



The role of employing strategic behavior in reducing the pressures of banking work An analytical study of the opinions of a sample of workers in commercial banks

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Abstract

The objective of the present study is to investigate the impact of strategic behaviour on work-related stress experienced by a sample of bank employees. The research sample comprises 120 individuals, who were selected to represent the population of interest. The study utilised four independent variables (Prospective Behaviour, Defender, Analytical Behaviour, Interactive Behaviour) and one dependent variable, which assessed the pressures of banking work across four dimensions: occupational risks, organisational issues, workload, and physical work environment. In pursuit of the research objectives and to test its hypotheses, the researchers utilised a questionnaire consisting of 32 items as the primary data collection tool to establish exploratory structural validity. This approach was deemed essential to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings. The study culminated in a series of conclusions and suggestions that could be further expanded upon in the realm of search variables.

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Keywords: strategic behavior, banking stress, commercial banks

Introduction

In contemporary business, there exists a discernible inclination towards confronting intricate environmental challenges through the implementation of strategic practices. This necessitates the presence of competent leaders and managers who can effectively engage in competition. Such competition may involve either a proactive approach that prioritizes growth and innovation, or a defensive approach that prioritizes the preservation of existing gains within the banking industry. By embracing the analyzed behavior, which involves both seeking out new innovations and opportunities, as well as striving to maintain current gains, or alternatively adopting a responsive approach, whereby the bank may become constrained by shifts in labor markets and external pressures. The banking industry is widely recognized as a crucial sector that experiences significant efforts. In order to achieve the goal of enhancing the provision of distinguished banking services to customers, which naturally requires rooted in the behavior of individuals when using their income is the tendency to meet their needs and satisfy their aspirations in order to achieve a better quality of life (Hani, 2021) ^[7]. The research was bifurcated into four distinct axes, with the intention of developing and modernizing it. The study comprises a comprehensive examination of data pertaining to commercial banks, accompanied by an evaluation of the relationship between research variables. The fourth axis pertains to the presentation of conclusions and recommendations.

Methodology

Research Problem

In light of the high levels of uncertainty, ambiguity, and unplanned dynamic changes that organizations encounter in the global environment, particularly in the Iraqi context, there is a growing imperative for organizations to prioritize the enhancement of

their work environment. This includes fostering prevailing and influential values and trends that have a direct impact on the personal and professional lives of individuals in the workforce. To this end, organizations must adopt the most effective methods for reducing work pressures, identifying negative emotions and introverted tendencies that contribute to work-related stress, and cultivating self-awareness and emotional intelligence to enable wise and realistic responses to challenging situations. The workplace setting is a crucial avenue for proficiently communicating with peers and articulating one's ideas and emotions to fellow coworkers. Thus, the inquiry's issue is encapsulated in the subsequent inquiries:

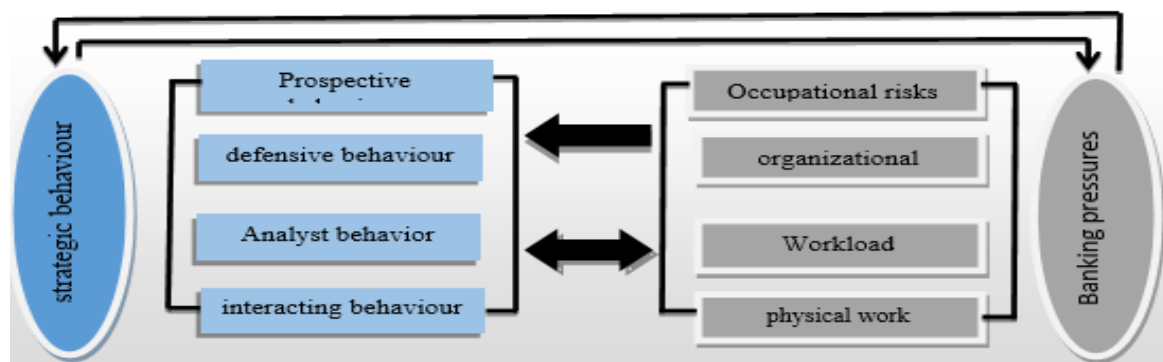
1. What is the extent of strategic behavior exhibited by banks in the study, as it pertains to their level of intelligence?
2. What is the extent of work-related stress experienced by banking professionals in the banks under investigation?
3. What is the relationship between the utilization of strategic behaviour and work pressures at the banks under investigation?

