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The Role of Strategic Leadership in Improving the Performance of Healthcare Institutions and Achieving Organizational Excellence: An Applied Study on Private Hospitals in Iraq

Raed kareem Munshid ^{1*}, Shaher Rekan Radhi ², Badr Waheed Harbi ³, Jalal Abdlnassar Abdlabbas ⁴, Rawaa Radhi Shaye'a ⁵, Ahmad khalil eanid ⁶, Kamal Muhiesen Enad ⁷

¹⁻⁷ Department of Health management, College of health and medical Technology, Sawa University, Iraq

² Department Legal Management, Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University, Najaf, Iraq

* Corresponding Author: **Raed kareem Munshi**

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of strategic leadership on the performance and pursuit of organizational excellence in Iraqi private hospitals, recognizing the operational challenges they face. A quantitative approach was employed, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather data from 193 administrative staff. The questionnaire assessed perceptions of strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence using established scales and a five-point Likert scale. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. Results revealed a strong, positive correlation between strategic leadership and both hospital performance and organizational excellence. Specifically, effective communication, teamwork, and proactive adaptation to change were significant predictors of positive outcomes. The study recommends investing in leadership development programs focused on these key areas, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, actively seeking stakeholder feedback, and empowering employees. These actions can contribute to improved performance, enhanced service quality, and the achievement of sustainable organizational excellence within Iraqi private hospitals.

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Introduction

The role of strategic leadership in enhancing organizational performance has been extensively explored in contemporary management studies, particularly in the context of healthcare institutions. Effective strategic leadership is essential for achieving organizational excellence by aligning institutional goals with operational efficiencies, fostering innovation, and improving service quality (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2022; Ekiz Kavukoğlu & İşci, 2023) ^[2, 9]. In the healthcare sector, where patient satisfaction and care quality are paramount, leadership plays a critical role in overcoming challenges such as limited resources, staff shortages, and dynamic healthcare needs (Alnuaimi, 2022; Karam & Kitana, 2020) ^[6, 11]. Specifically, private hospitals, as essential providers within the Iraqi healthcare system, face unique challenges that require strategic leadership to improve service quality, optimize resource use, and meet the evolving demands of the healthcare environment (Khalaf & Hamed, 2022) ^[12]. Addressing these challenges through strategic leadership not only contributes to organizational success but also enhances community health outcomes, thereby fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement (Owusu-Boadi, 2019; Lasrado & Kassem, 2021) ^[14].

Research Significance

The current study constitutes a scientific addition to the literature related to strategic leadership and achieving institutional excellence, as it sheds light on the role of strategic leadership in improving the performance of private health institutions in Iraq. Theoretically, the study contributes to deepening the understanding of how strategic leadership affects achieving organizational excellence through improving operations and raising service efficiency, which adds value to existing knowledge in the field of health management and enhances the integration of previous studies that addressed the concepts of institutional excellence and transformational leadership. In practical terms, the research results provide practical guidance for leaders in health institutions, especially in private hospitals, on how to employ effective leadership strategies to improve service quality and increase patient satisfaction. These results are useful in guiding decision-makers in the health sector towards adopting leadership mechanisms that contribute to overcoming challenges related to resource shortages and meeting the growing needs of the health community in Iraq, which contributes to supporting the health system in a sustainable manner.

Research Objectives:

The primary objective of this research is to explore the role of strategic leadership in enhancing organizational performance and achieving excellence within private hospitals in Iraq. Specifically, this study aims to:

- (1) Identify the strategic leadership practices that most significantly impact hospital performance;
- (2) analyze the extent to which strategic leadership contributes to organizational excellence in the context of Iraqi healthcare institutions;
- (3) Provide actionable recommendations for healthcare leaders to effectively leverage strategic leadership in addressing operational challenges, improving service quality, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Research problem:

The healthcare sector in Iraq, particularly private hospitals, faces numerous challenges that hinder the pursuit of organizational excellence, including limited resources, staff shortages, and the need for continual adaptation to evolving healthcare demands. Despite the critical role of strategic leadership in addressing these challenges and driving institutional performance, there remains a gap in understanding how specific leadership practices influence performance outcomes within the unique context of Iraqi private healthcare institutions. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of strategic leadership on enhancing organizational performance and achieving excellence in these institutions. By investigating this relationship, the research aims to provide insights into how strategic leadership can be effectively harnessed to overcome operational obstacles and promote sustainable quality improvement in healthcare services. Therefore, the research problem can be written according to the following question: What is the role of strategic leadership in improving institutional performance and achieving organizational excellence in private hospitals in Iraq?

