes in the business environment (Alsharari, 2024). The main dependent variable includes the following sub-variables:

a. Resilience: Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover in the face of volatility. It includes the ability to recalibrate strategies, modify structures, and update processes as conditions evolve, thereby maintaining effectiveness even under uncertainty or change (Govindarajan, & Ananthanpillai, 2022).

b. Continuous learning: Enhancing and improving the learning culture and capabilities to maintain a workforce with the expertise and knowledge needed to handle change (Armanious & Padgett, 2021).

b. Operational Definitions of the Study

The Main Independent Variable and its Sub-variables:

Strategic Management: The procedures followed by Saudi management consulting firms, which include a comprehensive and structured process for defining their strategic objectives, determining how to use resources, and making key decisions. This approach helps companies adapt effectively to changes in the environment and build a sustainable competitive advantage.

a. Strategic Planning: This is a method by which consulting firms define their long-term goals. They assess their strengths and weaknesses, examine what is happening inside and outside the organization, and then plan how to achieve these goals, while monitoring market changes.

b. Strategic Vision: This is the company's vision of its future direction. It involves setting a clear direction and objectives that enable the company to stay on track as the surrounding environment changes. It involves defining comprehensive plans and

ensuring they are aligned with the requirements of the developing world in which we operate.

c. Innovation Management: The company systematically generates new ideas, creates innovative solutions, and utilizes digital transformation and automation, putting them into action to remain competitive and adapt smoothly to the ever-changing world of management consulting.

d. Resource Management: This relates to how a company plans and utilizes its resources, staff, and knowledge in the best possible way to support its strategies and remain flexible when circumstances change.

8. Sub-variable (Adaptation to Change): The extent to which Saudi management consulting firms respond quickly and easily to changes within and external to their organizations. This includes adjusting strategies, workflows, and organizational structures to ensure business continuity and achieve objectives. The main dependent variable includes the following sub-variables:

a. Flexibility: Flexibility refers to a consulting firm's ability to quickly adapt its strategies and operational frameworks in response to shifts within the competitive landscape by recalibrating processes or direction as conditions evolve.

b. Continuous Learning: Continuous learning refers to the ongoing process by which a management consulting firm seeks to acquire new information, develop relevant skills, and reflect on past experiences. This approach enables the firm to improve its performance and maintain its ability to adapt to changing challenges and sector changes.

9. Study limits: (spatial, temporal, human)

Time Limits: The time limitation is that the data for the interviews and questionnaire will be collected during the year 2025.

Spatial Limits: The total number of local management consulting firms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is 55 companies. Due to the difficulty of accessing all management consulting firms in the Kingdom, only management consulting firms in the city of Jeddah were selected as a geographical area. The number of these companies in the city of Jeddah is eight companies. When contacting the companies, the approval of only two

companies out of eight companies was obtained, which gave approval to allow their employees to participate in the survey study to collect data.

Human Limits: data will be collected based on a sample of management consulting firm employees only and include (CEO - COO - Senior Manager - Consulting Manager - Administrators)

10.Procedures of the Study:

10.1 Study Methodology

The study methodology is based on the hybrid method, which combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches to study the role of strategic management in enhancing adaptation to change in companies by choosing a case study of the Saudi Consulting Company in Jeddah .

Sample study and Community:

- **Study Community**

The study population consists of employees of a management consulting firm in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, consisting of (CEO - COO - Senior Manager - Consulting Manager - Administrators). Management consulting firms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are considered important factors in business development in the Kingdom, as they represent a vital tool for improving the performance of Saudi organizations, companies and institutions, especially in light of the increasing competition and multiple challenges facing these entities. Management consulting can ensure innovative and objective solutions to problems, and thus can help companies achieve sustainable growth and improve their financial and structural operations (Insight, 2024).

To determine the study population, the number of consulting firms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was counted at 600. These firms vary between engineering, environmental, financial, risk management, administrative, and operational. However, since this study only targets management consulting firms, it was found that the number of companies included in the research scope, in addition to being local and not branches of a global company, decreased to approximately 55 management consulting firms. Due to the difficulty of communicating with all of these companies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the study scope was determined within the city of Jeddah as the geographical scope of the

study, which reduced the number of companies to eight. When communicating with companies in Jeddah, approval was obtained from only two companies out of eight to allow their employees to participate in the survey to collect data. These two companies are in the city of Jeddah: Kafaa - Efficiency Excellence, which has 70 employees, and the other company, Strategic Gears Leadership | Strategic Gears, which has 80 employees. Therefore, the total number of the study population is 150.

- **Study sample**

The study community included 150 employees of the management consulting company in Jeddah (chief executive officer-chief operating officer - senior manager-consultant manager-administrators), while the study sample size was calculated based on the Thomson equation as follows:

$$\frac{N \times p \times (1-p)}{(N-1) \times \frac{d^2}{Z^2} + p \times (1-p)} = \frac{150 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)}{(150-1) \times \frac{0.05^2}{1.96^2} + 0.5 \times (1-0.5)} \approx 108 \quad \bullet$$

Where “N” denotes the known population size, “n” denotes the required sample size, “d” denotes the error rate and is usually taken as (0.05), while Z is the standard score (the number of standard deviations that separate a point from the mean). The commonly used standard scores are 1.96 for a 95% confidence level.

