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THE EFFECT OF STRATEGIC VIGILANCE IN SHAPING  
THE STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR: A FIELD STUDY IN THE  
IRAQI TOURISM BOARD

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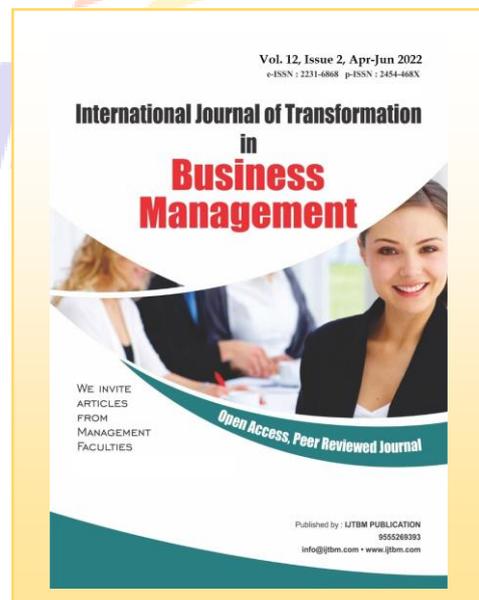
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**ABSTRACT**

The current research aims to know the degree of interest of the management of the General Authority for Tourism in information related to strategic vigilance and how to obtain and analyze it to take the required decisions as quickly as possible and in a timely manner. In its adoption of information systems and environmental sensing mechanisms that ensure the establishment of a state of strategic vigilance in the minds of those administrations, which is the complex problem that the research tries to dismantle to reach the most important causes and influencing factors, which stems mainly from the case of intellectual and theoretical treatment to establish a theoretical foundation for both dimensions, strategic vigilance and strategic behavior. The research sample included (91) observations from the administrations operating in the Iraqi Tourism Authority, and one of the most prominent conclusions is that the commission is still far from technical developments at the tourism and administrative level, and there is a regression from the adoption of modern technological means and outputs in the joints of the general performance in the commission, as there are still many Business is managed by means of transportation One of the most important recommendations is the need for the administration to spread the culture of adopting digital programs and modern technical outputs and support them financially through various tools and supplies, and then monitor the daily general performance to determine the extent of their application of that culture.

**Keywords:** *strategic vigilance, Shaping the Strategic Behavior, the General Tourism Organization.*

**THE FIRST TOPIC - METHODOLOGY**

**First - The Problem:**

The research problem crystallizes in a state of confusion and a loss of methodological frameworks in the strategic behavior of many of the departments of the body in question, which results from a disruption in their adoption of information systems and environmental sensing mechanisms that ensure the establishment of a state of strategic vigilance in the minds of those departments, which is the complex problem that the research is trying to dismantle to reach The most important causes and influencing factors, which stem mainly from the case of intellectual and theoretical

treatment to establish a theoretical rooting for each of the two dimensions (strategic vigilance and strategic behavior) to be tested and its dimensions determined in the practical environment of research.

**Second - Importance:**

The importance of the research is highlighted through the following points:

1- The importance of the research appears in its attempt to enlighten the working departments in the authority and the employees that their work map and procedures need constant attention and vigilance because it is related to the overall responsibility for one of the most important

sectors on the economic and social level of the country and the possibility of being exposed to many and varied sudden events if not taken into account, its result will lead to Problems reflected in the overall picture of the tourism performance of the different organizations.

2- The importance of the research in considering the strategic behavior variable as a function of the ability of the authority's departments to deal with the tourism reality in multiple and innovative ways, as the authority seeks through it to shift from responding to environmental influences (which may be delayed) to being proactive in building a distinct tourism renaissance.

3- The importance of the research increases by considering it deals with the most prominent institution that bears the responsibility of leading the tourism work, its organizations and individuals in a sound manner that puts it within the governmental priorities and raises the standards of general performance in it to reach distinct levels comparable to the standards of work in neighboring countries at least.

### **Third - Objectives:**

The current research seeks to achieve the following objectives: -

1- Determine the degree of interest of the management of the General Authority for

Tourism in information related to strategic vigilance and how to obtain and analyze it to take the required decisions as quickly as possible and at the appropriate time.

