

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL INNOVATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE
IN NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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To my beloved parents and family

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ABSTRACT

Due to the increasing uncertainties and rapid changes in business environment, strategic planning has been extensively adopted in most organisations. Nowadays, nonprofit organisations also adopt strategic planning to improve their competitive advantage and long-term performance. This research aimed to study the mediation effect of organisational innovation to improve organisational performance of non-profit organisations. It also focused on identifying dimensions that best represent strategic planning organisational innovation and organisational performance. Besides that, it investigated how organisational performance can be achieved through strategic planning and innovation. A mixed method research using survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide were adopted in the study. 257 Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Saudi non-profit organisations participated in the survey and based on quota sampling, 30 CEOs participated in the semi-structured interview. The study validated the mediation impact of organisational innovation on mission, knowledge and growth perspective, internal processes perspective, customer satisfaction perspective and financial perspective obtained from regression analysis and supported by Sobel Test. The findings of this research showed that organisational innovation is a strong contributor to the improvement of internal processes whilst the contribution of organisational innovation is moderate towards the mission, knowledge and growth and customer perspectives. The best dimensions that represent strategic planning processes are strategic orientation, strategic analysis, organisational resources management, top management support, audit and control strategy, and strategy implementation. In addition, dimensions that best represent organisational innovation are organisational learning, organisational innovation process, organisational innovation and organisational structure, innovation strategy, and organisational linkages. Finally, dimensions that best represent organisational performance are mission achievement, customer satisfaction, internal processes, employee learning and growth, and financial performance. The findings also revealed that Saudi nonprofit organisations are increasingly becoming aware that strategic planning process and organisational innovation have the ability to improve performance. Moreover, it has been revealed that strategy and innovation can improve performance through reduction of costs and time and enhance effectiveness. Therefore, it is recommended that Saudi nonprofit organisations should focus on applying strategic planning as a process to motivate employees to be innovative as well as achieve a higher and sustainable performance.

ABSTRAK

Dengan meningkatnya ketidakpastian dan perubahan pesat dalam persekitaran perniagaan, perancangan strategik giat diguna pakai dalam kebanyakan organisasi. Pada masa kini, organisasi bukan untung juga mengguna pakai perancangan strategik untuk meningkatkan kelebihan bersaing dan prestasi jangka panjang mereka. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan pengantaraan inovasi organisasi bagi mempertingkatkan prestasi organisasi bukan untung. Kajian ini juga memberikan tumpuan dalam mengenal pasti dimensi terbaik yang mewakili perancangan strategik, inovasi organisasi dan prestasi organisasi. Selain itu, kajian ini meneliti bagaimana prestasi organisasi dapat dicapai melalui perancangan strategik dan inovasi. Kajian dengan kaedah campuran yang menggunakan tinjauan borang soal selidik dan temu bual berpandu separa berstruktur telah dijalankan. 257 orang Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif (CEOs) organisasi bukan untung Saudi mengambil bahagian dalam kaji selidik dan berdasarkan persampelan kuota, 30 orang CEOs ikut serta dalam temu bual separa berstruktur. Kajian ini mengesahkan kesan pengantaraan inovasi organisasi ke atas misi perspektif pengetahuan dan pertumbuhan, perspektif proses dalaman, perspektif kepuasan pelanggan dan perspektif kewangan yang diperolehi daripada analisis regresi dan disokong dengan Ujian Sobel. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa inovasi organisasi merupakan penyumbang utama kepada peningkatan proses dalaman sementara sumbangan inovasi organisasi adalah sederhana terhadap misi, pengetahuan dan pertumbuhan serta perspektif pelanggan. Dimensi terbaik yang mewakili proses perancangan strategik ialah orientasi strategik, analisis strategik, pengurusan sumber organisasi, sokongan pengurusan atasan, strategi audit dan kawalan, serta pelaksanaan strategi. Di samping itu, dimensi terbaik yang mewakili inovasi organisasi ialah pembelajaran organisasi, proses inovasi organisasi, inovasi organisasi dan struktur organisasi, strategi inovasi, dan rangkaian organisasi. Akhir sekali, dimensi terbaik yang mewakili prestasi organisasi ialah pencapaian misi, kepuasan pelanggan, proses dalaman, pembelajaran dan pertumbuhan pekerja dan prestasi kewangan. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa organisasi bukan untung Saudi semakin sedar akan proses perancangan strategik dan inovasi organisasi berkeupayaan untuk meningkatkan prestasi. Tambahan pula, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa strategi dan inovasi dapat meningkatkan prestasi melalui pengurangan kos dan masa serta meningkatkan keberkesanan. Oleh itu, disyorkan agar organisasi bukan untung Saudi memberikan fokus dalam melaksanakan perancangan strategik sebagai proses untuk memotivasikan pekerja supaya menjadi inovatif di samping mencapai prestasi yang lebih tinggi dan mapan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSC	-	Balanced Scorecard
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CSP	-	Customer Satisfaction perspective
EKGP	-	Growth Knowledge and Growth Perspective
FPP	-	Financial Performance Perspective
IBP	-	Internal Business Processes
IS	-	Innovation Strategy
NPO	-	Non-Profit-Organization
OP	-	Organizational Performance
OP	-	Organizational Performance
SMART	-	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-framed
SP	-	Strategic Planning
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Background of the Research

