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# Planning and Implementation of Change Using Strategic Leadership Skills

-Strategic Leadership and Change-

Police Media Center

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The dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of (Strategic Leadership and Change) by The Manchester Metropolitan University.

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## Abstract

Strategic change is essential to develop the public sector, and to achieve the government requirement to survive in the ever-developing competitive economic environment. Moreover, strategic change will not be successful without investment in strategic leadership skills, to support leaders in applying the process of strategic change in public organisations. From this perspective, the researcher has chosen the planning and implementation of change using strategic leadership skills as the subject of his dissertation, to answer the problem statement: How strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change.

Strategic change is an important organisational change that can alter the mission of a public organisation, its framework, aims and priorities. Strategic leadership skills mean the ability to identify capable individuals and to analyse aspects of teamwork and the working environment; to reflect on previous practice and explore and develop ways to improve individual strategic plans for achieving personal goals, career aims and a programme of Personal Professional Development (PPD). The researcher chose his own organisation as an example of a public organisation in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The researcher also analysed his organisation according to considerations of the generation gap, level of knowledge and leaders' characteristics in terms of their strategic leadership skills, as potential barriers to adopting the strategic change. The researcher used surveys and interviews to collect the primary data and compare it with the secondary data to identify and solve problems. The results from the discussion were surprising, as the respondents from a public organisation in the Kingdom of Bahrain all agreed that the generation gap, the level of leaders' knowledge and their personal characteristics are significant barriers to strategic change. In more detail, the respondents believed that the barriers to adopting strategic change are related to the old leaders' mentality, weak teamwork, over-confidence and misunderstanding of the process of strategic change.

Furthermore, the researcher was recommended to do further investigation into the main issues that appear to be barriers to adopting the process of strategic change, by carrying out more interviews and finding more participants in order to understand the nature of the problems that lead the organisation to fail in applying the strategic change. He also agreed that strategic leadership skills vary according to the current situation in the public

organisation, leading him to believe that personal characteristics will change according to the organisation's requirements. An absence of knowledge about what strategic change is, and a general unwillingness to discuss change, became apparent during the data collection phase of this research, highlighting the need for greater knowledge building and awareness amongst public employees and participants of strategic change. The researcher also believed that the research need to explore all the reasons for problems in implementing strategic change rather than using generation gap as a main issue.

Finally, research Given the confusion between senior and middle management who understand and wish to adopt change, and employees who misunderstand the purpose of change, it is important to explain the following; first, the motives and barriers to planning and implementing change (addressed in goal 1); second, weaknesses in strategic leadership skills (goal 2); and third, exploring the management and staff's experience and ideas (goal 3). The final step of this research is to set out a series of useful and relevant recommendations based on the study's results. Interviewees, academics and the author of this research have a shared understanding of the need for public organisations to constantly adapt in order to compete and find relevance in an ever-globalising economy and ever-changing societies, yet this research brings attention to the need for strategic change that is both supported and understood by all those involved as well as the need for the continued support of the Government of Bahrain in promoting education on strategic change and strategic change leadership.

إن التغيير الاستراتيجي ضروري لتنمية القطاع العام، وتحقيق متطلبات الحكومة للبقاء في بيئه اقتصادية تنافسية دائمة التطور. علاوة على ذلك، فإن التغيير الاستراتيجي لن ينجح دون الاستثمار في مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية، لدعم القادة في تطبيق عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي في المؤسسات العامة، من هذا المنظور اختار الباحث استخدام مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية في تخطيط وتنفيذ عملية التغيير كموضوع أطروحته وتم تحديد سؤال البحث وهو:

**سؤال البحث الرئيسي:** كيف تساعد مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية المسؤولين في القطاع العام على اعتماد التغيير الاستراتيجي؟

التغيير الاستراتيجي هو تغيير تنظيمي هام يمكن أن يغير مهمة المؤسسة العامة، وإطارها وأهدافها وأولوياتها. أما مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية فتعني المهارات القيادية التي تساعد على تحديد المهارات التي يتميز بها القادة من خلال تحليل جوانب العمل الجماعي وبيئة العمل على سبيل المثال؛ للتفكير في التجارب السابقة واستكشاف وتطوير طرق لتحسين الخطط الإستراتيجية الفردية لتحقيق الأهداف الشخصية والأهداف المهنية وبرنامج التطوير المهني الشخصي. اختار الباحث مؤسسته كمثال على مؤسسة عامة من مملكة البحرين .

حل الباحث أيضًا مؤسسته وفقًا لاعتبارات الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) ومستوى المعرفة وخصائص القادة من حيث مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية، كحواجز محتملة تحول دون اعتماد التغيير الاستراتيجي. استخدم الباحث أسلوب الاستبيان والمقابلات لجمع البيانات الأولية ومقارنتها بالمعلومات الثانوية المرتبطة بنظريات الباحثين الآخرين لتحديد المشاكل وحلها. كانت نتائج المناقشة مفاجئة، حيث اتفق المستجيبون من المؤسسة العامة (موقع الدراسة) على أن الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفين، ومستوى معرفة القادة وتعليمهم وخصائصهم الشخصية هي عوائق كبيرة أمام التغيير الاستراتيجي ولكن ليست رئيسية. حيث اعتقد المستجيبون أن العوائق التي تحول دون اعتماد التغيير الاستراتيجي ترتبط بعقلية القادة القدامي، وضعف العمل الجماعي، والإفراط في الثقة وسوء الفهم في عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي وعدم تطبيقها بالصورة الصحيحة.

وعلاوة على ذلك، أوصى الباحث بإجراء مزيد من التحقيق في القضايا الرئيسية التي تعيق تطبيق واعتماد عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي، وذلك من خلال إجراء المزيد من المقابلات وإيجاد المزيد من المشاركين من أجل فهم طبيعة المشاكل التي تقود المنظمة إلى الفشل في تطبيق التغيير الاستراتيجي. كما اثبتت أن مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية تختلف حسب الوضع الحالي للقادة في المؤسسة العامة، مما يجعله يعتقد أن الخصائص الشخصية ستتغير وفقاً لمتطلبات المؤسسة. كما أصبح غياب المعرفة حول التغيير الاستراتيجي، وعدم الرغبة العامة في مناقشة التغيير، واضحاً خلال مرحلة جمع البيانات من هذا البحث، مما يبرز الحاجة إلى زيادة بناء المعرفة والوعي بين الموظفين العاملين والمشاركين في التغيير الاستراتيجي. كما اوصى الباحث أن البحث بحاجة إلى استكشاف جميع أسباب المشاكل في تنفيذ التغيير الاستراتيجي بدلاً من استخدام الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفين كسبب رئيسي .

أخيراً، نظراً للارتباك بين الإدارة العليا والمتوسطة التي تفهم وترغب في اعتماد التغيير، والموظفين الذين يسيئون فهم الغرض من التغيير، من المهم توضيح ما يلي؛ أولاً، الدوافع والحواجز التي تحول دون تخطيط وتنفيذ التغيير؛ ثانياً، نقاط الضعف في مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية؛ ثالثاً، شرح مقترن المدراء وتوضيح افكار الموظفين لتطبيق التغيير الاستراتيجي. كما تتمثل الخطوة الأخيرة من هذا البحث في إعداد سلسلة من التوصيات المفيدة وذات الصلة استناداً إلى نتائج الدراسة.

كما انه لدى الأشخاص الذين أجريت معهم مقابلات والأكاديميين ومؤلف هذا البحث فهم مشترك للحاجة إلى أن تتكيف المؤسسات العامة باستمرار من أجل التنافس وإيجاد الصلة في اقتصاد دائم العولمة ومجتمعات دائمة التغيير، إلا أن هذا البحث يجذب الانتباه إلى الحاجة إلى التغيير الاستراتيجي الذي يتم دعمه وفهمه من قبل جميع المعنيين بالإضافة إلى الحاجة إلى الدعم المستمر من حكومة مملكة البحرين في تعزيز التعليم حول التغيير الاستراتيجي وقيادة التغيير الاستراتيجي.

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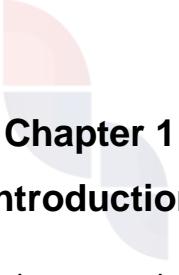
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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

This chapter explains the purpose of the research, identifying the business context and any existing strategic issues, and demonstrating the relevance of the study in this context. The aims and objectives of the investigation are outlined, and specific research questions identified.

#### 1.0. Title

The title of the research is **The Planning and Implementation of Change Using Strategic Leadership Skills.**

#### 1.1. Introduction

Strategic change is essential for any organisation to follow local and global developments, and to adopt any organisational changes (Gratton, 2017; Suddaby and Foster, 2017). This means that change is a method of utilising basic tools and structures to control any attempt at organisational change; its aim is to maximise the benefits to the institution and to minimise the effects of change to work by avoiding deviations from the course (Gratton, 2017; Pollack and Pollack, 2015). Companies therefore need strategic leaders to plan and implement the process of change if it is to be successful, and strategic leaders can positively contribute to the relationship between change and participants in the change (Ionescu and Bolcaş, 2015; Longenecker and Insch, 2018; Suddaby and Foster, 2017).

The process of change must go through many steps to achieve its aims in the organisation, which means that it relies upon multiple factors and a healthy environment in which to adopt the change (Brown and May, 2012; Ionescu and Bolcaş, 2015). For example, the process of change needs competent managers with sufficient strategic leadership skills and creative staff to participate in the process of change, as well as company-wide motivation to achieve its goals (Della, C. 2017; Ionescu and Bolcaş, 2015; Kilkelly, 2014; Longenecker and Insch, 2018). It is also necessary to understand

the meaning of change, the relevant tools, models and techniques for successful change to gain employee support in its application (Brown and May, 2012; Della, 2017).

The nature of strategic change could be divided into two aspects: internal and external. Both elements focus on developing the organisation, and on meeting international requirements in terms of business environment improvement (Arif et al., 2017; Della, 2017). This means that the main purpose of the change is to follow the global developments to improve the work and functions of an organisation and subsequently manage the lasting benefits for the firm (Cameron and Green, 2015; Ionescu and Bolcaş, 2015). However, the success or failure of change depends on the managerial style of the implementation, as well as leaders' skills, characteristics and behaviours, particularly in regard to their ability to motivate staff to adapt to on-going organisational change (Kilkelly, 2014; Schmid, 2017).

However, planning and effecting change in the public sector is different from that in the private sector because each has a different mentality and way of thinking about adopting the process of change, which means that the importance of success varies (Cameron and Green, 2015; Kilkelly, 2014). For instance, private organisations implementing change strategies can achieve financial benefits and see an increase in revenues, while public institutions and individuals in the civil service or who are employed by public entities do not directly profit from the process of change; (Arif et al., 2017; Schmid, 2017); the latter receive their salary from the government, and it is often fixed and has little or no economic incentives (Schmid, 2017). This is an example of differences in the attitudes to change between private and public organisations, with emphasis on how change is valued by management within each sector (Cameron and Green, 2015; Schmid, 2017).

Furthermore, for successful change, leaders need to win the support and acceptance of staff by convincing them of the feasibility of appropriate amendments to the status quo (Arif et al., 2017; Schmid, 2017). One method is to prepare training programmes to develop their employees' skills in order to adapt to the process of change (Gram and Todericiu, 2016; Gratton, 2017). Additionally, change can occur in different situations within any given organisation, and it can occur across an entire organisation or be concentrated in a specific part; and it can affect the leaders of the firm, the staff or both (Gram and Todericiu, 2016). Change can be introduced step-by-step, which the participants will more readily accept, or as a sudden development which can create a

state of resistance from those who consider themselves negatively affected by plans (Gram and Todericiu, 2016; Pollack and Pollack, 2015). It is also important to note that the impact of change on leaders and employees can be indirect or direct, affecting the degree to which it is received or anticipated (Pollack and Pollack, 2015).