Hypothesis:

This study is based on the following statistical hypotheses:

1. **H1:** There is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance in private hospitals in Iraq.
2. **H2:** There is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational excellence in Iraqi private healthcare institutions.

Literature Review:

The concept of strategic leadership has received significant attention in organizational studies, particularly for its impact on performance and excellence across various sectors. Strategic leadership is widely regarded as a critical factor in enhancing organizational effectiveness by fostering a shared vision, motivating employees, and promoting innovative practices (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2022) ^[2]. In the healthcare sector, strategic leadership has been found to directly impact service quality, patient satisfaction, and operational efficiency (Ekiz Kavukoğlu & İşci, 2023) ^[9]. For example, Al-Hawajreh *et al.* (2023) ^[4] highlight that strategic leaders in healthcare environments are essential for adapting to rapid changes and addressing challenges such as limited resources and high patient demand. In Iraqi private hospitals, where such challenges are prevalent, strategic leadership has the potential to transform healthcare delivery by aligning institutional goals with effective practices (Khalaf & Hamed, 2022) ^[12]. Other studies, such as those by Lasrado and Kassem (2021) ^[14], emphasize the role of transformational leadership styles in achieving organizational excellence by cultivating a strong organizational culture and commitment to continuous improvement. These findings underscore the importance of strategic leadership in driving both organizational performance and excellence, laying the foundation for this study's focus on the Iraqi healthcare context.

This study distinguishes itself from prior literature by focusing specifically on the role of strategic leadership within the unique context of Iraqi private healthcare institutions. While previous studies have examined the impact of leadership on organizational performance and excellence in various sectors (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2022; Ekiz Kavukoğlu & İşci, 2023) ^[2, 9], there is limited research addressing how strategic leadership directly influences these outcomes in Iraqi private hospitals, which face distinct challenges such as limited funding, shortages of qualified staff, and high patient demands. Unlike existing research that predominantly explores leadership in stable environments (Lasrado & Kassem, 2021) ^[14], this study aims to provide a contextual analysis of strategic leadership in a resource-constrained healthcare setting, thereby filling a significant gap in the literature. Furthermore, by focusing on both organizational performance and excellence as dependent variables, this study offers a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted role of leadership in healthcare institutions facing continuous operational pressures.

Spatial and temporal limits:

This study was conducted over a three-month period, from August to October 2024, and specifically focused on private hospitals operating within Iraq. The decision to concentrate on this timeframe allowed for data collection during a period of relative stability within the Iraqi healthcare system, minimizing potential disruptions that could influence leadership practices and organizational outcomes. The

geographical limitation to Iraq provides a focused context for understanding the role of strategic leadership within a healthcare system facing unique challenges and opportunities.

Methodology:

This study adopts a quantitative approach, utilizing a descriptive-correlational design to investigate the relationship between strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence within Iraqi private hospitals. Data will be collected through a self-administered questionnaire distributed to a sample of administrative staff in these institutions. The questionnaire will consist of established scales adapted from prior research, measuring the study variables through multiple Likert-type items. To ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha will be calculated to assess internal consistency, while confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be employed to examine the underlying factor structure of the scales. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, will be used to summarize the data and explore the respondents' perceptions of the study variables.

Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis will be performed to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence. Regression analysis will be conducted to assess the predictive power of strategic leadership on both hospital performance and organizational excellence. All statistical analyses will be performed using SPSS software, with the significance level set at $p < .05$.