The concept of 'strategy' is an old one, connoting the way in which systematic thinking leads to achieving targets. Inspired by its uses in the military, it was adapted to meet the requirements of business. Nowadays, it is extremely rare to find a firm without vision, mission and overall strategy. Regardless of the business type, for-profit or nonprofit, most of the organizations, at the present time, have their own strategy which helps them effectively manage their resources in order to achieve their respective strategic goals.

Literature reveals that adoption of the concept of strategy from military to business usage has posed little difficulty due to the similarity of logic that exists between them (Lane *et al.*, 2005; Kuprenas and Chinowsky, 2000). A variety of strategic tools have been adopted and practised in order to improve the performance of firms and to achieve and sustain the competitive advantage for profit and not-for-profit firms (Lowson, 2003; Mara, 2000; Mintzberg, 1978; O'Shannassy, 2003; Porter, 1996; Service, 2006; Viader and Espina, 2013; Analoui and Samour, 2012).

Practicing strategic planning helps businesses to efficiently position themselves against their competitors. Strategic planning helps a firm in identifying its direction through the short and long-term goals, ultimately leading it towards

successful accomplishment of the mission. In ideal situation, there is ability of businesses to match their resources with the changing environment which affects their needs (Brahma and Chakraborty, 2011; Viader and Espina, 2013). This makes the researcher feels that Strategic planning is useful for firms playing in a rapid changing environment. Strategic planning has been seen as a good precedent that boosts innovation and is assumed to be an antecedent of organizational performance (Carol and Mavis, 2007; Dobni, 2010).

Several scholars have studied the relationship between strategic planning and organizational innovation (i.e. Dobni, 2010; Thomas, 2011; Teece, 2010) and strategic planning and organizational performance (i.e. Al-Shammari and Hussein, 2007; Alloah, 2007; Alnajjar, 2010; Analoui and Samour, 2012; Viader and Espina, 2013). The researcher feels the relationship between strategy and innovation is a dilemma needs more quest. Innovation can be an approach included in the firms' strategy and supported by the firm's culture and structure. However, it is important for firms to build a proper culture, structure, incentive systems, and processes to boost innovation and incorporate these into day-to-day activities (Carol and Mavis, 2007; Dobni, 2010; Thomas, 2011; Morales *et al.*, 2012; Johannessen, 2013).

It is important to measure the organizational performance in order to improve the competitive advantage and applying strategic planning as a precedent to the organizational innovation, which is considered as an antecedent of the firms' performance. Organizational performance is a crucial factor for success for the reason that working without measuring performance is like driving without dashboard (Porter, 1996). Because of the fact that profit-oriented and nonprofit firms have different purposes and characteristics, it becomes more important for nonprofit firms to determine the best way that helps measure and manage the performance, which is supposed to be different in the case of profit firms. Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) need a compatible system that serves their purpose and has the ability to link its strategy process, planning effectiveness, resource optimization, and finance in a way that improves the performance (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

As Schmid (2002) points out, the measurement of the effectiveness of nonprofit originations is based on the effectiveness indicators used to achieve the

mission is a difficult task to be done. Which is an addition to many other models studied different dimensions of organizational performance in NPOs discussed in this research.

1.2 Attaining Organizational Performance through Strategic Planning and Organizational Performance

Strategic planning is vital to organization's success, whether it is a for-profit or nonprofit organization. Despite the fact that the result of the organization's success belongs to some categories may differ, the strategy processes, tools, and theories, however, all are still ultimately important (Mack, 2005; Munive-Hernandez, *et al.*, 2004). Strategic planning in nonprofit firms roots back to 1980s with the privatization movement as the shift of human services from government to nonprofit organizations, which increased the awareness of the importance of the nonprofit firms (Moxley, 2004; Steward, 2004). According to Kaplan and Norton (1996), the adoption of strategy into planning leads the firms to position themselves in the competitiveness of the business world.