The significance of the study lies in the subsequent factors
The cognitive examination of the variables under

consideration, namely the utilization of strategic behavior and the pressures associated with banking work, holds significant relevance in the realm of organizational behavior and organizational studies. The significance of utilizing the financial sector, specifically the banks under investigation, and the societal function of this sector are noteworthy due to its crucial position within the Iraqi economy. The implementation of this research and its subsequent findings may yield suggestions that augment the efficacy of utilizing strategic conduct as a means of mitigating the stressors That employees encounter. Thirdly, the research objectives are as follows: Direct the focus of the researched organizations towards the significance of strategic behavior. The objective is to ascertain the degree of work-related stress experienced by employees in the banks that were surveyed. The present study aims to elucidate the correlation and impact of strategic conduct in conjunction with the demands of the banking profession.

Hypothetical Research figure

The research scheme presents an expressive image of the research idea and clarifies the nature of the relationships and the directions of influence between its variables, and it can be illustrated through Figure (1).



Source: prepared by researchers

Fig 1

Fourth: Research Hypotheses

The first hypothesis: There is a statistically significant effect of strategic behavior (with its dimensions combined) on banking work pressures (with its dimensions combined) in the commercial banks under study.

The second hypothesis: There is a statistically significant correlation of strategic behavior (with its dimensions combined) in banking work pressures (with its dimensions combined) in the commercial banks under study.

The theoretical aspect

First / strategic behaviour

The notion and characterization of strategic behaviour.

The notion of strategic behaviour has garnered significant attention in academic circles over the last 50 years, with numerous scholars and authors contributing to the broader field of strategy and specifically, strategic behaviour.

According to organizations adopt specific behaviours to fulfill their requirements and sustain their competitiveness in the workplace. The strategic behaviour of an organization serves as a guiding principle or a reference point for employees in their respective roles (Javanmard, 2015). Managers' mental perceptions play a crucial role in

determining the strategic behaviour of an organization. According to Kim (2015), individuals within an organization engage in proactive measures to address external factors that may impact their ability to achieve organizational goals. They rely on their cognitive associations to make informed decisions that align with the objectives of the organization. The dimensions pertaining to strategic behaviour are of interest in academic research.

The survey conducted by the researchers revealed that the dimensions of behaviour that garner the attention of both researchers and business companies are restricted to the following:

1- Prospective conduct

Prospectors are characterized as trailblazers and innovators in the market, which makes them more inclined to allocate resources towards technology and market investments to enhance their research and development and marketing management capabilities. Consequently, the unique capabilities that are linked to being a prospector must result in competitive research, development, and marketing capabilities. Hence, the principle of assigning the capacity to execute said strategy (Mohsin *et al.*, 2022) ^[12]. According to

Lin *et al.* (2013), superior marketing, research, and development capabilities are imperative in comparison to production capabilities. The excavator is considered the most versatile among the four types of organizational strategies. When operating in an unstable, uncertain, and turbulent environment, the adoption of this method requires a high degree of environmental monitoring to identify potential job and market opportunities. Consequently, the excavator strategy is often regarded as a catalyst for change within an organization.

2- Defensive Behaviour

Organizations that implement the Defenders strategy endeavour to identify appropriate market segments by enhancing their efficiency and efficacy. Furthermore, they spearhead a team comprising production personnel and concentrate on a secure and established market, with the aim of preserving their market presence. Consequently, all their business goals revolve around sustaining their respective market niches (Linnet, 2013).

According to Kess and Isoharram's study in 2014, organizations that exhibit defensive behaviour tend to offer a specific range of products and focus their competition on factors such as price, quality, and cost.

3-The behaviour of analysts

Analysts assume an intermediary stance by mitigating potential hazards inherent in both prospector and defender strategies. Organizations that adopt the approach of analysts derive advantages from the prospector's and defenders' strategies by integrating their requisite competencies with a proclivity towards innovation. As such, analysts are responsible for overseeing numerous established entities, much like how product developers concentrate on the creation of goods. Hence, in the implementation of an analyst strategy, the core capabilities of production, marketing, and R&D are deemed crucial. This necessitates an ability allocation principle that ensures that these capabilities are approximately equal to each other. The analyzed behaviour of organizations involves monitoring competitors and adopting innovations that exhibit strength and potential in the labour market.

4-Interactive behavior

Interactors this particular type of organization is distinguished by the lack of cohesion among its constituent parts and its ability to adapt to alterations in its surroundings. This conflict has the potential to originate from a minimum of three distinct sources. One of the primary reasons for organizational failure is the inability of management to develop a viable strategy for the organization. The second issue pertains to strategic formulation; however, the interrelation between technology, structure, and process is not adequately established. According to Compagno *et al.* (2008), the strategic behaviour of certain organizations is no longer applicable to current environmental conditions. Consequently, these organizations may not be equipped to respond effectively to changes in the environment. This is due to their reluctance to take risks with new products or services that may not be threatened by competitors. Additionally, organizations with highly centralized control and decision-making processes, as well as rigid organizational structures, may also face challenges in adapting to environmental changes (Cancellier, 2014).

