
The Mediating Role of Empowering Workers in the Relationship Between Strategic Leadership Practices and Strategic Alignment : A Study in Medium and Small Sized Companies in Kirkuk

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Abstract: *The research aims to test the mediating role to enable workers to test the relationship between strategic leadership practices and strategic alignment in medium and small-sized companies in the Iraqi city of Kirkuk, and to achieve that goal and to solve the research problem and take advantage of its importance, a field visit was conducted for the companies of the study sample to see the reality of their work regarding the research variables, and then a questionnaire form was designed according to the five-point Likert scale and distributed to a sample of (369) workers representing the companies of the study sample to collect data and information, and analyze those Statistical program usage data (SPSS, AMOS) V26 In light of these results, the research revealed that there is a statistically significant impact relationship for strategic leadership in strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering workers in medium and small-sized companies in Kirkuk, and accordingly a set of recommendations were made, the most important of which was the need to work to improve organizational performance and enhance competitiveness of companies through the application of best strategic leadership practices, empowering employees and achieving strategic alignment in the surveyed companies.*

Keywords: *Leadership, Empowering employees, strategic alignment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The global environment in this era and the environment of public organizations in particular witnessed rapid changes, great challenges, increasing demands, and accelerated technology, which required organizations to find appropriate solutions that enable them to adapt and survive, so the old methods of leadership are no longer feasible in light of these variables, so the technique of adopting strategic practices in leadership was the first in this field, as it broadcasts positive signals to employees and pushes them to make more efforts and adhere to the culture of the organization and achieve the goals of the organization, and contributed to the emergence of The concept of strategic leadership, including the shift from traditional approaches in management to the strategic entrance through the great acceleration in globalization and The success of organizations in light of the dynamic environment and the high intensity of competition between organizations to achieve an advanced position is a challenge that requires organizations to achieve harmony and alignment between the organization's strategy and the internal environment, and between the organization's strategy and its external environment to increase the interdependence and harmony between the environment and the organization and achieve successful investment in the external environment, The empowerment of employees by the administration is a crucial element in the field of organizing employees and pushing them towards

commitment to achieve outstanding performance, and control the work entrusted to them at the level of the individual, group and organization in organizations in general, and is the process of employee participation to work through powers and decisions to reach development and planning, which in turn leads to job satisfaction for workers where organizations develop laws for their employees to measure the efficiency of employees' performance of their work, hence the idea to adopt such important topics and the need of organizations This research came to adopt the test of these concepts in the private sector, especially industrial companies, including those companies in the research sample specifically to enable them to compete between local and international companies, It enables the diagnosis of the level of strategic leadership they have in order to strengthen them and overcome their weaknesses in this area and the extent of their impact on strategic alignment, and then provide a set of recommendations in order to benefit from them by the organization researched in the leadership and strategic field, where the research was divided into three axes, the first dealt with the research methodology, the second includes the theoretical framework of the studied variables, and the third axis focused on the practical aspect of the research, conclusions and recommendations.

The first axis: the methodology of the study First: The problem of the study: The surveyed companies seek, through their various vision and strategies, to maintain their employees, and achieving strategic alignment is one of the goals that all companies strive to achieve because of its positive effects on the individual and the organization at the same time, as the alignment helps to adopt the consolidation of technological concepts and integrate them into the future strategic plans of the organization, which contributes to the stability of work among employees and increase their satisfaction, which is the feeling that is generated by the employee and pushes him to work hard and sincerely, And enthusiastically, to increase his efficiency and productivity, and that feels the appreciation of subordinates for his efforts, and this research has been enriched in the use of employee empowerment as an intermediate variable that explains the relationship between independent and dependent variables, as far as the researcher knows, previous studies have not addressed, It means the ability of the institutions surveyed to respond quickly to opportunities and environmental changes, and in terms of the great impact of strategic leadership on the strategic alignment of workers, the need has emerged to study this topic, and address its phenomena, because the absence of the concept of strategic leadership in organizations may lead to a low level of strategic alignment in them, and the researcher has noted (as far as he knows) the existence of a scarcity of studies that dealt with the variables

of the current study, and it can be said that the study of the current subject in addition to the proximity of those companies surveyed and the clarity of the picture The researcher may have special advantages with regard to analyzing the reasons behind the shortcomings in the level of adopting the concept of strategic alignment, and providing proposals and recommendations for the development of work in the organization, and accordingly the current research seeks to address the knowledge research gap, and the spatial and temporal research gap between the current research and previous studies and from this point of view the research problem can be identified and solved by answering the following questions:

- a. What is the availability of strategic leadership in the surveyed companies?
- b. Do companies have a clear idea of employee empowerment?
- c. What is the level of strategic alignment in the surveyed companies?
- d. What impact do strategic leadership practices have in enhancing the empowerment of employees in the surveyed companies?
- e. Does empowering employees in strategic alignment affect the surveyed companies?
- f. What mediating role does empowering employees play in the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment in the surveyed companies?