According to Carol and Mavis (2007), innovation is a crucial factor in the national competitiveness. It boosts and drives the firms' growth and enhances their performance. She also emphasises the necessity of being able to launch new products/ services while at the same time keeping ahead of rivals by a few steps. This needs planning to be aware of the business environment. Drucker (2005) argues that every organization needs one core competency which comes from innovation regardless of its size or business volume. Innovation has several dimensions. To manage innovation, Maravelakis *et al.* (2006) measured innovation from the perspectives of product, process, and administration, while Walker (2005) and Wolff and Pett (2004) evaluated the implications of product and process innovation towards the performance of the organizations. However, the real achievement of innovation success implies standing up in the market place. Identifying innovation is necessary

for inspiring the firms with innovative ideas, introducing products that can improve the performance of a firm, generating profits, and guaranteeing a certain level of sustainability.

All organizations need to sustain their competitive advantage by improving performance. To be successful in the market, the nonprofits need to discover innovative ways. As nonprofit organization's mission and their characteristics turn their goals and objectives unlike the profit-oriented firms, the nonprofit organizations accordingly need better system and process that can guide the firm's strategy, planning process, resource allocation, and budgeting to ensure better organizational performance (Kaplan and Norton, 2001).

As regards planning, strategy is a method that helps decide the short and long-term pathways to achieve the organization's mission. In perfect situations, organizations can equate their resources with its ever changing complicated environment situation (Moxley, 2004; Feurer and Chaharbaghi, 1997).

For nonprofit organizations, strategic planning can be a useful method that may improve firms' competitiveness (Analoui and Samour, 2012; Priem and Butler, 2013). Nonprofit organizations have been forced to adopt strategies in order to achieve better efficiency and higher organizational performance. Nonprofit firms need to be more strategic in their decisions. At present, nonprofit firms are using a variety of strategic approaches to improve their performance. Different approaches are used for strategic planning to meet the need of today's highly changing business world (Helmig *et al.*, 2004; Analoui and Samour, 2012; Prewitt *et al.*, 2012). Strategic planning can provide nonprofit organizations with greater advantages. Comparing the benefits of strategic planning with the process complexity and comprehensiveness encourages nonprofit firms to apply strategic planning in order to enhance performance (Crittenden *et al.*, 2004).

Moxley (2004) argues that strategic planning aims to align the firms' behaviour with their targets. Furthermore, Moxley claims that strategic planning process in nonprofit organizations is more likely to be vision-based, which means setting a vision followed by an appropriate strategy to fulfil it. Mintzberg (1994) has

the same opinion that the ability to change can be defined by the vision of the firm as more than a plan. Moxley (2004) found that the nonprofit firms with different characteristics (as commitment to public good, transformational leadership and commitment to the process) can get a great benefit from the vision-based strategy. Furthermore, Kaplan (2001) advocates using the 'balanced scorecard' methodology, which links the organizations' mission with all of its dimensions.

1.3 Problem Statement

After having thoroughly reviewed literatures, it appears that strategic planning provides firms with a systematic approach that helps in achieving better organizational performance (Moxley, 2004; Al-Shammari and Hussein, 2007; Kaissi *et al.*, 2008;

Alnajjar, 2010; Gica, 2011; Analoui and Samour, 2012). Strategic planning needs to be adopted as per the characteristics of the organization, failing to meet that may result some serious losses (Moxley, 2004), the Swiss watches example in the 1970s and 1980s can best describe this (Routledge, 2013). It also appears that innovation can improve performance if utilized properly (Dobni, 2010). Studying the relations of strategic planning process and organizational performance has been recommended by some recent researches (i.e. Alnajjar, 2010; Gica, 2011; Analoui and Samour, 2012). Thus, the researcher concludes that every business is expected to have different results according to the business type and characteristics.

Potential outcomes of innovation can be achieved by applying systematic approach such as strategic planning process to result superior organizational performance. Most previous studies focused on measuring the implication of strategic planning on organizational performance with a direct relationship (see Alnajjar, 2010; Gica, 2011; Al-Shammari and Hussein, 2007). This research aims at studying the relationship of the strategic planning process, testing the implication of new approaches (including 'innovation as a mediator').