Second: work pressure

1- Concept and definition of work stress

The notion of work stress holds significant relevance in the domains of administration and organization and has garnered substantial attention from scholars. It is a subject that is frequently explored in both theoretical and practical research endeavours. Minavand *et al.* (2013) ^[11] Over the course of the last four decades, a diverse array of concepts, theories, and practices pertaining to occupational stress have been formulated, encompassing research across numerous disciplines. Fila (2014) ^[6] The topic of stress has garnered significant scientific interest and has been explored in various fields such as engineering, physical, medical, psychological, administrative, and organizational sciences. These disciplines have proposed their own unique concepts and methodologies, contributing to the development of the stress concept. As a result, stress has become a complex and multifaceted scientific phenomenon. Babarinde and Ayotunde (2022) ^[2] define stress as a response to external stimuli that surpasses an individual's or social system's capacity for adaptation, resulting in physical, psychological, and social risks in the workplace. Regarding the concept of studying, Crosswell and Lockwood (2020) have defined it as the body's response, encompassing emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and physiological reactions, to external stimuli and stressors. Conversely, Adzakpah *et al.* (2016) ^[1] have defined studying as a product of interactions, specifically as the emotional and physical reactions that arise from the interaction between workers and their work environment when job demands surpass their capabilities and resources.

2-Mitigating the Stressors of Banking Occupation

The present study utilized the work stress sources identified by Chen *et al.* (2020) ^[3] as a measure of work stress, given its alignment with the research objectives and contextual suitability for the Iraqi environment and sample. Furthermore, previous studies have applied this measure in Iraqi settings and diverse organizational contexts, thus justifying its adoption in the current research. The following text is presented below:

1- Occupational risks

The topic of discussion pertains to the potential hazards and dangers that are associated with various occupations. Occupational hazards encompass a diverse range of hazards, including chemical, biological, psychological, and physical hazards, such as X-ray hazards, harmful chemicals, cold temperatures, excessive noise, safety hazards, insufficient lighting, and other potential dangers (WHO, 2002).

2-Matters pertaining to the organization.

Organizations constitute the fundamental components of human society. Organizations are required to exhibit flexibility and adaptability in response to dynamic environmental conditions. Additionally, they must possess the capacity to recognize potential issues that may arise, given their susceptibility to a range of internal and external challenges. Certain issues can be straightforward, while others may be intricate and necessitate resolute determinations. The aforementioned issues are commonly referred to as organizational problems, as stated by (Dalvi, 2013) ^[14]. Workplace stress is often attributed to inadequate management practices within organizations, particularly in

the healthcare industry. Such practices may include deficient organizational policies, rigid regulations, and issues related to work organization, such as workload, role conflict, and role ambiguity. Krishna *et al.* (2020) ^[9] identified three key factors that negatively impact workplace productivity: excessive monotony, issues with organizational structure, and inadequate communication between different levels.

3- Workload

A positive correlation exists between work-related stress levels and the magnitude of assigned responsibilities. Specifically, individuals who are tasked with greater responsibilities experience heightened pressure, as evidenced by research indicating that such individuals are prone to

experiencing significant levels of tension that can manifest in various physical health issues, including but not limited to stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, and elevated blood sugar levels (Kokoroko & Sanda, 2019) ^[10].

4- Physical work Environment

Effective work performance is contingent upon interpersonal interactions among individuals within an organization (Hochwarter *et al.*, 2006) ^[8]. The personal relationships between employees are crucial in fulfilling their psychological and social needs. However, when these relationships are negative, it can result in isolation and a sense of job alienation, thereby creating pressure within the organization.

Applied side

First: the independent variable (employment of strategic behavior)

Table 1: The respondents' responses about the dimensions of the independent variable

Dimensions of strategic behavior employment variable	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Agreement ratio (%)
Prospective behaviour	4.20	0.31	0.84
defensive behaviour	4.27	0.35	0.85
Analyst behavior	4.23	0.33	0.85
interacting behaviour	4.22	0.31	0.84
Total Employment Strategic Behavior	4.23	0.16	0.85

Data analysis of the dimensions of the strategic behavior employment variable shows that all arithmetic medians are in the range of (4.20-4.27), which are all greater than the hypothetical mean of (3), and the standard deviation is in the

range of (0.16-0.33), and they indicate the homogeneity of the sample responses about this variable in general. The percentages of agreement were in the range of (84-85%), which indicates complete agreement on this variable.