Population and sample:

The study population includes administrative workers in Iraqi private hospitals. Iraqi private hospitals are a fundamental pillar of the Iraqi health system, providing basic and complementary health care services. Despite the challenges they face, such as lack of funding and qualified personnel, they provide a variety of medical services including primary care, specialized care, emergency care, immunization, childbirth, and some types of treatment. Despite the many challenges, private hospitals strive to improve the quality of their services and overcome the shortage of resources. They benefit from the expertise of distinguished medical personnel who serve with expertise and skill, to provide comprehensive health care to members of society, within a difficult environment that requires great efforts to ensure the continuity of these services and keep pace with developments in the field of health care. According to the hospitals, the number of targeted workers was 566 workers. To calculate the size of the random sample from the community, the following statistical formula is used:

$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{(E^2 \cdot (N - 1)) + (Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p))}$$

where n is the desired sample size, N is the population size (566 in this case), Z is the value corresponding to the confidence level (e.g., 1.96 for a 95% confidence level), p is the expected success or response rate (if unknown, 0.5 can be used to maximize the sample size), and E is the acceptable margin of error (e.g., 0.05 for a 5% margin of error). We calculate the sample size with a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and a 50% response rate: We find:

$$n = \frac{566 \cdot (1.96^2) \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05^2 \cdot (566 - 1)) + (1.96^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5))} = 173.9$$

Now, the sample size was calculated to be approximately 174 individuals to ensure the required accuracy with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. 200 questionnaires were distributed and 193 were returned, making the final sample size 193.

Discussion and results:

1. The theoretical framework of the variables and the relationship between them:

This study centers around three core variables: strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence:

Strategic Leadership: This concept extends beyond traditional leadership paradigms, emphasizing a leader's ability to formulate and communicate a compelling organizational vision, aligning resources and actions towards achieving long-term goals (Kising'u, 2017) ^[13]. In dynamic and resource-constrained environments like healthcare, strategic leaders are crucial for proactively anticipating change, fostering innovation, and guiding organizations towards sustainable success (Al-hawajreh *et al.*, 2023) ^[4]. They empower their teams, encourage collaborative problem-solving, and cultivate a culture of learning and adaptability (Hossain & Saleh, 2016) ^[10].

Hospital Performance: This encompasses a multifaceted construct, reflecting the effectiveness and efficiency of a hospital in achieving its desired outcomes. Key dimensions of hospital performance include financial stability, quality of patient care, patient satisfaction, operational efficiency, and a strong community reputation (Ali, 2023). In a competitive healthcare landscape, strong performance is not merely desirable—it's essential for long-term sustainability and meeting community health needs.

Organizational Excellence: Going beyond mere performance, organizational excellence signifies an institution's relentless pursuit of continuous improvement, innovation, and the creation of sustainable value for all stakeholders (Blakely, 2020). It reflects a deep-seated commitment to learning, adapting to change, and consistently exceeding expectations (Lasrado & Kassem, 2021) ^[14]. In healthcare, organizational excellence translates to delivering exceptional patient care, fostering a positive work environment, and achieving superior outcomes.

A robust body of research supports the strong link between strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence. Strategic leaders play a pivotal role in driving performance by establishing clear strategic direction, empowering employees, promoting a culture of innovation, and effectively managing resources (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2022) ^[2]. By fostering these elements, strategic leaders create a fertile ground for organizational excellence to flourish, enabling hospitals to consistently improve quality, enhance patient satisfaction, and optimize operational efficiency (Ekiz Kavukoğlu & İsci, 2023) ^[9]. Moreover, research highlights that organizations characterized by strong strategic leadership are better equipped to embrace change, navigate challenges, and achieve sustainable high performance (Karam & Kitana, 2020) ^[11]. Therefore, this study posits that strategic leadership serves as a crucial catalyst, fostering both enhanced hospital performance and a culture of organizational excellence.

The theoretical framework presented here underscores the crucial and interconnected roles of strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence within the healthcare landscape. Strategic leadership emerges as a driving force, shaping an organization's ability to navigate complexities, optimize resource allocation, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. By embracing a strategic leadership approach, hospitals can enhance performance across various dimensions, ultimately paving the way for achieving and sustaining organizational excellence. This study, therefore, seeks to empirically examine these relationships within the unique context of Iraqi private hospitals, contributing to a nuanced understanding of how strategic leadership can be leveraged to elevate healthcare delivery and achieve sustainable success in this critical sector.