According to Hillel (2002) and Yang (2009), measuring the performance of nonprofit organizations is difficult because of many reasons as the difficulty of following human behaviour, absence of clear indicators of efficiency, and intangibility of the product (producing services). On the other hand, the measurement of organization's performance regardless to the business type is still important and a major concern that gives the management clear picture of the business's efficiency (March and Sutton, 1997; Macpherson, 2001). Therefore, a systematic, balanced method endorses that organizational performance is highly needed than any time before. Moreover, Gica (2011), in a recent research, recommends to study the relationship between strategic planning and performance of nonprofit firms due to the lack of knowledge supporting the positive implication of strategic planning on organizational performance (especially for nonprofit firms). This research may find how to overcome BSC measures, or will support previous studies emphasizing its high reliability.

Innovation at firms has got a fresh attention from researchers (i.e. Carol and Mavis, 2007; Salim and Sulaiman, 2011; Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle, 2010; Pett and Wolf, 2011; Terziovski, 2010). Some authors, as Carol and Mavis (2007) and Jaskyte (2011), who studied the relationship between innovation and performance of nonprofit firms under different circumstances and characteristics such as the business type and size, report a strong relationship between innovation and performance in nonprofit organizations. Jaskyte (2011) encouraged the future researchers to conduct studies on innovation in nonprofit organizations and to compensate for the lack of research on different aspects of organizational innovation. This study is expected to fill this gap.

Moreover, there are only few researches on the relationship between strategic planning process and innovation (i.e. Dobni, 2010). According to Dobni (2010) there is a positive relationship between strategic planning and organizational innovation. Dobni (2010) argues that the main barrier in the way of achieving optimal organizational innovation is the lack of resources and market intelligence, unsuitable corporate culture, poor incentives, and badly defined innovation strategy. Although there are a lot of benefits expected from innovation (e.g. supposed to lead towards achieving better organizational performance), yet it is not clear whether

strategy and innovation support or impede each other. However, Dobni (2010) found that organizational innovation and strategic planning have the opportunity to make a synergetic relationship. Secondly, dearth of studies aimed at exploring the relationship between strategic planning process and organizational innovation makes this research considered as a part of new contributions to that area. Thirdly, the relationship between organizational innovation and strategic planning has not been studied from the perspective of nonprofit organizations, which will add new findings to the existing knowledge in the area (Gica, 2011; Dobni, 2010; Al-Shammari and Hussein, 2007; Wirtenberg *et al.*, 2007; Carol and Mavis , 2007; Analoui and Samour, 2012; Viader and Espina, 2013). Fourthly, NPOs are playing a major role as the third arm of the government towards solving the community challenges, which deserve more studies to improve its role. This role should be supported by further researches and studies to have clarity of how NPOs (which have not been studied from the Saudi perspective) can act to achieve higher performance. Studying the issues to be solved by NPOs is not the only way to improve their effectiveness, studying how of effective management practices, organizational performance and sustainability of better services is also needed.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to find out the relationship between strategic planning process and organizational performance with the mediation of innovation. This research focuses on the case of nonprofit organizations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The major aim of this research is divided into five objectives, as follows:

1. To identify the dimensions that will represent strategic planning process (SPP); Organizational Innovation (OI); and Organizational Performance (OP)
2. To explore the level of strategic planning, organizational innovation and organizational performance in the Saudi NPOs;
3. To explore the correlation between strategic planning process, organizational innovation, and organizational performance;

4. To assess the mediation role of organizational innovation between strategic planning process and organizational performance; and
5. To understand how organizational performance can be improved in nonprofit organizations.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives mentioned earlier, five research questions have been raised as follows:

1. What dimensions can best represent strategic planning process, organizational innovation, and organizational performance?
2. What is the level of Strategic Planning Process (SPP), Organizational Innovation (OI) and Organizational Performance (OP) in the Saudi NPOs?
3. What is the correlation between Strategic Planning Process, Organizational Innovation, and Organizational Performance?
4. What is the mediation effect of Organizational Innovation between Strategic Planning Process and Organizational Performance?
5. How can Organizational Performance be improved in the nonprofit sector?

1.6 Significance of the Research

Strategic planning has attracted the attention of nonprofit organizations and has started eliciting contributions from many eminent researchers (Breul, 2003). Strategic planning is getting more important than ever in nonprofit organizations in the developed countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and China (Boyne and Walker, 2005). Strategic planning can improve innovation, a source for the competitiveness of firms by involving it around the firm's process; it might also hinder it by just following the systematic process of strategic planning which impedes innovation (Jaskyte, 2011). As a mediator, innovation, especially at the

present time, has a major role in launching new products and services and improving competitiveness of firms, which needs to be studied. This research will study how the role of innovation is affected by strategic planning as a precedent and the organizational performance as an antecedent, which will contribute to the body of knowledge by filling the gap in the relationship between strategic planning process and organizational innovation.