Second: Research Objectives: The current research aims to know the practices of strategic leadership in enhancing strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering employees in the surveyed companies, and the following sub-objectives emerge from this goal:

- a. Identify the most important challenges facing the application of strategic leadership dimensions in the surveyed companies.
- b. Identify obstacles that prevent employees from performing their tasks properly in companies.
- c. Detecting the problems that hinder the application of the dimensions of strategic alignment in the surveyed companies.
- d. Provide recommendations and proposals to the company's field of study to solve the problems of strategic leadership and empower employees and strategic alignment in the companies surveyed based on the results that will be reached through the research.

Third: The importance of the research: The importance of this study will be highlighted through its theoretical (scientific) and practical (applied) importance as follows:

- a. The study contributes to focusing on an important topic that has not been taken sufficiently by researchers, as it puts the relationship between strategic leadership

practices in its dimensions (vision, ethical practices, human capital, organizational culture, core capabilities) and its impact on enhancing strategic alignment and empowering workers, which previous studies overlooked (according to the researcher's knowledge).

- b. The research provides a theoretical and field framework that enriches the Iraqi library, in particular, the Arab library, and researchers interested in the fields of research topics.
- c. Drawing the attention of researchers to carry out many future studies in the field of strategic alignment through strategic leadership practices in their various dimensions.
- d. Providing the management of the research sample companies with the necessary information about the availability of strategic leadership and its relationship to enhancing the level of strategic alignment in it.
- e. Knowing what will lead from this research of the results and providing recommendations in enhancing the strategic alignment of employees through the commitment of strategic leadership and benefiting from those results and recommendations in the practical reality of those companies.
- f. Studying the importance of strategic leadership in strengthening and increasing the strategic alignment of the company, which in turn will be reflected in the stability of employees and their non-dropouts, increase their productivity, and thus increase the company's market share.

Fourth: Research Model: In line with the research problem and to answer the questions that were developed to answer it and to achieve its objectives and hypotheses, a virtual model will be designed for research, which illustrates the impact of strategic leaders as an independent variable with its dimensions (vision, ethical practices, human capital, organizational culture, core capabilities) in promoting strategic alignment (dependent variable), and the intermediate variable represented in empowering workers in its dimensions (freedom and independence, information sharing).

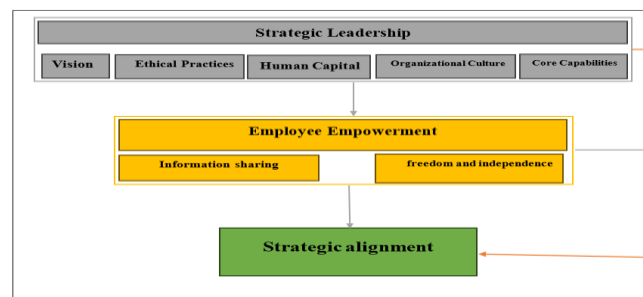


Figure 1 Hypothetical study model

Source: Researcher Preparation

The third main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of strategic leadership in strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering workers in small and medium-sized studies in Kirkuk.

Fifth: The hypothesis of the study: In light of the problem of the study and its plan, we propose the following hypotheses:

- a. The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of strategic leadership in empowering workers in small and medium-sized studies in Kirkuk.
- b. The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect of empowering workers in strategic alignment in small and medium-sized studies in Kirkuk.
- c. The third main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of strategic leadership in strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering workers in small and medium-sized studies in Kirkuk.

Sixth: Description of the field, society, and sample of the study: The research community consisted of workers in the organizations studied, which were represented by (Kronji Company, Al-Raqi Company, Al-Muna Company, Al-Hayat Company, Splendor Baghdad Company, Al-Kawthar Company, Baghdad Soft Drinks Company), and their number is (391) affiliates, and the members of the study sample were selected, in a simple random way from the total community, where the researcher distributed (378) forms to the categories of the community sample. Where the total questionnaires were retrieved (375) questionnaires, and after the questionnaires were examined, it was found that there were (6) questionnaires, which are not suitable for the analysis process. Thus, the total number of questionnaires valid for analysis became (369) questionnaires for analysis.

Seventh: Research Methodology: The researcher has adopted the descriptive analytical approach, which is commensurate with the studies, which adopt the cognitive approach, in investigating the phenomenon, which was crystallized by the study problem, and to conclude, i.e. a path through which the researcher takes a position, in which the contents of the main variables, and the sub-variables of the study, are analyzed and interpreted independently or interconnected.

