

# **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT IN THE STRATEGIC AGILITY OF EMPLOYEES THROUGH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE OPINIONS OF A SAMPLE OF PRIVATE SCHOOL MANAGERS OF THE CENTER OF THE CITY OF DIWANIYAH**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the role of strategic leadership in influencing employee strategic flexibility, with a particular focus on the mediating effect of strategic alignment. The objective is to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework that tackles the critical issues identified by researchers in relation to these variables. The research employs an analytical approach, drawing insights from feedback provided by private school principals in the Diwaniyah Governorate. A total of 187 schools participated in the study, involving 150 principals.

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire, and various statistical methods were employed to analyze the results through the Smart PLS software. The findings confirmed the validity of the proposed hypothesis, demonstrating the impact and interconnections between the investigated variables. Based on these results, the study offered a series of recommendations, emphasizing the importance of private school principals adopting specific behaviors to foster strategic agility by prioritizing strategic alignment.

**Keywords:** Strategic agility, Strategic alignment, Private schools in the city of Diwaniyah, Strategic leadership.

## **Introduction**

Micro-theories of leadership delve into the dynamics of leadership within organizations, focusing on internal structures and relationships. In contrast, strategic leadership research broadens the scope to examine leadership of organizations, highlighting roles like CEOs, executive teams, and governance bodies (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001: 515). Strategic leaders exhibit distinctive characteristics that transcend various settings. They strive to align internal operations with external conditions, navigate through ambiguity and complexity, handle

overwhelming amounts of information, juggle diverse challenges, and depend on intermediaries to execute their vision effectively (Hambrick, 1989:6). While their roles share underlying similarities, the relevance and influence of specific individuals or groups as strategic leaders can shift depending on varying forms of strategic agility within an organizational context (Finkelstein, 1992: 505).

Managing crises hinges on the role of strategic leadership in anticipating issues, mitigating their impacts, addressing after-effects, and extracting insights to strengthen organizational resilience. However, some leaders adopt a reactive or randomized approach to crises, potentially obstructing an organization's progress, causing financial losses, or jeopardizing its survival. Recognizing the critical role of strategic leadership in fostering strategic agility, this study examines a model encompassing three core constructs: strategic alignment , strategic agility. strategic leadership

Strategic leaders fundamentally aim to guide organizations toward a competitive advantage. To achieve this, they must demonstrate critical capabilities, including defining strategic directions, investing in organizational capabilities, enhancing human capital development, fostering an ethical organizational culture, and implementing balanced oversight mechanisms. Research on strategic leadership has underscored the impact of various factors—such as strategic alignment—on achieving these objectives (Thani, 2020: 308).

## **1. Review of Literature & Theoretical Background**

### **1.1 Strategic Leadership**

Leadership serves as a cornerstone in organizational management, functioning as a critical force behind competitiveness and the harmonious integration of people and resources to accomplish organizational goals. Effective leadership enables organizations to navigate shifting landscapes, adapt to challenges, and foster both operational efficiency and innovation. As noted by Pitelis and Wagner (2019:233), strong leadership is instrumental in ensuring organizations remain resilient and progressive amidst change. In recent years, there has been growing interest in examining the impact of leadership on organizational performance, particularly in light of the profound influence wielded by senior leaders.. These leaders possess a distinct ability to identify environmental shifts, implement innovative strategies, mitigate risks, and respond effectively to crises, thereby enhancing organizational performance (Hughes et al., 2018:549). Conversely, poor leadership often results in low employee motivation, stifling creativity and innovation while diminishing the organization's capacity to manage challenges (Zahrani,2018:189).

Today's leaders operate in increasingly complex and dynamic environments, where constant change demands effective strategies. One critical approach involves fostering follower engagement to ensure alignment with the leader's vision and commitment to achieving organizational objectives. Among various leadership styles, strategic leadership (SL) is considered particularly effective for navigating today's rapidly evolving landscape and bolstering organizational success (Najm & Al-Nuaimi, 2012:2).