2. Study tool:

The primary data collection instrument for this study is a structured questionnaire designed to gather quantitative data from administrative staff in Iraqi private hospitals. The questionnaire is divided into four distinct parts:

Part 1: Demographic Information. This section aims to collect relevant background information from respondents, including their gender, highest educational qualification, age group, and years of experience in the current hospital. These demographic variables will be analyzed to provide context to the study findings and explore potential variations in perceptions based on individual characteristics.

Part 2: Strategic Leadership. This section employs a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to assess respondents' perceptions of strategic leadership effectiveness within their hospitals. The items in this section, adapted from the leadership scales used by Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2022) ^[2] and Kising'u (2017) ^[13], measure key aspects of strategic leadership, such as having a clear vision, effective communication, fostering innovation, promoting teamwork, proactive adaptation to change, and empowering employees.

Part 3: Hospital Performance. This section also utilizes a five-point Likert scale to gauge respondents' perceptions of their hospitals' overall performance. The items, drawn from existing research on healthcare performance (Ali, 2023; Ekiz Kavukoğlu & İşci, 2023) ^[9], assess key dimensions, including financial performance, quality of patient care, patient satisfaction, community reputation, operational efficiency, and effective resource utilization.

Part 4: Organizational Excellence. This final section employs the same five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of organizational excellence within their hospitals. Adapted from studies on organizational excellence in healthcare (Blakely, 2020; Lasrado & Kassem, 2021) ^[14], the items evaluate key aspects, including commitment to continuous improvement, seeking feedback from stakeholders, fostering a culture of learning and development, implementing best practices, striving for excellence in all operations, and understanding the hospital's competitive advantage.

This carefully constructed questionnaire, drawing upon validated scales and tailored to the specific context of Iraqi private hospitals, aims to provide a comprehensive and robust tool for gathering data on the complex interplay between strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence.

3. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire:

Before administering the questionnaire to the target sample, a critical step was undertaken to ensure its content validity: expert review. The questionnaire was distributed to a panel of experts in healthcare management, leadership studies and familiar with the Iraqi healthcare context. These experts were tasked with evaluating the relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness of each item in relation to the study's objectives and the theoretical constructs being measured. This rigorous process aimed to establish face and content validity, ensuring that the questionnaire effectively captures the intended concepts and is appropriate for the target population:

Table 1: Questionnaire reliability results

Reliability Statistics		
Variable	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Strategic Leadership	6	0.840
Hospital Performance	6	0.819
Organizational Excellence	6	0.899
ALL	18	0.846

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on

Sample data and SPSS27 program

The internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a widely accepted measure of scale reliability. Table 1 presents the reliability results for each study variable and the overall questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha values for Strategic Leadership ($\alpha = .840$), Hospital Performance ($\alpha = .819$), and Organizational Excellence ($\alpha = .899$) all exceed the generally accepted threshold of .70, indicating a high degree of internal consistency among the items within each scale. Moreover, the overall Cronbach's alpha for the entire questionnaire ($\alpha = .846$) further confirms the high reliability of the instrument as a whole. These results provide strong evidence that the questionnaire is a reliable tool for measuring the intended constructs within the study population.

Table 2: Results of the internal consistency validity of the questionnaire

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.854
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1541.306
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on

Sample data and SPSS27 program

To further evaluate the questionnaire's validity, specifically its construct validity, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted. The KMO value of .854, exceeding the recommended threshold of .60, indicates an adequate sample size and appropriateness of factor analysis for this dataset. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a statistically significant result ($\chi^2(153) = 1541.306$, $p < .001$), rejecting the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. This provides strong evidence of sufficient inter-item correlations, supporting the suitability of factor analysis to explore the underlying structure of the questionnaire scales and confirm the presence of the intended constructs.