Finally, there is some confusion about the benefits of change between public and private sectors (Braduțanu, 2014; Rainey, 2014). The private sector generally focuses on changing the organisation to improve its income within a competitive environment; while the public sector may not necessarily prefer change because members are familiar with the routine and have received their support or mandate from the government to perform a specific set of duties in a particular way (Rainey, 2014; Spaaij et al., 2018). However, nowadays, most governments are looking to change because they face strong competition from private organisations in providing services to the public, particularly where industries and services have been privatised or sub-contracted (Braduțanu, 2014; Spaaij et al., 2018). Although many Western countries may be advanced in planning and implementing change, the majority of Middle Eastern countries have found resistance to adopting change, especially in public organisations (Braduțanu, 2014; Rainey, 2014).

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

This research will focus on the planning and implementing of change as a significant requirement for the governments of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, and it will use the public organisations of the Government of Bahrain as an example of how best to adopt such change (Alhazemi et al., 2013; Stepping, 2018). Furthermore, competition between public and private organisations shows that the leaders need to find new ways of adapting to change by solving the lack of knowledge among leaders of the process of change, and subsequently among the participants (Stepping, 2018). Managers of public organisations in Bahrain often face resistance to change from those involved, not necessarily because they refuse to accept the change but because of a misunderstanding of the change's purpose; most leaders do not appear to be flexible when adopting change, which has led to many examples of failure in adapting to the change (Alhazemi et al., 2013; Stepping, 2018).

Critical to this study is finding the type of change that can be adopted and encouraged in the ambition of the Bahraini Government to develop strategic leadership skills (Bunea et al., 2016; Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016; Stepping, 2018). It is also important to understand

the type of work relationship between the leader and the followers in the process of change in order to find the most important areas for improving and working towards a more effective way of facilitating and embracing change. Change should impact positively on the competitiveness, growth, efficiency and survival of public organisations, and it is necessary to broaden the mindset of employees to support planning and implementing future change (Bunea et al., 2016; Stepping, 2018).

It appears that employees' resistance to change in the public sector can only be addressed through a creative plan for the future (Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016; Stepping, 2018). Resistance is strengthened by the apparent disorganisation of changed environments, and the absence of flexible organisational structures, acceptance of advanced technology and a system of rewarding employees (Bunea et al., 2016; Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016). In the adoption of strategic change, employees' participation is essential, and its absence contributes to failure, now and in the future (Bunea et al., 2016; Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016). Organisational change is affected by all these aspects and a statistically significant relationship between them should be investigated to recognise these factors in public organisations, in order to effectively and resourcefully approach them (Bunea et al., 2016).

The importance of research on the value of planning and implementing change to support public organisations is even more interesting in the light of other researchers' findings on effective systems of implementing and adapting change (Bunea et al., 2016; Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016; Stepping, 2018). Illes et al. (2012) believe that GCC organisations are affected negatively by the prevailing culture and the lack of interest in government projects to sustain public organisations' efforts and campaigns, which can constrain change in a number of ways. Participants in change in the region may also resist it because they fear failure, the results, losing their job, lack of acknowledgement, lack of coordination, attention to material elements and neglect of behavioural factors (Bunea et al., 2016; Rizescu and Tileaga, 2016).

To gain a deeper understanding of change issues across public organisations in Bahrain, this study will focus on finding a system of planning and implementing change which can reduce resistance by identifying the reasons for refusing the process of change from associated members in terms of leaders personalities in strategic leadership skills. Thus, this is an attempt to learn from the successes and failures of previous change in order to provide guidelines for more efficient, inclusive and effective

processes of change in government-led programmes and departments. It will also demonstrate the importance of the leaders' knowledge, and the impact strategic leadership skills can have on their ability to maintain the participation of their members and other stakeholders for successful change.

According to Elias (2009) and Ryan and Deci (2008), it is important to understand the various types and levels of skill of leaders, to develop managers' leadership skills in implementing change. This means understanding the culture of an organisation, to identify ways to manage the process of change through improving their leaders skills' in line with the global economic environment (Elias, 2009; Rana and Goel, 2014). According to Brown et al. (2015), Burke et al. (2017) and Elias (2009), strategic leadership skills can be valuable in developing managers' performance, supporting them in adapting to government requirements.

Inherently, understanding leadership skills is essential in helping to meet government requirements (Burke et al., 2017; Rana and Goel, 2014). For example, leaders should motivate participants to adapt to the process of change as important skills (Burke et al., 2017). However, GCC leaders often focus on adopting change without first developing the required skills (Azoury, 2017; Rana and Goel, 2014). The success of an organisation depends on the managers' knowledge and strategic planning skills, and their ability to improve the organisation by applying positive change in a way that reflects the nature of the organisation's priorities, departments' requirements and the workforce's skillset (Azoury, 2017; Burke et al., 2017).

Finally, it is difficult to illustrate why employees resist implementing strategic change without understanding the nature of the relationship between staff and managers, and potential barriers at personal, institutional or societal levels (Azoury, 2017; Burke et al., 2017; Rana and Goel, 2014). Given the confusion between senior and middle management who understand and wish to adopt change, and employees who misunderstand the purpose of change, it is important to explain the following: first, the motives and barriers to planning and implementing change (addressed in goal 1); second, weakness in strategic leadership skills (goal 2); and third, exploring the management and staff's experience and ideas (goal 3). The final step of this research is to make recommendations based on the study's results.



### 1.3. Research Aims

The overall aim of the research is to demonstrate the level of understanding of the importance of change across public organisations, and to find useful systems for adopting relevant change in one of the organisations in the Government of Bahrain, within the context of planning and implementing change using strategic leadership skills.

The research will benefit Something like “the public sector, and its ability to work with effectiveness, by contributing to the development of the necessary strategic leadership skills in order to adopt the process of change”. The results, from analysis of secondary and primary data, can be used to support the research focus of growing the public sector and developing planning processes to implement the process of change by finding modern ways of how the strategic leadership skills can help in adopting the process of strategic change. They also will find way to improve the strategic leadership skills of managers and employees in terms of their capacity to adopt the strategic change.

Even though the results from the study cannot be generalised, the literature review findings and responses from the participants' questionnaires can help to improve public organisations by understanding the weaker aspects of adopting the process of change; this can lead them to look at their programmes for change, and their ways of encouraging members and stakeholders to adapt to the change. The findings can also support the Bahraini public sector's competitiveness with other countries in the GCC by improving organisational performance, and by developing the work of the government in maintaining the pace of global developments.

Furthermore, this study will try to find new ways of overcoming barriers that can obstruct the process of strategic change, and it can change the mindset of staff in a positive way when they adopt the change. Alhazemi et al. (2013) said that the public sector needs to change in order to follow world developments, and that the strategic change will not be fully adopted until the members and leaders participate together to plan and implement

it, as well as finding ways for all members involved in the process to play an active and positive role in the entire process

Finally, this research does not aim to create a new plan for strategic change, but instead seeks an in-depth understanding of the problems faced when adopting strategic change and improving the strengths that can support it. Hence, the research will use the theories of other researchers identified from the literature review to compare it with the primary data.

#### **1.4. Research Question**

In view of the above problem statement, the research question ratified for this research is: **‘How would strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change?’**

#### **1.5. Research Objectives**

The specific objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify the acceptance of applying strategic change in the public sector, and the barriers to successfully adopting the process of change according to the key findings from existing research on strategic leadership, as analysed in the literature review.
2. Make a contribution in the knowledge to evaluate the impact of the relationship and mental gap between the older and younger generations as a barrier to adopt the strategic change.
3. Explore staff stakeholder views and leaders' practices related to adopting change, following government requirements in order to develop the organisation.
4. Make a contribution to existing knowledge of strategic change and strategic leadership skills by using primary data and analysis that is scarce, particularly within the context of the Government of Bahrain and wider GCC context.
5. Formulate recommendations to adapt to change and improve the participants' strategic leadership skills, which can serve as an example for other teams, departments and ministries within Bahrain and across the GCC.

#### **1.6. Contribution to Knowledge and Strategic Implications**

This research will identify multiple strategic ways to control change in the public organisations of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. It will demonstrate strategic leadership skills and show how they can help in adapting to this change. In addition, it will show the generation gap between the leaders and participants of change, which may result in misunderstanding the change. Furthermore, it will explain the impact of adopting strategic change in public organisations. Finally, it will make recommendations to support the process of strategic change.

### **1.7. Potential Limitations of the Research**

It is natural that each research project has its own limitations (Saunders et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2009). With this in mind, the researcher will not see limitations as a weakness but will explain them as a basis for the generalisability of the study (Saunders et al., 2009). All the primary data will be collected in Arabic, the official language of the Kingdom and the first language of the researcher. The researcher will also create the questionnaires in both Arabic and English to keep the survey clear for participants. Another limitation of the research could be that the study and analysis will not cover the whole government system but only one of the organisations.

The research will be based first on the research objective, identifying the experience of other researchers in how they adopt the process of change, and the essential strategic leadership skills required for success (Objectives 1, 2); this secondary data will be from journals (e.g. *Public Personnel Management* and *London Business School Review*); recent and similar results from other research projects, as well as a body of relevant books (e.g. Rainey, 2014). The primary empirical data will be collected through questionnaires (Objective 3) and interviews with the leaders of change (Biggam, 2015).

Finally, the combination of the literature review and empirical research will allow the theoretical understanding and practical experience of participants of change to be compared (Biggam, 2015; Biggam, 2018). This will be conducted in order to understand the level of knowledge of project members and employees about existing change practices and processes, and to find weaknesses in order to remove them. The researcher also needs to do more interviews, rather than repeat the questionnaire, because it is important in understanding the nature of the issues that encourage staff to resist applying strategic change.

## 1.8. Outline of the Dissertation

The general purpose of this research was to answer the question of How would strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change in subject of planning and implementing of strategic change using strategic leadership skills. In Chapter 2, the researcher illustrated the strategic leadership and strategic leadership skills as a literature review. While, in Chapter 3, the researcher explained the context of change, strategic change, planning and implementing of strategic change as a second part of the literature review. In Chapter 4, the researcher presents the research methodology, research philosophy, data collection choices and reason for the chosen methodology, which explains and justifies the methodological choices that have been adopted for the research.

Furthermore, in Chapter 5, the researcher applies the chosen methods and techniques to analyse the primary data and subsequently summarises the findings. In Chapter 6, the researcher focused on drawing together the findings from primary analysis and bringing together the results with the authors information in the literature review, which illustrates the researcher's capacity for reflective and logical argument to reach objective study and answer research question. In Chapter 7, the researcher summarised the results with the research aims and objectives of the study, and ending with recommendations from the research discussion. Finally, the chapter below provided a critical review of the literature review related to strategic leadership and strategic leadership skills according to authors information as a secondary data.



## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### Strategic Leadership

Police Media Center

Policy and Journalistic Studies

##### 2.0. Introduction

In the chapter above, the researcher introduced the subject, aims, objectives, research problem and research question of the dissertation. In this chapter, the researcher provides a critical review of the literature relating to strategic leadership skills. It will identify and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of existing theories related to strategic leadership, and demonstrate the benefits of this part of the research to the existing body of knowledge of strategic leadership skills.

Strategic leadership is one of the most important features of any successful adoption of strategic change within organisations (Adair, 2016; Kearns et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015). Moreover, strategic leadership skills are essential in helping members who are responsible for applying the process of change to improve their performance, and to reach the organisation's overall aims of the change (Adair, 2016; Helfat and Peteraf, 2015). This means that the study needs to identify the type of useful strategic leadership skills that could be adopted to support the strategic change; it can help to find weaknesses in order to develop leaders' skills and improve their strategic leadership (Helfat and Peteraf, 2015; Rawashdi et al., 2014; Slavik et al., 2015).

