

Organizational Pride Mediating Strategic Thinking and Sustainable Innovation: A Study on the Saudi Postal Corporation

By Abdullah D. Alshrari¹, Mahmoud M. Al-Ajlouni², Mohamed Ali Saad³,

ABSTRACT:

Through its application to the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, this study aimed to determine the mediating role of organizational pride in connecting strategic thinking and innovative behavior. The researcher used a descriptive analytical approach in this study, gathering theoretical data from library sources, in addition to designing a questionnaire consisting of (37) phrases that were distributed to (311) individuals working in the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah, the study's hypotheses were tested and data was analyzed using the statistical software for social sciences (SPSS). The path analysis method was relied upon to verify the presence of indirect effects of strategic thinking on innovative behavior by focusing organizational pride, and the study discovered a remarkable effect of strategic thinking on organizational pride, along with the significant impact of strategic thinking on innovative behavior.

The results also showed that organizational pride partially mediates the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, these findings may help to focus more on organizational pride in strengthening the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior.

Keywords: Strategic thinking, Organizational pride, Innovative behavior, Saudi Postal Corporation

1. Introduction

Organizations today operate in a climate characterized by intense competition, in addition to rapid changes at all national, regional and international levels, which has made the basic feature of the business environment and its organizations dynamism and turmoil, which has presented many difficulties to the planning and forecasting process, and traditional methods and means have become unable to confront them, which has necessitated the search for effective means and methods that have the ability to contain these challenges.

Innovative behavior represents one of the important factors in maximizing the competitive advantage of organizations, as it aims in order to increase the efficacy and efficiency of organizational procedures, the benefits of innovative behavior include improving organizational performance, and it also leads to many social benefits for individuals and work groups such as job satisfaction and improved interpersonal communications (Janssen, 2000). Strategic thinking is also considered to be among the

¹Department of Human Resources, College of Business Administration, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia.

²Department of Human Resources, College of Business Administration, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia.

³Department of Human Resources, College of Business Administration, Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia. Corresponding Author.

finest important management concepts that have received great acclaim because of its capacity to enhance the capacities of the organization in responding to environmental changes, as it relates to synthesis and involves employing intuition and creativity, and its result is linked to the formation of an integrated perspective for the project (Mintzberg, 1994), strategic thinking also stimulates innovation, consequently impacts the overall level of the organization and that this relationship is considered vital to organizations that seek to endure and prosper in a corporate world that is changing quickly (Ledi et al., 2024).

Based on the interest in the subject of strategic thinking and innovative behavior, and the role that organizational pride can play in strengthening the connection between them, the present study seeks to determine the impact of strategic thinking on innovative behavior in Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah, while identifying the impact of organizational pride as a mediating variable in this relationship.

The problem of the study is to identify the mediating role of organizational pride in the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior in the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah. This problem includes many of the following sub-questions: Does strategic thinking have an effect on innovative behavior? Does strategic thinking have an effect on organizational pride? Does organizational pride have an effect on innovative behavior? Does organizational pride play a mediating role in the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior?

The study aims to identify the basic concepts related to the study variables: strategic thinking, organizational pride, and innovative behavior, and determine the nature of the relationship between them, in addition to determine the direct effect of strategic thinking on innovative behavior, in addition to identifying the basic concepts related to the study variables, to determine the indirect effect of strategic thinking on innovative behavior via the mediating role of organizational pride in the area under research, and finally arriving at a set of recommendations that contribute to the development of the service sector.

The scientific importance of the study lies in clarifying the three study variables relevance as they are among the most important contemporary concepts in modern administrative thought, as well as identifying the requirements for their application, in addition to identifying the mediating role of organizational pride in the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, the applied importance of the study stems from its applying it to the service sector, which occupies great importance in the process of sustainable development at the level of any country, which imposes on service sector the necessity of adopting modern administrative concepts and approaches so that it can keep pace with the aspirations and ambitions of its customers, the study also seeks to reach a set of results that could contribute to strengthening the relationship between the study variables.

2. Theoretical literature

2.1. Strategic thinking

Mintzberg (1994) believes that strategic thinking is a special method concerned with processing insight that results in a complete and integrated vision for the organization, arising from the appropriate application of both realizing the truth and achievement in

formulating strategic visions, While (Allio, 2006) indicates that it is an analysis of the organization's current position and the formulation of long-term trends, strategic thinking can be viewed as one of the individual thinking activities that benefits organizations. Harrison (2013) also confirm that strategic thinking is a comprehensive effort aimed at anticipating the future using the information at hand and conducting a thorough procedure to create a wide stock of awareness, prediction, and presuming to imagine the characteristics that might define the future.

The researcher believes that strategic thinking consists of identifying and analyzing the current situation of the organization, determining its target situation and formulating a strategy that enables it to reach it through optimal seizing of opportunities and confronting all types of threats.

Regarding the dimensions of strategic thinking, there have been many models for strategic thinking, the most prominent of which is the model (Liedtka, 1998), this model includes five basic elements that the researcher relied on in this study, which are: Systems Perspective, Intent-focused, Intelligent Opportunism, Hypothesis Driven, Thinking in Time.

Systems perspective means that all parts of the organization affect each other, and that interdependence and harmony must be achieved among them, and that this harmony and interdependence depends primarily on the human element, who must look at the organization in a holistic and comprehensive manner, which reflects his vision and a deeper study that enables him to develop and improve continuously, which supports the processes of creativity and innovation at the level of the organization,

As for Intent-focused, it means the future vision of the future goals to be achieved, and the intention is the starting point in determining the strategic goals that push the organization towards formulating its future strategies, which are supposed to carry the participation of its creative members who have the ability to think strategically, which enhances the innovative orientation of the organization in general.