4. Demographic information analysis

Through this paragraph, we obtain personal characteristics of the research sample, which show the adequacy and diversity of the sample. The results include:

Table 3: Specifications of respondents by Gender, Age, Highest Level of Education, Years of Experience at the Central Bank of Iraq

Gender		
	N	%
Male	103	53.4%
Female	90	46.6%

Highest Level of Education		
	N	%
Diploma	55	28.5%
Bachelor's Degree	122	63.2%
Master's Degree	14	7.3%
PhD	2	1.0%

Age		
	N	%
25-34 years old	6	3.1%
35-44 years old	81	42.0%
45-54 years old	106	54.9%

Years of Experience at the Central Bank of Iraq		
	N	%
Less than 5 years	2	1.0%
5-10	7	3.6%
11-15	155	80.3%
More than 15 years	29	15.0%

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the 193 respondents who participated in the study. The sample demonstrates a relatively balanced gender distribution, with 53.4% male and 46.6% female participants. In terms of educational qualifications, the majority of respondents (63.2%) hold a Bachelor's degree, followed by 28.5% with diplomas, 7.3% with Master's degrees, and a small percentage (1%) with PhDs. This indicates a generally well-educated sample, reflecting the professional nature of administrative roles within hospitals. Age-wise, the majority of participants (54.9%) fall within the 45-54 age group, followed by 42% in the 35-44 age group, suggesting a substantial proportion of experienced personnel. This is further supported by the data on years of experience, with a significant majority (80.3%) having worked in their current hospital for 11-15 years. The dominance of experienced staff, particularly those in middle to later career stages, suggests a stable workforce within these Iraqi private hospitals. This experience could be invaluable for understanding established practices and organizational culture. However, it also underlines the need for continuous professional development initiatives to ensure these experienced staff remain adaptable and receptive to innovation within the dynamic healthcare landscape.

5. Descriptive statistics and graphical analysis:

Through this paragraph, the direction of the sample members' answers regarding the questionnaire paragraphs that measure the variables is clarified, and these results are analyzed in light of the problem and objectives of the research, where we obtain the following results:

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for Strategic Leadership

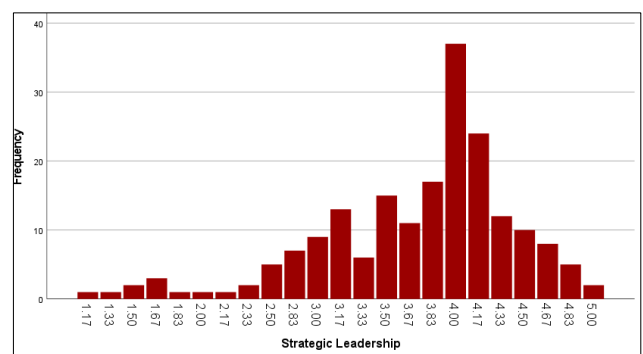
item description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Results
The hospital leadership has a clear vision for the future.	193	3.5803	1.04833	Agree
The leadership effectively communicates the hospital's vision and goals to employees.	193	4.0052	1.10160	Agree
The leadership encourages innovation and creativity among staff.	193	3.6788	.85417	Agree
The leadership fosters a culture of teamwork and collaboration.	193	3.5337	1.00528	Agree
The leadership proactively adapts to changes in the healthcare environment.	193	3.6477	.86012	Agree
The leadership empowers employees to make decisions and take initiative.	193	3.8187	1.07687	Agree
Strategic Leadership	193	3.7107	.74259	Agree

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the Strategic Leadership scale. The overall mean score of 3.71 (out of 5) indicates that, on average, respondents tend to agree that their hospital leadership demonstrates characteristics of strategic leadership. The highest agreement (Mean = 4.01) is observed for the item "The leadership effectively communicates the hospital's vision and goals to employees," suggesting effective communication as a perceived strength. Conversely, the item "The leadership fosters a culture of teamwork and collaboration" received the lowest agreement within the scale (Mean = 3.53), potentially highlighting an area for improvement. The standard deviation for all items falls within a relatively narrow range (0.74 - 1.10), indicating some variability in perceptions but a general consensus around the presence of strategic leadership behaviors. The overall positive perception of strategic leadership is encouraging. However, the relatively lower score for fostering teamwork suggests a potential area for leadership development. Strengthening collaboration and team dynamics could further enhance organizational effectiveness

and contribute to a more positive work environment.

