

# Building a Knowledge Management Strategies Model in Private Higher Education: An Analytical Research in a Group of Private Colleges

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## Abstract

The research analyzed the construction of a model of knowledge management strategies in private higher education. A group of Iraqi private colleges (Tigris University College, Isra University College, and the University of Al-Ketab) were selected based on constructive philosophy to derive its hypotheses and deductive approach to test them. The research community was represented by (1110) records distributed (263, 590, 257) respectively for the three faculties, and a non-random (intentional) sample of (258) records were selected in the manner of Herbert Larken to represent the society correctly. Exploratory factor analysis was used to test the main research hypothesis. The research found that there are three strategies for knowledge management in the researched colleges and that these strategies have explained 50% of the total variation, which means that there are other strategies that have not been researched or may be due to other factors not included in the model. The strategy of survival on the current situation has gained importance among other strategies. This may be due to the nature of the Iraqi environment, and accordingly the research recommended the need to give colleges the freedom to choose their directions and business models and not resort to imitation and simulation of government universities, as well as attention to development and innovation through contracting with foreign universities and achieve twinning.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Management, Knowledge Management Strategies, Factor Analysis

## First: Literature Review

The reviewer of strategic literature finds that strategic management is based on three central questions (Where are we ?, Where do we want to go from our current location ?, How will we get there?) (Thompson et al, 2014: 4) It is important and necessary for the organization to know Where does it want to go and what does it want to achieve, puts the vision, the message, and establishes a system of

knowledge values for the organization in order to give it the ability and capability to manage (Ayoub and Alwan, 2007: 11). Knowledge and its management constitute a competitive advantage for business organizations, and a new strategic framework for managing knowledge-based competency in the organization is needed. The focus is on recruiting, developing and maintaining excellent managers who collect knowledge assets, attract smart and talented people, raise their intellectual capabilities and keep them for as long as possible. In addition, organizations must create policies that protect knowledge from being imitated by competitors (Ichijo & Nonaka, 2007: 121), (ibid) points out that current knowledge may be of no use and here organizations must realize this, and in order to win in the current competitive environment, organizations must be able to manage knowledge strategically. By owning knowledge (intellectual resources), the organization should understand how to exploit and develop its existing resources better than its competitors, even if some or all of these resources are not unique (Abou-Zeid, 2008: 357). One study revealed that knowledge assets represent strategic changes for organizations and that there is a clear relationship between those assets and the development of organizational strategy, and that individuals with experience and ability to learn and technical know-how, information technology and human skills in particular, affect the development of the strategy and thus the organizations need knowledge assets to implement Strategies, formulation and evaluation (Kamasa & Yucele, 2010: 71). The correlation between the concept of strategy and knowledge management is due to the planning and development of the strategy in general is a first-degree knowledge work, as it represents a long-term forward-looking comprehensive vision, that is, the knowledge dimension has a precedent of activity in it, and organizations that acquire a strategic vision about their future and search in demands Knowledge of this future will most likely be from successful organizations, and if this applies to traditional organizations, it applies to a greater degree to knowledge-based organizations, not only because the strategy itself and its basic projects or growth in it is knowledge work first, but also Because the work of these organizations in an unprecedented competitive environment makes them unable to survive and grow without using specific knowledge strategies that help them achieve excellence and progress in working methods and a greater improvement in the services provided to their beneficiaries (Al-Taie and Al-Adly, 2014: 29-30). Strategic Knowledge Management offers a unique approach to managing individuals and systems, responding to changes in a turbulent environment, and a way to improve organizational performance and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Sousa & Rocha, 2019: 223).

### **Second: Knowledge management strategies**

The term “knowledge strategy” refers to the employment of knowledge processes in the current or new knowledge field in order to achieve strategic goals (Krogh et al, 2001: 426) The relationship between knowledge management and organizational strategy is the first to establish an understanding of the advantages of knowledge as a strategic resource that supports The process of formulating and implementing a competitive strategy, hence the organization is developing and advancing according to a knowledge perspective that must support excellence based knowledge competition in the sector of activity (Aishush, 2016: 53).