With regard to Intelligent Opportunism, it means the ability to exploit the opportunities provided by the external environment of the Organization through the development of new strategies, and this is achieved through the practice of managers to constantly think creatively to adapt to the external environment, understand its challenges and work to seize opportunities through innovative means.

Hypothesis Driven also means applying the scientific method in thinking by finding hypotheses and testing them accurately and there is no doubt that creative thinking is the basis of strategic thinking, which is reflected in the discovery of new ideas that enhance innovation at the level of the organization.

Thinking in Time is one of the most important dimensions of strategic thinking, by analyzing the events of the past and the present to contribute to the development of a vision for the future from the summary of those experiences, thinking in time links the events of the past and the present with the future, which contributes significantly to avoiding the problems of the past and seizing the opportunities provided by future events, and it also supports the inevitability of innovation with regard to the future of the organization in order to achieve its strategic objectives.

2.2. Organizational pride

Social identity theory states that pride originates from fundamental status and proficiency of the team to which an individual belongs (Tajfel et al., 1979). Sheridan (2010) believes that organizational pride expresses the individual's feeling of essential for his role inside the organization and as a result of the appreciation of others and their acknowledgment of his skills and accomplishments, conversely, it represents the person's total thought and self-reflection. On the third hand, it can be considered a kind of arrogance, and this is a bad and undesirable thing, and it is worth noting that individuals' sense of organizational pride results in many positive effects for both the individual and the organization, according to (Todd & Kent, 2009) organizational pride includes sentiments of respect, significance, and worth derived from evaluations of situation crafted by the individual. Pride in relation to the organization increases the conviction that the organization enjoys societal respect, and in order to increase this respect it is necessary for individuals to work to make positive efforts continuously in order to enhance the value of the organization at the community level (Tyler & Blader, 2002). Pride is strongly connected to building emotional attachment towards the organization and its employees (Sleebos et al., 2006), indicated that organizational pride is a sentimental reaction to a favorable occurrence that leads to a pleasant feeling for the individual (Masterson, 2016).

(Basch & Fisher, 1998) refers to affective organizational pride as a set of strong and distinct psychological feelings that are usually short-lived and that form in the individual as a result of specific events and situations that are usually short-lived. Emotional organizational pride results in a set of behaviors such as integration at work, feeling of job security, and organizational loyalty. (Elfenbein, 2007; Seyedpour et al, 2020).

Gouthier & Rhein (2011) directional organizational pride is a psychological tendency that arises towards the organization and is distinguished by a significant degree of preference and approval towards it.

2.3. Innovative behavior

Innovation capability is critical to the viability of an organization, it also indicates the possibility to create new knowledge derived from previous information, and consists of a comprehensive set of organization characteristics that facilitate and support innovation strategies (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Innovative behavior is defined as additional employee behavior aimed at producing, advancing and applying fresh concepts in the field of work (De Spiegelaere et al., 2014). From a point of view (Yuan & Woodman, 2010) innovative behavior of employees is the ability of employees to form, present, and apply original and new ideas through which products, processes, or methods and methods of work can be improved, while (Vandavasi et al., 2020) sees innovation as starting to intentionally develop, present, and implement innovative concepts through a team work or organization in order to perform the required tasks.

We conclude from the above that innovative behavior is putting forward innovative ideas to confront traditional problems or presenting original initiatives and searching for supporters for them by marketing them well and applying them systematically in a way that reflects positively on performance in general. The literature that dealt with the dimensions of innovative behavior of employees was numerous and differed partly in terms of the number of dimensions according to the vision of each one.

The researcher relied on a study (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) which identified three dimensions of innovative behavior: generating the idea, promoting the idea, and implementing the idea. Idea generation means creating new ideas or proposing original solutions to problems related to work or improving products or services (Asmawi et al., 2015). Promoting ideas means searching for supporters of the idea, convincing them of it, and working to mobilize sufficient support for the innovative idea, as ideas are promoted and disseminated in throughout the organization in order to find practical support for it (Janssen, 2000).

3. Literature review

Regarding the literature review related to Strategic thinking. Graetz (2002) concluded that enhancing strategic thinking capabilities and disseminating them throughout the organization requires business leaders with a great deal of intelligence and psychological balance. Rohani & KhaefElahi (2014) explained that there is an contrary relationship between strategic thinking and individuals' acceptance of change. Bratianu (2015) also showed that strategic thinking is a very important element at the level of managers, and (Kazmi, 2017) concluded that strategic thinking among leaders and their practice of the transformational leadership style supports to new proposals for developing goods and services and team work. Al-Qatamin & Esam (2018) indicated that strategic thinking skills have an influence on competitive advantage. Muriithi et al., (2018) showed that strategic thinking and leadership performance are positively correlated. While Salamzadeh et al., (2018) confirmed that there is a positive relationship between managers' strategic thinking and organizational success.

In another study, (Alzghoul et al., 2023) concluded that strategic thinking enhances the innovative capabilities of employees, and that leadership that is focused on knowledge reduces the causal link between employee creativity and strategic thinking. Others also found that strategic thinking are positively correlated with competence (Sattam & Altrabelsi, 2023). In addition, strategic thinking stimulates innovation, this thus impacts the overall work efficiency (Ledi et al., 2024).