The importance of this study comes from the currently potential role of strategic planning process, organizational innovation on organizational performance (Analoui and Samour, 2012; Dibrell, Craig, and Neubaum, 2013; Prewitt *et al.*, 2012; Teece, 2010; Weigand *et al.*, 2013). It is also important in empowering and filling the gap of the body of knowledge of strategic management of nonprofit organizations (Gica, 2011; Analoui and Samour, 2012; Prewitt *et al.*, 2012).

The shortage of research papers discussing how to improve NPOs effectiveness in developing countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia raise the importance of such study and extra work on similar area of researches (Gica, 2011; Kaissi *et al.*, 2008). According to Gica (2011), there is a necessity to study the relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance in local organizations which have no contacts with the international environment, Analoui and Samour (2012) agrees on the same point. Gica (2011) emphasise on the importance of studying the relationship between strategic planning process and organizational performance in nonprofit firms and encourages including the special characteristics of firms and their orientations. The characteristics such as age, experience and the nature of their study might influence strategic planning process and organizational performance. Jaskyte (2011) in his exploratory study has encouraged researchers to conduct further investigations to examine the relationship between innovation and performance in the nonprofit firms.

This research will draw a special attention to nonprofit organization, for the purpose of their role in support of governments in the developmental issues and supporting the community as the NPOs are playing a major role in the national competitiveness of nations and economy (Morales *et al.*, 2012; Ghoneim and El-Baradei, 2011). Moreover, this research will enrich the knowledge of NPOs and

directors by suggesting different ways of improving their organizational performance, with innovation. It will also provide organizations, especially NPOs, with a clear understanding of the role of innovation in the relationship of strategic planning and organizational performance.

Finally, strategic planning provides the benefit of directing organization towards its goal by optimizing resources (Barney, 1991; Porter, 1996), which is a quest for any organization whether it is a profit or a nonprofit organization. However, for NPOs it is highly required to have such discussion that comes up with solutions and suggestion which leads to higher performance for NPOs. This research will investigate how this relationship can be affected by Organizational Innovation, which is one of the new contributions in the field of strategic management and planning. Organizational Innovation is expected conceptually to enhance the effects of strategic planning process by producing new methods that enables improving of performance.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This research looks for information related to the CEOs' responsibilities. Accordingly, there is a parallel process of data collection. In the first part, a questionnaire has been distributed to the research sample (257 NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). The sample unit was the CEOs or who are in charge of the strategic activities. The qualitative part included interviewees selected who were using quota sampling from the CEOs acceptance on voluntarily participation.

The whole process of data collection, from distribution of questionnaires up to the collection has been completed in only three weeks' time. The time period has been kept extremely limited so that the entire research samples will face the same variables and condition. The interviews have been done after collecting questionnaires and before any analysis.

1.8 Nonprofit Organizations in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

A nonprofit organization or not-for-profit organization, often called an NPO or simply a nonprofit and non-commercial organization is an organization that uses surplus revenues to achieve its goals rather than distributing them as profit or dividends. While not-for-profit organizations are permitted to generate surplus revenues, they must be retained by the organization for its self-preservation, expansion, or plans (Holtzhausen, 2014). The researcher believes that there is a serious confusion among public returns to the poor communications which affects the NPOs mission achievement. NPOs are not working for profits, however, they cannot run the business and sustain without making some profits. Thus, it is very important for the NPOs to communicate effectively with people to avoid losing reputation and transparency which are highly affecting their profits in the long-term.

NPOs have controlling members or boards. Many have paid staffs including management, while others employ unpaid volunteers and even executives who work with or without compensation (occasionally nominal). Where there is a token fee, in general, it is used to meet legal requirements for establishing a contract between the executive and the organization. The extent to which an NPO can generate surplus revenues may be constrained, or use of surplus revenues may be restricted. Some NPOs may also be a charity or service organization; they may be organized as a not-for-profit corporation or as a trust, a cooperative, or they exist informally. A very similar type of organization termed a supporting organization operates like a foundation, but they are more complicated to administer, hold more favourable tax status and are restricted in the public charities they support. Their goal is not to be successful in terms of wealth but in terms of giving value to groups of people they administer (Mahmoud and Yusif, 2012). The nonprofit sector is the third sector of the triangle after the government sector and the private sector. The world is experiencing very major role of this sector for the community and its strength is increasing day by day. Organizations are working locally and internationally in various areas of development and humanitarian. United Nations has sought to integrate the efforts of civil society organizations in its various initiatives and also supports governments technically in order to enhance its relations with civil society.