2- Diagnosing the most important values, beliefs and strategic behaviors prevalent in the work of the authority's leaders to serve the sector and the beneficiaries of the authority's services.

3- Knowing the marketing orientation or philosophy adopted by the management and its suitability to the company's financial and human capabilities and its current environmental conditions under the reality of strategic vigilance and the prevailing marketing culture in the minds and ideas of that management.

4- Presenting a set of recommendations accompanied by executive mechanisms to the departments operating in the Commission, through which they can establish a practical and strategically vigilant approach that is translated into distinct strategic behaviors in accordance with modern tourism standards.

**Fourth- The Hypothesis of The Research:**

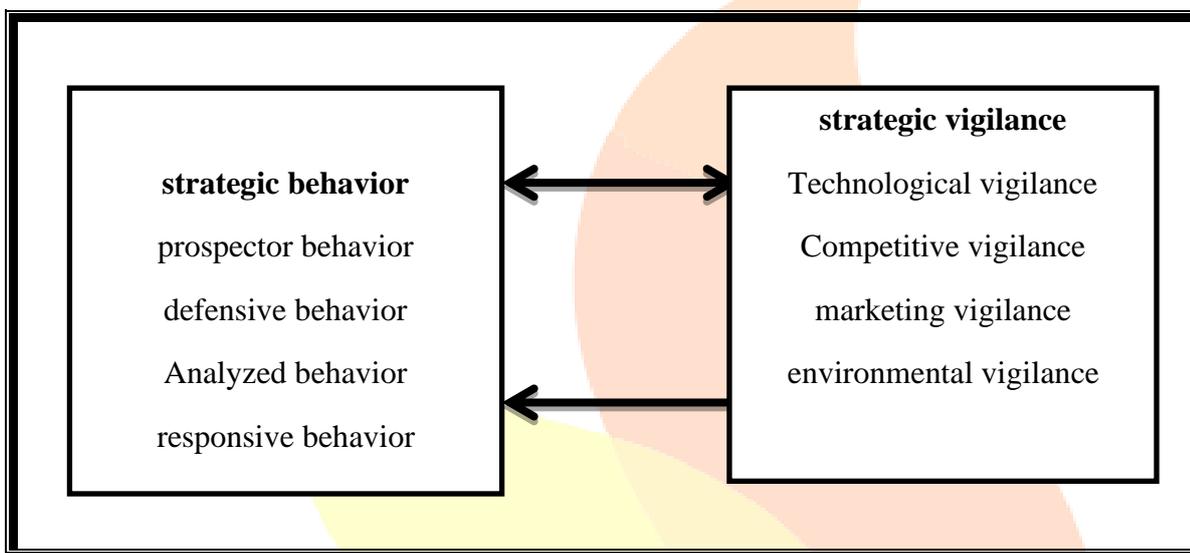


Figure (1) The hypothesis of the research

**THE SECOND TOPIC - THEORETICAL STUDY**

**First - Strategic Vigilance: Strategic Vigilance**

1- Concept: The emergence of strategic vigilance was the result of research in strategic management that focuses on realistic and proactive information that organizations obtain from their surrounding environment, and defined (Ghellab and Malika, 2012: 158) as (the process of transforming information acquired in the context of monitoring the environment from In order to discover and collect the most accurate weak signals related to threats and opportunities as soon as possible) strategic vigilance can be defined procedurally as (a

system that helps tourism and hotel administrations by supporting various decision-making by monitoring and analyzing the scientific, technical and technological environment and current and future economic influences, and focuses on information that has a strategic character Or important decisions, as the information acquired in the context of monitoring the tourism and economic environment in general is transferred in order to discover and collect the most accurate weak signals related to threats and opportunities as quickly as possible.

2- Dimensions: As a result of the interest of many researchers in the subject of strategic vigilance and its dimensions and types, many classifications have emerged. In this

research, the dimensions shown below will be adopted and in line with the nature of the work of the General Authority for Tourism in question, as follows: (Karumi and Omar, 2010: 140)

A- Technological vigilance: It refers to the organization's monitoring and analysis of the scientific and technological environment in order to identify opportunities and threats.

b- Competitive vigilance: It is the activity through which the organization learns about its current and potential competitors, and it is also concerned with the environment in which the competing organization develops, and this is by collecting information from industry analysis and competition analysis, then analyzing and extracting the results to be used in making appropriate decisions.