Regarding the literature review on organizational pride, Verbeke et al., (2004) found that organizational pride increases employees' performance-related motivation, as it encourages greater energy and one's belief in one's ability to act in ways necessary to reach specific goals, and also favorably influences organizational citizenship behaviors, in addition (Gouthier & Rhein, 2011) confirmed that there is a strong correlation between the feeling of emotional organizational pride and directional organizational pride, And that directional organizational pride indirectly positively affects the level of employee creativity, and (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014) concluded that there is an inverse relationship between organizational pride and the intention to leave work, in addition to that the availability of elements of independence and team support increases organizational pride, the study (De Roeck et al., 2016) concluded that organizational pride mediates the relationship between perception of social responsibility and employees' organizational identification. (Babić & Arslanagić, 2019) concluded that the availability of organizational reputation dimensions positively affects the organizational pride of individuals on the front lines in service organizations. Awareness of social responsibility as one of the dimensions of

organizational reputation has a beneficial effect on organizational pride, which reflects positively on the organizational similarity of employees (Shahzadi et al., 2020). Widyanti et al., (2020) also concluded that perceived organizational justice encourages employees to feel proud, and thus they make a decision to remain in the organization, in addition to a positive effect of organizational pride to be happy at work and make extra efforts.

(Raza et al., 2021) explained that the awareness of individuals awareness of the organization's social responsibility activities affects their voluntary behavior to protect the environment, and that when the organization integrates social responsibility activities into its specialized practices, its reputation improves from the point of view of the employees, which leads to increased organizational pride, and revealed (AL-haraisa, 2024) that ethical leadership has a favorable effect on organizational pride and that organizational pride has a noteworthy and advantageous effect on employee motivation.

Some studies have tested the relationship of innovative behavior with other managerial concepts, where (De Stobbeleir et al., 2011) highlighted the significance of employees and this requires them to focus on the organizational level of their behavior in the creative process, as a method that facilitates individual adaptation, (Khan et al., 2012) confirmed that there is a considerable advantage effect of both transformational leadership and transactive leadership on innovative behavior at work, (CeliK et al., 2014) also explained that there is a favorable relationship between empowerment, organizational creativity and innovation, and that empowerment positively impacts the degree of creativity and innovation in the organization, Gross (2017) indicates that innovative behavior has a favorable and important impact on the strategic thinking of team work, (Afsar et al., 2019) found that job adjustment behaviors mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative behavior.

There are many studies have revealed that the relationship between responsible leadership and innovative behavior through the mediation of organizational pride (Dong & Zhong, 2021). While (Lifeng & Dong, 2021) concluded that socially responsible human resources management and organizational pride mediate the positive relationship between leadership responsible and innovative behavior. Odugbesan et al., (2023) emphasize that green talent management has a favorable influence on the innovative behavior, and similarly, artificial intelligence has a significant impact on the innovative behavior of employees. Soltanizadeh et al., (2024) finds that innovation and strategic thinking improve employee performance and enable the organization to manage organizational challenges and perform better.

4. Methodology

The study developed a conceptual foundation for its three variables by methodically using the descriptive analytical technique, where data was collected from various sources with the intention of creating a theoretical foundation, in the analytical field, the researcher relied on designing a questionnaire with the aim of deducing and examining the connection between study variables through use of structural equation modeling (SEM) and path analysis.

4.1. Study model

Figure 1 shows the model of study that incorporates the variables of current study, regarding the independent variable (Strategic thinking), the study was carried out using the model (Liedtka, 1998), concerning the dependent variable (Innovative behavior), the researcher relied on the scale (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010), and for mediating variable (Organizational pride) the study relied on the scale (Basch & Fisher, 1998).

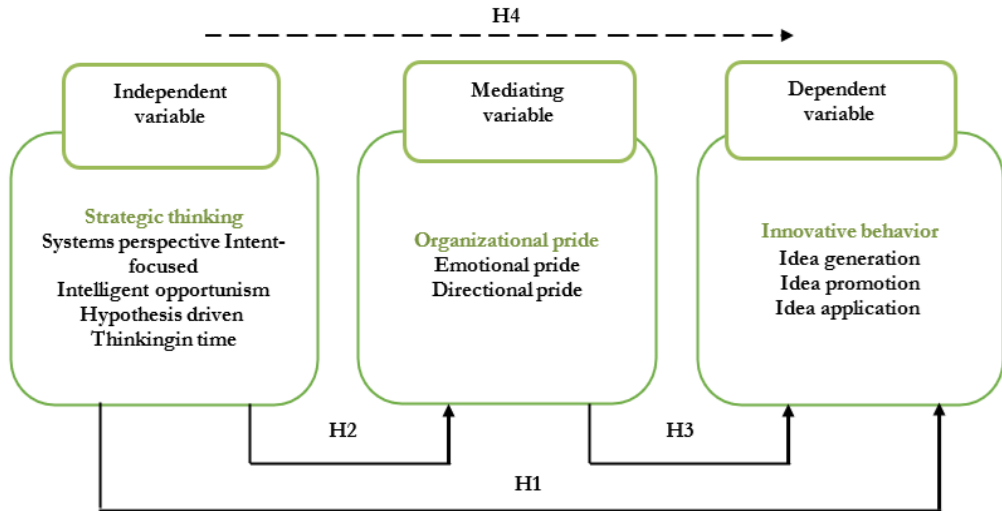


Figure 1. Study model
Source: developed by the authors

4.2. Hypotheses

- H1:** Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.
- H2:** Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on organizational pride at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.
- H3:** Organizational pride has a statistically significant impact on innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.
- H4:** The association between strategic thinking and innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah is mediated by organizational pride.