After considering knowledge as a vital strategic resource in organizations, there have appeared many approaches and perspectives that address each aspect of knowledge management, especially in light of

organizations seeking to use that knowledge strategically and in building their future strategies and defining their goals based on knowledge that contributes to their distinction from organizations Others (Aishwash, 2016: 40). The integration of knowledge management in the organization with its goals and strategic goals is something that should be considered, the director of knowledge management cannot lead an initiative for his benefit, it must be appropriately aligned with the strategic goals and these goals must be the responsibility of the right individuals, but rather A cultural shift in thinking, which then addresses the ongoing process of competitiveness and survival in today's business environment (Russ, 2010: 113).

The importance of knowledge management strategies is reflected in the effective role that these strategies reflect in the competitive strategy of the organization and how to achieve a better response to the needs of the beneficiaries, and organizations, when adopting knowledge management strategies, seek to facilitate the use of knowledge assets, acquiring and sharing knowledge of their employees and customers and then documenting them to preserve them ( Al-Kubaisi and Al-Shaikhli, 2011: 46).

The successful implementation of knowledge management in organizations requires the use of appropriate knowledge management strategies to achieve organizational goals, choosing the appropriate strategy and this depends on many important factors in evaluating and succeeding knowledge management strategies including (supporting senior management, aligning with business strategy, technical and organizational infrastructure, culture Knowledge is friendly, communication, time, cost, goal of innovation and efficiency, types of knowledge (Naghizadeh, 2013: 59).

Zack (2002: 266) indicates that competition successfully needs knowledge either by aligning the strategy with what the organization knows, or developing the knowledge and capabilities needed to support the required strategy (Viron, 2014: 269).

Researchers have multiple views on knowledge management strategies starting from (Hasan, 1999: 109) in the personalization and coding strategy to supply and demand strategies (McElory 2000: 34) and knowledge management strategies according to SWOT analysis (Offensive, conservative, and hybrid) (Zack, 1999: 139), strategies (exploration, organizational entrepreneurship, collection, exploitation) (Yang et al, 2010: 232) and strategies (Kroug et al, 2001: 426) represented by leverage strategy, expansion strategy, verification strategy, and strategy Conversion (Ichijo & Nonaka, 2007: 123)) Strategies for Survival and Progress. And achieving an administrative consensus for the nature of knowledge management in innovation and creativity to show the researcher the ability to rely on three strategies that are explained in the following paragraphs

### **1. Survival strategies**

This type of strategy emphasizes the current strengths and reduces the current weaknesses in the company's resources and knowledge base; that is, ensuring the profitability of the current company, by taking advantage of the current business opportunities and identifying threats in the environment and hedging them, when developing survival strategies, management relies on a clear picture A fairly well-known business environment, designed to enable the company's current business environment (Ichijo & Nonaka, 2007: 125). Another indicates that the survival strategy assesses the gap between the

organization and the industry in terms of the knowledge that the organization must stay between competitors. To do this, the organization must determine the knowledge it has to compare with its peers in a particular industry to remove the gap between them. Thus, the organization must generate knowledge within itself by creating a supportive environment, which will strengthen employees through the organization to contribute their implicit knowledge with others to generate new knowledge, when the organization outperforms its competitors in terms of knowledge and ideally can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Rahimli, 2012: 40).

## **2. Progress strategies**

Since it is necessary for today's business to grow in order to survive and continue, the strategy chosen by the organization is very important, companies compete for the neck and neck at the present time, due to the increase in the number of companies and the constant change in customer attitudes. As a catalyst for growth and progress, competition pressure makes companies need to improve, maintain, or end their existing system for change and progress. Therefore, it is very important for companies to decide growth and choose the appropriate growth strategy (Durmaz & İlhan, 2015: 213).

(Ohio State University, 2018: 5) indicated that progress is essential to success, as progress as a movement requires the seamless integration of communications, relationships, and development will allow dealing with these functions as parts not connected separately and promoting awareness of stakeholders through participation. Leaders and employees must commit to building talent, infrastructure and culture, in a way that contributes to achieving the strategic goals of advancing as a strong team. The study (Omolade & Tony, 2014: 231) indicated that growth (progress) is an essential goal for startups, and management must determine the best way to combine core competencies within the company's functional departments to provide the company with the best opportunity to achieve and maintain competitive advantage in the chosen environment.