Leadership extends across all organizational levels and influences others through its processes. It is not confined to top-tier executives but can emerge at multiple hierarchical levels. As noted by Opoku et al. (2015:185), leadership is both an executive responsibility

and a relational process that shapes an organization's direction and vision. Leaders play an integral role in influencing these outcomes through their interaction with followers (Taylor et al., 2011:413). Further elaborating on this perspective, Thani and Obeidat (2015) identify five core behaviors of strategic leadership, the first of which is defining the organization's strategic direction.

### **1- Determine strategic direction**

Establishing a strategic direction involves articulating the organization's mission, vision, overarching objectives, and comprehensive plans for the future. Leaders play a pivotal role in crafting a forward-looking vision that inspires their teams while equipping them with the resources and strategies needed to propel sustainable growth and foster innovative development. . Key elements underpinning this concept include strategic intent, which provides a roadmap for long-term goals rather than focusing on immediate plans. As Thani and Obeidat (2015:313) highlight, achieving success involves turning shared aspirations into actionable goals defined by senior management.

Strategic intent has been demonstrated to enhance organizational performance by influencing mission clarity, goal orientation, and the identification of future opportunities (Shaw, 2019: 97). For instance, articulating a vision helps outline what the organization aims to accomplish while motivating employees across all levels. This process not only defines the organization's aspirations but also establishes the benchmarks it intends to reach moving forward (Ozdem, 2011: 1889). Likewise, refining a mission underscores the core values and strategic priorities that steer the organization's direction.

A strategic objective encompasses measurable performance benchmarks aligned with overarching organizational goals. These objectives articulate specific achievements the organization aspires to realize while serving as milestones for broader success (Narayanan & Zinn, 2009:305). Through these focused efforts on defining strategic direction, leaders align all organizational elements toward a cohesive vision for sustained growth and competitiveness.

### **2- Investing strategic capabilities**

Investing in strategic capabilities involves concentrating on the development and preservation of core competencies, which are the distinctive resources and skills that set companies apart from competitors. Strategic leaders prioritize identifying assets and capabilities that are not only valuable and rare but also challenging to imitate or substitute, ensuring the foundation for sustainable competitive advantage. Recognizing these attributes allows organizations to strengthen their position in the market over the long term. Additionally, every organization is equipped with intellectual capital—spanning human expertise, structural processes, and relational assets with customers—which collectively play a crucial role in shaping and maintaining those core competencies. . When these competencies exhibit qualities of being valuable, rare, and hard to imitate, they become instrumental in driving competitive superiority. However, as shifts occur in the external environment, adapting these competencies becomes crucial. Strategic leaders must not only pinpoint the specific capabilities needed to fulfill the organization's objectives but also work

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diligently to refine, sustain, and utilize them effectively to maintain relevance and achieve organizational goals.

### **3- improvement & development of human capital**

Human capital serves as a cornerstone for organizational success, standing out as one of the most essential resources for navigating environmental changes and driving innovation. It is fundamental to improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately fostering a competitive advantage. Obaidat et al. (2018: 258) identify human capital as the foundation of intellectual capital, asserting that the very existence and sustainability of companies depend on it. In its broadest sense, human capital encompasses the collective competencies, skills, knowledge, creativity, commitment, wisdom, and experiences of employees, along with their values, habits, and attitudes that contribute to the organization's success (Al-Da'abseh et al., 2018: 15). Leadership has a pivotal role in motivating employees to unlock their full potential and channel their capabilities toward organizational objectives. Across all industries, the criticality of human capital lies in its integration of knowledge, skills, personal attributes, and unique competencies that drive workforce value (Obaidat et al., 2017). To thrive in today's complex and hyper-competitive environment, leaders must focus on strategies rooted in long-term thinking that leverage the wealth of talent embedded in human capital. This approach highlights essential attributes like expertise, aptitude, and specialized abilities as fundamental drivers of sustainable growth and innovation (Saeed & Abbas 2016: 76).

### **4- Ethical practices with promote organizational culture**

Ethical practices are closely tied to the qualities of strategic leaders, such as humility, a commitment to prioritizing public interest over personal gain, a pursuit of justice, accountability, and respect for all individuals. These practices play a pivotal role in shaping an organization's culture and driving employee performance. The achievement of organizational success is deeply rooted in strong ethical principles, which significantly affect overall outcomes (Pitelis & Wagner, 2019).