Eight; Sources of access to data and information: To achieve the objectives of this study from the theoretical and practical points of view, two main sources were resorted to collect data and information, as follows:

First: Theoretical framework: The theoretical framework of the study was covered by relying on Arab and foreign literature, such as books, theses, university theses, published

periodicals, in scientific fields, websites, research and articles related to the nature of the study.

Second: Field Framework: The field aspect of the study was covered based on records and documents in the organizations studied study, in addition to the questionnaire that was developed, as a main tool for the current study, where the questionnaire form was designed according to the five-point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) and a hypothetical mean of (3), and the form consisted of three sections (strategic leadership, empowering employees, strategic alignment), and a reliability test was conducted for it to show its suitability for testing as shown in Table (1).

Table 1 Components of the questionnaire, its sources, and Cronbach’s alpha test

Variable type	Variables	Sub-dimensions	Number of paragraphs	Cronbach's alpha	Source
independent variable	Strategic Leadership	Vision	5	.90	(Hussein, 2021)
		Ethical Practices	5	.87	(Hamid, 2023)
		Human Capital	5	.82	(Salman & Al-Nasiri, 2016)
		Organizational Culture	5	.78	(Nihak & Ellitan, 2022)
		Core Capabilities	5	.88	(Mahdi, 2017)
Intermediary variable	Employee Empowerment	Information sharing	5	.89	(Raouf and Saadoun, 2018)
		freedom and independence	5	.91	(Budbous and Saleh, 2024)
Dependent variable	Strategic alignment	X1	1	.93	(Qadisiyah, 2022)
		X2	1	.89	
		X3	1	.81	
		X4	1	.79	(Atheer and Haider, 2023)
		X5	1	.84	
		X6	1	.77	
		X7	1	.81	(Sarah and Hadeel, 2021)
		X8	1	.86	
		X9	1	.90	
		X10	1	.82	

Source: Researcher preparation based on research data.

Second Theme: Theoretical Framework

First: Strategic Leadership:

The concept of strategic leadership appeared, several years after the emergence of the idea of strategic management, as strategic leadership appeared for the first time at the beginning of the eighties of the last century and is one of the relatively recent trends in

the administrative literature (Al-Khafaji and Al-Qazzaz, 2023: 7). Accordingly, it is necessary to identify the concept and dimensions of strategic leadership as follows:

- a. The concept of strategic leadership: defined by (Othman and Wissam, 2023: 25) as the long-term insight to form a vision for the future of the organization, linking strategic goals with the goals of employees and motivating them to work on their implementation, and integrating this into a strategy that supports change jointly between leadership and subordinates, and indicates (Hamid, 2023: 418) that it is The characteristics of an organization's leader at the highest levels of hierarchy can also be found throughout the organization, making full use of the efficiency of human capital and other resources. Strategic leaders are the people who make decisions about the future of the organization and determine the intention of the organization, and (Hussein, 2021: 358) shows the ability to influence others to self-make day-to-day decisions to strengthen my validity. The organization is also long-term, and is seen (Salman and Al-Nasiri, 2016: 193) as understanding the entire organization and the environments within which it operates and using this understanding to create strategic change through others to put the organization in the environment as a short-term goal and also the ability to survive in the long term to define the concept of strategic leadership, and can be described as a practice that contributes to the ability to influence the individuals working in the organization to carry out the tasks assigned to it to the fullest.
- b. The importance of strategic leadership: The importance of strategic leadership, whose most important advantages and benefits have been explained by many researchers, is evident in the following points (Al-Jaber and Al-Saidi, 117:2021):
 - 1) Their role in facing uncertainties, especially in environments characterized by worsening ambiguity and increasing complexity of information, organizations today are in dire need of strategic leadership capable of facing uncertainties and achieving the organization's long-term competitive advantage in the organization (Al-Jarjari and Al-Obaidi, 3023: 120).
 - 2) The importance of strategic leadership increases by being a source of innovations and breaking the organizational deadlock by relying on the cognitive and creative capabilities and its future vision that serves the aspirations of the organization, and working to enhance flexibility in the organization, openness and reliance on enlightened methods (Molina,2018: 118).
 - 3) Contribute to the growth and increase of the high performance of the organization in light of the requirements of the internal and external environment that surrounds

the organization, and is a source of strategic leadership as a key incentive to empower employees in the organization (Helen, et al,2018: 158).

- 4) Achieving and sustaining total quality in the organization and strategic leadership in total quality organizations, strategic leadership should be the most important challenge, and the important element of organizational change used to design the total quality model (Hassouni, 2010: 209).