10.2 Data collection methods:

The data collection based on two tools : survey questionnaire will be distributed online using google forms via social media while structured interviews will be conducted at 7 experts from the management consulting company in order to investigate the outcomes of quantitative methods. The interviews will be designed and executed face to face method.

10.3 Suggested statistical procedures

1. Quantitative method : the data of questionnaire will be analyzed based on SPSS software using the following statistical methods: Reliability analysis, pearson correlation coefficients, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and linear regression analysis

2. qualitative method : the data of interviews will be analyzed based on Nvivo software via thematic analysis by coding the themes and analyze the most frequented themes using Lexical approach and thematic approach

10.4 Steps to implement the study plan:

Firstly, The study will based on data collection using literature review in order to identify the comprehensive strategic management practices in organizations in addition to identifying adaption to change practices. Then data will be designed in questionnaire that will be validated and modified based on experts then will be distributed to the study sample and analyzed using SPSS software .The second stage of the study based on investigating the outcomes the quantitative method using interviews with 7 experts in management consulting company and the data of the interviews will be coded and analyzed using Nvivo software.

11.Study Model

The study model was built by the researcher, where the main variables were identified based on the study topic, while the sub-variables were identified after reviewing the literature and previous studies, through which the main independent variable was identified, which is strategic management, with its sub-dimensions: strategic planning (Asobee, (2021); Chatterjee et al., 2022), strategic vision (Rêgo et; Ali & Anwar, 2021), innovation management (Lin et al., 2024 Krasnostanova et al., 2021), resource management (Hamouche, (2023)), while the main dependent variable in the study represents adaptation to change and its sub-variables: flexibility (Szemző et al., 2021; Park & Park, 2021) and continuous learning (Budhiraja & Rathi, 2023; Frank & Mohamed, 2024). The relationship between the main and sub-variables will be studied directly without the influence of an intermediary variable. Figure 1.1 shows the study model.

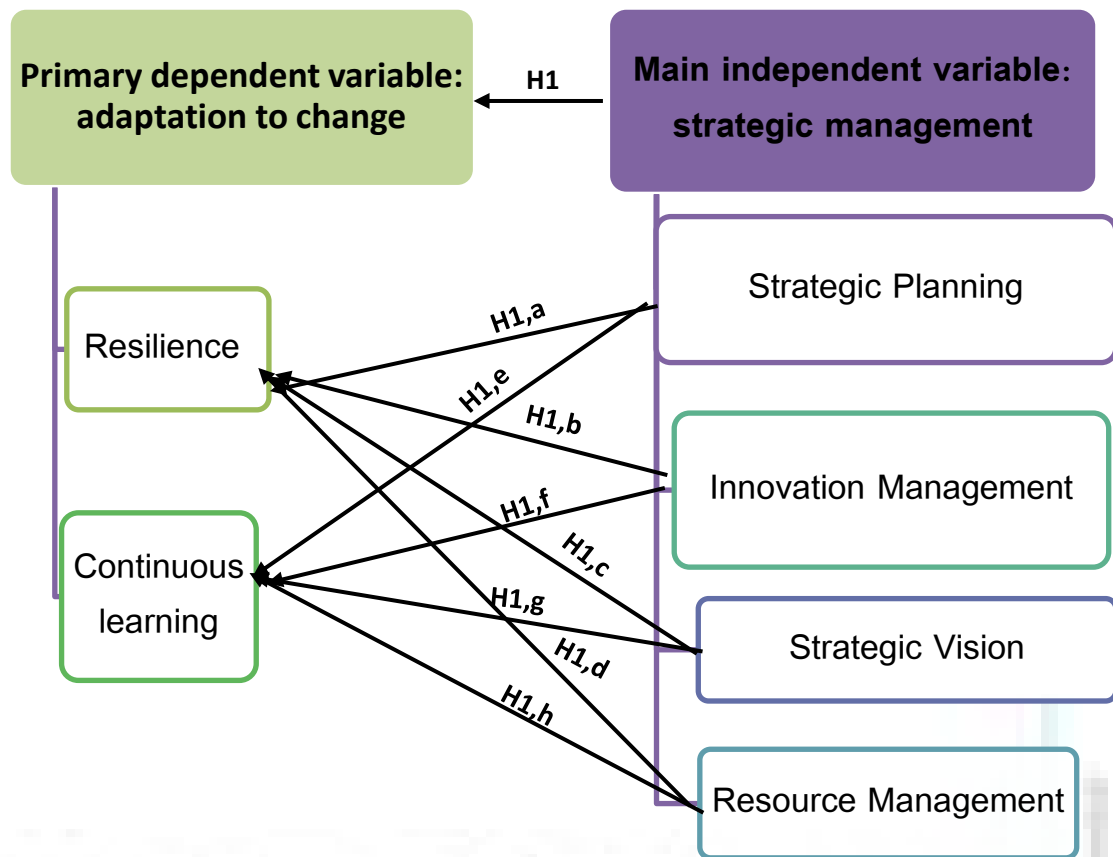


Figure 1.1 Study Model: The Impact of Strategic Management on Enhancing Adaptation to Change in a Management Consulting Firm

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