These practices serve as essential factors in shaping organizational culture and influencing employee performance. The success of an organization heavily relies on robust ethical standards, which have a profound impact on overall performance (Pitelis & Wagner, 2019).

### **5- Balanced organizational control serves**

Balanced organizational control serves as a crucial pillar of strategic management, particularly during the implementation phase. This encompasses mechanisms for strategic review that monitor performance, assess outcomes, and enable the necessary adjustments to ensure alignment with overarching objectives. Strategic platforms play a significant role in fostering collaboration across diverse internal and external environments, offering a flexible framework to facilitate adaptations as circumstances evolve. These systems not only support management by reinforcing strategic direction but also facilitate continuous evaluation, allowing leaders to systematically refine and optimize their strategies. At the core, these platforms define strategic perspectives, organize and address resistance, measure

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performance metrics, and integrate feedback for ongoing improvement. The ultimate goal is not just to cultivate organizational commitment to desired behaviors but also to ensure the effective execution of strategies through a structured and evidence-based approach (Nurzilan et al., 2016: 76).

## **1. Strategic agility**

Understanding agility within its broader framework and recognizing its strategic value is essential for organizations aiming to excel in today's fast-paced and ever-changing environment. The Oxford Dictionary defines agility as the ability to move quickly and easily, emphasizing two key aspects: swift responses and seamless adaptation. This concept was later adopted in the business domain, signifying an organization's capacity to respond promptly to early signals of change while maintaining operational efficiency. The term "agility" was first coined in 1991 by a group of researchers at the Iacocca Institute, Lehigh University. They introduced agile manufacturing strategies as a way to secure competitiveness for American businesses facing the challenges of globalization and the emerging digital economy. Since then, agility has become integral to discussions on organizational strategy, innovation management, and sustainable growth, particularly in fast-evolving, highly competitive markets (Audran, 2011). For instance, Pal & Pantaleo (2005) described agility as the ability to move skillfully in any direction – forward, backward, or sideways – highlighting its relevance both in avoiding looming risks and seizing unexpected opportunities. In a business context, agility broadly refers to an organization's ability to continuously adapt to uncertain and rapidly evolving environments. Competitive advantages are often fleeting under such conditions, necessitating consistent strategic innovation and adaptability (Junni et al., 2015). Agility becomes especially critical in high-competition industries, serving as a dynamic capability that empowers organizations to thrive amidst turbulence. Brueller et al. (2014) add to this by defining agility as the capability to identify opportunities and act with precision and speed, leveraging extraordinary acceleration forces. Thus, agility encompasses an organization's ability to make prompt, accurate strategic moves to remain responsive and resilient in uncertain environments. Furthermore, strategic agility is classified into five distinct behavioral dimensions (Omar, 2019; Doz & Kosonen, 2008). These dimensions collectively underscore the importance of agility as an essential organizational trait for maintaining a competitive edge and fostering sustainable growth in dynamic industries.

### **1 - Strategic sensitivity**

Strategic sensitivity refers to the sharpness of perception, heightened awareness, and focused attention within an organization. This quality can be enhanced through a cohesive strategic process that integrates a strong external focus with deep internal engagement. It involves maintaining a high degree of tension and attentiveness, fostering open and dynamic internal dialogue, and relying on an organization's ability to detect environmental changes while anticipating potential threats and opportunities (Wirahadi & Pasaribu, 2022:285). This concept embodies the organization's capacity to search for relevant information, absorb and comprehend it, adapt it to the organizational context, and interpret and analyze it to address

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pressing challenges. Essentially, greater knowledge enables organizations to adopt diverse strategies and approaches to overcome work-related obstacles (Mavengere, 2013:16). Furthermore, strategic sensitivity empowers organizations to recognize opportunities for developing innovative business models while ensuring their existing models are renewed and transformed in response to changing circumstances (Doz & Kosonen, 2010:371).