Fig 1: The trend of the answers for Digital Currency Adoption



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

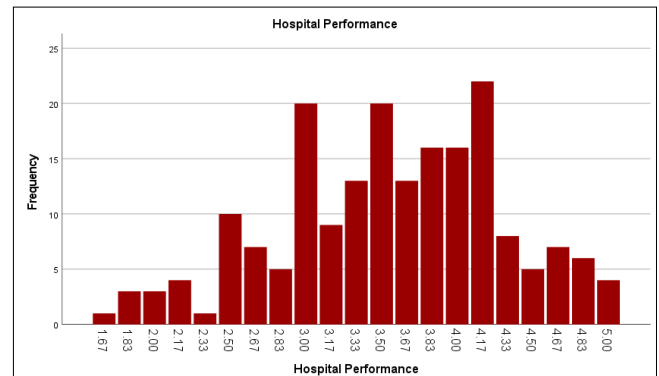
Table 5: Descriptive statistics for Hospital Performance

item description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Results
The hospital consistently meets its financial targets.	193	3.7254	.80508	Agree
The hospital provides high-quality patient care.	193	3.5026	1.05141	Agree
The hospital has a high level of patient satisfaction.	193	3.4352	.95044	Agree
The hospital has a strong reputation in the community.	193	3.6062	.96844	Agree
The hospital is efficient in its operations.	193	3.4508	1.10346	Agree
The hospital effectively utilizes its resources.	193	3.6477	1.20338	Agree
Hospital Performance	193	3.5613	.74057	Agree

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample

Data and SPSS27 programmer

The descriptive statistics for Hospital Performance are presented in Table 5. The overall mean score of 3.56 suggests a general agreement among respondents that their hospitals perform well. "Consistently meeting financial targets" received the highest agreement (Mean = 3.73), indicating a positive perception of financial stability. Conversely, "The hospital is efficient in its operations" received the lowest agreement (Mean = 3.45), potentially highlighting an area for improvement. The standard deviations for the items range from 0.80 to 1.20, reflecting some variability in perceptions of different performance aspects. While the overall perception of hospital performance is favorable, the relatively lower score for operational efficiency warrants attention. Investigating and addressing potential bottlenecks or inefficiencies in hospital processes could lead to improved resource utilization, cost savings, and enhanced overall performance.

Fig 2: The trend of the answers for Hospital Performance

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

Table 6: Descriptive statistics for Organizational Excellence

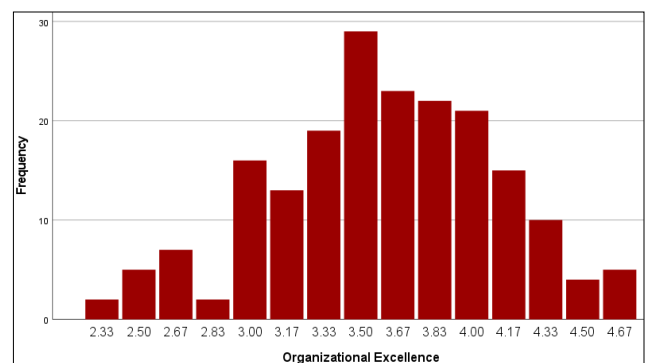
item description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Results
The hospital has a strong commitment to continuous improvement.	193	3.8031	1.10519	Agree
The hospital actively seeks feedback from patients and stakeholders.	193	3.6321	.87465	Agree
The hospital has a culture of learning and development.	193	3.5544	.96198	Agree
The hospital effectively implements best practices.	193	3.4560	1.30279	Agree
The hospital strives for excellence in all areas of its operations.	193	3.4767	1.48630	Agree
The hospital has a clear understanding of its competitive advantage.	193	3.6943	1.09678	Agree
Organizational Excellence	193	3.6028	.51111	Agree

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on

Sample data and SPSS27 programmer

Table 6 displays the descriptive statistics for Organizational Excellence. The overall mean score of 3.60 indicates a general agreement among respondents that their hospitals exhibit characteristics of organizational excellence. The highest agreement (Mean = 3.80) is observed for "The hospital has a strong commitment to continuous improvement," reflecting a positive perception of the hospitals' dedication to ongoing enhancement. In contrast, "The hospital effectively implements best practices" and "The hospital strives for excellence in all areas of its operations" received the lowest agreement within the scale (Mean = 3.46 and 3.48, respectively). Notably, these two items also exhibited the largest standard deviations (1.30 and 1.49), suggesting greater variability in perceptions regarding these specific aspects of organizational excellence. While a commitment to continuous improvement is evident, the relatively lower agreement and greater variability in perceptions regarding the implementation of best practices and striving for excellence across all operations suggest

Potential areas for targeted interventions. Hospitals could benefit from a more systematic approach to identifying, disseminating, and implementing best practices, coupled with a clearly articulated and communicated commitment to excellence across all facets of the organization.