Kalargyrou et al. (2012) believe that strategic leadership involves a certain set of leadership characteristics that can, initially, be developed through encouraging individuals identified as leaders to join training programmes before they enter such leadership roles. Slavik et al. (2015) claim that the most important skills for leaders are basic business skills, followed by cognitive, interpersonal and strategic skills and personal values. Specifically, many authors emphasise that clearer and effective communication is one of the essential skills (Kalargyrou et al., 2012; Slavik et al., 2015). Finally, strategic leadership skills can be adopted in different ways according to the aims of the organisation (Helfat and Peteraf, 2015; Rawashdi et al., 2014).

## 2.1. Strategic Leadership

Public organisations face many issues related to their actions in a rapidly changing world (Banzato and Julio, 2016; Serfontein and Hough 2011). Therefore, future leaders are often under severe pressure to conceptualise and achieve changes with immediate benefits, with fewer resources available and an ever-shrinking capacity to manage the workload required to achieve the growing requirements of the public sector (Kearns et al., 2015; Serfontein and Hough 2011). In a world of changing priorities and conditions, leaders and staff need to focus on strategic leadership in order to improve their performance and responsibilities, rather than on addressing the current situation by building their abilities to solve recent problems (Collins, 2005; Serfontein and Hough 2011). Public organisations need effective strategic leadership to achieve high-quality or even satisfactory performance when dealing with the multifaceted challenge of the global economy (Collins, 2005; Kearns et al., 2015; Serfontein and Hough 2011).

There is no universally agreed definition of the term strategic leadership, because of its complexity, overlapping variables and surrounding factors, which affect the variety and multiplicity of functions (Banzato and Julio, 2016; Kearns et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015). Norzailan et al. (2016) said that strategic leadership is a framework that can help leaders manage the action in their organisation; it develops members' performance to reach the requirements of the business environment. Levasseur (2009) suggested that strategic leadership means that teamwork leaders can impact positively on staff actions to reach organisational aims, and to analyse the current situation to develop a vision for the future. Banzato and Julio (2016) believed that strategic leadership is part of an ongoing innovation for dealing with change in order to survive, and to achieve the permanent success of any given organisations.

Hitt et al. (2012) suggested that strategic leadership is no more than guessing, preparing and dealing with the future aims of a public organisation. It involves the ability to identify aims – as well as the ability to prepare sufficient energy in order to reach these aims in the future – by using the available resources (Banzato and Julio, 2016; Hitt et al., 2012). Hitt et al. (2012) believed that strategic leadership also depends on the courage to think bravely about what leaders should be completing for the public organisation within a specific time period, and to find new ways of applying this strategy to reach individual aims by using creativity, intuition and planning. Boal and Hooijberg (2000) argued that strategic leadership concerns the capacity to learn, the ability to change, and managerial

wisdom; and gathering new meaning from the need to work well in emergency. New strategic leadership is the strategy based on knowledge and creativity by encouraging staff to participate in making decisions (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000; Hitt et al., 2012).

The most important element in the ongoing development of a common definition for strategic leadership is to improve the concept of management, for the organisation's success in an environment linked to global variables (Adair, 2016; Banzato and Julio, 2016; Boal and Hooijberg, 2000). Strategic leadership as a system can be adopted from high-level administration in any organisation, where the framework of the system focuses on removing organisational weakness in order to survive (Kearns et al., 2015; Norzailan et al., 2016; Slavik et al., 2015). For instance, strategic leadership can establish the organisational structure, attract investors and find other sources of revenue (Kearns et al., 2015; Norzailan et al., 2016). This enables it to achieve its aims by creating the strategic vision of the company, and to share this strategy with employees in order to more effectively achieve the purpose of the strategic leadership (Boorman, 2009; Slavik et al., 2015).

Strategic leadership in public organisations differs from that in other types of firms, as it focuses on transforming the public sector by using specific types of strategic management and leadership (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000; Norzailan et al., 2016; Nutt and Backoff, 1993). This is because public organisations have unique needs and often require a specific type of suggestion to improve their work, and to reach the government's requirements in a way that redirects and improves the energies and performance of the leaders in the future (Mayfield et al., 2015; Nutt and Backoff, 1993). Strategic leadership can also support public organisations in identifying the best strategy for their type of organisation, which could require partial or radical change in their strategic leadership skills (Nutt and Backoff, 1993; Slavik et al., 2015). Hence, leadership strategy is an important legacy for developing the leaders' performance by creating competitiveness in the public sector (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000; Nutt and Backoff, 1993; Slavik et al., 2015).

Strategic leadership requires short-term or long-term planning, according to the intended purpose of the strategies, as well as the authorised proposals and timescale of the leadership's mandate (Boorman, 2009; Kearns et al., 2015). Many authors believe that strategic leadership in the short term is related to identifying the most suitable way of implementing strategic and visionary leadership, to achieve the public organisation's

aims within a relatively short timescale and to guarantee its survival in the long term (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000; Mayfield et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015). Therefore, strategic leadership in the short term needs a clear strategic plan to meet the organisation's requirements (Nutt and Backoff, 1993; Slavik et al., 2015). Thus, the purpose of strategic leadership in the short term is to illustrate the ability to gather human resources in an effective way to ensure the organisation's survival and meet its targets (Boorman, 2009; Mayfield et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015).

Other authors have suggested that strategic leadership is a long-term organisational work system, which focuses on achieving stakeholders' expectations in a changing environment by creating new development strategies (Boorman, 2009; Kearns et al., 2015). Strategic leadership begins with people and strategic leaders working and planning collectively to map out and facilitate the requirements for strategic management (Levasseur, 2009; Mayfield et al., 2015). Furthermore, strategic leaders should have a clear vision to guide actions on how best to reach the goals and organisational objectives (Boorman, 2009; Mayfield et al., 2015). This means that they need to be able to find the delicate balance between the strength of the institutional system and the strength of human resources (Mayfield et al., 2015; Norzailan et al., 2016). This will give them more space to focus on and deal with influential issues in the organisation in support of change (Mayfield et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015).

Finally, it is clear that strategic leadership in public organisations can be adopted on both the long-term and short-term timescales (Norzailan et al., 2016; Slavik et al., 2015). Strategic leadership skills include strong personalities focused on the human side of leadership, rather than those who demonstrate greater ability at catering to institutional and analytic aspects of their job (Kearns et al., 2015; Mayfield et al., 2015; Norzailan et al., 2016). However, public organisations tend to follow a traditional model which focuses primarily on the basic level of the framework system (Boorman, 2009; Norzailan et al., 2016; Slavik et al., 2015). Our growing understanding of strategic leadership as a continuous process can help us learn what to expect when talking about strategic change – and how it can be adopted – within the public sector, creating a framework that can positively support the participants of change to re-adjust their understanding and meet the needs of public sector strategic changes (Adair, 2016; Levasseur, 2009; Norzailan et al., 2016).

## 2.2. Strategic Leadership Skills

Strategic leadership skills are essential in adopting strategic change, and include developing knowledge, skills, valuable attitudes, planning and decision making (Norzailan et al., 2016; Spaeth, 2001). These skills involve the characteristics of leaders in developing staff performance (Hughes, 2016; Spaeth, 2001); MacGillivray (2018) believed that they include self-skills, technical skills and management skills (Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018).

According to Rubens et al. (2018), personal skills are related to the ability of individuals to analyse actions of teamwork and industry environment, reflecting on their previous practices and exploring and developing certain leadership skills to improve individual strategic plans for achieving personal abilities, career aims and potentially a programme of Personal Professional Development (PPD). Tarim (2015) claimed that strategic leadership skills should support leaders in dealing with difficult employee behaviours, and in giving employees feedback to develop their performance. Strategic leadership skills are also focused on developing the importance of innovation, performance management, personal effectiveness, controlling challenges in working environments, assertiveness and emotional intelligence (Rubens et al., 2018; Tarim, 2015). Thus, strategic skills enable leaders to build characteristics to help them lead their members to achieve the organisation's requirements (Palmeira, 2014; Rubens et al., 2018).

In the current global climate, organisations face many issues encouraging business administration teams to think about the future of their company, requiring the organisation to respond, adapt and achieve progress, or else fail, when adopting strategic change (Adair, 2016; Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018). This means that the skills of strategic leadership include identifying and solving problems, learning from previous experience and reviewing how to apply change to ensure the organisation's survival in an unstable environment (MacGillivray, 2018; Schoemaker et al., 2013). Leaders should also adopt creative and distinctive energy efficiently in order to achieve aims on time, and find a group of staff qualified to adapt to change and accurately implement the plan for change (Hughes, 2016; Schoemaker et al., 2013; Slavik et al., 2015).

Furthermore, strategic leadership needs a team with initiative to find new ideas, and to encourage others to participate in adopting the change in a healthy working environment

(Boorman, 2009; Hughes, 2016; Slavik et al., 2015). A strategic plan is essential, to analyse and study the internal and external factors that can impact adopting the process of change (Schoemaker et al., 2013; Slavik et al., 2015). Likewise, strategic leadership is directly related to creating valuable aims, intuitive thinking, solving problems that arise in adopting the plan of change, adventurous decision making, good behaviours that can help members accept working in a team, and creative in introducing non-traditional ways to achieve excellence (Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018; Schoemaker et al., 2013).

Strategic leadership skills are essential in building the characteristics of strategic leaders in terms of their vision, ability to focus on the agenda and their capacity to implement the aims of public organisations, which can help in dealing with the pressure relating to expectations for achieving organisational requirements (Hughes, 2016; Schoemaker et al., 2013). For example, strategic leadership skills can prepare the staff of public organisations to overcome the barriers to organisational development, and to create plans to keep organisations growing to reach their targets (MacGillivray, 2018; Slavik et al., 2015). They also keep organisations prepared for controlling organisational changes within the business environment, as well as keeping them in a healthy state of competition, by creating innovative ideas to guarantee survival (MacGillivray, 2018; Schoemaker et al., 2013). Strategic leaders' characteristics can and should also be seen as a vital part of the communication between employees and the plans for the institution's future visions (MacGillivray, 2018; Slavik et al., 2015).

Another significant aspect of strategic leadership skills is cooperative working and the social skills to meet members of the team at work, and assign their responsibilities, duties and powers (Schoemaker et al., 2013; Slavik et al., 2015). The skills of cooperative work are also related to building external working relationships, cultural and diversity awareness, empowering and harnessing the talents of others, persuasive dialogue and a degree of flexibility (Hughes, 2016; Schoemaker et al., 2013). Thus, the skills of cooperative work can support leaders in dealing with their team members, as well as in adopting the processes of change (Cameron and Green, 2015; MacGillivray, 2018). Therefore, each skill is important to achieve the great level of cooperative work (Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018).

Strategic leadership skills are also significant for:

- i) Gathering efforts to achieve goals.
- ii) Eliminating labour issues.
- iii) Developing and motivating individual skills.
- iv) Building stronger professional relationships with team members.
- v) Creating and organising rules to develop organisational delivery.
- vi) analysing work actions to find errors.
- vii) Accepting constructive criticism and making accurate decisions in urgent situations (Boorman, 2009; Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018; Slavik et al., 2015).

Thus, supportive strategic leadership skills can help public organisations to achieve the government requirements by creating useful programmes to improve human skills (Bush, 2015; MacGillivray, 2018). Hence, the public organisations can reach the level of business environment development around the world, and influence staff and guide them to achieve the desired goals (MacGillivray, 2018; Slavik et al., 2015).