## **2- Strategic response**

Strategic response plays a crucial role in ensuring the success and sustainability of business organizations, particularly in highly volatile environments. According to Overby et al. (2006:3), strategic response encompasses an organization's capacity to promptly and accurately address emerging threats and opportunities, which involves reallocating resources and adjusting activities to meet external challenges effectively. Helfat and Peteraf (2003:998) highlight that this capability can be enhanced through dynamic capabilities, which encompass essential elements such as development processes, team building, functional relationships, and robust communication. Wang and Ahmed (2007:37) define three key components of dynamic capabilities. First is adaptability, which emphasizes the organization's flexibility in adjusting to environmental changes. Second is absorptive capability, which pertains to integrating external information within internal operational contexts. Lastly, creative capability involves linking opportunity-seeking activities with internal organizational innovation to maintain competitive advantages. Responsiveness, meanwhile, can be understood as the outcome of organizations designing their structures and relationships to proactively identify and meet the legitimate expectations of society. This concept reflects a specific type of organizational behavior aimed at aligning actions with societal needs and demands (Popescu, 2014:146).

Kumar and Motwani (1995:36) define it as the capability to expedite tasks along a critical path starting from identifying market demands and culminating in the delivery of tailored products. This represents a holistic approach to addressing the challenges of leveraging rapidly evolving global markets. As described by Vokurka and Fliedner (1998:165), it involves the ability to manufacture and market a diverse range of affordable, high-quality products with short lead times across varying sizes, delivering greater value to customers. Consequently, it emerges as the driving force behind cost leadership, competitive pricing, and innovation in products and services, as noted by Bernardes and Hanna (2009:38).

## **3- Strategic learning**

Both Farmer and Kohtamäki (2017:18) as well as Bose and Gupta (2019:10) examine strategic learning as an adaptive organizational capability, emphasizing its role as a collection of processes aimed at creating, disseminating, interpreting, and implementing strategic knowledge. Both studies interpret strategic learning in similar terms, highlighting it as the internal processes through which organizations manage and apply strategic knowledge. The concept involves four key processes: acquiring, interpreting, transforming, and retaining information within organizational memory (Omar, 2019:6). Furthermore, strategic learning is identified as a specialized learning capability that empowers top management teams to continuously incorporate organizational-level experience and knowledge into strategies. This

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ability is critical for enabling organizations to effectively address increasing disruptions and interruptions in their strategic landscapes (Sirén, 2012:497).

## **1.2 Strategic alignment**

Strategic alignment is a management concept derived from contingency theory, emphasizing the harmony between external and internal organizational environments (Acur et al., 2012: 304). This approach underscores the importance of integrating strategy, processes, organizational resources, and technological capabilities to create synergy. Organizations, regardless of being private or public, are advised to harmonize their mission, objectives, and operational plans with their broader business strategies to ensure coherence and effectiveness (Chi et al., 2020). Additionally, McAdam et al. (2019: 196) emphasize that strategic alignment is a dynamic process, requiring continuous adaptation to evolving environmental conditions and unforeseen variables. In today's ever-changing business context, sustaining strategic alignment presents considerable challenges (Price, 2016: 59). Ghonim et al. (2022) outline four fundamental dimensions that encapsulate the essence of strategic alignment:

### **1- Information Technology**

Technology is increasingly recognized as a strategic lever for boosting organizational reputation and securing social support in emerging markets, as outlined by Angulo-Ruiz et al. (2019: 188). Bhardwaj (2019: 1833) sheds light on the pivotal role of IT and knowledge management as catalysts for organizational cognition, establishing a strong connection between technology and business operations. The IT-business alignment literature further underscores the intricate interdependence between IT strategies, business frameworks, processes, and organizational components (Chi et al., 2020). However, despite its widespread acknowledgment in strategic alignment studies, lingering questions surrounding the complexities of this relationship remain (Al Khalifa, 2016: 35). Maximizing value creation through IT investments hinges on robust strategic alignment, which ensures the effective deployment of technology within an organization (Turel et al., 2017: 118).