C- Marketing vigilance: It is the process of searching, processing and distributing information related to the organization's markets, which is concerned with following up on market development, consumer behavior, and the introduction of new products and other elements. Threats that affect its sustainability and aim to guide management decisions in order to improve performance.

D- Environmental vigilance: This type of vigilance concerns the remaining elements in the environment of the organization that were not taken into account by the previous

types. It is also known as comprehensive vigilance, which is concerned with monitoring the economic, political, legal, demographic and cultural developments that affect one way or another the activity of the organization.

### **Second - Strategic Behavior**

1- The concept: in this part, the researcher tried to identify the most important definitions that dealt with this concept by the number of researchers. Features of the concept of singular strategic behavior as one of the intellectual frameworks within the field of strategic management that is always renewed, and defined (Bernheim, 2014:3) as (the form of the administrative system expressed in a pattern of coordinating the efforts of all members of the organization through a clear vision and the translation of the organization's message and strategic goals set into reality Practical action to achieve the organization's response and adaptation to its environment, which leads to putting the organization on the right track to achieve its strategic goals.

The researcher believes that strategic behavior can be defined as

The comprehensive system of all forms and levels of decisions and programs that direct the pattern of administrative performance of the hotel and tourism organization and which determines the mechanisms that can be

adopted by the tourism organization in order to influence the environment of the competitive mission that it serves in a manner that ensures a state of interaction with the nature of that environment and providing the best for its beneficiaries )

2- Dimensions: Through the researcher's review of many classifications of strategic behavior, it was found that there are many of those classifications. The classification of (Bejai, 2022: 60) was adopted as the closest to the environment of our current research, in which the dimensions were defined as follows:

A- Defending behavior: It is represented in organizations that take a conservative approach in competitive processes and strive to make competitive efforts in areas of price and quality instead of investing heavily in developing new products, that is, they often focus on specialized markets and interest in improving the efficiency of their existing operations.

b- Prospecting behavior: It is the pursuit of continuous searches for market opportunities, and the experience of possible responses to changes in the environment. Organizations in this behavior are often pioneers in developing new products, being structured in a manner consistent with this trend, and therefore they need a high level of decentralization.

C- Analyzed behavior: It is defined as (a strategic mixture of the two types of defensive and prospective behavior, as it includes elements of all strategic behaviors of defenders and prospectors. Managers who adopt this type of behavior are constantly scanning the environment to obtain new ideas, and adopt those ideas that are promising in the future and they are trying to explore new market opportunities and at the same time they are keen to find a stable base of current products and current customers) (Bjai, 2020: 65)

D- Responsive behavior: It is represented in the administration that is characterized by its lack of any fixed forward-looking strategy.

Through the types and classifications of the nature of the strategic behavior, it becomes clear that the aforementioned types appear clearly and clearly in the tourism work environment, as it is one of the most dynamic and changing sectors. Therefore, the strategic behavior appears clearly with the market movement and the change in the general curve in performance. Now the organizations operating in the Iraqi tourism sector In particular, it often tends towards responsive behavior that deals with the reality of changes and environmental pressures, due to the industry's lack of many elements of stability and institutionalization, in addition to the fact that most of the leading organizations in the market are either

affiliated with the government sector and its policies, or they revolve in this orbit due to weak capabilities. Therefore, the tourism and hotel sector is sensitive. It is very affected by the many economic and security crises that afflicted Iraq in the past years, which means that it always adopts responsive behavior that shows strategies as a reflection of the reality of environmental influences.

### THE THIRD TOPIC - THE FIELD STUDY

**First - Description and diagnosis of study variables:** This part of the third topic deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results of the study variables, according to the answers of the research sample as follows.

The value of the weighted arithmetic mean for the independent variable represented by strategic vigilance reached 3.91, which is greater than the value of the hypothetical mean, which represents the boundary between agreement and disagreement, which is 3 to indicate that the level of importance of the sample's answers to the paragraphs of the independent variable moved towards agreement, as the value of the standard deviation reached 0.71, which indicates the presence of a slight dispersion in the sample's answers regarding the paragraphs of this independent variable, and the relative importance of the strategic vigilance

management variable recorded an agreement rate of 78.29%, which confirms the agreement of most of the study sample members on the paragraphs of the independent variable, and it is clear that the direction of the General Authority for Tourism depends on a number of vigilant practices and that in their initial form through the application of practices represented in the relationship with a number of official and semi-official bodies and civil society organizations regarding changes that may occur to the environment in its general form and tourism, including in particular at the local, global and regional levels, as happened in the Corona pandemic crisis and witnessed from Extension of relations with a number of institutions to know the consequences of the pandemic over successive periods.