However, there are barriers to adopting strategic leadership in the process of change (Bush, 2015; Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016; Hughes, 2016). One of the most important factors is staff becoming confused in the case of unclear goals and policies, and how best to achieve them, wasting teamwork time and effort (Hughes, 2016; Fealy et al., 2011). Another barrier is the lack of necessary information, especially related to administrative decisions, which can impact negatively the work of the establishment (Bush, 2015; Fealy et al., 2011). Some administrative leaders prefer to have control and power over teamwork, and to make individual decisions on vital activities (Bush, 2015; Hughes, 2016). This means that team members will have no responsibility, working only on tedious routine procedures (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016; Fealy et al., 2011).

There are many other barriers to public organisations that can negatively impact these strategic leadership skills which can in turn affect the success of adopting change (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016; Elliott et al., 2016). One such example is when organisations ineffectively mentor their employees and incorrectly evaluate or identify their workplace actions and behaviours, which can impact their creativity and reduce their personal drive to contribute to the growth and development of the organisation (Elliott et al., 2016;

Fealy et al., 2011). Support from senior management and leaders' opportunity to participate at strategic levels can also negatively affect strategic leadership in adopting strategic change in public organisations (Elliott et al., 2016; Hughes, 2016). This means that these barriers need to be approached by analysing the aspects of the problems limiting organisational growth (Elliott et al., 2016; Fealy et al., 2011).

Finally, strategic leadership skills as leadership characteristics are important in any organisational process, and in adopting strategic change in public organisations to follow global developments in practices and standards across all aspects of the business environment (Fealy et al., 2011; Mayfield et al., 2015). Identifying the strategic leadership skills of employees can help organisations to solve problems and on-going challenges (Elliott et al., 2016; Fealy et al., 2011). Higher-level managers can then design programmes to counteract the weaknesses in individuals and collect skill sets of staff (Elliott et al., 2016; Hughes, 2016). Hence, leaders can create plans with members to adopt the process of strategic change, for success in the changing business environment (Elliott et al., 2016; Fealy et al., 2011; Mayfield et al., 2015).

In conclusion, this chapter explained the knowledge of strategic leadership is improvement to be up-dating with global economic development. However, there is no universally agreed definition between authors in terms of strategic leadership, but most of authors agreed that the strategic leadership is a long-term organisational work system that focuses on achieving stakeholders' expectations in a changing environment by creating new development strategies (Adair, 2016; Boorman, 2009; Kearns et al., 2015; Levasseur, 2009). Furthermore, the chapter illustrated the meaning of strategic leadership skills, and the important of these skills in adopting the process of strategic change according to authors experiences, which was reflected some of the most essential personal skills (MacGillivray, 2018; Schoemaker et al., 2013).

# Chapter 3

## Literature Review

### Strategic Change

#### 3.0. Introduction

The previous chapter was illustrated the first part of the literature review, which is about the meaning of strategic leadership and the important of strategic leadership skills in terms to adopt the process of strategic change. It also defined the strategic leadership according to authors information and identified the most important characteristics in strategic leadership skills to support public organisations successful applying the strategic change.

In this chapter, the researcher provides a critical review of the literature relating to planning and implementing change using strategic leadership skills. It will identify and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of existing theories, and demonstrate the contribution of this research to the existing body of knowledge. Finally, a conceptual framework is proposed, with a comprehensive synthesis of the concepts and analytical concepts which will be used to answer the research question on strategic leadership and strategic change.

#### 3.1. Context of Change

Change is essential for an organisation's development to reach global-level development (Cameron and Green, 2015; Kotter, 1996; Suddaby and Foster, 2017). Success is more likely by understanding the definition of change as well as the various models, tools and techniques, and it is important to understand its process (Smith, 2015; Suddaby and Foster, 2017). Change is essential if an organisation is to develop and survive, and this is related to complexities of adopting the process of change (Coleman and Thomas, 2017). For instance, Senior and Swailes (2010) believed that change is linked to organisational performance to follow the business environment improvement.

The staff's understanding of the level of the change process of the organisation can be a determining factor for success or failure, which means that the experience, thoughts and

actions of the employees can encourage members to participate or resist adopting the change (Cameron and Green, 2015; Palmeira, 2014; Senior and Swailes, 2010). Knodel (2004) believed that change should be adopted in every organisation, whether partially or completely, which means that the leaders and staff need to be ready to adapt to the change. This means that participants in the process of change need to identify potential barriers to change to support its adoption (Cameron and Green, 2015; Knodel, 2004; Kotter, 1996).

According to Sofronijević et al. (2015), change is a pioneering business initiative that contributes to the success of public organisations by analysing the mechanism of action, and by making appropriate changes to the work system with the aim of following the ever-developing notion of improving the business working environment. This demonstrates the importance of engaging in change management in order to make a success of new business initiatives across public organisations (Sofronijević et al., 2015; Van der Voet et al., 2016). In addition, participating in identifying change decisions and providing comprehensive and detailed information about the process of change would motivate employees to contribute further to successful practices within the process of change in public organisations, and to reduce staff resistance to change, improve their satisfaction and increase their productivity (Teo et al., 2016; Van der Voet et al., 2016).

Van der Voet et al. (2016) believed that strategic leadership skills are linked with emotional commitments to specific parts of successful planning, implementing and controlling the change in public organisations. The context of change also considers the leaders as a key element in the successful implementation of change processes, and the nature of the relationship between the leader and the employee is the basis for change in public organisations (Sofronijević et al., 2015; Teo et al., 2016). Teo et al. (2016) claimed that the public organisation's implementation of the process of change in order to achieve government aims requires the institution to avoid the negative results of economic change, and to identify ways of implementing change by illustrating the type of process of change and organisational structure.

Finally, in many cases the planned structural change fails due to the lack of planning that arises when adopting the elements of the relevant processes within change; however, if the change is built on clear elements and strategic planning, the organisation will succeed in adopting the change (Cameron and Green, 2015; Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Knodel, 2004; Muller and Kunisch, 2018). This means that strategic change is important

for survival, so the organisation must create clear planning, implementing and controlling of strategic change to reap its benefits (Cameron and Green, 2015; Muller and Kunisch, 2018; Kotter, 1996; Santere et al., 2012).

### **3.2. Strategic Change**

Strategic change is necessary to develop organisational work within the public sector, and to have a significant, positive impact on organisational performance and survival in the long term (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Muller and Kunisch, 2018). Muller and Kunisch (2018), said that strategic change is an essential organisational change that can transfer the mission of the organisation, or its framework, aims and priorities. Misunderstanding surrounding the implementation processes can result in the failure of strategic change, threatening the stability of the organisation (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Santere et al., 2012; Rajagopalan and Spreitzer, 1997).

According to Hruska (2015), strategic change is highly dependent on the ongoing research of decision-making competencies and ever-improving social interaction to develop a consistent framework for improving the organisation. Strategic change is about creating plans to change existing work systems in the organisation by analysing the firm's situation through cognitive and organisational psychology, philosophy and sociology as a means of implementing radical changes (Hruska, 2015; Santere et al., 2012). The strategic change method can impact the relationship between leaders and employees in terms of building strategic leadership skills to successfully adopt the strategic change process (Hruska, 2015; Suddaby and Foster, 2017).

Santere et al. (2012) believed that strategic change is a process that can redefine the organisational mission, or change the priorities and aims to find new directions to improve the organisation's performance. Many organisations face multiple changes in their strategy to protect their benefits and survive (Muller and Kunisch, 2018; Santere et al., 2012). Rajagopalan and Spreitzer (1997) suggested that strategic change is radical and adopted by higher management, leading the organisation to shift key activities and structures that can be affected by intensive change.

This means that staff may resist, champion or accept the strategic change, an essential element to be considered (Rajagopalan and Spreitzer, 1997; Santere et al., 2012). It is important to have a clear plan and creative decision making to find useful ways to

implement and control the process of strategic change (Muller and Kunisch, 2018; Santere et al., 2012; Suddaby and Foster, 2017). Finally, creative strategic change can radically or partially alter any organisations if leaders plan, implement and control it to meet the organisation's requirements (Cameron and Green, 2015; Suddaby and Foster, 2017).

### **3.2.1. Planning Strategic Change**

Planning is the first important step in the process of adopting strategic change. Creating a plan can build successful strategic change, and the leaders of change should focus on the barriers and forms of resistance that may complicate the change (Cameron and Green, 2015; Carlson et al., 2013). An effective plan can operationalise the organisation's aims to successful implementation of strategic change, leading to improved performance (Carlson et al., 2013; Chrusciel, 2006). The organisational factors of strategic change are therefore relevant in identifying the aspects of planning.

Spee and Jarzabkowski (2011) said that the plan is one of the most important administrative tasks, aimed at determining the future objectives of the organisation and the ways of identifying them. Rigby and Bilodeau (2015) believed that the plan is part of the process of setting future goals by finding ways and alternatives that can be followed in order to achieve the objectives, where the objectives are compatible with the available resources. Good planning, however, faces barriers resulting from leaders or elements of the plan (Spee and Jarzabkowski, 2011).

The main barrier from leaders is lack of commitment to planning and relying on experience (Carlson et al., 2013; Flamholtz and Randle, 2008). Most leaders are busy solving current problems using all the available resources, without looking to the future aims and ways to achieve them (Chrusciel, 2006; van Woerkum et al., 2007). Also, leaders rely on experience alone in planning, ignoring the other important aspects required for successful planning (Carlson et al., 2013; Chrusciel, 2006).

A creative plan is therefore considered the most important resource to tackle issues, improve participants' performance and adapt to strategic change (Flamholtz and Randle, 2008; Raineri, 2011). It can support members in facing sudden change related to possible emergencies (McKee and Froelich, 2016; Raineri, 2011). Clarifying objectives can encourage participants to understand and adopt the elements of the plan, and to

guide activities to reach the aims (Chrusciel, 2006; Raineri, 2011). Finally, a good plan can reduce costs and develop teamworking between departments and employees in the working environment (Flamholtz and Randle, 2008; McKee and Froelich, 2016).

### **3.2.2. Implementing and Controlling Strategic Change**

Implementation is clearly essential to the process of strategic change (Battilana et al., 2010; Limwichitr et al., 2015). This step should be controlled and reviewed by members of the organisation in order to benefit from the change (Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Limwichitr et al., 2015). Battilana et al. (2010) suggested that adopting strategic change should encompass evaluating the procedure and motivating the participants to support the change.

Beer and Eisenstat (1996) believed that implementing strategic change means transforming the elements of the plan into action within a procedural framework. Caldwell et al. (2008) said that implementing change is a complex process that can affect all members of the organisation, from the highest to the lowest, and can contribute to the development of organisational performance which in turn helps the organisation to meet the aims of the strategic plan. Johnson and Leenders (2004) suggested that the implementation step focuses on transforming the plan from theory to practice by work procedures in the framework, to achieve the aims of the strategic plan.

However, implementing strategic change requires those supervising it to draw up a general framework covering all administrative and functional aspects, and to put the plan into practice by ensuring coordination and integration between the various functional and organisational units (Caldwell et al., 2008; Johnson and Leenders, 2004; Limwichitr et al., 2015). In order for this to happen effectively, implementation needs to find a working system that brings together administrative and general personnel in a common effort to reach the requirements of the plan (Battilana et al., 2010; Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Limwichitr et al., 2015).

Finally, it is difficult to apply the plan to meet specific aims without creative leaders with special skills (Beer and Eisenstat, 1996; Limwichitr et al., 2015). Appropriate

organisational structures are also required, and a balance from resources to the various operational activities (Battilana et al., 2010; Johnson and Leenders, 2004). The administration should find a system to assist participants in the process of change, and a system of management information with an organisational culture to improve productivity (Caldwell et al., 2008; Limwichitr et al., 2015).