### **2- Operations**

Organizational operations hold significant importance in strategy execution. Researchers argue that aligning functional processes can enhance performance and goal achievement by removing barriers related to communication, thought processes, and physical workflows. This alignment allows for faster and more effective dissemination of information across functions (Acur et al., 2012: 305), ultimately facilitating organizational objectives efficiently and effectively (Salles et al., 2013: 18). However, operations alignment faces challenges such as inter-functional conflicts stemming from disparate objectives and insufficient frameworks for effective interface management (Zanon et al., 2013: 209). Resolving these conflicts requires a deeper understanding of functional interactions and fostering open exchange of perspectives and values. Operations can be reorganized in alignment with strategic priorities to reduce such friction (Sardana et al., 2016: 133).

### 3- Individuals

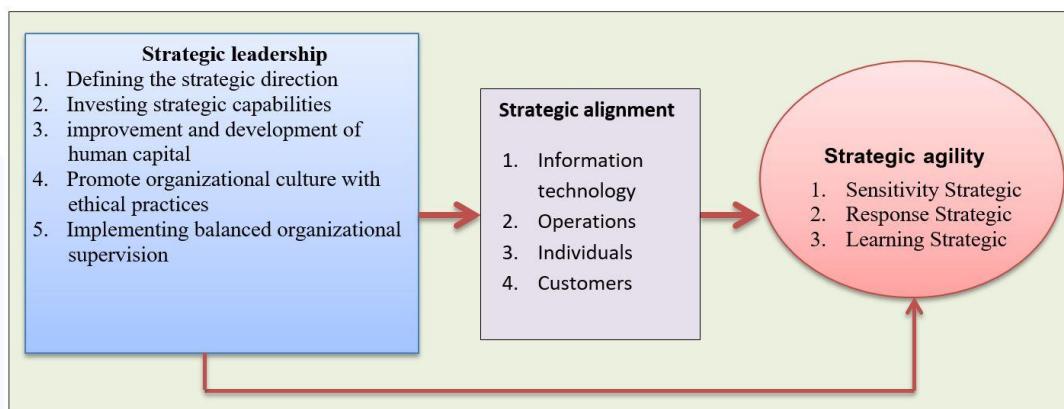
Fredrickson (1986) emphasizes the importance of involving individuals at all organizational levels in the strategic process, rather than limiting participation to top management. This broader engagement enhances the ability to identify and address strategic interrelationships across different functional areas (Zanon et al., 2013: 213). Strategic alignment is conceptualized as a self-organizing phenomenon, rooted in a shared organizational culture where stakeholders collectively understand and prioritize critical success factors (Hanson et al., 2011: 1091). The alignment of employees strategically is reflected in the alignment of perceptions regarding strategic priorities across all members of the organization (Ateş et al., 2020: 639).

### 4- Customers

Customers play a crucial role in the discourse on strategic alignment within organizations. They are the cornerstone around which organizational existence revolves, with the primary objective being the delivery of value to them—a concept underscored as critical to organizational focus (Hofmann & Kenebel, 2013: 21). This customer-centric approach is not confined to private enterprises but also applies to public sector entities, where it incorporates dimensions such as fiscal accountability (Schobel & Denford, 2013: 265) alongside fostering customer empowerment and active participation (Henriques et al., 2019: 13). Strategic alignment plays a vital role in enhancing marketing effectiveness and delivering superior customer value (Malshe et al., 2017: 151). Each dimension highlights the dynamic and multidimensional nature of strategic alignment while reinforcing its critical significance in ensuring sustained organizational success amidst evolving challenges.

## 2. Framework of the study

The proposed framework in the study offers a streamlined, hypothetical depiction of the phenomenon under investigation. It maps out the relationships between variables using theoretical arrows, which have not yet been empirically verified. The design of this diagram stems from a set of hypotheses aimed at assessing the practicality of measuring each variable included in the study, while also considering the design's overall scope and potential application.