In terms of specificity, it promises to be a sensitive and complex leadership at the same time, as it depends on the way of thinking and good management, which leads to managing the organization's operations efficiently and maintaining its sustainability in success over time, and the term strategic leader "is a term used to describe the managers who head the organization and whose initial mission is summarized (Mohammad & Ismail, 2018: 2571).), in assisting in the formulation and implementation of strategic change, which obliges them to monitor the environment, including the opportunities and threats that are surrounding the external environment. And examine the strengths and weaknesses of the organization based on the receipt and collection of information related to all aspects of the business and an accurate understanding to know all its requirements. The strategic leader needs analytical skills and foresight of the situations facing the organization as they are important and the challenges are different as these skills are required to deal with them differently.

- c. Dimensions of strategic leadership: Researchers differed in determining the dimensions of strategic leadership due to their different intellectual trends, and this in turn was also reflected in its definition as we have shown previously, some researchers tended to count strategic leadership for different dimensions, while the researcher adopted a study (Al-Jader and Al-Saidi, 111:2023) and a study (Al-Harthy,: 2019: 36), and a study (Nahak & Ellitan, 2022: 1442) dimensions of strategic leadership being more consistent with the objective of the current research and after the researcher reviewed the literature of strategic leadership that dealt with the dimensions adopted by many researchers.

- 1) Vision: The vision is important as it contributes to translating the leader's abilities and capabilities to mix imagination from reality and help others put forward enlightened ideas that serve the work (Taher and Hammoudi, 2021: 274), and it can also be described as a strategic movement that includes two important axes: strategic planning as a first part and strategic application and control as a second part, it draws the future movement of the organization's design and characteristics internally on the one hand, and the mechanism interacts with the factors of its

public, private, individual and common environment that diagnoses Its strategic location on the other hand, which means that it is the abstract idea with philosophical content and the future perspective of management and the basis for building and translating ideas and future visions (Hussein, 2021:358).

- 2) Human capital: a group of individuals who possess skills, knowledge and capabilities that contribute to increasing the economic value of the organization, and from this perception, workers are seen as a capital resource that must be invested, and finding human capital to manage the organization effectively is a difficult process, so the organization resorts to using the most developed new workers (Alayoubi et al. 2020: 16), Strategic leaders must also acquire the necessary skills to help them develop human capital within the limits of their fields and responsibilities. When human capital investments are successful, the result is a workforce capable of learning continuously. .:et al,2020 Alrowwad,).
- 3) Organizational culture: Organizational culture is described as "a cognitive framework composed of attitudes, values, standards of behavior and expectations shared by employees in the organization" (Gerald, 2004: 628). It is defined as "a pattern of common beliefs, values, norms, activities and behaviors that have evolved in an organization over time" (Radhi, 2016: 92) It consists of a complex set of beliefs or ideology, symbols and symbols.The intrinsic values shared by all employees of the organization and that affect the way the organization accomplishes its work. In the same context, it is defined as "a combination of values, beliefs, assumptions, meanings and common expectations held by individuals or groups in the organization and is learned by new members as the way to think, feel and act correctly and express the values of influential individuals in an organization and these values in turn affect the tangible aspects of the organization and the behavior of individuals as well as determine the style adopted by these in their decisions and management of their subordinates and organizations" and may be portrayed (Issawi, 2012: 36.
- 4) Ethical practices: The impact of the processes used in the organization to implement its strategies increases when these processes are based on ethical practices, organizations encourage people at all organizational levels to act ethically when they do what is necessary to implement the strategy in the organization and ethics refers to the basic principles that govern the process of interaction between individuals working on the one hand and the organization on the other, In addition

to the principles that govern the process of interaction between the organization and relevant external parties, they help the individual to decide when an act is moral, when it is not moral, when it is socially acceptable, and when it is not acceptable (Urgent, 2019: 69).

- 5) Core capabilities: The importance of core capabilities stems from the advantages achieved by organizations and operating companies, which if they possess distinct core capabilities led to excellence in performance and production and create a competitive ability to have can work for themselves competencies against competitors through these capabilities that are difficult to imitate and by looking at the markets we see that organizations that left their places and withdrew from the markets was the result of the emergence of evilKat and institutions have a high competitive advantage and this advantage did not come from a vacuum, but came as a result of having distinct resources, i.e. intrinsic capabilities that are difficult to imitate (Mahdi, 2017: 93) and contribute to the availability of a strong work environment when you can make the ability replace capital, and can create a competitive advantage through the core capabilities that it possesses, the company's position in the market and the amount of its market share are through the company's adoption of strategies based on its core capabilities that competitors cannot Its tradition and all this comes through the interdependence between all departments (Mappigau & Hastan, 2017:161).