## **3. Innovation strategy**

In defining an innovation strategy, the definitions of innovation and strategy must be understood separately. The different roles of the innovation strategy must be described, so innovation is defined as a new idea that adds value, and the strategy plays several important roles in the management of the company. These range from charting a trend to describing how the company tries to obtain a competitive advantage in allocating resources (Katz et al, 2015: 72). Innovation is today the key to future growth (Katz et al, 2015: 68), and another noted that innovation is the engine for the emergence and protection of the advantage of competition, as value evolves and increases, and both means the use of knowledge for work (Hartlieb & Willfort, 2002: 332), and superior performance depends on The ability of companies to adopt innovation and protect and use (tangible) knowledge assets (Teece, 2000: 52-53), and lead and manage knowledge to innovation which in turn leads to achieving a competitive advantage

(Mcelroy, 2000) study concluded that the adoption of the strategy for creating and disseminating knowledge affects a lot on work levels, and that management's support for multiple ideas will have an impact on the overall creative performance in the organization. And that knowledge management and innovation is a two-way, two-way process, because knowledge is a source of innovation and when it is

realized it becomes a source of new knowledge. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of creating new knowledge. Successful organizations are those that constantly generate and create new knowledge.

### Third: Research methodology

The transformation of business from the materialistic view to the one that is more focused on knowledge, has caused a shift in strategic literature from the resource-based view to the one close to it known as the knowledge-based view, this transformation carries a lot in its implications and that its orientations and philosophy suggest a great deal of importance if it is realized Knowledge is at the forefront of resources, and if the transformation actually takes place, there is a limit in the researches that dealt with intellectual framing, if it is taken into consideration how to take advantage of the available knowledge, or how new knowledge can be acquired. The conjunction / even maturity of this ideology requires borrowing strategic literature to reveal the ways in which knowledge can be used as the most important resource at the present time, and that starting with the modalities is evident more c The aforementioned limitedness was satisfied only with imitation and simulation and did not resort to development and creativity in it, in addition to that, Arab literature was very shy in this field, and therefore the research problem is based on a major question: (How can you build a model for knowledge management strategies in the researched field? The research outline represents the image and the figure that illustrates the structure that contributes to the interpretation of how the model is built by including knowledge management strategies.



Figure (1) hypothetical research model

Source: prepared by the researchers

In line with the research problem and its hypothetical scheme, the basic thesis of research is (a model for knowledge management strategies can be built in private colleges). The research community was represented by teaching staff working in the Iraqi private colleges (Tigris University College, Isra

University College, University of the Book) whose number is (1110) teaching (590, 263 and 257), respectively, a sample of them was chosen according to Herbert Arkan's equation to reach (285), The research is based on the analytical method to reveal the perceptions and trends of the research community through its analysis based on deductive and subjective approach using Factor analysis.

#### Fourth: The results

Scientific research on building models needs the factor analysis system to be used, i.e. the identification of the factors that construct the model, and at the beginning it involves data review and measurement validity by checking validity and reliability. Before embarking on factor analysis tests, the sample size is a prerequisite for the use of factor analysis, (Hair et al, 2014: 100) indicated that the global analysis is accurate if the sample size is greater or equal to (100) singles, and on the other hand ( Gaza, 2012: 83) indicated that the data must exceed the following criteria in order for them to be acceptable:

- 1- Most correlation coefficients should exceed (30%) and a function, even if the statistical significance is not very reliable, and all correlations exceed this value.
- 2- The absolute value of the correlation matrix determinant must be greater than (0.0001). If the absolute value is greater than this value, this indicates the absence of very high linear correlations or the absence of linear dependence between the variables, and has reached in this research (0.0009).
- 3- The Bartlett test should be statistically significant, and this means when (alpha is less than 0.05), and the correlation matrix is not a unit matrix (free of relationships) but rather it has a minimum of relationships, and this condition has also been fulfilled as it has reached a value The test (5021.48) and its level of significance (0.000).
- 4- The (KMO) test (Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin) for all matrices must be higher than (0.50) according to the Kaiser motors, which measures the efficiency of designation, and this condition was also met as it reached (0.92)<sup>1</sup>. Table (1) shows the above tests related to (3, 4). As for (1, 2), it is too long. There is no way to mention it.