4.3. Study tool

Depending on the hypotheses and variables of the study, a questionnaire was created by the researcher consisting of (37) phrases that were prepared and present to the research sample using (Google Forms), the questionnaire's structure was separated into three parts as follows: Part one evaluation of strategic thinking and relied on (19) phrases distributed over all its elements, and the items for this variable were developed using a scale reference (Liedtka, 1998), the second part measuring of organizational pride evaluation of (7) phrases distributed over all its elements, and the items for this variable were developed using a scale reference (Basch & Fisher, 1998), the third part evaluation of innovative behavior, and relied on (11) phrases distributed over all its elements, and the items for this variable were developed using a scale reference (De Jong & Den Hartog,

2010), the five-point Likert scale, from total rejection (1) to full approval (5), was used to calculate the research items.

4.4. Study population and sample

The study population includes everyone in the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, who numbered (1638) employees at the time of conducting the study, distributed among the various offices of the corporation in Jeddah, and the sample size was verified based on the equation (Thompson, 1987):

$$n = \frac{N \times P (1 - P)}{[(N-1) \times (d^2 \div z^2)] + p(1 - p)}$$

The equation showed that the size of the random sample is (311) employees of the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.

4.5. Stability of the study instrument

The reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was computed for the study tool (questionnaire), and from Table 1, the values of the reliability coefficient are appropriate for all axes, as reliability coefficient value confined between (0.766) and (0.924), the value of the validity coefficient confined between (0.875) and (0.961), and infer from the foregoing that the study sample's data is acceptable on all axes.

Table 1: Values of consistency and self-honesty

Parts	Study Variables	number Paragraphs	Stability Test	Self-validity coefficient
			Cronbach's alpha coefficient	
Part One	Strategic thinking	19	0.766	0.875
First	Systems perspective	4	0.841	0.917
Second	Intent-focused	3	0.770	0.877
Third	Intelligent opportunism	4	0.911	0.954
Fourth	Hypothesis driven	5	0.829	0.910
Fifth	Thinking in time	3	0.803	0.896
Part Two	Organizational pride	7	0.883	0.839
First	Emotional pride	3	0.795	0.892
Second	Directional pride	4	0.873	0.934
Part Three	Innovative behavior	11	0.924	0.961
First	Idea generation	4	0.787	0.887
Second	Idea promotion	3	0.910	0.954
Third	Idea application	4	0.799	0.894

5. Results and discussion

H1: Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.

This hypothesis was assessed using multiple regression analysis, table 2 presents the estimates of the multiple regression mode, by reviewing the table data, we find that there is a significant effect of the dimensions of strategic thinking (systems perspective, intent-focused, intelligent opportunism, hypothesis driven, thinking in time) on innovative behavior, as the sign of the positive regression coefficients (B) reached (0.234), (0.163), (0.369), (0.178), (0.272) respectively, with a significance level of (0.000) at a significance level of (0.05), which means the significance of all dimensions, which indicates the presence of an impact for all dimensions of strategic thinking on innovative behavior, therefore, the high level of strategic thinking reflects positively at level of innovative behavior, the significance of the estimated regression model is also evident from the calculated F value (167.006) at a significance level (Sig=0.000), which is less than (0.05), in addition to the significance of the regression coefficients and the significance of the constant term through the T values and the Sig values at a significance level (0.05), in addition to the above, there is a robust direct relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, according to the correlation coefficient's value reached ($R = 0.617$) at a significance level of (0.000) and significant at a significance level of (0.05). The value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) was (0.381), which is a statistically significant value and means that the dimensions of strategic thinking together explain about (38.1%) of the variance occurring in innovative behavior, and remaining proportion relates to other variables that do not exist in the current regression model, the previous results indicate acceptance of the first hypothesis, which states: "Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah".

Table 2: Multiple Regression of dimensions of Strategic thinking on Innovative behavior

Independent variable dimensions	Dependent variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R ²	F
Systems perspective	Innovative behavior	0.234	0.251	4.184	0.000	0.617	0.381	167.006
Intent-focused		0.163	0.186	1.385	0.000			
Intelligent opportunism		0.369	0.384	6.530	0.000			
Hypothesis driven		0.178	0.191	2.947	0.000			
Thinking in time		0.272	0.306	1.609	0.000			

H2: Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on organizational pride at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.

Multiple regression analysis was employed in order to evaluate this hypothesis, table 3 presents the estimates of the multiple regression models. By reviewing the table data, we find that there is a significant effect of the dimensions of strategic thinking (systems perspective, intent-focused, intelligent opportunism, hypothesis driven, thinking in time) on organizational pride, as the sign of the positive regression coefficients (B) reached (0.237), (0.359), (0.146), (0.192), (0.326) respectively, with a significance level of

(0.000) at a significance level of (0.05), which means the significance of all dimensions, which indicates the presence of an impact for all dimensions of strategic thinking on organizational pride, therefore, the high level of strategic thinking reflects positively on the level of organizational pride, the significance of the estimated regression model is also evident from the calculated F value (114.251) at a significance level (Sig=0.000), which is less than (0.05), in addition to the importance of regression coefficients and the significance of the set limit through T values and the Sig values at moral level (0.05), in addition to the above, a strong direct association exists between strategic thinking and organizational pride, as the value of the correlation coefficient reached ($R = 0.562$) at a significance level of (0.000) and significant at a significance level of (0.05). The value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) was (0.316), which is a statistically significant value and means that the dimensions of strategic thinking together explain about (31.6%) of the variance occurring in organizational pride, and that the remaining percentage is explained by other variables that are not included in the current regression model, the previous results indicate acceptance of the second hypothesis, which states: “Strategic thinking has a statistically significant impact on organizational pride at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah”.

The current study's findings in line with the results of studies (Pereira et al.2021); (McIntosh, 2010), which found a statistically significant effect of strategic thinking on organizational pride, this is because strategic thinking involves analyzing information in the best possible way and proposing innovative ideas that help enhance success at the organizational level. In addition, it helps improve the management and overall organization of the business, and stimulates selecting the right step to take, which enhances the success of the project, which reflects positively and enhances organizational pride.