Second: the dependent variable: dimensions of banking work pressures Summary of the dependent variable (banking work stress)

Table 2: The respondents' responses about the dimensions of the dependent variable

Dimensions of banking work stress variable	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Agreement ratio (%)
Occupational risks	4.27	0.30	0.85
organizational issues	4.18	0.34	0.84
Workload	4.28	0.32	0.86
physical work environment	4.16	0.35	0.83
Total banking stress	4.22	0.17	0.84

Analysis of the data on the dimensions of the banking stress variable shows that all arithmetic medians are in the range of (4.16-4.28), which are all greater than the hypothetical mean of (3), and the standard deviation is in the range of (0.17-0.35), and they indicate the homogeneity of the sample responses about this variable in general. The percentages of agreement were in the range of (83-86%), which indicates agreement and complete agreement on this variable.

Third: Testing research hypotheses

This paragraph aims to test the hypotheses of the research by studying the correlation between the variables of the study, as well as testing the extent of the influence of the independent variable (employment of strategic behavior) and its sub-dimensions on the dependent variable (banking

pressures).

1. Examining the correlation theory

As the value of the correlation is (1,1), the first main hypothesis and its sub-hypotheses will be tested using the Pearson correlation scale between the two research variables as well as the dimensions of the independent variable (employment of strategic behavior) as independent dimensions associated with the dependent variable (banking pressures). As shown in the following example, a positive response indicates a direct relationship, a negative response indicates an inverse relationship, a value that approaches a positive or negative one indicates a strong correlation, and a value that approaches zero indicates a weak relationship between the variables.

Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficient matrix between research variables and their sub-dimensions

Variable / dimension	Occupational Risks	Organizational Issues	Workload	Physical Work Environment	Total Banking Work Stress
Prospective behaviour	0.08	.22* θ	0	-0.01	0.13
defensive behaviour	-0.06	0.10	-0.05	-0.03	-0.02
Analyst behavior	-0.13	-0.04	0.13	.27**0	0.10
interacting behaviour	0.13	0.05	0	-0.02	0.07
Total Employment Strategic Behavior	0.08	.202*	0	-0.01	0.13

The sign (**) indicates that the correlation is significant below the level of (0.01), while the sign (*) indicates that the correlation is significant below the level of significance (0.05), and the absence of one of the two signs indicates that the correlation is not significant.

Source: prepared by the researcher based on the output of the statistical program (spss v26).

2. Validating the impact theory

Table 4: Results of impact analysis (multiple linear regression) at the aggregate level

Dimensions of the dependent variable (banking work stress) combined	The independent variable (employment of strategic behavior)		
	Test (F)	sig	coefficient of determination (R ²)
	2.6	11.0	%0.1

Source: prepared by the researcher based on the output of the statistical program (spss v26)

The table presented above indicates that there was no statistically significant effect observed, as evidenced by the value of (sig) which was equal to 0.11. This value is greater than the probability values of 0.01 and 0.05, and is associated with the calculated (F) test value, leading to the rejection of the second main hypothesis. This hypothesis posited that there would be a statistically significant effect of employing strategic behavior and its sub-dimensions on the variable of banking work pressures.

Conclusions and Recommendations

By conducting a statistical analysis of the variables, it was determined that strategic behavior is a crucial factor in the consolidation of future plans for banking institutions, with the aim of mitigating the pressures associated with banking operations.

Strategic behavior is a crucial factor in the survival of banks amidst competition, particularly in light of the rapidly evolving technological landscape. The advent of advanced technologies at various levels has led to significant environmental changes, necessitating banking institutions to adopt appropriate behavior to keep pace with these developments.

The present study incorporates the independent variable of strategic behavior, which encompasses several dimensions, namely prospector behavior, defensive behavior, analyzed behavior, and responsive behavior, as adopted by the researchers.

Strategic behavior has been found to have a significant impact on mitigating work-related pressures. However, certain inter-relationships have not been fully realized, such as the potential influence of emotional self-awareness and emotional cognition on reducing work pressures in the banking industry. One of the prescribed measures is to enhance the emotional self-awareness levels of the leaders in the surveyed banks to augment their effective influence and ultimately contribute towards alleviating work-related pressures in the bank. Furthermore, fostering a sense of

The findings of the statistical analysis to test and quantify the impact of the independent variable are reviewed in this paragraph as a supplement to testing and evaluating the hypothesis of the correlation between the study variables.

The dependent variable (banking pressures) and its sub-variables as independent dimensions influencing the dependent variable (employment of strategic behavior) will be employed in multiple linear regression analysis to evaluate the second major hypothesis, as indicated below:

gratitude and collaboration among colleagues, authentic communication, and mitigating work-related stress to attain selflessness and optimal outcomes through mutual cooperation.

It is imperative to acknowledge the necessity of addressing the organization of working hours, as they frequently lead to insomnia and burnout. Failure to do so may result in errors stemming from prolonged periods of reduced concentration. Additionally, management ought to provide compensation for doctors working beyond their regular hours. Ultimately, efforts are being made to establish collaborative spaces with leading financial institutions to cultivate advantageous ideas and behaviors.

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