Second: The concept of strategic alignment:

One of the important terms that organizations are interested in is that expresses the dynamic process that includes a number of mechanisms to help the organization form a strategic system that includes (coherence, interdependence, integration, harmonization, cohesion, harmony, integration, harmony, synergy) that controls work at all levels (Ghobash and Al-Naji, 2022: 340). All of them are used to denote the content of alignment and is expressed as the harmony of business and IT departments in order to develop and adapt their strategies and work together to achieve a common goal (Qadisiya, 2022:62), and is described as an ongoing process that requires the support of senior management in the organization to build good relationships within the work environment to create appropriate parts characterized by interaction and harmony Effective communication to achieve the set goals (Abu Radan and Abdul Rahman, 2020:200). It can be described as the process of applying technology to adapt the nature and work of the organization to the external environment.

In the same context, it is described as a dynamic, integrated and continuous process that focuses on achieving harmony between changes in the external environment and the internal resources and capabilities possessed by the organization, which requires continuous vigilance to adapt and direct key actors, to avoid alignment imbalances (Sarah and Hadeel, 2021:176). Its importance is evident through its very important fundamental effects, for the purpose of enhancing the strategic role and increasing the effectiveness of the organization in improving its operations, practices and activities towards achieving goals (Atheer and Haider, 165:2023), is one of the main reasons why business executives and senior management develop strategies to connect business and information technology in their organizations, helps managers adapt to the business environment formed through the rapid developments of information technology (Abu Radan and Abdul Rahman, 2020 :200). It also achieves the generation of relative information related to the prioritization of projects of organizations that meet business needs with the aim of achieving a higher return on investment, provides organizations with a sustainable competitive character, improves the effective management of organizational plans and the application of effective technology that contributes to achieving goals at the right time and place in the organization (Al-Yasiri et al., 2021: 193).

There is a set of characteristics that characterize the strategic alignment as it is an important variable at the level of the organization, as it is a strong guarantee of integration and cooperation between all departments of the organization and sets goals, formulates the roadmap, and makes adjustments and updates them continuously, meaning that there is a master plan for information technology that is approved by the business unit and is reviewed regularly or whenever high changes occur in the course of work or the organization's strategy and asset investment management and quality, So that the technology offered is of benefit to the customer, and its costs are low (Fadel and Aqeel, 324:2022). All departments should be able to experience the value of alignment directly, without any third party having to refer to it and alignment should provide evidence of a change in long-term business results (Makram, 2024:45).

Third: Empowering Employees:

- a. Concept: It is the modern concepts that have emerged interest in them recently, specifically at the end of the last century, especially after the transformation that occurred in the transformation of organizations from the command and control organization to the organization of empowerment and learning, where organizations see the human element as an essential resource (Hamdi, 2018: 196). It can be described as

the process by which authorities are given to the organization's employees, making decisions that serve its aspirations and taking responsibility for this (Muhammad, 2020: 322). It is defined as giving confidence to subordinates and working to enhance capabilities in order to improve the reality of the organization so that each of them knows his rights and duties by providing educational, material, cultural and moral means (Loisch, 2014 :). It can also be defined as an organizational practice that aims to give employees all powers and responsibilities and give them the freedom to perform work in their own way without direct interference from management, as well as providing all resources in addition to providing the appropriate work environment to qualify them professionally and behaviorally in order to perform the work (Ramadan,2023: 235). After reviewing the previous studies, choose the following dimensions to empower employees, namely:

- b. Dimensions of empowering workers: includes its dimensions through several most researchers agreed that they are the most common dimensions in research and related studies and can be described as follows:

Sharing information: means that employees have the necessary knowledge and experience not to accomplish what is required of them as well as organizational policies and decisions within the organization, and the participation in information plays an important role in building trust between workers at senior management levels and the first bright lines, and there is nothing that makes employees trust their departments more than their participation in the information about the organization and its employees, which is not known by those outside it (Raouf and Saadoun, 2018: 191). There must be high trust between individuals so that sensitive and important information is shared among individuals and this has a positive impact on the work and serves the interest of the work and the future aspirations of the organization (Dewyder.2015: 141).).

Freedom and independence: It means granting workers the right to dispose of creative in their work in a way that enables them to find themselves in dealing with changes through the authority granted to them and what is related to their tasks, empowerment requires reducing the structure so that people can work independently, but managers must start the empowerment process by expanding this structure, not reducing it, as freedom of action and independence are the most important dimension in empowering workers (Boudbous and Saleh, 2024: 174). The results of recent studies that dealt with the concept of empowering workers in business organizations indicated that workers who have more freedom during work enhance this sense of satisfaction and increase confidence in

themselves in performing the tasks required of them in a way that achieves results and enhances the competitive position for the organization (Ali, 2018: 288).