**Table (1) Kaiser-Meyer-Olken and Bartlett values for adequacy of the sample**

KMO and Bartlett's (KMO)		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. KMO		0.92
Bartlett's Test	Approx. Chi-Square	5021.48
	d.f.	595
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Researchers preparation based on SPSS: 23 program output.

<sup>1</sup> The researcher only mentioned three strategies (and he did not mention the fourth strategy known as deflation) because it is contrary to business logic, describing that all organizations are trying to move forward, not retreat.

It was also applied by Stephen Thompson equation and got the same number.

The value between 0.5 -0.7 is ok, the values between 0.7-0.8 are good, the values between 0.8 -0.9 are very good, and the values that exceed 0.9 are excellent or excellent, and they reinforce our confidence that the sample size is sufficient to perform the global analysis (GAZA, 2012: 90)

Based on these results, it gives us the opportunity to continue the analysis and move to the second stage, which is choosing the method of extracting the factors. The basic default method (the basic components) has been chosen. Moreover, the third step requires choosing the criterion or criterion for the number of extracted factors. The most common and used test is the Kaiser test and according to this test requires reviewing the latent root of the resulting factors and the acceptable factors are those whose latent root exceeds the correct one. Table (2) shows that the latent root of the factors was (12.670, 2.747 and 2.285), respectively.

Table (2) shows that the latent root of the factors was (To confirm also, method or test of the ratio of the explanation variance was used , and this method focuses on the percentage of cumulative variation that is explained by the factors that are extracted sequentially, and the importance of this method lies in that it emphasizes the practical or practical importance of the ability of the selected factors to absorb or represent information (interpretation of variance). In data (Tegza, 2012, 59-58). With regard to the current research data, it is noted that the explanation of the contrast ratio of the three extracted factors was (50.576%), and this ratio indicates the possibility of the three strategies from interpreting knowledge management strategies in private colleges.

Table (2) the distinctive roots and the explanatory variation of the factors

	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	Factor variance ratio	percentage of cumulative variation	Total	Factor variance ratio	percentage of cumulative variation
1	12.670	36.199	36.199	12.670	36.199	36.199
2	2.747	7.848	44.047	2.747	7.848	44.047
3	2.285	6.529	50.576	2.285	6.529	50.576
4	0.964	3.898	54.474			
5	0.960	3.328	57.802			
6	0.954	3.127	60.929			
7	0.948	2.859	63.788			
8	.946	2.702	66.490			
9	.895	2.557	69.047			
10	.781	2.232	71.279			
11	.728	2.079	73.358			
12	.683	1.951	75.308			
13	.639	1.826	77.134			
14	.592	1.692	78.826			
15	.556	1.590	80.416			
16	.541	1.546	81.961			
17	.535	1.530	83.491			
18	.518	1.480	84.971			

19	.477	1.362	86.333			
20	.445	1.271	87.604			
21	.419	1.196	88.799			
22	.415	1.185	89.984			
23	.400	1.142	91.126			
24	.377	1.078	92.204			
25	.359	1.026	93.230			
26	.324	.925	94.155			
27	.309	.882	95.037			
28	.280	.801	95.838			
29	.261	.744	96.582			
30	.245	.700	97.282			
31	.235	.672	97.954			
32	.208	.596	98.550			
33	.186	.530	99.080			
34	.167	.478	99.558			
35	.155	.442	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Source: Researchers preparation based on SPSS: 23 program output

It appears from the table that the first strategy (the first factor) has been interpreted (36.199) of the total variance, which reflects its important role or the relative importance in interpreting the knowledge management strategies in the researched colleges, while the second strategy (the second factor) was interpreted (7.848) to become a cumulative variance (44.047) As for the third strategy (the third factor), it was interpreted (6.529) to become a cumulative variance (50,576). It represents the importance of the three strategies in interpreting the vision of the three colleges in managing their knowledge, experiences, and skills. The faculty administration employed what it possesses in managing its knowledge, to achieve compatibility between the framework Theoretical and practical in liters Discriminate on only three strategies, which observed the researchers from the nature of the work of civil colleges and universities as a whole and not only the subject of current research colleges.