Table 3: Multiple Regression of dimensions of Strategic thinking on Organizational pride

Independent variable dimensions	Mediating variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R ²	F
Systems perspective	Organizational pride	0.237	0.263	5.640	0.000	0.562	0.316	114.251
Intent-focused		0.359	0.382	2.170	0.000			
Intelligent opportunism		0.146	0.161	1.122	0.000			
Hypothesis driven		0.192	0.217	2.570	0.000			
Thinking in time		0.326	0.344	3.361	0.000			

H3: Organizational pride has a statistically significant impact on innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah.

Multiple regression analysis was employed in order to evaluate this hypothesis, table 4 displays the multiple regression model's estimates, by reviewing the table data, we find that there is a significant effect of the dimensions of organizational pride (emotional

pride, directional pride) on innovative behavior, as the sign of the positive regression coefficients (B) reached (0.119), (0.336) respectively, with a significance level of (0.000) at a significance level of (0.05), which means the significance of all dimensions, which indicates the presence of an impact for all dimensions of organizational pride on innovative behavior, therefore, the high level of organizational pride reflects positively on the level of innovative behavior, the calculated regression model's significance is also evident from the calculated F value (94.609) at a significance level (Sig=0.000), which is less than (0.05), in addition to the importance of both the constant term and the regression coefficients through the T values and the Sig values at a significance level (0.05), in addition to the above, there is a strong correlation between organizational pride and innovative behavior, as the correlation coefficient's value reached ($R = 0.610$) at a significance level of (0.000) and significant at a significance level of (0.05). The value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) was (0.372), which is a statistically significant value and means that the dimensions of organizational pride together explain about (37.2%) of the variance occurring in innovative behavior, and that the proportion that remains is explained by other variables that are not included in the current regression model, from the above it is clear that the third hypothesis is correct.

The current study's findings in line with the results of studies (Gouthier & Rhein, 2011); (Arshad & Imran, 2016); (Dong & Zhong, 2021); (Li et al., 2024), the reason for this is that organizational pride is an emotional feeling that is positively linked to performance and arises as a result of outstanding achievements and successes. Therefore, it is considered the primary incentive for positive and innovative work behaviors and the basic element of competitive excellence.

Table 4: Multiple Regression of dimensions of Organizational pride on Innovative behavior

Mediating variable dimensions	Dependent variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R ²	F
Emotional pride	Innovative behavior	0.119	0.154	6.352	0.000	0.610	0.372	94.609
Directional pride		0.336	0.372	2.496	0.000			

H4: The association between strategic thinking and innovative behavior at the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah is mediated by organizational pride.

This hypothesis is tested using a model. (Baron & Kenney, 1986), which includes three stages as follows:

- Measure how strategic thinking (independent variable) affects inventive behavior (dependent variable).
- Measure how strategic thinking (independent variable) affects organizational pride (mediating variable).

- Measure how organizational pride (mediating variable) affects inventive behavior (dependent variable).

In keeping with the steps outlined by (Baron & Kenny, 1986) in this context, when the mediating variable enters the regression model, either the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable disappears, and this case is called full mediation, or this effect decreases, and this case is called partial mediation, structural equation modeling (SEM) and path analysis were also used. Figure 2 displays the outcomes of path analysis for the items under study.

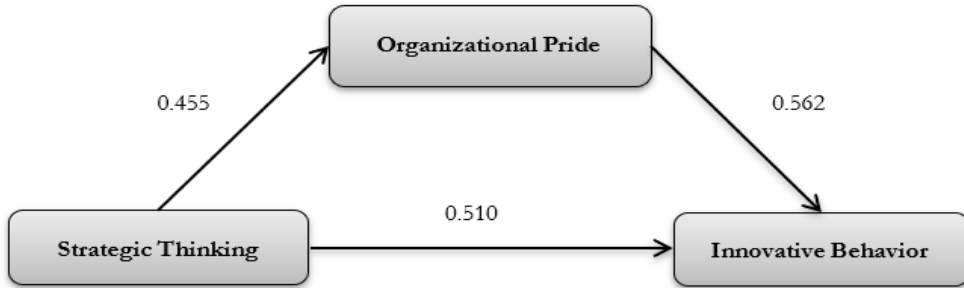


Figure 2. Path analysis model
Source: developed by the author

Table.5 demonstrates that the independent variable has a direct positive influence (strategic thinking) on the dependent variable (innovative behavior), where the path analysis's findings indicated that the direct effect coefficient's value was (0.510) and statistically significant at the level of (0.05), data of the table also shows presence of direct positive influence of independent variable (strategic thinking) on intermediate variable (organizational pride), where the track analysis showed that the value of the direct impact coefficient was (0.455) and statistically significant at the level of (0.05), the results also indicate that presence direct positive impact of the intermediate variable (organizational pride) on the dependent variable (innovative behavior), since the direct impact coefficient's value was (0.562), as indicated by the path analysis, and statistically significant at the level of (0.05).

Results of the path analysis also revealed the presence of an indirect effect of independent variable (strategic thinking) the dependent variable (innovative behavior) amounting to (0.427) in the existence of the intermediate variable (organizational pride), that is a good value and means that organizational pride has a role as an intermediate variable in the connection between the independent variable (strategic thinking) and the dependent variable (innovative behavior), and therefore there is an indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in the presence of the intermediate variable at a rate of (42.7%) in a positive direction, and this indicates the positive presence of Intermediate variable.