**Figure-1-:Illustrates the hypothetical framework of the study, offering a visual depiction of its conceptual structure and approach**

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### **1.5 Hypotheses for the study**

**1.5.1 The study's primary hypothesis asserts that strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in influencing strategic agility. Building on this foundation, multiple sub-hypotheses are formulated to further examine this relationship:**

1. Establishing a clear strategic direction plays a crucial role in shaping strategic agility.
2. The development and enhancement of strategic capabilities strongly contribute to its overall effectiveness.
3. Enhancing and developing human capital plays a key role in driving strategic agility.
4. Promoting an organizational culture centered on ethical practices significantly contributes to strategic agility.
5. Implementing balanced organizational oversight has a meaningful effect on strategic agility.

**1.5.2 This study is built around the central hypothesis that strategic leadership is closely linked to strategic alignment, leading to the development of several sub-hypotheses outlined below:**

1. Strategic direction significantly impacts strategic alignment.
2. Strategic capabilities investment significantly influences strategic alignment.
3. Human capital enhancement and development exert a notable effect on strategic alignment.
4. Cultivating organizational culture with ethical practices significantly contributes to strategic alignment.
5. Balanced organizational oversight plays a significant role in strategic alignment.

**1.5.3 Additionally, the study proposes a primary hypothesis where strategic alignment significantly affects strategic agility, leading to the following sub-hypotheses:**

1. Information technology has a significant impact in strategic agility.
2. Operational processes significantly impact strategic agility.
3. Individual contribution has a notable impact in strategic agility.
4. Customer engagement plays a significant role in strategic agility.

Lastly, the research suggests that strategic alignment serves as a mediating factor between strategic agility and strategic leadership.

### **2.1 The study's sample**

The research encompassed 187 schools in total, drawing data from a sample of 150 managers located in Diwaniyah Governorate, Iraq.

### **The study's instrument**

The research employed a questionnaire as the main instrument for gathering data, structured into three distinct sections. The initial section concentrated on strategic leadership, incorporating items adapted from the work of Thani and Obeidat (2015). The second section addressed strategic agility, drawing items from Omar (2019) as well as Doz and Kosonen (2008). The third section concentrated on strategic alignment, with its content adapted from Ghonim et al. (2022). To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed, which is considered acceptable for values exceeding 0.70, as indicated by Chen and Huang (2007). Upon application of the test, the results revealed that the strategic leadership axis achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.945, demonstrating strong

consistency. Similarly, the strategic alignment axis recorded a coefficient of 0.834, while the strategic agility axis achieved 0.882, both reflecting acceptable reliability levels. Additionally, when all axes were analyzed collectively, they attained a combined reliability coefficient of 0.946, signifying that all dimensions demonstrated robust and acceptable reliability measures.

### 3. Hypothesis Testing:

**1.5.1**This study's principal hypothesis asserts that strategic leadership substantially influences strategic agility. From this foundation, multiple sub-hypotheses are developed to explore specific dimensions and relationships within the broader framework:

To evaluate the hypothesis, its sub-hypotheses are examined individually. The findings presented in Table 1 highlight the following insights:

**Table 1 Assessment of the influence of strategic leadership on strategic agility**

The explanatory variable and its dimensions	Regression coefficient		R2	F value	P	Responsive variable
	$\alpha$	$\beta$				
Defining the strategic direction	1.521	0.589	0.452	243.673	0.000	Strategic agility
Investing strategic capabilities	1.649	0.451	0.467	212.624	0.000	
improvement and development of human capital	1.685	0.622	0.231	233.564	0.000	
Promote organizational culture with ethical practices	1.537	0.541	0.344	130.611	0.000	
Implementing balanced organizational supervision	1.732	0.473	0.372	178.554	0.000	
<b>Strategic leadership</b>	<b>0.622</b>	<b>0.751</b>	<b>0.566</b>	<b>458.868</b>	<b>0.000</b>	
The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.05) = 3.841 The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.01) = 6.635						

The analysis indicates a strong positive correlation between the variable representing strategic direction and the concept of strategic agility. The findings revealed a regression constant of 1.521 alongside a beta coefficient of 0.589, highlighting the measurable impact of strategic direction on agility. Furthermore, the independent variable accounted for 45.2% of the variance in strategic agility, as reflected in an interpretation coefficient ( $R^2$ ). The model's validity was substantiated through the (F) statistic, which exceeded its tabulated value, alongside a significance level that fell within the required acceptance threshold of less than 0.05. These findings justify the acceptance of the proposed hypothesis.