The levels of importance of secondary variables within strategic vigilance were distributed among the highest response level achieved by the dimension (environmental vigilance) among all secondary variables within the independent variable with a weighted arithmetic mean whose value was (4.048) and with a standard deviation of 0.71, and relative importance constituted (80.97%), which makes it likely that most agree. The study sample members are based on the paragraphs of this secondary variable, documenting the direction of the directors in the authority in a large way towards

understanding the environmental variables in general and determining what they bear of political and economic influences, considering that the tourism sector is the most sensitive sector towards all those influences and with a different spirit, while the dimension (technological vigilance) came in order. The latter is within the dimensions of the variable as a whole, as the weighted arithmetic mean value for this secondary variable was 3.75 and the standard deviation was 0.69, with a relative importance of 75.12% to confirm that the agreement of most of the study sample members on the existence of a somewhat acceptable level in the dependence of managers in the General Authority for Tourism to follow up on technical variables. The innovations and developments of digital formats and programs related to tourism work and the work of the Commission.

2-Analyzing the level of importance of the response of the study sample to the dependent variable strategic behavior, The weighted arithmetic mean value of the strategic behavior variable reached 3.78, which is greater than the hypothetical mean value, which represents the boundary between agreement and disagreement, which is 3, to establish that the level of importance of the sample's answers to the dependent variable tended towards agreement, with a standard deviation of 0.72, which indicates

the presence of Slight dispersion in the sample's answers regarding the paragraphs of this variable, and the relative importance of the sustainable behavior variable was recorded (75.66%), which shows the agreement of most of the study sample members on the paragraphs of the dependent variable, and from it it appears that the General Authority for Tourism is moving towards consolidating the concept and application of general indicators for a specific type of strategic behavior. By types (prospecting behavior, defensive behavior, analyzed behavior, responsive behavior) but in varying proportions.

The levels of importance of the secondary variables within the strategic behavior were distributed among the highest level of answer achieved by the variable (analyzed behavior) among all the secondary variables within the dependent variable and with a weighted arithmetic mean whose value reached 3.88 and the lowest standard deviation reached 0.70, and the relative importance reached 77.70% to suggest that most agreement. The study sample members are based on the paragraphs of this secondary variable, documenting the behavior of managers working in a mechanism in which everyone surveys the environment in a way that adopts the analysis of general indicators of readiness in a way that is complete, while Table 7 highlighted that the responsive behavior

achieved the lowest level of response among the secondary variables within the strategic behavior variable, as The weighted arithmetic mean value was 3.69 and the standard deviation was 0.76, and its relative importance reached 73.92% to confirm that most of the study sample members agreed on the existence of an acceptable level of responsive behavior that characterizes the performance of managers in the body in question.

### **Second- testing the hypotheses of association:**

This part includes the use of the (Z-TEST) test because the sample size is more than thirty, in order to test the hypotheses of the association between the independent variable (strategic vigilance) and (certified strategic behavior), as follows:

The results indicated the acceptance of the first main hypothesis, which states (1- The first main hypothesis: there is a significant correlation between strategic vigilance and the form of strategic behavior adopted in the Iraqi Tourism Authority) with a confidence of 95%, as the calculated Z value reached 6.123, which is significant, Because it is greater than the tabular value of 1.96 at a significant level of 0.05, while the value of the simple correlation coefficient between strategic vigilance and strategic behavior was 0.784, and this confirms the existence of a

strong direct relationship between the independent variable represented by strategic vigilance and the dependent variable expressed in strategic behavior, according to the views of the sample. Selected by the General Authority for Tourism

The results also showed the acceptance of all four sub-hypotheses, bringing the number of accepted correlation hypotheses five out of five, bringing the percentage of the accepted hypotheses to 100%.