### **3.3. The Importance of Strategic Change and Strategic Leadership Skills in Answering the Research Question and Achieving the Study Aims**

Strategic change and strategic leadership skills are related to successful adoption of the process of change, and most theories agree that to improve performance the organisation needs to adapt to the process of change (Adair, 2016; Muller and Kunisch, 2018). Moreover, it is essential to find ways to encourage members of the organisation to participate in adopting the change, as many theories have proved that change can be a failure in the face of resistance from staff (MacGillivray, 2018; Muller and Kunisch, 2018). Strategic change also needs a valuable plan and useful system to implement it and meet the organisation's aims from this change (Cameron and Green, 2015; Limwichitr et al., 2015).

This research will focus on how to apply strategic change in the public sector, and on the barriers to adopting this change in Bahrain's public organisations (Baker and Taylor, 2007; Vann, 2004). There still appears to be a gap in the literature on change and strategic leadership, specifically regarding the public-sector (Cameron and Green, 2015; Vann, 2004). The process of change in the public sector differs according to the situation of the organisation, and each country has a different way of adopting and successfully implementing strategic change (Kuipers et al., 2013; Baker and Taylor, 2007). This means that the barriers to successful adoption are different in each organisation, so it is necessary to analyse the specific situation of the organisation to solve its problems (Kuipers et al., 2013; Vann, 2004).

Philippidou et al. (2008) believed that the barriers in the public sector relate to both the external and internal environment. For example, a changing political environment and institutionalisation of public organisations means that the change will affect the main work-system of the public sector (Kuipers et al., 2013). Understanding the barriers to change in the public sector should focus on the content of the change, and the

organisational strategy and structure (Philippidou et al., 2008; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Change can be adopted incrementally or radically, affecting parts of departments, parts of the organisation or the whole system of the organisation (Baker and Taylor, 2007; Kuipers et al., 2013; Philippidou et al., 2008).

However, strategic leadership can support change in the public sector by using well known theories of change (Hughes, 2016; Kotter, 1996; Kuipers et al., 2013; Philippidou et al., 2008), such as Kotter's (1996) eight-stage process. This theory can be used as a vision for identifying the change process; it focuses on the impact of the relationship and mentality of leaders and staff who participate in the change, and the importance of understanding the process of change in reaching the public organisation's aims (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Kotter, 1996). Kotter believed that strategic change can succeed by placing strong emphasis on strategic leadership and viewing change as top-led (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Philippidou et al., 2008).

Despite the popularity of Kotter's strategy, different aspects of the process have been criticised by many authors (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Brisson-Banks, 2010). For instance, there is little information describing what should actually be done (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Kuipers et al., 2013), and few details to explain how staff should apply the change in the organisation (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Smith, 2015). This means that the theory cannot be generalised to accommodate all parts of the organisation, and more time should be spent on planning the process of change (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Brisson-Banks, 2010). In short, it does not represent the realities of organisational life (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Brisson-Banks, 2010; Kuipers et al., 2013).

Different change and transitional systems have similar methods of adapting to change, but they are not sufficiently general to cover all the elements of an organisation (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Kotter, 2007; Smith, 2015). Nevertheless, these methods can support strategic leadership's strong vision to improve performance and meet organisational objectives (Kuipers et al., 2013; Smith, 2015). Furthermore, the administration of public organisations can combine some aspects of different theories to create a system suitable to their own circumstances (Kotter, 2007; Vann, 2004). This means that this comparison can help members to analyse the situation to create their own process of change by focusing on the physical and emotional elements of their organisation (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Kotter, 2007).

Several researchers believe that change is about the future, with each process of change focusing on part of the organisation; previous experience can help to create the appropriate process of change (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Brisson-Banks, 2010). Strategic leadership therefore needs to analyse the organisational situation to identify potential elements of change (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Appelbaum et al., 2012). Members can then implement the change by reviewing the results of theories to find their own process of adopting change, which means that the strategic leadership must spend a long time identifying these elements, creating a useful plan, and anticipating barriers to implementing the plan (Ansari and Bell, 2009; Appelbaum et al., 2012; Brisson-Banks, 2010).

Another theory explains change in three steps: unfreezing, changing and refreezing the process of change (Brisson-Banks, 2010; Ritchie, 2006). Armstrong (2006) said that the process of change should start by unfreezing the working system, that leaders should identify the risks facing the staff, and explain solutions to motivate them. They then need to develop new aims and plan them according to the result of situation analyses (Armstrong, 2006). Finally, the process should end by refreezing the new requirements for the organisation, and the new characteristics of individuals should be resolved and committed to adapt to the change to reach the goals (Armstrong, 2006; Ritchie, 2006).

Strategic leadership can also manage the process of change in terms of directives, bargaining, hearts and minds, and analytical and action-based strategies, reducing the “generation” gap between leaders and the participants of change (Armstrong, 2006; Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018). These strategies have both positive and negative aspects, on which this research will focus (Kulkarni, 2016; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). The generation gap means the differences in knowledge, motivation and culture between old managers and young participants in implementing the change (Meyer, 2013; Waddell and Sohal, 1998; Kulkarni, 2016).

Classical management theory identified difficulty in controlling staff resistance to change, misunderstanding the essential nature of the resistance, and failing to explain the purpose of change to the staff (Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006). However, leaders can use the generation gap in positive ways to support implementation of the process of change (Kulkarni, 2016; Waddell and Sohal, 1998), especially in the planning stage, to address issues that will arise during the process of change (Armstrong, 2006; Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006).

Finally, each organisation has different situations that require a tailored approach to analysis, even before beginning to adopt the process of strategic change, and using strategic leadership skills to encourage members to participate in creating the process of change (Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006).

The secondary data derived from this literature review supports the question of how best to improve strategic change across the public sector of the Kingdom of Bahrain, as an academic inquiry; it is compared with primary data in order identify the weak aspects that negatively affect the successful understanding and implementation of strategic change within these organisations (Armstrong, 2006; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). This will answer the research question and is related to the negative impact of the generation gap between leaders and employees. It is through increased understanding and ongoing enquiry that the author endeavours to demonstrate the useful strategic leadership skills required for successful change in public organisations in Bahrain, learning from previous attempts and applying a higher level of understanding to reach a healthy way forward (Ritchie, 2006; Smith, 2015).

In summarise, this chapter was explained critically the context of change, strategic change, planning, implementing and controlling the strategic change in public organisations, and to identify the strengths and weakness of existing theories from authors experiences. This chapter also demonstrated the importance information in chapter 2 and 3 which related to the strategic change and the strategic leadership skills to support researcher answering the research question and achieving the study aims.

## Chapter 4

### Research Methodology

#### 4.0. Introduction

The previous chapter has presented the context of change, strategic change, planning, implementing and controlling of strategic change in a critical way to find out the secondary information from literature review that can be supported the research subject to answer research question and achieve research aims. It has also identified the strengths and weakness of existing theories from authors experiences and observation, which together with the first two chapters, begins to build an important body of research which helps the author and reader to realise the research aims.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the research plan and choices of methodology, referring to research philosophy, choices for data collection, reasons for the chosen methodology, and descriptions of data analysis. It explains and justifies the methodological choices that have been adopted for the research.

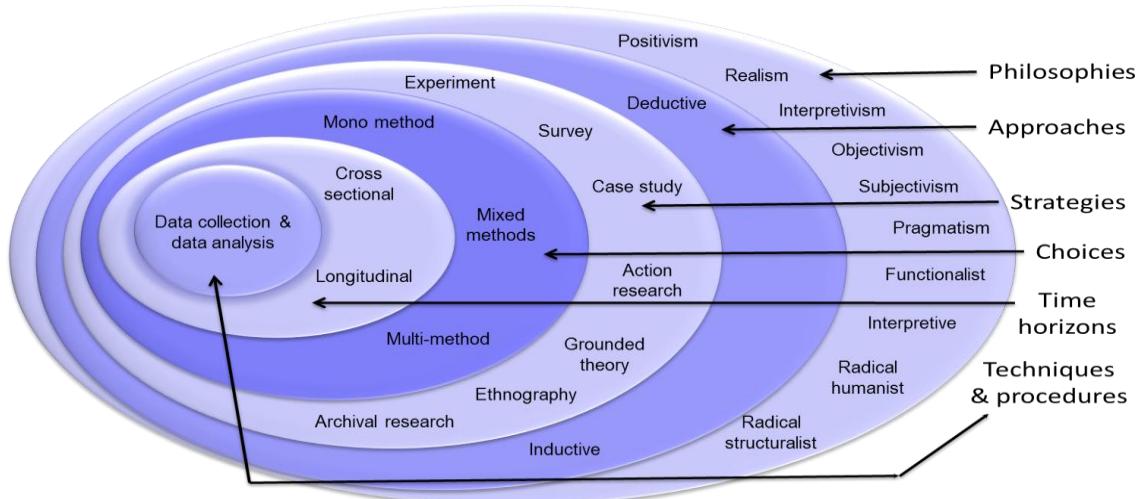
Business and management research is vital for improving the global economic environment, focusing on the causes and solutions of issues relating to business and management development worldwide (Saunders et al., 2012). For example, research can focus on knowledge gained in other disciplines with a view to contributing to the development of the economic sector, using it to reach new visions that cannot necessarily be found from within business or economic-orientated practices and studies (Saunders et al., 2016). According to Saunders et al. (2012), business and management research illustrates ways to improve links between the new ideas of any given research subject and previous thought. It also combines business and management theories with practice, to make recommendation that can solve current problems using specific research tools (Saunders et al., 2012; Singh, 2015).

Accordingly, the researcher will use a methodology that demonstrates the staff's level of understanding of the process of strategic change within public organisations, and one that will find useful systems of adopting relevant changes, using specific research tools. The researcher will use these tools to answer the study question, "How would strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change?". They will

identify the acceptance of and barriers to adopting change, and demonstrate the impact of the gap in thinking between older and younger people. They will support the researcher in explaining collection of the primary data and the methods that will be using in the research.

#### 4.1. Research Design

According to the research onion, presented in Figure 4.1, the research design should include an explanation and justification of the study philosophies, research approach, strategy and choices of the study, and how these affect the procedures and techniques of the methodology.



**Figure 4.1: The Research Onion**

Source: (Saunders et al., 2012: p.128)

##### 4.1.1. Philosophy-based Research Approaches

A coherent research philosophy is necessary for a successful study, as it supports the researcher in analysing situations and examples relating to the topic of the research (Plowright, 2011; Singh, 2015). Likewise, the researcher needs to develop the research philosophy and find his own way by using different methods to design the research (Saunders et al., 2012; Singh, 2015). Therefore, the philosophy supports the research hypothesis, and develops the methodology to achieve the study requirements (Plowright, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012; Singh, 2015). According to Saunders et al. (2016),

understanding the study philosophy is essential in building the research process, and it can help to arrange self-analysis and ongoing reflections of research designs.

#### **4.1.2. Epistemology**

Epistemology is the study of the nature and scope of knowledge and justified belief; it analyses the nature of knowledge and helps to illustrate how it relates to similar notions (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2016). This can lead the researcher to evaluate the truth, belief and justification in the process of change, and to understand the strategic leadership skills required (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Thus, epistemology focuses on the means of production of knowledge and highlights certain defects in different knowledge claims (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2012). It is the part of philosophy that focuses heavily on the theory of knowledge and studying the nature of knowledge, justifying the author's beliefs (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

This researcher therefore chooses the epistemological method for this study as it is necessary to identify the problems in the topic (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2016). The problems between the leaders and participants of change tend to have a negative impact on development of the public sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain (Singh, 2015; Saunders et al., 2016). This philosophy leads to analysis of one of the public organisation's actions designed to adapt to change. Finally, it is important for the interpretivist philosophy to suggest recommendations to overcome the barriers to the process of change (Saunders et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2012).