A deeper review of the analysis results clearly highlights the positive influence of strategic leadership on strategic agility. The calculated regression constant (alpha) stood at 0.622, with the beta effect factor recorded at 0.751. Consequently, strategic leadership practices in school management accounted for 56.6% of the variance in the dependent variable, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ). The model's reliability was further affirmed by the F-statistic, which exceeded its tabulated value, alongside a significance level that comfortably fell below the threshold of 0.05. These findings strongly support the validation of the core hypothesis.

**1.5.2** This study is built on the central hypothesis that strategic leadership is closely and significantly linked to strategic alignment, giving rise to several sub-hypotheses as detailed below:

In order to test the hypothesis, we test its sub-hypotheses. The results of table (2) indicate the followings:

**Table (2) Analysis of the Influence of Strategic Leadership in Strategic Alignment**

The explanatory variable and its dimensions	Regression coefficient		R2	F value	P	Responsive variable
	$\alpha$	$\beta$				
Defining the strategic direction	0.622	0.751	0.566	458.868	0.000	Strategic alignment
Investing strategic capabilities	1.521	0.589	0.452	243.673	0.000	
improvement and development of human capital	1.537	0.541	0.344	130.611	0.000	
Promote organizational culture with ethical practices	1.732	0.473	0.372	178.554	0.000	
Implementing balanced organizational supervision	1.649	0.451	0.467	212.624	0.000	
<b>Strategic leadership</b>	<b>1.685</b>	<b>0.622</b>	<b>0.231</b>	<b>233.564</b>	<b>0.000</b>	

The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.05) = 3.841 The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.01) = 6.635

The analysis results indicate a positive correlation between the variable influencing strategic direction and strategic alignment. Specifically, the regression constant (alpha) was computed as 0.622, while the beta coefficient was determined to be 0.751. The independent variable accounted for 56.6% of the variance in strategic alignment, supported by the explanatory coefficient ( $R^2$ ). The model's significance was confirmed through the F-statistic, which surpassed its critical threshold. Additionally, the significance level remained below 0.05, affirming the hypothesis.

Similarly, the findings emphasize the beneficial effect of strategic leadership on strategic alignment. In this case, the regression constant (alpha) measured 1.685, with a beta coefficient of 0.622. This demonstrates that school principals were able to explain 23.1% of the variance in the dependent variable, as verified by the  $R^2$  value. Once again, the validity of the model was reinforced by the F-statistic exceeding its table value, with significance levels below 0.05. These outcomes further bolster support for the main hypothesis.

**1.5.3** Additionally, the study proposes a primary hypothesis where strategic alignment significantly affects strategic agility, leading to the following sub-hypotheses:

To evaluate the hypothesis, we analyze its sub-hypotheses. The findings presented in Table (3) reveal the following points:

**Table (3) Analysis of the Effect of Strategic Alignment in Strategic Agility**

The explanatory variable and its dimensions	Regression coefficient		R2	F value	P	Responsive variable
	$\alpha$	$\beta$				
Information technology	1.358	0.734	0.436	133.544	0.000	Strategic agility
Operations	1.428	0.529	0.311	242.589	0.000	
Individuals	1.537	0.541	0.344	130.611	0.000	
Customers	1.732	0.473	0.372	178.554	0.000	
<b>strategic alignment</b>	1.522	0.677	0.356	222.673	0.000	
The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.05) = 3.841 The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.01) = 6.635						

The findings from the analysis indicate a positive correlation between information technology and its influence on strategic agility. The regression constant (alpha) was recorded at 1.358, while the beta coefficient stood at 0.734, illustrating the strength of the relationship. Additionally, the independent variable explains 43.6% of the variance in strategic agility, confirmed by the interpretation coefficient ( $R^2$ ). The model's reliability was established through the F statistic, which surpassed its critical threshold, alongside a significance level below 0.05, firmly justifying the acceptance of the associated hypothesis. The analysis indicates a strong positive impact of strategic alignment on strategic agility. Specifically, the regression constant (alpha) reached a value of 1.522, while the beta coefficient was recorded at 0.677. Strategic alignment among school managers accounted for 35.6% of the variance in the dependent variable, as evidenced by the  $R^2$  interpretation coefficient. The model's validity was further reinforced by surpassing the threshold value of the F statistic and achieving a significance level below 0.05, placing it within the acceptance zone. These results provide substantial evidence supporting the main hypothesis.