### **Third- Testing the hypotheses of the effect between the study variables**

This part aims to answer the test of the study's impact hypotheses by using some statistical methods represented by simple linear regression to measure the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, as the simple linear regression coefficient is used as shown below:

1- The effect of managing strategic vigilance with its four dimensions on strategic behavior:

It is clear from the results below that strategic vigilance achieved a significant effect on strategic behavior, which means accepting the second main hypothesis which states (2- The second main hypothesis: there is a significant influence relationship of strategic vigilance in shaping the strategic behavior adopted in the Iraqi Tourism

Authority), and it reached The calculated F-value of strategic vigilance (88.947) is significant because it is greater than the tabular F value of 4.001 at a significant level of 0.05 with a confidence ratio of 0.95, while the value of the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  reached 0.597, which indicates that the independent variable represented by strategic vigilance with its sub-dimensions It explains 59.7% of the change in strategic behavior and the rest is due to other factors that did not appear in the model. As for the value of the  $\beta$  coefficient, which amounted to 0.786, it indicates that the change in strategic vigilance by one unit leads to a change in strategic behavior by 0.786, while The value of the fixed limit  $\alpha$  was 1.07, which means that the strategic behavior has a presence of 1.07 even if the strategic alertness is zero.

The results also showed that the sub-hypotheses emanating from the second main hypothesis were accepted with a percentage of 100%.

2- Distribution of the impact of sub-dimensions within the management of strategic vigilance on strategic behavior

By reviewing the results of analyzing the influence relationships between strategic vigilance management with its dimensions, it becomes clear to us that the second main hypothesis and all the four sub-hypotheses emanating from it have been accepted. To

achieve the influence relationships between the variables of the study, which means the consistency of these results with the results of the simple correlation coefficient, which indicated the existence of a correlation relationship between the independent variable strategic vigilance management in its dimensions and the dependent variable strategic behavior, as it becomes clear to us that the environmental vigilance dimension achieved the highest percentage of influence in strategic behavior among all The other dimensions within the strategic vigilance variable (58%), then came after technological vigilance, with an impact rate of 51%, then after marketing vigilance, with an impact rate on strategic behavior of 32%, while the competitive vigilance dimension recorded the lowest impact on strategic behavior, at 28%.

## THE FOURTH TOPIC - CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### First, The Conclusions

1- The departments operating in the General Authority for Tourism monitor and follow up on circumstantial events through what they receive from environmental information with weak signals and work to assess their dangers and confront them with all awareness and attention. The external

environment and its weakness in order to ensure an effective presence for the authority in the arena of legitimate competition and to achieve discrimination at the tourism level.

2- The authority is still far from technical developments at the tourism and administrative level, and there is a regression from adopting modern technological means and outputs in the joints of the general performance of the authority, as many businesses are still managed by traditional means.

3- The administrations working in the authority, through deepening the understanding of what the strategic behaviors are, can determine the shape of the future of the hotel organization as the function directing performance in the short and long term and an indicator of the capabilities of discovering opportunities and opening new markets and other activities and procedures.

4- Through the results of the field study, there is a correlation and influence relationship between strategic vigilance and strategic behavior.

### **Second - Recommendations:**

1- The authority must use a modern information system with advanced technologies capable of collecting data related to customers and constantly updating it to support decision makers with

information that enhances their state of vigilance, caution and attention and interprets weak signals from the environment at all times and with high accuracy.

2- The need for the administration to spread the culture of adopting digital programs and modern technical outputs and support them financially through various tools and supplies, and then monitor the daily general performance to determine the extent of their application of that culture.

3- It is imperative for the responsible authorities in the authority to link the strategic behavior with the organizational performance standards that the organization's management should think of when establishing its goals and objectives represented in profitability, efficiency, cost reduction, growth, maximizing owners' wealth, market leadership (market share), and technology leadership. creativity), and survival.

4- Striving and vigorously towards building and implementing training programs to prepare a tourist cadre capable of absorbing the concepts and mechanisms of strategic behavior at work in the sector, as well as a real understanding of the marketing programs that can make a real leap in the reality of Iraqi tourism work.

**Third - Suggestions:**

The most important recommendations can be stated in the following points:

- 1- The impact of the adopted strategic behavior on the strategic decision-making processes.
- 2- The effect of strategic vigilance in determining the marketing option.

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