Table (3)

variable name	Paragraphs	Extracting variables		
		First strategy	Second strategy	Third strategy
First variable Progress strategies	X <sub>1</sub>	.758		
	X <sub>2</sub>	.706		
	X <sub>3</sub>	.701		
	X <sub>4</sub>	.684		
	X <sub>5</sub>	.666		

variable name	Paragraphs	Extracting variables		
		First strategy	Second strategy	Third strategy
	X <sub>6</sub>	.648		
	X <sub>7</sub>	.648		
	X <sub>8</sub>	.631		
	X <sub>9</sub>	.626		
	X <sub>10</sub>	.621		
	X <sub>11</sub>	.602		
	X <sub>12</sub>	.597		
	X <sub>13</sub>	.588		
	X <sub>14</sub>	.504		
	X <sub>15</sub>	.494		
	X <sub>16</sub>	.488		
Second variable: Survival Strategy	X <sub>17</sub>		.744	
	X <sub>18</sub>		.727	
	X <sub>19</sub>		.713	
	X <sub>20</sub>		.706	
	X <sub>21</sub>		.703	
	X <sub>22</sub>		.699	
	X <sub>23</sub>		.686	
	X <sub>24</sub>		.671	
	X <sub>25</sub>		.669	
	X <sub>26</sub>		.659	
	X <sub>27</sub>		.640	
X <sub>28</sub>		.600		
X <sub>29</sub>		.293		
Third variable Innovation strategy	X <sub>30</sub>			.736
	X <sub>31</sub>			.736
	X <sub>32</sub>			.726
	X <sub>33</sub>			.681
	X <sub>34</sub>			.644
	X <sub>35</sub>			.627

Source: Researchers preparation based on SPSS: 23 program output

Based on the above table, (3)the two researchers (Williams et al., 2010: 9) indicated that the number of variables loaded on one factor must be no less than two or three variables in order for the factor to be meaningful. Therefore, the first strategy (maintaining the current situation) was the basis in the faculties researched in terms of knowledge management because it explained the largest percentage in terms of the total variation of the strategy of advancing second and followed by the innovation strategy.

And the process of interpretation and explanation of these results necessitates the necessity of knowing the educational reality in Iraq before embarking on the interpretation, as the observer for this almost realizes that the private education environment does not differ a lot from government education, all linked to the orientations of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and therefore the monitoring of developments in The Iraqi environment makes the tracker a second time judge the current trends, wanting to maintain what it is with very shy attempts if the description is correct to progress if we say innovation, and it seems so clear through modest encouragement to enter the global rankings and publish in a high level publishing rank(Scopus) and (Calrivat) as well as the s Curriculum System to be introduced to the Iraqi environment.

### **Fifth : Conclusions**

The conclusions represent the final outcome of the research. The research reached a number of conclusions. As follows:

1. It was found that the research colleges give attention to the knowledge they possess, depending on preserving their knowledge and experiences through bringing in and acquiring retired professors and they represent an important intellectual capital and therefore they have realized the importance of a strategy to stay on the current situation.
2. It appears that these colleges did not rely on the appointment of new graduates or from small scientific titles. This was reflected in the attitudes of retired professors who do not favor scientific research much, unlike the small scientific titles that are linked to opportunities for promotion and compensation that they can receive as a result. They use a strategy of progress or innovation in their work and knowledge.
3. The ministerial directions of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research overshadowed the orientations of these colleges, especially after the recent interventions of the ministry and the request to achieve twinning with public universities, which made these colleges limited behavior and free dealing in developing their knowledge strategies, while not forgetting that their first and last goal is profitability .
4. The private colleges, due to the limited societal understanding, have not been able to achieve a philosophy rooted in the social responsibility in the service of society through the achievement of profits, which made the strategy to remain in the current situation top the throne among the strategies.

**As for the recommendations** I have built on the basis of the conclusions as follows:

1. The necessity of paying attention to appointing new graduate students and giving them opportunities to participate in the progress and development of these colleges because it is a basic requirement of the educational process.
2. Providing material and moral support to invent new knowledge strategies that capture the minds of investors in private colleges, and give a perception that community service will generate financial returns much more than if the goal was purely profitable.

3. Trying to activate the consulting offices in private colleges and benefit from the experiences and experiences of retired professors from government colleges in stimulating the movement of counseling and training for all other state institutions.

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