#### **4.1.3. Research Approach**

Following the epistemological research philosophy illustrated in Figure 4.1, the researcher chose the inductive method for the study (Singh, 2015; Saunders et al., 2016). Inductive reasoning is the expression of an investigation into a phenomenon by evaluating different perspectives and multiple hypotheses (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012). It also allows the researcher to create Inductive as theory that building qualitatively, which was leading to build the research results and review primary assumptions to apply the newly-gained knowledge (Saunders et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2016).

In deductive reasoning (theory testing), the researcher needs to identify the primary assumptions, and test them to confirm or reject the findings of these assumptions

(Fowler, 2009; Singh, 2015). However, as the aim of the research is to evaluate adopting the process of change within the Kingdom of Bahrain's public sector, the inductive approach is more appropriate to analyse the common and more nuanced Western assumptions of finding the positive elements, and to evaluate adopting these aspects in Bahrain (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). This means that the researcher using mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) as inductive and deductive theories testing to build the research approach (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2016)

#### **4.2. Research Strategy**

The research strategy is the design that the researcher will use to achieve the agreed-upon research aims (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). The strategy supports the researcher in finding a link between the philosophy and methodology, in a research strategy to address the problem statement (Saunders et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2012). Research design strategies include survey, case study, archival research and action research (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009). This research will use a case study approach to analyse the research subject and complex issues in-depth and in real-life settings (Fowler, 2009; Yin, 2009). The strategy will be a fusion of inductive and deductive approaches to evaluate solutions to the problem statement (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012).

There are many types of case study that the researcher can use for this research dissertation; exploratory, explanatory or descriptive are the most common types of research for such a case study (Saunders et al., 2012; Yin, 2009). In this dissertation, the researcher has approached this case study using the 'exploratory' approach, due to the notion that the researcher is exploring a phenomenon within a particular context (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012). Exploratory research can be defined by conducting research to discuss a problem that has not yet been studied more critically, and when using such approach, this can help the researcher to identify their priorities and develop the final framework for the research (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009). Furthermore, the benefit of using the exploratory strategy is to find the best design for the research, and the best way to collect the data by using mix methods (qualitative, quantitative) (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). However, because of the fundamental nature of the strategy, the researcher should collect the results only with extreme caution (Fowler, 2009; Yin, 2009).

The case study approach also used when the researcher needs to find and understand the in-depth meaning of an issue, event or specific situation, in the natural real-life environment (Yin, 2009); and it can help the researcher to understand and explain fundamental links and pathways resulting from adopting new policy or facility development. This strategy can help to develop or refine theory and address the problem statement (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009), allowing the researcher to apply his own knowledge in the field and the local context, but in a way that leaves the researcher open to exploring new ideas and reaching innovative solutions to issues that public organisations in Bahrain and the GCC may face (Yin, 2009).

The case study of a government department in Bahrain will be used, including a survey to collect primary data, and to explore aspects of the organisation and address any weakness (Fowler, 2009; Singh, 2015). The survey strategy seeks to explain and provide data to test the different hypotheses (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016; Singh, 2015; Yin, 2009). Finally, it focuses on respondents' descriptive answers in order to evaluate the process of change within the public organisations in which they work, reflecting their attitude to the research question and achieving the research aims and objectives by using the organisation's real-life context as a case study (Saunders et al., 2016; Singh, 2015; Yin, 2009).

#### **4.3. Research Choices**

The researcher chooses a mixed-method approach of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Saunders et al., 2012; Singh, 2015). This involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2016; Singh, 2015). The addition to the survey of semi-structured interviews and integration of the findings will provide more understanding of the problem statement than the use of each method alone (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). In order to avoid both sweeping statements and focusing too much on individual circumstances, the researcher is aware of the need to combine these different methodologies in order to achieve the highest quality research. (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016).

Through this route, the researcher will evaluate the process of change within the public organisations of Bahrain, to analyse their strategic leadership skills and thus answer the research question (Saunders et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2016). The researcher has

received written permission from the organisation in which to conduct the research, assuring its legitimacy and in accordance with the customs, rules and laws of the subject and his country. (Saunders et al., 2016). The researcher is an employee of the organisation, and this will not affect interaction with organisational policy, or the quality of the information and purpose of the research (Saunders et al., 2012). With permission granted, the researcher will be able to collect data in the organisation (Saunders et al., 2016). The researcher has explained the purpose, aims and objectives of the research to the case study organisation, which understands the research values (Saunders et al., 2012).

Finally, the researcher will sample the research population by using a randomised sampling technique of the employees in the organisation. (Saunders et al., 2016). The advantage of random sampling is that it enables the researcher to collect clear data that represents the members of the organisation, with numerous chances to be included, and to control researcher bias (Saunders et al., 2012). This approach also allows access to large numbers of staff, avoiding unintentional bias that could take place if the samples were selected by an individual rather than a randomised process (Fowler, 2009). Whilst this can have its disadvantages, it is important that the researcher acknowledges the limits of his particular research (Yin, 2009). However, given that access to data of this nature is currently limited to informal sources, this approach will be a valuable insight into a very under-researched issue in Bahrain (Saunders et al., 2012). Alternatives to random sampling are complicated and it takes a long time to collect the data when the researcher focuses on a specific group of participants, needing more resources and reducing the efficiency of answers (Saunders et al., 2016).

#### **4.4. Data Collection**

As already explained, this study employs quantitative and qualitative primary data collection to illustrate the strategic leadership skills of public organisation members in adopting strategic changes across many levels (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016). Ultimately, however, the decision to use both quantitative and qualitative data was supported by the lack of academic and institutional studies and research on adopting change in public organisations in the Kingdom of Bahrain (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2012).

To clarify, qualitative research focuses on analysing specific details related to the research question, whilst quantitative study focuses on evaluating the relationship between the variables of the research objective (De Vaus, 2014; Fowler, 2009).

#### **4.4.1. Questionnaire/Survey**

The researcher will use the Bristol Online Survey in order to follow the requirements of Manchester Metropolitan University for primary research conducted using online platforms, and has sought approval for the use and retention of the online data that will be used in the research (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2012). In this way, respondents will use the link to answer the questionnaire to make the data more realistic (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016). According to De Vaus (2014), the questionnaire is a method of collecting data by asking different respondents exactly the same questions, and using the answers to sufficiently and accurately address the research question. The researcher will use Excel to analyse the data and gather the information.

As a quantitative method, questionnaires focus primarily on close-ended information such as that related to measuring attitudes, characteristics and performance instruments (Saunders et al., 2016; Singh, 2015). Moreover, quantitative methods collect the data using instruments or checklists to answer the research question and test hypotheses (Fowler, 2009; Saunders et al., 2016). The benefits of using quantitative research are that a high number of respondents usually participate in the study, increasing the credibility of the result and uncovering correlations and patterns (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009). Quantitative methods are faster and less costly than qualitative methods, and help the researcher to test specific hypotheses and generalise the results (Yin, 2009). The disadvantages of using quantitative methods are that the researcher is not able to find specific details relating to the research subject, and that the quality and relevance of the responses of the participants are dependent on their understanding of the survey's principal aims, the research project and strategic change and leadership as a technique (Saunders et al., 2012).

#### **4.4.2. Semi-structured Interviews**

The interviews can help the researcher in explaining the participants' answers in depth, providing specific primary data to support answering the research question (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2009). The interviewees' answers are collected by audio

recordings, which are subsequently destroyed to protect the privacy of the participants and to comply with data protection laws and guidelines (Saunders et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2016). The researcher used the videoconference software Skype in order to efficiently communicate with interview participants overseas, recording the interviews so as to be accurate and precise. (De Vaus, 2014; Fowler, 2009).

As a qualitative method, interviews focus on open-ended information (Saunders et al., 2012; Singh, 2015). A pool of data is divided into categories of information, presenting the different ideas of participants (Fowler, 2009; Singh, 2015). In qualitative methods, the numbers of participants are usually smaller than in the quantitative method, to control in-depth questions and close observation (Singh, 2015). The researcher is able to identify reasons and opinions, and expose new problems in the research. The richness of the information helps to answer the problem statement (Saunders et al., 2016; Yin, 2009). The disadvantage of qualitative methods is that they are more prone to accusations of bias, high financial cost and the effect of the researcher on the surrounding conditions during the interviews (Fowler, 2009; Yin, 2009).

Finally, the use of mixed methods to collect primary data is essential to diversify the sources of information, and to strengthen the various aspects of the research discussion (De Vaus, 2014). Use of the Bristol Online Survey and live interviews can solve the problem of participants and respondents being at a distance, the primary data being collected from Bahrain. The free and encrypted video conference software is Skype (Fowler, 2009). The questionnaire and interviews are conducted in Arabic, as already explained (Saunders et al., 2016). However, the researcher might find barriers to collecting the primary data because the structure of the questions is not co-ordinated between survey and interviews (De Vaus, 2014); the researcher should therefore find a useful structure to guide the collection of the primary data (Saunders et al., 2016).

#### **4.5. Data Analysis**

Microsoft Excel is used to evaluate the survey data (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Saunders et al., 2016), supporting its analysis (De Vaus, 2014; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011). Excel is a software program that allows researchers to organise, calculate and format data with formulas using a spreadsheet system (Monk et al., 2016). It is part of the Microsoft Office suite (De Vaus, 2014; Monk et al., 2016).

#### **4.5.1. Semi-structured Interviews**

The researcher will use manual text to analyse the interviews; as only two interviews are held, it is not necessary to use a software system like NVivo (De Vaus, 2014; Saunders et al., 2016). The information from the interviewees' answers will be compared with the survey findings (De Vaus, 2014; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

#### **4.5.2. Questionnaire/Survey**

The Bristol Online Survey analyses the data automatically, and maintains the confidentiality of the respondents' information (De Vaus, 2014). It helps to organise the information and give it more credibility (Fowler, 2009). However, the researcher needs to understand how the data should be analysed to meet the research aims (De Vaus, 2014). In addition to cost and time, there is also the risk of losing information collected online by the system (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

Finally, the researcher will use Excel and the Bristol online analysis together as supportive systems to give the primary data more reality and credibility (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011). The results will be compared with the secondary information to suggest answers to the research question (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

### **4.6. Research Ethics and Risk Assessment**

Since the research is conducted by a Level 7 student at Manchester Metropolitan University, it will follow the risk assessment and ethics checklist to meet the ethical requirements of the University and the highest standards of academic research (Saunders et al., 2012). In addition, research ethics demonstrate what is and what is not acceptable between the researcher and participants/respondents in the research (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011). It also explains the behaviours and practices that the researcher should follow in order to adhere to recent GDPR regulations, and other data protection laws and guidelines for research (Saunders et al., 2016).

Furthermore, individuals will participate as volunteers without payment, and not take part until they understand the purpose of the research; the researcher must assure them that the study will not affect or cause any harm to the individuals, inside or outside the workplace (Saunders et al., 2016). All sensitive information, such as names of

employees, their organisation, location and comments, will be secured by anonymising the data (De Vaus, 2014; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

Finally, the researcher should design the questionnaires and interviews in a way that will not negatively affect the participants (Saunders et al., 2016), for instance, making individuals anxious or putting them under stress when answering the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2012). The researcher will also collect the primary data according to the Data Protection Act (1998), keeping it on a password-protected laptop, securely stored and with only the researcher having access to the private data and correspondence (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Saunders et al., 2016). All correspondence relating to the research is sent from an encrypted University email address (Saunders et al., 2016). All the data will be destroyed by the researcher after finishing the dissertation (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

To summarise, this chapter is about the research methodology of the dissertation and explaining the research design and philosophy-based research approaches. It has also set out the reasons for choosing the research epistemology, which is the study of the nature and scope of knowledge and justified belief of the dissertation that is chosen by the researcher. This chapter also illustrated the 'exploratory' approach as a type of research strategy that researcher will use for setting out this dissertation's case study, which demonstrated that the researcher has used mix methods to reach creative and innovative results. Finally, the researcher explained the techniques for sourcing and recording the relevant primary data from the participants of the case study.