We note that the route coefficient's value (B) with respect to the impact of strategic thinking on innovative behavior has decreased from (0.510) to (0.427) despite the importance of influence in both cases, which means that organizational pride partially

mediates the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, where partial mediation is achieved when the impact of independent variable on the dependent variable continues when intermediate variable enters despite the decrease in this effect (Barron and Kenny, 1986).

Thus, the stages identified by Baron & Kenny (1986) are achieved as follows:

- Strategic thinking positively influences innovative behavior ($B = 0.510$).
- Strategic thinking positively impacts organizational pride ($B = 0.455$).
- Organizational pride positively influences innovative behavior ($B = 0.562$).
- Organizational pride influences innovative behavior in the presence of strategic thinking ($B = 0.427$).

Table 5: Path analysis model for study variables

Variables/paths	Path coefficient (B)	Standard error	Sig.	Model quality indicators			
				GFI	CFI	Chi-square	RMSEA
Strategic thinking → Innovative behavior	0.510	0.049	0.000	0.925	0.909	1.176	0.42
Strategic thinking → Organizational pride	0.455	0.071	0.000				
Organizational pride → Innovative behavior	0.562	0.054	0.013				
Strategic thinking → Innovative behavior (Indirect effect)	0.427						

It is also clear from the table data that the model goodness-of-fit index (GFI) reached (0.925), which is a percentage close to (1.00), it is known that the closer the ratio is to (1.00), the greater the quality of the model, which indicates the suitability of the model. It is also clear from the table that the comparative fit index (CFI) reached (0.909), which is also a ratio close to (1.00), which indicates the goodness of Sample, the (Chi-square) reached (1.176), which is greater than (1.00) and is considered acceptable, the (RMSEA) value is also considered acceptable as it reached (0.42), the findings of evaluating the fourth hypothesis were previously presented, and it is evident that this hypothesis is acceptable.

6. Conclusion

The study's findings indicated that there is a statistically significant impact of strategic thinking on innovative behavior in Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah, and these results indicate the validity of H1, the results of the current study are in line with the conclusions of studies (Bouhali et al., 2015); (Gross, 2017); (AlQershhi, 2021); (Soltanizadeh et al., 2024), which found a statistically significant impact of strategic thinking on innovative behavior, and this is due to the fact that strategic thinking leads to arranging and defining priorities, and disseminating them among employees. It also helps in clarifying the vision and dealing well with events and facts, as well as creating motivation among employees to bring out their best, it increases energies at work and pushes them to development, creativity and innovation. Strategic thinking plays an essential role in key issues in the various organizational sectors of any organization, and contributes to raising the level of performance, and there are several organizations worldwide that oversee their enterprise successfully in the most challenges circumstances thanks to strategic thinkers, and there is no doubt that the Saudi Postal Corporation as an organization seeks to provide services to its customers with the best possible quality, therefore, it must work to apply the scientific methodology of strategic thinking and work to enhance practices related to it (Mahdavian et al., 2014), as well as supporting talented people who have the ability to present new ideas that contribute positively to the development of the institution's performance (Saad, 2020).

Furthermore, the study found a strong, statistically significant effect of strategic thinking on organizational pride in Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah, which means H2 is true, the results of the current study are in line with the conclusions of studies (Pereira et al.2021); (McIntosh, 2010), which found a statistically significant effect of strategic thinking on organizational pride, this is because strategic thinking involves analyzing information in the best possible way and proposing innovative ideas that help enhance success at the organizational level, in addition, it helps improve the management and overall organization of the business, and stimulates making the appropriate choices at the appropriate moment, which enhances the success of the project, which reflects positively and enhances organizational pride.

Additionally, the study found a statistically significant and robust effect of organizational pride on innovative behavior in the Saudi Postal Corporation in Jeddah. Which means H3 is true, the present study's findings are in line with the results of studies of (Gouthier & Rhein, 2011); (Arshad & Imran, 2016); (Dong & Zhong, 2021); (Li et al., 2024), the reason for this is that organizational pride is an emotional feeling that is positively linked to performance, and arises as a result of outstanding achievements and successes, therefore, it is considered the primary incentive for positive and innovative work behaviors and the basic element of competitive excellence.

The study found that organizational pride mediates the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, therefore, the inclusion of organizational pride in the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior has greatly contributed to clarifying the relationship between them, this study agrees with the conditions set by (Baron & Kenny, 1986), and that organizational pride partially mediates the relationship between strategic thinking and innovative behavior, as the value of the

path coefficient (B) regarding the effect of strategic thinking on innovative behavior was (0.510). In the case of direct influence, while it decreased in the case of indirect influence to (0.427), although there was a specific effect in both cases.

Based on the foregoing, we see that there is a need to establish an organizational culture that supports strategic thinking in its five dimensions, through leadership support that encourages employees to think strategically based on a scientific methodology and create the internal environment of the organization to consolidate and devote that culture, in addition to consolidating strategic intentions and purposes in the hearts of employees and making it a method and basis for continuous work, and it also needs to enhance harmony between all parts of the organization by involving all administrative levels directly in planning, and decision-making, which imparts more responsibility and keenness to achieve strategic objectives

In addition, it is also required to enhance the strategic thinking skills of employees, through holding workshops and specialized training programs, and developing the skill of scenarios to deal with the future under accelerated environmental conditions, which supports the innovative behavior of workers, in addition to the need for periodic analysis of the external environment of the organization to ensure continuous adaptation to it and study the experiences of other organizations that have achieved remarkable development in strategic thinking in its various dimensions, taking into account all future possibilities based on deep and timely environmental analysis to explore and exploit promising opportunities and face potential risks and threats

The results and recommendations of the study provide the foundations that can be relied upon to enhance organizational performance and raise the level of competitive excellence, and this study emphasizes in particular the need to deepen the process of strategic thinking, which contributes significantly to believing in the capabilities and energies of the organization's members, and it also provides a fertile environment that helps predict future possibilities, employ available knowledge, and provides a good organizational climate that develops a sense of organizational pride, and helps develop and promote the innovative behavior of employees, which achieves the goals of the organization in addition to the aspirations and ambitions of employees.