Third Theme: Field Aspect

This axis deals with the analysis of the results of the description and diagnosis of the answers of the individuals of the study sample who represent the surveyed companies, as well as testing the hypotheses of the study using structural equations, using the statistical program (SPSS, Amos), this is explained in the following paragraphs:

First: Analysis of strategic leadership results: The results of Table (2) show that most of the individuals in the study sample agreed by a large percentage on all dimensions of strategic leadership by (72%), and that result indicates high agreement, which means that there is the availability of those dimensions (vision, ethical practices, human capital, organizational culture, core capabilities) in the company and in terms of the value of the arithmetic mean (3.602), as well as in terms of the response rate (72.5%), either the percentage of The gap was low by (27.9%), which is a small percentage in terms of the standard deviation value (0.991), which is significant because it is less than 1, the above results indicate that the company has strategic leadership capable of developing future plans that enable the company to dominate the market and outperform competitors.

Table (2) Strategic Leadership Results					
Dimensions	agreement	Who?	St.deviation	Response rate	Gap ratio
Vision	0.76	3.801	0.9112	0.7602	0.2398
Ethical Practices	0.80	4.002	0.7984	0.8004	0.1996
Human Capital	0.67	3.351	1.1048	0.6702	0.3298
Organizational Culture	0.71	3.556	1.0252	0.7112	0.2888
Core Capabilities	0.66	3.303	1.12	0.6606	0.3394
Rate	0.72	3.6026	0.991946	0.72052	0.27948

Source: Researcher Preparation

Second: Analysis of the results of empowering employees: The results of Table (3) show that most of the individuals have agreed on the dimensions of empowering employees by (73.8%), which is a high percentage in terms of the arithmetic mean of (3.685), as well as in terms of the high response rate (70.1%), while the value of the standard deviation is acceptable because it is less than 1 and has reached (0.965), which is a fairly low percentage in terms of the gap ratio (29.9%), and on the basis of those results, it was found that the company's management provides whenever Employees need training

programs, material requirements and financial requirements, to enable them to carry out their work accurately and quickly.

Table (3) Employee Empowerment Results					
Dimensions	agreement	Who?	St. deviation	Response rate	Gap ratio
Information sharing	0.754	3.75	0.937	0.75	0.25
freedom and independence	0.723	3.62	0.993	0.652	0.348
Rate	0.738	3.685	0.965	0.701	0.299

Source: Researcher Preparation

Third: The results of strategic alignment: The results of Table (4) indicate the answers of the individuals of the study sample about the paragraphs of strategic alignment (X1 - X10), and it was found that the individuals have agreed on these paragraphs by (70.7%), which is a high percentage in terms of the value of the arithmetic mean of (3.616), which is a high value because it is higher than the value of the hypothetical mean of (3), and also in terms of the response rate (72.3%) This means that the workers They have a wide and great awareness about the importance of applying the requirements of strategic alignment in the activities of their company, either the negative trend of disagreement was low in terms of the value of the standard deviation (0.723), which is a low value because it is less than (1), and there is another evidence of the low negative trend, which is the gap ratio of (27.6%), in light of the above results, it can be said that the company is constantly trying to apply whenever it concerns the principles of strategic alignment in all departments to create high harmony between them, which enables it to Adaptation to changing environmental conditions.

Table (4) Strategic alignment results					
Dimensions	Agreement	Who?	St. deviation	Response rate	Gap ratio
X1	0.714	3.675	0.94605	0.735	0.265
X2	0.67	3.454	1.03582	0.6908	0.3092
X3	0.69	3.567	0.98877	0.7134	0.2866
X4	0.76	3.802	0.91048	0.7604	0.2396
X5	0.75	3.845	0.86625	0.769	0.231
X6	0.84	4.211	0.66276	0.8422	0.1578
X7	0.63	3.254	1.09998	0.6508	0.3492
X8	0.72	3.702	0.93456	0.7404	0.2596
X9	0.71	3.655	0.95495	0.731	0.269
X10	0.59	2.998	1.18118	0.5996	0.4004
Rate	0.7074	3.6163	0.95808	0.72326	0.27674

Source: Researcher Preparation

Fourth: Hypothesis testing: The hypotheses will be tested using structural equations (confirmatory factor analysis), as Figure (2) indicates that there is a moral impact relationship between the leadership strategy in empowering workers, as well as the existence of a moral impact relationship to enable workers in Strategic alignment, just as strategic leadership influences strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering employees, the existence of these relationships will facilitate us to test hypotheses as shown in the following paragraphs.