In the case of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, NPOs have many faces such as charity organizations (e.g. Alrajhi Foundation), education empowerment (e.g. Arab Open University), health care (e.g. Saudi Origins Transplantation), and non-financial support to small businesses (King Khalid Foundation). Some of the organizations have strong influence; some are very small and managed by few people for organizing charities as per the classification developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs (2013) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013) in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These explained organizations are launched after finding a necessity for them among the Saudi people. The ministry of social affairs is the governing body for all NPOs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and this gives the ministry a very high influence on NPOs to push them onto achieving higher performance and building integration among all of them and serve better. Through the ministry of Social Affairs, government is supporting the NPOs in addition to donors which facilitate achieving the mission of those organizations and also enables to solve issues affecting the ministries performance.

1.9 Definition of Terms

In this part we will explain the terms will be used in the research. The idea behind this part is to build a single clear definition of every term. The following definitions have been used through this research:

1.9.1 Strategy

It can be defined as the track and focus on the objectives and target of firms within a long-term period to attain its vision and mission (Niven, 2008). Thompson *et al.* (2005) defines strategy as a mixture of actions created from internal and external approaches. Quinn (1980) defines strategy as “the pattern or plan that integrates an organization’s major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole” (p. 311). In other words, it is the development of a course of alternatives of actions within their strategic plan. While these definitions do not specify the business type, Niven (2003) has defined strategy in nonprofit firms as the

fundamental organization-wide priorities sought after in order to realize the organization's mission.

1.9.2 Strategic Planning (SP)

Strategic planning process has been defined in many different ways. It can be defined as a part of the strategic management approach, helping firms to determine their strategy in the future (Poister and Streib, 2005). On the other hand, Still (1974) defines strategic planning process as the progression of decision-making that controls the motion action plan and allocates resources in order to achieve the firm's overall mission. While the researchers have concluded that strategic planning process is a process that stems from people's strategic thinking and their evaluation of their firms' potential orientation. Also, strategic planning is a management tool, which is commonly used in large and medium enterprises (Al-Ghamdi, 1998; Barney, 1991; Dibrell *et al.*, 2013).

Though the researcher finds that strategy an action plan identify achieving a group of tasks, the strategic planning process is a well-ordered stage of decision-making that identifies the goals and objectives to be accomplished, decisions to be made and specific procedures to be adopted through which the firm will reach its end results (Bryson, 1988; Moyer, 1982). As noted by Mintzberg (1994) and Drucker (1976), strategic planning process consists of different stages that allow making decisions supported by methodological steps, providing comprehensive picture and integrating consequential decisions, and performance, finally empowering firms to achieve potential targets in a highly uncertain environment. In addition, Bryson stressed that the decisions result from strategic planning guidance, "what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it" (p. 11).

1.9.3 Strategic Planning Models

These are some scenario models, which explain the process of strategic planning. It involves a group of actions regarding basics of strategic planning process, scenarios, strategic planning issues and objectives, and organic strategic planning process (McNamara, 2000). There is no single perfect model that equally suits all organizations. McNamara argued that every firm builds its own model in view of the characteristics of the firm. Many firms combine or integrate models in order to identify goals, strategize their system, and address how they can achieve their goals. McNamara even stated that some firms choose to adapt an existing model by modifying it as per the firm's need and nature. Strategic planning models provide a wide range of alternatives from which organizations have the choice to select an approach and begin to develop their own strategic planning process" (p. 1).

1.9.4 Organizational Innovation (OI)

Literature of 'innovation' has varied in describing different aspects of the scope of the area of investigation (Orttand van der Duin 2008; Percival and Cozzarin, 2008). However, from a micro point of view, Innovation is the development of new customer's value through solutions that meet new needs, articulate needs, or old customer and market needs in new ways (Jaskyte, 2011).

1.9.5 Strategic Innovation (SI)

Strategic innovation is concerned with the organizational strategies that exert continuous competitive advantages for companies. The components of strategic innovation include alliances with competitors, industries, and suppliers and outsourcing, and relocation of a firm's core competence (Gaynor, 2002).