Acknowledgement

The authors extend their appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at Northern Border University, Arar, KSA for funding this research work through the project number "NBU- FFR-2025-2590 – 01".

References

- Afsar, B., Badir, Y. F., & Saeed, B. B. (2014). Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, 114(8), 1270-1300.
- AL-haraisa, Y. E. (2024). Ethical Leadership and Employees' Creativity: The Mediating Role of Organizational Pride. *Foundations of Management*, 16(1), 25-40.
- Allio, R. J. (2006). Strategic thinking: the ten big ideas. *Strategy & Leadership*, 34(4), 4-13.
- Al-Qatamin, A. A., & Esam, A. M. (2018). Effect of strategic thinking skills on dimensions of competitive advantage: empirical evidence from Jordan. *Economics, management and marketing (MAC-EMM 2018)*, 8.

- Alzghoul, A., Algraibeh, K. M., Khawaldeh, K., Khaddam, A. A., & Al-Kasasbeh, O. (2023). Nexus of strategic thinking, knowledge-oriented leadership, and employee creativity in higher education institutes. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(4), e01107-e01107.
- Arshad, A., & Imran, A. (2016). Impact of organizational morality on employee creativity: Mediating role of organizational pride. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 5(3), 961-971.
- Asmawi, A., Rahim, M. F. A., & Zainuddin, M. N. (2015). A study of leadership styles and organizational commitment in a Malaysian Private University. *Advanced Science Letters*, 21(6), 1944-1947.
- Babić-Hodović, V., & Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, M. (2019). Perceived corporate reputation and pride as drivers of frontline employees' reputation impact awareness: Mediating role of job satisfaction. *Market-Tržište*, 31(2), 171-185.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator–mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 51(6), 1173.
- Basch, J., & Fisher, C. D. (1998). Affective events-emotions matrix: A classification of work events and associated emotions (pp. 1-20). Bond University.
- Bouhali, R., Mekdad, Y., Lebsir, H., & Ferkha, L. (2015). Leader roles for innovation: Strategic thinking and planning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 181, 72-78.
- Bratianu, C. (2015). Developing strategic thinking in business education. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy*, 3(3), 409-429.
- Celik, A., Cakici, A. B., & Celik, N. (2014). The effects of employee empowerment applications on organizational creativity and innovativeness in enterprises: The case of Oiz. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(10).
- Choi, B. S., Kim, J. S., Lee, D. W., Paik, J. W., Lee, B. C., Lee, J. W., ... & Lee, H. Y. (2018). Factors associated with emotional exhaustion in South Korean nurses: a cross-sectional study. *Psychiatry investigation*, 15(7), 670.
- De Jong, J., & Den Hartog, D. (2010). Measuring innovative work behaviour. *Creativity and innovation management*, 19(1), 23-36.
- De Roeck, K., El Akremi, A., & Swaen, V. (2016). Consistency matters! How and when does corporate social responsibility affect employees' organizational identification?. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(7), 1141-1168.
- De Spiegelaere Stan, H. K., Guy Van Gyes, H. K., & Geert Van Hootegeem, C. K. (2014). The Innovative Work Behaviour concept: definition and orientation.
- De Stobbeleir, K. E., Ashford, S. J., & Buyens, D. (2011). Self-regulation of creativity at work: The role of feedback-seeking behavior in creative performance. *Academy of management journal*, 54(4), 811-831.
- Dhir, S., & Dhir, S. (2020). Modeling of strategic thinking enablers: a modified total interpretive structural modeling (TISM) and MICMAC approach. *International Journal of System Assurance Engineering and Management*, 11(1), 175-188.
- Dong, W., & Zhong, L. (2021). Responsible leadership fuels innovative behavior: The mediating roles of socially responsible human resource management and organizational pride. *Frontiers in psychology*, 12, 787833.
- Elfenbein, H. A. (2007). 7 Emotion in organizations: a review and theoretical integration. *Academy of management annals*, 1(1), 315-386.
- Gouthier, M. H., & Rhein, M. (2011). Organizational pride and its positive effects on employee behavior. *Journal of Service Management*, 22(5), 633-649.
- Graetz, F. (2002). Strategic thinking versus strategic planning: towards understanding the complementarities. *Management decision*, 40(5), 456-462.
- Gross, R. (2017). The links between innovative behavior and strategic thinking. *Contemporary Management Research*, 13(4).
- Harrison, R. (2013). Strategic thinking in 3D: a guide for national security, foreign policy, and business professionals. Potomac Books, Inc.
- <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740910929777>