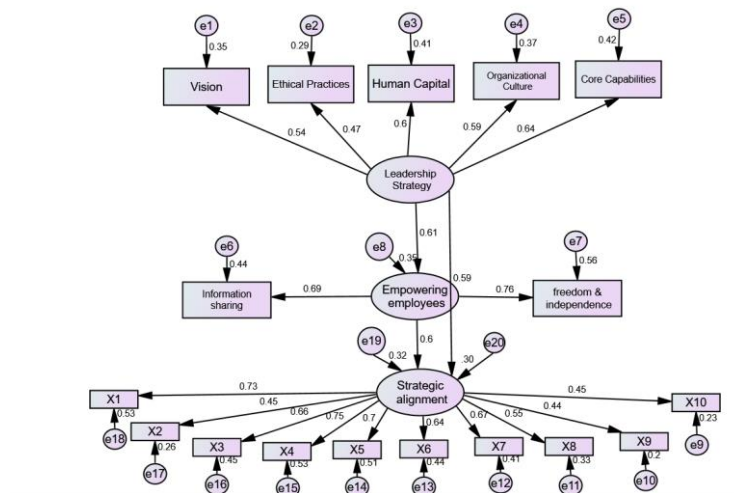


Figure 2 Modeling the structural equations of the impact of strategic leadership in strategic alignment by empowering workers

Source: Researcher Preparation

- a. Testing the first hypothesis: Table (5) shows the values of the (Estimate) test, which reached a percentage of 0.612, indicating that there is a direct impact relationship of strategic leadership in empowering employees, such that the increase in strategic leadership by one unit leads to an increase of 0.612 in the level of employee empowerment, while (the standard error (S.E.) reached 0.038, while the critical variance value (C.R) was 15.681, while the value of the (P) test (000) means that the probability value is less than 0.001, while the percentage of the standard regression coefficient (SRW) reached 0.514, which represents the strength of the standard relationship between the two variables, and based on that we will accept the first main hypothesis, which states (there is a positive and statistically significant impact of strategic leadership in empowering employees).
- b. Testing the second hypothesis: The results of Table (5) indicate the values of the (Estimate) test, which reached a percentage of 0.604, which means that there is a direct impact relationship for empowering workers in strategic alignment. An increase in the

worker empowerment variable by one unit leads to an increase of 0.604 in strategic alignment. The standard error (S.E.) reached 0.0395, while the critical variance value (C.R) was 13.432, while the test value (P) (000) means that the probability value is less than 0.001, while the standard regression coefficient ratio (SRW) reached 0.453, which represents the strength of the standard relationship between the two variables. Accordingly, we will accept the second main hypothesis, which states that (there is a positive and statistically significant impact on empowering workers in strategic alignment).

- c. Testing the third hypothesis: The results of Table (5) show the values of the (Estimate) test, which reached 0.59, which means that strategic leadership directly impacts strategic alignment through employee empowerment. An increase in the strategic leadership variable by one unit leads to an increase of 0.59 in the level of strategic alignment, through employee empowerment, while (the standard error (S.E.) reached 0.0414, while the critical variance value (C.R) was 12.351. The value of the (P) test (000) means that the probability value is less than 0.001. In contrast, the standard regression coefficient ratio (SRW) reached 0.437, which represents the strength of the standard relationship between the two variables. Accordingly, we will accept the third main hypothesis, which states (that there is a positive and statistically significant impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment through employee empowerment).

Table (5) Regression analysis of strategic leadership in strategic alignment through employee empowerment (overall)

Relationships		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	standard Regression weight SRW
Leadership Strategy	Empowering employees	.612	.038	15.681	***	.514
Empowering employees	Strategic alignment	.604	.0395	13.432	***	.453
Leadership strategy	Empowering employees - Strategic alignment	.59	.0414	12.351	***	.437

Source: Researcher Preparation

Fifth: Future administrative implications of the study variables: Strategic leadership will have positive future administrative implications by enhancing the ability of employees in companies to formulate clear visions so that they are more proactive in anticipating environmental and economic changes, which ensures the continuity of

competitive operations at present and in the future, through their ability to adapt to various necessities. It is expected that companies will adopt a more proactive approach in anticipating environmental and economic changes. There will also be implications for enhancing organizational innovation by focusing on ethical practices and investing in human capital, which leads to creating an environment that encourages innovation, enhances the culture of commitment, and supports core capabilities. Regarding the implications of employee empowerment: Empowering employees will have a positive future impact on the performance of the study sample companies, which requires the development of more comprehensive empowerment policies that include providing opportunities to develop skills and enhance interaction between employees and management, as well as providing an environment that encourages free expression and independence, which will contribute to enhancing job satisfaction and reducing employee turnover. Regarding the implications of strategic alignment, this topic has positive effects on the harmony between the different departments in the company, which will enhance the flexibility of companies to adapt to rapid changes. Effective strategic alignment will enable companies to improve their response to market requirements and ensure the achievement of common goals.