# Chapter 5

## Data Analyses

### 5.0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher determined the research methodology and the strategy that was used to collect and analyse the data. The researcher used the Bristol Online Survey for the questionnaires, and interviews to collect the primary data. The research methodology also illustrated the framework of the dissertation, helping the reader to understand the dissertation design.

This chapter applies the researcher's chosen methods and techniques to analyse the primary data and summarise the findings. Finally, it includes tables to illustrate the data, and to assist the reader in understanding the findings.

### 5.1. Questionnaire Data

The questionnaire explored the research question which is about how strategic leadership skills can help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change, and to understand the employees' attitudes to adopting change in their organisations. It started with questions related to the meaning of strategic change, in order to understand the level of the participants' knowledge of applying the process of change and of strategic leadership skills enabling public sector leaders to adopt strategic change.

The questionnaire also evaluated the impact of the mental gap between older and younger generations in the public sector. Finally, it included questions to discover staff opinions on adopting change, and open-ended questions to obtain suggestions from staff stakeholders to achieve government requirements and develop the organisation's work.

Table 5.1: (Participants' Gender)

Male	Female
115	42
157	

**Table 5.2: (Participants' Age)**

Age	Respondents
18-28	55
29-40	81
Above 40	21

Table 5.1 shows that 157 respondents completed the questionnaire, 115 of whom were male (73%). Table 5.2 shows the participants age divided into three groups: 55 participants (35%) were aged 18-28; 81 (52%) were aged 29-40; and 21 (13%) were above 40. In fact, most of the respondents (136: 87%) were under 41.

The tables below present the answers to specific questions, by the age of the respondents.

### **A. Importance of Strategic Change in Public Organisations**

**Table 5.3: (Importance of Strategic Change) Question 3**

Importance of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Yes	54	77	20
No	1	4	1

Table 5.3 shows that, overall, 151 (96%) respondents believed that strategic change is essential; with the highest number in the 29-40 generation, 77 (49%). Only 6 (3%) said that strategic change is not essential for their organisation.

**Table 5.4: (Importance of Strategic Change) Question 6**

Important of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Yes	51	75	19
No	4	6	2

The numbers and proportions of answers to whether their own organisation needed change are similar to those to question 3 (see Table 5.4), although twice as many (12; 8%) answered no.

## B. Value of Applying Strategic Change in Public Organisations

Table 5.5: (Value of Applying Strategic Change) Q9

Value of Applying Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	14	29	9
No	41	52	12

The results presented in Tables 5.5 and 5.6 indicate answers on the value of applying change. Table 5.5 shows that two-thirds of the respondents (105; 67%) believed that change is not adopted effectively in their organisation.

Table 5.6: (Value of Applying Strategic Change) Q19

Value of Applying Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Strongly Agree	30	52	16
Agree	21	25	5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	4	0
Disagree	1	0	0
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0

Table 5.6 breaks down the answers into five levels of agreement, unlike the binary Y/N of previous questions; by combining “strongly agree” and “agree”, the majority of respondents believed that the process of change can help to develop the quality of the organisation’s work (149; 95%). Surprisingly, none of the respondents over 40 disagreed with the statement.

### C. Acceptance of strategic change in public organisations

Table 5.7: (Acceptance of Strategic Change) Q4

Acceptance of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	21	23	12
No	34	58	9

101 (64%) respondents were not satisfied with the process of change in their organisation, and the remaining third are satisfied (Table 5.7).

Table 5.8: (Acceptance of Strategic Change) Q5

Acceptance of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	22	39	10
No	33	42	11

Q5 related to the leaders' orders to adopt the process of change; over half (86; 55%) of respondents would not immediately accept their leader's orders, while 71 (45%) would prefer to apply their leader's orders (Table 5.8).

### D. Discussion and Share of Planning of Strategic Change between Managers and Staff in Public Sector

Table 5.9: (Discuss and share planning of Strategic Change) Q10

Discuss and share planning of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	22	31	9
No	29	50	12

In Q10, the researcher asked the respondents if their managers shared and explained the process of change and the associated decisions; 62 (41%) said that their managers

shared the idea of change with them, while 91 (59%) believed that their managers did not (Table 5.9).

**Table 5.10: (Discuss and Share Planning of Strategic Change) Q16**

Discuss and share planning of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	23	27	14
No	28	53	7

Q16 was similar to Q10, but the researcher changed the way of asking it: did respondents' managers explain the process of change before applying it? Unsurprisingly, the results were similar as 64 (42%) said yes and 88 (58%) respondents said no. This indicates that the majority of the respondents did understand the subject of change and the research questionnaire (Table 5.10).

**Table 5.11: (Discuss and Share Planning of Strategic Change) Q20**

Discuss and share planning of Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Strongly Agree	34	54	17
Agree	19	24	4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	2	0
Disagree	0	0	0
Strongly Disagree	1	1	0

In Q10, Q16 and Q20, the respondents were asked about the importance of leaders discussing and sharing plans for strategic change with their staff. However, the researcher changed the wording of each question to ensure that the respondents understood the questions and the study subject. Table 5.11 shows that most respondents (152; 97%) agreed that managers should explain the process of change with staff. However, it was unexpected that 2 (1%) respondents aged under 40 strongly disagree with this idea.

## E. Understanding the Meaning of Strategic Leadership in Public Sector

Table 5.12: (Understanding the Meaning of Strategic Leadership) Q11

Understanding the Meaning of Strategic Leadership	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
Yes	27	52	14
No	28	29	7

In anticipation of respondents finding difficulty in understanding the meaning of strategic leadership, the researcher added a note to ask whether or not respondents understood the term before answering the question. All the respondents answered Q11, but only 93 (59%) claimed to understand the term; the remaining 64 (41%) either did not understand the term or had not heard it before, but were clearly interested to understand the question (Table 5.12).

Table 5.13: (Five Most Important Skills Suggested by Staff for Adopting Strategic Change) Q12

Examples of Most Important Skills	Number of respondents
Teamwork	7 (9%)
Personal characteristics	5 (7%)
Emotional intelligence	5 (7%)
Motivating people	4 (5%)
Participating in making decisions	4 (5%)

The respondents were given examples of essential strategic leadership skills that might be helpful in adopting change, related to their understanding of strategic leadership skills. Table 5.13 indicates the most frequent responses from the respondents: personal characteristics, teamwork, emotional intelligence, motivation and participating in making decisions.

## F. Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills to Help Staff Adapt to Change

Table 5.14: (Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills to Help Staff Adapt to Change) Q13:

Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills to Help Staff Adapt to Change	Age		
Respondents' Answers	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Yes	45	76	21
No	4	3	0

In Q13, the researcher asked the respondents if strategic leadership skills are important in helping staff adapt to the process of change; 142 (95%) of 149 respondents believed that strategic leadership skills can support staff in this case (Table 5.14).

Table 5.15: (Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills to Help Staff Adapt to Change) Q23

Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills to Help Staff Adapt to Change	Age		
Respondents' Answers	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Strongly Agree	19	30	11
Agree	18	33	6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	6	0
Disagree	3	2	0
Strongly Disagree	1	1	0

Similarly in Q23, 117 (85%) of 137 respondents agreed that strategic leadership skills are essential for adopting change. It is also surprising that all those above 40 agreed with this (Table 5.15).

## G. The Impact of Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders

Table 5.16: (The Impact of Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders to Apply Strategic Change) Q17

The Impact of Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders to Apply Strategic Change	Age		
Respondents' Answers	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Yes	39	64	19
No	12	14	2

In this part, the researcher was interested in the impact of the generation gap between staff and leaders in terms of applying the process of change. The generation gap

between leaders and staff was proposed as an obstacle in Q17 and Q27. In Q17, the researcher asked if the generation gap would be an issue in adopting the process of change, and 122 (81%) of 150 respondents believed that it was a barrier (Table 5.16).

**Table 5.17: (The Impact of Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders to Apply Strategic Change) Q27**

The Impact of Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders to Apply Strategic Change	Age		
	18-28	29-40	Above 40
Respondents' Answers			
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	17	29	5
<b>Agree</b>	15	33	7
<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	10	5	3
<b>Disagree</b>	2	2	3
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	2	2	0

However, Table 5.17 shows that 106 (79%) of 135 respondents believed that the generation gap could affect the way in which change is adopted, which raises the generation gap as a major issue that public organisations need to consider.

## 5.2. Interview Data

This section summarises the results obtained through interviews, to illustrate the different perspectives of understanding change, strategic change, strategic leadership skills and the generation gap between employees and leaders, and to demonstrate how strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change. Two participants from one of the public organisations were interviewed, and three elements were identified to compare the results between the participants.

First is the participants' understanding of change, strategic change and strategic leadership skills, with some examples of important strategic leadership skills taken from their work experience. Second is the acceptance of applying change in the workplace, and barriers to the adoption of change. Third is the impact of the relationship and mental gap between the older and younger generations in their workplace. The participants are referred to as P 1 and P 2 in order to preserve their anonymity and confidentiality. The interview text is presented in Appendix 2 for P 1 and Appendix 3 for P 2.

### **5.2.1. Understanding of Change, Strategic Change and Strategic Leadership**

According to (P 1): "changes in management can be used to change the objective of the system work in the organisation and employees' work style"; and "the change can be used to develop the work system, responsibility and change objective to be more creative in a regular way". "Strategic change is a long process of strategy, and the effect of strategic change is not immediate, but it needs a long process to get a value from it" (P 1).

P 2 similarly answered that "change is about working to develop the organisation to be up-to-date with world developments by using technology in the organisation, and protecting the environment by using environmental systems". He added that "change in the organisation means regular change, but strategic change should include some goals and preparing plans to adopt it". He was convinced that "regular change can be easy to adopt, but strategic change needs more preparing and factors to succeed applying the change".

However, P 1 and P 2 had different definitions of strategic leadership. P 1 said that "strategic leadership means the quality of the characteristics that should be available in strategic leaders to implement the change". P 2 said that "strategic leadership means the leader who will be leading the organisation to adopt the change, which means that the strategic leader should have individual skills like being open minded, unique and creative to be a leader and to lead the process of change in the organisation".

### **5.2.2. The Acceptance of Strategic Change in the Workplace**

P 1 and P 2 agreed that "change in the workplace is important, and it can help to find the problem and solve it", when they answered the question about the importance of change in their workplace. They also believed that "because of the process of adopting change in their organisation and the security nature of their organisation, staff will not accept the idea of change and the employees are afraid of applying the change" when they answered why they were not adopting strategic change in their organisation. Furthermore, they said that the organisational environment and leaders in the organisation prefer to control the process of change, which affects the staff's willingness to accept it.

P 1 said that “the process of change is adopting from the party; then the higher manager applies it in their organisation and as a member of the organisation I only received my part in terms of change to implement it in the organisation”. On the other hand, according to P 2, “strategic leadership means leaders who can adopt the change and have unique skills to lead the process of change to be successful; but in fact, in my workplace, they are not leaders and they need to improve their skills to be able to lead the process of change”.

### **5.2.3. The Impact of the Generation Gap in the Workplace**

According to P 1, “the generation gap is not the problem in adopting change, but the other elements impact negatively on the process of change. For instance, the older generation do not keep the younger generation from being comfortable with the process of change, and the lack of knowledge in terms of managing and applying the change”. P 1 believed that “the older generation are important to develop the organisation because they have the experience from years of work, but they are the reason to refuse accepting ideas from the staff”. Finally, P 1 said that “it is essential to understand the importance of teamwork to successful adopting of change and solving the generation gap problems”, when he was asked whether the generation gap between employees and managers impacted positively or negatively on adopting change.