#### **1.5.4 Strategic alignment serves as a mediator in the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic agility.**

To validate this hypothesis, its sub-hypotheses are examined. Refer to the results presented in Table 4.

**Table (4) Examining the influence of strategic leadership in achieving strategic alignment to foster strategic agility**

The explanatory variable and its dimensions	Regression coefficient		R2	F value	P	Mediator variable	Responsive variable
	$\alpha$	$\beta$					
Defining the strategic direction	1.303	0.617	0.366	211.786	0.000	Strategic alignment	Strategic agility
Investing strategic capabilities	1.787	0.468	0.356	202.524	0.000		
improvement and development of human capital	1.709	0.535	0.385	229.640	0.000		
Promote organizational culture with ethical practices	1.633	0.549	0.261	129.559	0.000		
Implementing balanced organizational supervision	1.815	0.545	0.337	186.466	0.000		
<b>Strategic leadership</b>	0.502	0.881	0.558	462.976	0.000		
The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.05) = 3.841 The value of (F) tabulated at a level of significance (0.01) = 6.635							

The analysis results reveal a significant positive correlation between implementing balanced organizational oversight and enhancing strategic alignment, which ultimately drives improved strategic agility. The regression constant (alpha) was established at 1.815, while the effect factor (beta) measured 0.545. Furthermore, the independent variable accounted for 33.7% of the variance in strategic agility, as demonstrated by the  $R^2$  interpretation coefficient. Statistical validation of the model was achieved with the F-statistic surpassing its critical value and meeting the significance criterion of less than 0.05. These findings substantiate the acceptance of the proposed hypothesis.

The analysis underscores the pivotal role of strategic leadership in promoting strategic alignment, which in turn strengthens strategic agility. The regression results revealed an alpha constant of 0.502 and a beta coefficient of 0.881, demonstrating that strategic leadership exerted by school managers accounts for 55.8% of the variance in the dependent variable, as evidenced by the  $R^2$  value. The validity of the model was reinforced by an F-statistic surpassing the critical threshold and meeting the significance level criterion of less than 0.05. These findings offer robust empirical evidence in favor of accepting the primary hypothesis.

#### **4. Conclusions & recommendations**

##### **4.1 Conclusions**

The research indicates that embedding ethical practices within the organizational culture plays a minimal role in boosting the strategic agility of private schools. Additionally, it highlights that an imbalance in strategic leadership aspects by school principals may jeopardize this agility. On the other hand, when strategic alignment is achieved between compatibility and execution, goal attainment becomes more practicable, fostering constructive managerial behavior.

The research also revealed a modest link between strategic leadership and strategic alignment, suggesting that private school principals need to focus on achieving objectives by embracing innovative practices designed to adapt to the current environmental context.

On the other hand, the findings demonstrated a strong connection between strategic leadership and the enhancement of strategic agility via effective strategic alignment. Accordingly, private school administrations must establish and maintain a suitable strategic alignment framework, enabling employees to adapt successfully to environmental shifts and challenges.

##### **4.2 Suggestions**

- 1) Leadership must articulate a clear strategic vision that cultivates an atmosphere of creativity, innovation, and adaptability in schools, enabling them to respond effectively to shifting demands.
- 2) Promoting a robust organizational culture rooted in ethical practices equips managers with a deeper understanding of the strategic goals, supported by transparent relationships and open communication to manage emerging challenges effectively.
- 3) A focused investment in the strategic capabilities of school administrations, coupled with an emphasis on developing human capital, strikes a critical balance between stability and

transformative growth. This approach fosters trust in new ideas while creating opportunities to learn from external perspectives.

4) Empowering educators with greater autonomy in their roles by incorporating modern technological tools enhances their ability to address key professional challenges and interact effectively with students.

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