The researcher believes that it very important to highlight the importance of strategic innovation. In order to have a useful innovation we still need to strategies and identify what is required from applying innovation in a strategic approach.

1.9.6 Organizational Performance (OP)

Many scholars have discussed and defined the organizational performance. According to Khattab (2001, p. 3), organizational performance is the effort that the firm makes to achieve its goal. Aish (2008, p. 44) defines performance as achieving the organizational objectives by using resources with high effectiveness and efficiency. It also requires focusing on unique resources of the firm, including tangible and intangibles, financial and non-financial. Organizational performance also includes some of the main activities of firms as strategy, processes, and human resources. Performance is also related to the firm as well as to its employees' efforts, and it has a very high importance in firms for the reason that it indicates the overall efforts of the firm (Allothman, 2003, p. 73). However, here we discuss the performance from the NPOs perspective which focus on fulfilling the society needs which is, in the case of Saudi Arabia, supported by the government besides donors. The generous support from the governments a way to have a flexible work process which the government's processes don't usually have. It is also happening to achieve better solutions serve the government and satisfy people.

1.9.7 Balanced Scorecard (BSC)

Balanced scorecards is an incorporated set of financial and non-financial measures employed in a firm's strategy executing procedure that underlines the strategy of communication with the members and provides feedback for attaining goals of the organization (Mendoza and Zrihen, 2001). This tool was developed by Kaplan and Norton in 1992. It is a method that measures the organizational performance by using the four perspectives of customer perspective internal business process perspective, employee learning and growth perspective, and finance perspective (Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

1.9.8 Customer Satisfaction Perspective (CSP)

Kaplan and Norton (2001) define customer processes as the organizational practices and methods that concentrate on developing value and differentiation in the eye of the consumer. The reason behind selecting such definition is that customer satisfaction is commonly used and understood as a marketing term, while we are using this term from the perspective of strategic management.

1.9.9 Financial Performance Perspective (FPP)

Kaplan and Norton (2001) define financial performance and processes as the result of organizational behaviours expressed in terms of increased budgets and sustainability. In nonprofit organizations, the financial processes examine the most cost-effective manner in which to provide benefit to the customer.

1.9.10 Employee Learning and Growth

Kaplan and Norton (2001) defined employee learning and growth processes as organizational practices and methods that promote a culture conducive to innovation, organizational improvement and growth. According to Kaplan and Norton's definition, employees have a major role in triggering the performance improvement. All the other performance dimensions cannot be improved without starting with the Employee learning and growth improvement.

1.9.11 Internal Business Processes (IBP)

Kaplan and Norton (2001) define internal business processes as the organizational practices and methods used to fulfil the customer and stakeholder expectations. 'Internal business processes' is an alternate use of this term. Accordingly, knowledge and "knowing-how" come from the employee learning perspective. Also, the result of enhancing the processes leads usually, if led well through the vision and mission, to raise customer satisfaction and finally the financial performance.

1.9.12 Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs)

There are numerous definitions for an NPO. This study, however, emphasises on the approach of Hall (1987). This makes it possible to characterise an NPO as a body of Market individuals who associate for any of three purposes: to perform public tasks that have been delegated to them by the state; to perform public tasks for which there is a demand that neither the state nor for-profit organisations are willing to fulfil; or to influence the direction of policy in the state, the for-profit sector, or other NPOs (Hall, 1987, p. 3). The "nonprofit was founded explicitly to respond to a community need" (Letts *et al.*, 1999, p. 39), and its encompassing purpose is to

create value for society rather than to generate profit (Lettieri *et al.*, 2004). From all the aforementioned definitions, the researcher defines NPO as a corporation or an association that conducts business for the benefit of the general public without shareholders and without a profit motive. It is important to mention that the Saudi NPOs are having different nature as the country follows shariya within most of the activities. Thus, attracting donors is not a difficult work to be done there. The people there are always looking to pay donation and the issue is only where to pay it and what would they do for it. Also, the Saudi economy is having an intensive growth and the government is relying on the NPOs to solve issues related to the communities. Thus, there is a governing body supervising the activities of the NPOs and at the same time developing integration and some support such as financial support. Thus, attraction of donors is not a problem, the people there are always looking up to pay donations and the main issue is where to pay and who should they pay for.