While the implications of the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment are mediated by employee empowerment: The role of employee empowerment as an intervening variable between strategic leadership and strategic alignment in companies that adopt this relationship will be able to improve performance in the long term, and enable them to do the following:

- a. Resistance to change: Leaders may face challenges in implementing new strategies due to resistance from employees or other departments.
- b. Sustaining high performance: Maintaining a high level of leadership and employee empowerment will require ongoing resources and additional investments.
- c. Application of technology: Using technology to support strategic alignment will require thoughtful planning and implementation to avoid organizational complications.

Fifth: Future administrative repercussions of the study variables: Strategic leadership will have positive future administrative repercussions by enhancing the ability of employees in companies to formulate clearly defined visions so that they are more proactive in anticipating environmental and economic changes, which ensures the continuity of competitive processes at the present and future time, through their ability to adapt to various necessities, companies are expected to adopt a more proactive approach in

anticipating environmental and economic changes, and there will be repercussions to promote organizational innovation through Focus on ethical practices and human capital investment leading to the creation of an environment that encourages innovation, fosters a culture of commitment and supports core capabilities. Regarding the repercussions of empowering employees: Empowering employees will have a positive future impact on the performance of the companies in the study sample, which requires the development of more comprehensive enabling policies that include providing opportunities for skills development and enhancing interaction between employees and management, as well as providing an environment that encourages free expression and independence that will contribute to enhancing job satisfaction and reducing the turnover rate of employees. With regard to the repercussions of strategic alignment, Therefore, the issue of good effects on the harmony between the different departments in the company, and this will enhance the flexibility of companies in adapting to rapid changes, effective strategic alignment will enable companies to improve their response to market requirements and ensure the achievement of common goals. While the repercussions of the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment are mediated by empowering employees, the role of empowering employees as a mediating variable between strategic leadership and strategic alignment in companies that adopt this relationship will be able to improve performance in the long term, and enable them to:

Resistance to change: Leaders may face challenges in implementing new strategies due to resistance from employees or other departments.

High-Performance Sustainability: Maintaining a high level of leadership and employee empowerment will require ongoing resources and additional investments.

Technology application: Using technology to support strategic alignment will require thoughtful planning and implementation to avoid organizational complexities.

Fourth Theme: Conclusions and Recommendations

First: Conclusions:

The study reached several conclusions, the most important of which were:

- a. The results of strategic leadership in its various dimensions indicate that most of the individuals in the study sample have agreed by 72%, and this consensus shows the ability of companies to direct future visions and control the market, which enhances the role of strategic leadership in improving performance.

- b. The results of employee empowerment showed that individuals in companies agreed by 73.8%, which indicates a clear awareness among employees of the importance of empowerment in performing their tasks accurately and quickly.
- c. The results of strategic alignment show that employees agree by 70.7%, reflecting the ability of companies to apply the principles of alignment and achieve harmony between their different departments, demonstrating an effective application of these principles to achieve greater adaptation to environmental conditions.
- d. The results of the first hypothesis test showed a positive impact of strategic leadership in empowering employees, as the impact ratio was 0.612 and statistical significance ($P < 0.001$), which enhanced the acceptance of the hypothesis.
- e. The results of the second hypothesis test revealed a positive effect to enable workers in the strategic alignment, where the effect value was 0.604 and statistical significance ($P < 0.001$), which prompted us to accept the second hypothesis.
- f. The results of the third hypothesis test show that there is a positive impact of strategic leadership in strategic alignment through the mediation of empowering employees with a rating value of 0.59 and statistical significance ($P < 0.001$), which means accepting the third hypothesis.

Second: Recommendations:

In light of the conclusions, we make the following recommendations:

- a. The need to develop training programs for corporate leaders that focus on future vision, ethical practices, and human capital investment, as well as employing leaders with experience and the ability to adapt to environmental variables to achieve strategic alignment.
- b. Work to provide a work environment that encourages freedom of expression and independence, as well as improve the information sharing system to ensure effective communication between employees and management.
- c. The need to provide continuous training programs to develop the skills of employees and enhance their contributions to achieving strategic objectives.
- d. Encourage the company's management to improve the integration of objectives between different departments within companies, in addition to using technology to enhance the interaction between internal resources and external opportunities, taking into account a periodic review of the company's strategies to ensure their compatibility with environmental variables.

- e. The company's management must adopt a periodic evaluation system to measure the efficiency of strategic leadership, the effectiveness of empowerment and strategic alignment, as well as conduct periodic surveys to measure employee satisfaction and their response to organizational changes.
- f. Work to improve organizational performance and enhance the competitiveness of companies by applying the best practices of strategic leadership, empowering employees and achieving strategic alignment.

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