- Janssen, O. (2000). Job demands, perceptions of effort–reward fairness and innovative work behaviour. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 73(3), 287–30.
- Kazmi, S. A. (2017, October). Blending transformational leadership with strategic thinking to strengthen organizational NPD innovation process. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management* (pp. 1122-1132).
- Khan, M. J., Aslam, N., & Riaz, M. N. (2012). Leadership styles as predictors of innovative work behavior. *Pakistan Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 9(2), 17-22.
- Kraemer, T., & HJ Gouthier, M. (2014). How organizational pride and emotional exhaustion explain turnover intentions in call centers: A multi-group analysis with gender and organizational tenure. *Journal of Service Management*, 25(1), 125-148.
- Ledi, K. K., Dumedea, R. B., Bandoma, S., & Ameza-Xemalordzo, E. (2024). Strategic thinking and innovation as panaceas for hotel performance in turbulent business environments. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 2328330.
- Li, X., Wang, Y., Zhu, Y., & Zheng, L. (2024). How and when leader voice solicitation facilitates innovative behavior: the role of pride and collectivism orientation. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.
- Liedtka, J. M. (1998). Strategic thinking: can it be taught?. *Long range planning*, 31(1), 120-129.
- Lifeng, Z., & Dong, W. (2021). The Influence of Responsible Leadership on SRHRM, Organizational Pride, and Innovative Behavior. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2021, No. 1, p. 11868). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.
- Mahdavian, M., Mirabi, V., & Haghsheenas, F. (2014). A study of the impact of strategic thinking on the performance of Mashhad municipal managers. *Management Science Letters*, 4(4), 679-690.
- Masterson, C. R. (2016). Organizational pride: A multi-method examination of the nature, emergence, and function of pride in the workplace (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Chicago).
- McIntosh, J. (2010). Linking organizational pride to purpose. *Employment Relations Today*, 37(2), 39-45.
- Mintzberg, H. (1994). The fall and rise of strategic planning. *Harvard business review*, 72(1), 107-114.
- Mintzberg, H. (1994). The rise and fall of strategic planning. *Simon and Schuster*.
- Muriithi, S. M., Louw, L., & Radloff, S. E. (2018). The relationship between strategic thinking and leadership effectiveness in Kenyan indigenous banks. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 21(1), 1-11.
- Odugbesan, J. A., Aghazadeh, S., Al Qaralleh, R. E., & Sogek, O. S. (2023). Green talent management and employees' innovative work behavior: the roles of artificial intelligence and transformational leadership. *Journal of knowledge management*, 27(3), 696-716.
- Pereira, L., Patrício, V., Sempiterno, M., da Costa, R. L., Dias, A., & António, N. (2021). How to build pride in the workplace?. *Social Sciences*, 10(3), 104.
- Raza, A., Farrukh, M., Iqbal, M. K., Farhan, M., & Wu, Y. (2021). Corporate social responsibility and employees' voluntary pro-environmental behavior: The role of organizational pride and employee engagement. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 28(3), 1104-1116.
- Rohani, A., & KhaefElahi, A. A. (2014). Strategic thinking and management of employee resistance to changes. *International Journal of Management Perspective*, 1(4), 15-24.
- Saad, M. A. (2020). The relationship between strategic leadership and intellectual capital management: Evidence from the faculty members at the Northern Border University. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, 7(5), 27-38.
- Salamzadeh, Y., Bidaki, V. Z., & Vahidi, T. (2018). Strategic thinking and organizational success: Perceptions from management graduates and students. *Global Business & Management Research*, 10(4).
- Sattam, R. R., & Altrabelsi, K. (2023). The Effect of Strategic Thinking In Achieving Organizational Ambidexterity: An Exploratory Study In The Iraqi Ministry Of Water Resources. *Aegaeum*, 18(3), 57-68.
- Seyedpour, S. M., Safari, A., & Nasr Isfahani, A. (2020). Formulating an organizational pride model for the National Iranian Oil Company. *Cogent Business & Management*, 7(1), 1794679.
- Shahzadi, G., Qadeer, F., John, A., & Jia, F. (2020). CSR and identification: The contingencies of employees' personal traits and desire. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 16(8), 1239-1251.
- Sheridan, K. (2010). Employee pride. *Leadership Excellence*, 27(6), 15.

- Sleebos, E., Ellemers, N., & de Gilder, D. (2006). The carrot and the stick: Affective commitment and acceptance anxiety as motives for discretionary group efforts by respected and disrespected group members. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(2), 244-255.
- Soltanizadeh, A., Nikaeen, Z., Haji Anzehaie, Z., & Manouchehri, J. (2024). Application of innovation in the relationship between strategic thinking and organizational performance in sports federations. *Organizational Behavior Management in Sport Studies*, 11(1), 79-90.
- Soltanizadeh, A., Nikaeen, Z., Haji Anzehaie, Z., & Manouchehri, J. (2024). Application of innovation in the relationship between strategic thinking and organizational performance in sports federations. *Organizational Behavior Management in Sport Studies*, 11(1), 79-90.
- Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C., Austin, W. G., & Worchel, S. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *Organizational identity: A reader*, 56(65), 9780203505984-16.
- Thompson, S. K. (1987). Sample size for estimating multinomial proportions. *The American Statistician*, 41(1), 42-46.
- Todd, S., & Kent, A. (2009). A social identity perspective on the job attitudes of employees in sport. *Management Decision*, 47(1), 173-190.
- Tyler, T. R., & Blader, S. L. (2002). Autonomous vs. comparative status: Must we be better than others to feel good about ourselves?. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 89(1), 813-838.
- Vandavasi, R. K. K., McConville, D. C., Uen, J. F., & Yepuru, P. (2020). Knowledge sharing, shared leadership and innovative behaviour: a cross-level analysis. *International Journal of Manpower*, 41(8), 1221-1233.
- Vera, D., & Crossan, M. (2004). Strategic leadership and organizational learning. *Academy of management review*, 29(2), 222-240.
- Verbeke, W., Belschak, F., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2004). The adaptive consequences of pride in personal selling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 32, 386-402.
- Widyanti, R., Irhamni, G., & Silvia Ratna, B. (2020). Organizational justice and organizational pride to achieve job satisfaction and job performance. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 55(3).
- Yuan, F., & Woodman, R. W. (2010). Innovative behavior in the workplace: The role of performance and image outcome expectations. *Academy of management journal*, 53(2), 323-342.