Fig 3: The trend of the answers for Organizational Excellence

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 programmer

6. Hypothesis testing:

Table 6: Results of testing the hypothesis1

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F – Statistics sig	Durbin-Watson
1	.627 ^a	.393	.390	.57845	123.7 (.000)	1.966

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.241	.213		5.835	.000
	Strategic Leadership	.625	.056	.627	11.123	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Hospital Performance						

a. Dependent Variable: Hospital Performance

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

The results of the regression analysis testing the first hypothesis, which posited a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and hospital performance, are presented in Table 6. The findings provide strong support for hypothesis 1, as indicated by the statistically significant F-statistic ($F(1, 191) = 123.7, p < .001$) and a substantial R-squared value of .393.

The analysis reveals a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and hospital performance ($\beta = .627, p < .001$). This means that for every one-unit increase in the strategic leadership score, the

hospital performance score is predicted to increase by .625 units, holding other factors constant. The R-squared value of .393 indicates that strategic leadership explains 39.3% of the variance in hospital performance, suggesting a large effect size. This finding underscores the crucial role of strategic leadership in enhancing hospital performance. Investing in leadership development programs that foster strategic thinking, communication, and change management skills among hospital leaders can lead to significant improvements in organizational effectiveness and contribute to achieving desired performance outcomes.

Table.7: Results of testing the hypothesis2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F – Statistics sig	Durbin-Watson
2	.532 ^a	.283	.279	.43404	75.23 (.000)	1.810

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
2	(Constant)	2.245	.160		14.066	.000
	Strategic Leadership	.366	.042	.532	8.674	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Excellence						

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Excellence

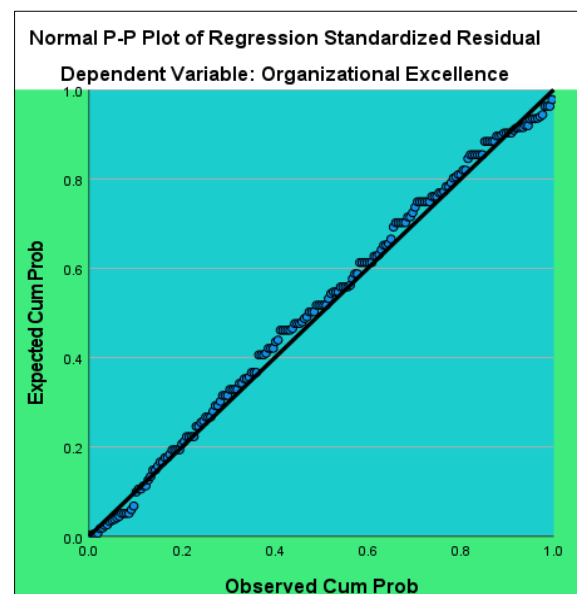
Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

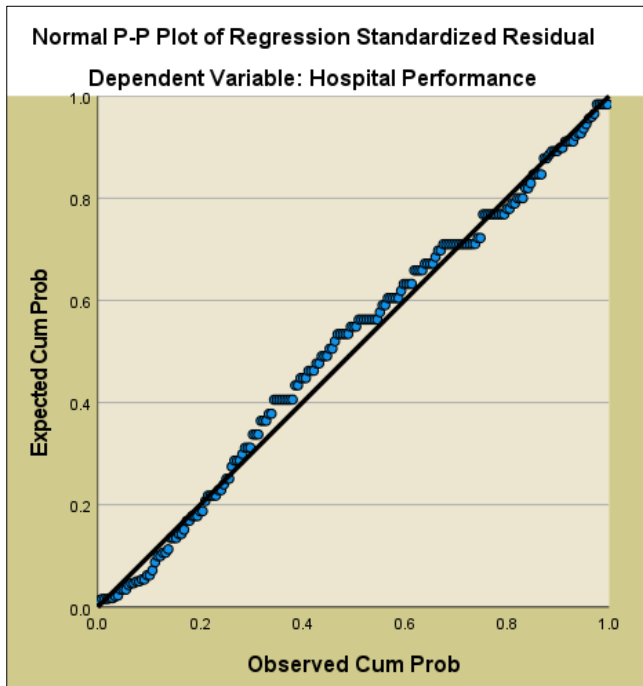
Table 7 presents the results of the regression analysis testing the second hypothesis, which proposed a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational excellence. The findings strongly support hypothesis 2. The F-statistic ($F(1, 191) = 75.23, p < .001$) is statistically significant, and the R-squared value of .283 indicates a substantial effect.