1.9.13 The Plan of the Thesis

In order to cover all dimensions of the research problem, the research proposal covers the following topics as shown in Figure 1.1. Chapter one discusses the research background, defining the research problem, formulating the research aims and questions as well as describing the proposed research strategy. Chapter two consists of a review of the related literatures that covers strategic planning process, organizational innovation and organizational performance, starting with the theoretical development of strategic planning process to the resource based view as an underpinning theory and presenting strategic planning models. Then organizational innovation will be discussed, with a special reference to the relationship between the strategic planning process and the organizational performance. At the end of this chapter, a summary of the whole chapter will be provided. Chapter three mainly explains the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research. Chapter four discusses the research type and approach, population and sampling, and research ethics. Chapter five will discuss the analysis approaches and methods; and Chapter six critically discuss the findings and conclusion.

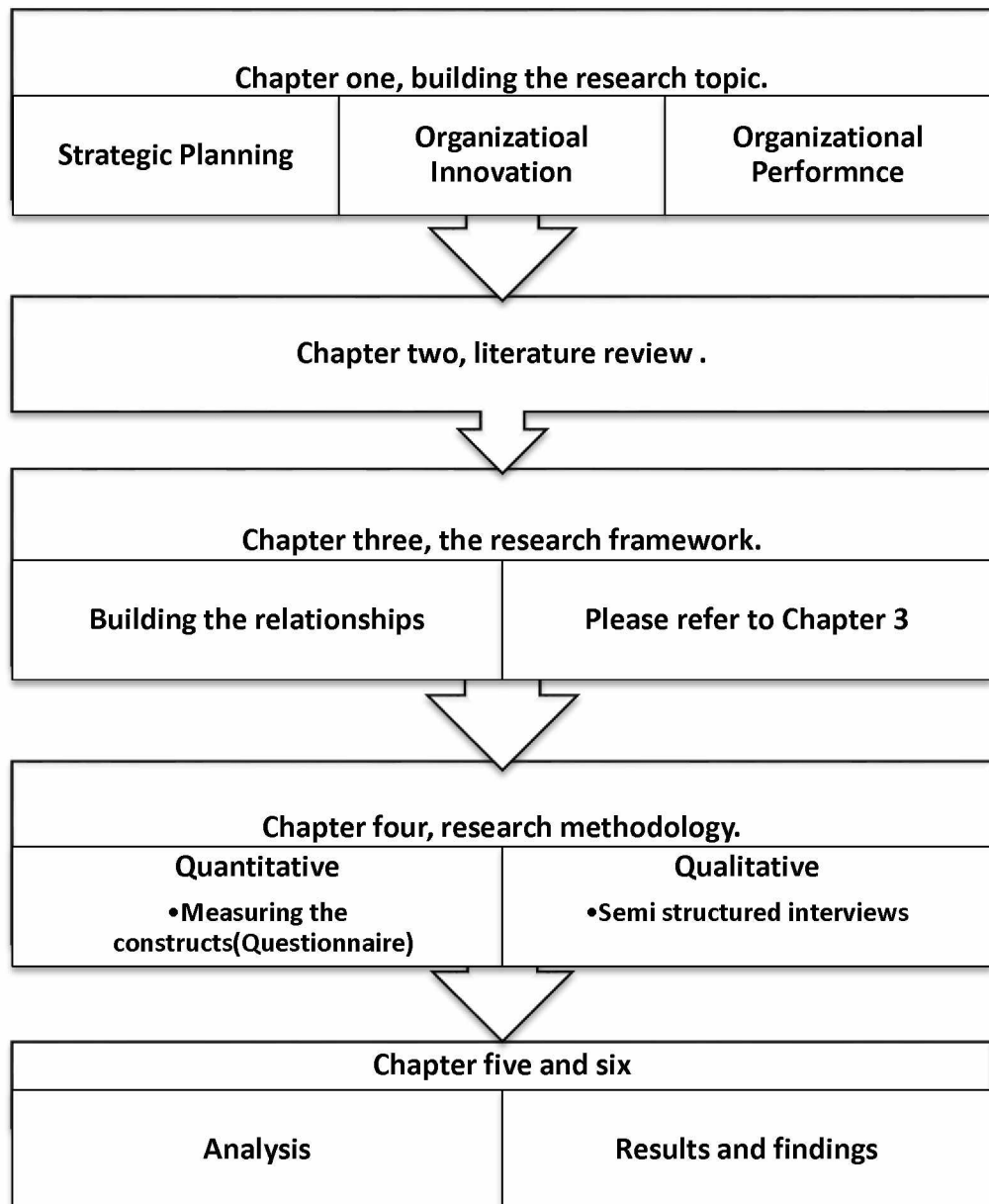


Figure 1.1 Research outline

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