Similar to the first hypothesis, the analysis reveals a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational excellence ($\beta = .532, p < .001$). This result implies that for a one-unit increase in the strategic leadership score, the organizational excellence score is predicted to increase by .366 units, when controlling for other variables. The R-squared value of .283 indicates that strategic leadership explains 28.3% of the variance in organizational excellence, representing a considerable effect size. These findings highlight the importance of strategic leadership in cultivating a culture of excellence within hospitals. By prioritizing leadership development initiatives that enhance strategic vision, communication, and empower employees, hospitals can make significant strides towards achieving organizational excellence. This, in turn, can lead to improved service quality, increased patient satisfaction, and a stronger

competitive position within the healthcare market.

Fig 4: Model Fit





Source: Prepared by the researcher based on sample data and SPSS27 program

Figure 4 displays the Normal P-P plots of the regression standardized residuals for both dependent variables, Organizational Excellence and Hospital Performance. These plots are essential for assessing the assumption of normality in the residuals, a key requirement for valid regression analysis. In both plots, the observed cumulative probabilities closely align with the diagonal line representing the expected cumulative probabilities under a normal distribution. This close adherence to the diagonal indicates that the residuals are normally distributed, confirming that this assumption of the regression model has been met. Furthermore, there is no discernible pattern or clustering of the data points around the diagonal line. This random scattering of residuals further strengthens the conclusion that there is no significant autocorrelation or systematic bias in the model, affirming the model's statistical robustness. This visual confirmation, alongside the statistical tests conducted, provides strong evidence for the validity and reliability of the regression analyses performed in this study.

Conclusions and recommendations:

This study aimed to explore the intricate relationship between strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence within the context of Iraqi private hospitals. Recognizing the challenges these hospitals face, including limited resources and evolving healthcare demands, the research sought to understand how strategic leadership could contribute to improved organizational effectiveness and the pursuit of excellence.

A quantitative approach, utilizing a descriptive-correlational design, was employed. Data was collected from a sample of 193 administrative staff working in Iraqi private hospitals using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire, rigorously tested for validity and reliability, measured respondents' perceptions of strategic leadership, hospital performance, and organizational excellence.

The analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and both hospital performance and organizational excellence. This confirms

that strategic leadership plays a crucial role in driving organizational success within Iraqi private hospitals. Strong strategic leadership contributes to improved financial performance, enhanced quality of patient care, higher patient satisfaction, a stronger community reputation, and more efficient operational processes.

These findings carry significant implications for leadership development and organizational strategy within Iraqi private hospitals. Based on the study's results, the following recommendations are offered:

- Tailored programs focusing on strategic thinking, communication, fostering teamwork, change management, and employee empowerment should be prioritized for hospital leaders at all levels.
- Encourage a learning environment where best practices are actively sought out, shared, and implemented. Regularly assess and improve organizational processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Implement robust systems for gathering feedback from patients, employees, and the community. Use this feedback to drive service improvements and ensure alignment between organizational actions and stakeholder expectations.
- Ensure transparency and consistent communication of the hospital's mission, vision, and strategic priorities to all staff members. This fosters a sense of shared purpose and direction.
- Delegate authority and encourage a culture of ownership and accountability among staff members. This can enhance employee engagement and lead to more innovative solutions to challenges.

By embracing the principles of strategic leadership and actively pursuing the recommendations outlined, Iraqi private hospitals can overcome current challenges, enhance overall performance, and achieve sustainable organizational excellence. This, in turn, will contribute to a more robust and resilient healthcare system capable of meeting the evolving needs of the Iraqi population.

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