However, P 2 said that “the older generation still rules the organisation which is keeping staff inflexible to change”. He also answered “the old generation do not give chance for youth to participate in preparing the plan of change and implementing the process of change”. He said also “The generation gap also impacts directly on the work system, and organisational development”. He gave an example of the old generation’s style of working: “the old generation still use paper and do not accept improving the work system to finish their work, which costs more money and time, while the young generation prefer to use technology to finish their work in a short time with less cost and to protect the environment from pollution”. P 2 also said “This makes employees refuse to adopt strategic change when it is sponsored by the older generation because they believe that the older leaders bury the process of strategic change”.

## **5.3. Summary of the Main Quantitative (Survey) and Qualitative (Interview) Findings**

In this section, the researcher will identify the main results from the quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interview) data.



### **5.3.1. Quantitative (Survey)**

In the survey, 157 respondents of different ages answered the questions. 96% believed that strategic change is essential, although only 59% claimed to understand the term strategic leadership. In terms of acceptance of leaders' orders, 55% of respondents answered that they would not immediately accept their leader's orders, although the remaining 45% would do so. Only 41% of the respondents said that their managers shared the idea of strategic change with them. Finally, a large majority (79%) of 135 respondents believed that the generation gap could affect the way in which change is adopted, which raises the generation gap as a major issue that public organisations need to consider.

### **5.3.2. Qualitative (Interview)**

In the interviews, the participants answered questions covering three main points. On the first point, they explained their knowledge in terms of understanding change, strategic change and strategic leadership. They believed that the way in which strategic change is adopted by the parties can have a negative impact on the process of strategic change. On the second point, the participants believed that strategic change is important in public organisations, although they warned that because of the process of adopting change in their organisation and the security aspect of their organisation, staff will not accept the idea of change; the employees are afraid of applying the change. Finally, the participants believed that the generation gap can have a negative impact on the process of strategic change by encouraging staff to refuse to adopt the strategic change.



## Chapter 6

### Discussion

#### 6.0. Introduction

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In the previous chapter, the researcher collected and analysed the primary data from the survey and interviews to find results that can support the dissertation subject and answer the research question. The primary data was related to understanding change, strategic change, strategic leadership and strategic leadership skills. It also illustrated the impact of strategic leadership skills on adopting the process of strategic change in a public organisation. The effect of the generation gap in applying the strategic change in the public organisation was also covered.

This chapter will focus on drawing together the findings that have emerged from primary analysis and relating the result with other information in the literature review. It will also illustrate the researcher's capacity for reflective and logical argument, to reach the objectives of the study and answer the research question. Finally, this chapter will reflect on the researcher's understanding of the research material, and give insights into the dynamic processes of the topic which the researcher has studied.

#### 6.1. Interpreting the Research Material

The researcher chose the Planning and Implementing of Change Using Strategic Leadership Skills as a subject of the research, with a focus on finding how strategic leadership skills might help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change. The researcher also searched the literature to illustrate the meaning of change, strategic change and strategic leadership, and then related the authors' information from this secondary data with the primary data which was collected from employees who are working in the public sector to find their understanding of the research subject. It also identifies the acceptance towards applying change in the public sector. Finally, the

researcher evaluated the impact of the relationship and the mindset of the generation gap between the older leaders and younger staff by discussing the research question, that is how strategic leadership skills can help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change.

### **6.1.1. Understanding of Strategic Change and Strategic Leadership**

According to Banzato and Julio (2016), it is difficult to define strategic leadership because of the complexity of the variety and multiplicity of functions that may affect the variables and surrounding factors. However, Levasseur (2009) believed that strategic leadership is considered as the leader's personality in terms of teamwork that can affect positively the staff working style to achieve the organisation's aims, and to analyse the working environment to develop a vision to adopt for the future.

From the survey result, all respondents answered Q11; although 59% of them understand the term strategic leadership, this leave 41% who do not understand it or who have never the term (Table 5.12). Interviewees P 1 and P 2 disagreed about the definition of strategic leadership. P 1 said that "strategic leadership means the quality of the characteristics that should be available in strategic leaders to implement the change" (P 1, Appendix 2). However, P 2 said that "strategic leadership mean the leader who will be leading the organisation to adopt the change, which means that a strategic leader who should have individual skills like open minded, unique and creative characteristics to be a leader and to lead the process of change in the organisation" (P 2, Appendix 3).

These results show the difficulty of defining strategic leadership, and this was supported by the opinion of other authors who that said the definition of the strategic leadership is complex (Banzato and Julio, 2016; Kearns et al., 2015; Slavik et al., 2015). On the other hand, the secondary and primary data share similar results concerning explaining the level of understanding of strategic change. The interviewees explained strategic change as a long process needing more preparation to get a value and achieve the goals. P 1 said "strategic change is a long process of strategy, and the effect of strategic change is not immediate, but it needs long processing to get a value from it"; and P 2 said "strategic change should include some goals and preparing plans to adopt it" and "strategic change needs more preparation and factors to succeed applying the change" (P 1, Appendix 2; P 2, Appendix 3).

In the survey, the respondents answered the questions according to their knowledge of the subject of strategic change; 96% believed that strategic change is essential, but the remainder considered that it would not help to improve their organisation (Table 5.3). This means that the majority of staff in the place of study believe in the value of strategic change, and understand it. Similar to the primary results, the secondary results defined strategic change as a process that can redefine the organisational mission, or as a main change in the priorities and aims to find new directions to develop the organisation's performance (Hruska, 2015; Muller and Kunisch, 2018; Santere et al., 2012).

### **6.1.2. Importance of Strategic Leadership Skills in Helping Staff Adapt to Change**

According to the secondary and primary data results, strategic leadership skills are essential to help staff adapt to the change. MacGillivray (2018) said that leaders can use their strategic leadership skills to support staff in increasing their performance. Hughes (2016) and MacGillivray (2018) believed that self-skills, technical skills and management skills could be useful examples of the main skills that should be encouraged by strategic leaders. This means that the strategic leadership skills can support leaders in developing their own characteristics to lead their staff in the public organisations to adopt the process of change (Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018; Palmeira, 2014; Rubens et al., 2018).

In the survey, the respondents answered questions related to whether or not the strategic leadership skills are important in helping staff to adapt to the process of change. The results were surprising in that most of the respondents (95%) answered (positively to this question (Table 5.14). This result was supported supported as 85% of respondents agreed that strategic leadership skills are essential in adopting change in the public sector (Table 5.15). This means that the primary result supports the findings from the literature review; this means that the strategic leadership skills are important knowledge in adopting the process of change in the public sector and achieving the organisational requirements through a successful process of change (MacGillivray, 2018; Palmeira, 2014).

### **6.1.3. Impact of Acceptance of Applying Strategic Change in the Public Organisation's Performance**

According to Muller and Kunisch (2018), strategic change is essential in developing the performance of public organisations, and in impacting positively on transferring the mission of the organisation and the framework, priorities and aims to adopt the strategic change. This was supported by the survey respondents, 96% of whom believed that strategic change is essential (Table 5.3). Strategic change is also important in encouraging staff to adapt with the process of change and achieve the public organisation's requirements (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Muller and Kunisch, 2018).

Hruska (2015) and Santere et al. (2012) defined strategic change as a process that should include plans to change the existing work system by analysing the organisation's situation, and to implement radical change in the psychology, philosophy and sociology of the organisation to achieve the requirements of the world's business environment. Moreover, the method of strategic change can affect the relationship between leaders and staff in adopting the process of strategic change in terms of building strategic leadership skills (Hruska, 2015; Suddaby and Foster, 2017). The secondary information was supported by the interviewees P 1 and P 2; they were in agreement that strategic change in their workplace is important, as it can help to isolate problem and solve them.

P 1 defined strategic change as "a long process of strategy; it will not take effect immediately, but needs a long process to get value from it" (P 1). P 2 also said "strategic change should include some goals and preparing a plan to adopt it" (P 2). P2 was convinced that "the regular change can be easy to adopt, but strategic change need more preparation and factors to succeed in applying the change". In addition, to accept the process of change, the staff should be satisfied with it, and accept the leaders' order to adopt strategic change in the public organisation (Hruska, 2015; Suddaby and Foster, 2017).

However, from the primary data, the responses indicated that 64% of respondents were not satisfied with the process of change in their organisation, with only 36% being satisfied with the level of change in their organisation (Table 5.7). This means that a large proportion of the respondents who answered the survey do not accept the level of change, and are against applying the change; this refusal should be related to the barriers that could negatively affect the application of strategic change (Table 5.7). According to the result in Q5, one of the main barriers was staff refusing to accept their leaders' orders in terms of adopt the strategic change (55%) (Table 5.8).

Additionally, staff need to understand the process of strategic change if they are to accept and apply it, and they need to be convinced of the decisions issued by their leaders if they are to successfully implement the process of strategic change (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Santere et al., 2012). Misunderstandings surrounding the implementation processes of change can also lead strategic change to fail, perhaps threatening the stability of the whole organisation (Kelly and Amburgey, 1991; Santere et al., 2012; Rajagopalan and Spreitzer, 1997). The primary data further supported the information above by showing that most (97%) of the respondents are in agreement that the managers should explain clearly the process of change (Table 5.11).

Furthermore, the leaders need to use strategic skills to encourage staff to accept and adopt strategic change in public organisations (Norzailan et al., 2016; Spaeth, 2001). This is because strategic leadership skills have a positive impact on the decisions, general skills, knowledge and valuable attitudes of leaders of strategic change in the public organisation (Hughes, 2016; Norzailan et al., 2016). According to Norzailan et al. (2016) and Spaeth (2001), strategic leadership skills involve the personalities of leaders that can help to support staff to develop their performance to achieve the public organisation's aims.

The information above shows the importance of understanding strategic leadership skills for acceptance and application of strategic change. Consequently, the researcher asked the interviewees to define strategic leadership skills, and interviewees P 1 and P 2 had different definitions. P 1 defined strategic leadership skills as "the quality of the characteristics that should be available in strategic leaders to implement the change" (P 1), whilst P 2 said that "strategic leadership means the leader who will be leading the organisation to adopt the change, which means a strategic leader who should have individual skills like open minded, unique and creative characteristics to be a leader and to lead the process of change in the organisation" (P 2).

The researcher was also aware of the survey respondents' difficulty in understanding the term strategic leadership, and asked whether they understand the meaning and purpose of the research. Table 5.12 shows that over half (59%) of the respondents understand the term strategic leadership skills, while the remainder either do not understand it or had not heard of it, but were interested in understanding the question.

The respondents were also given suggestions as examples of useful strategic leadership skills that could be helpful in accepting and adopting the process of strategic change. According to the results in Table 5.13, most suggestions from the respondents were related to the personal characteristics, teamwork, emotional intelligence, motivation and participating in making decisions.

Finally, the results from analysis of the secondary and primary data show that strategic leadership skills can help leaders in the public sector to accept and apply the process of strategic change by focusing on the characteristic and the personality of leaders to encourage the staff to participate in the process of strategic change.

#### **6.1.4. Impact of the Generation Gap between Staff and Leaders in Applying Change**

In the current worldwide climate, organisations are facing issues that are encouraging public organisations to think about the future of the work system, which means that they need to be responding, adapting and achieving progress; otherwise they fail in adopting strategic change (Adair, 2016; Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018). One of the main issues is the generation gap between leaders and staff in adopting the process of change (Meyer, 2013; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). According to these authors, this gap means differences in the level of knowledge, culture, motivation and confidence between old managers and younger people in implementing the process of strategic change.

The generation gap issue can encourage the resistance to strategic change in public organisations, which means that the staff may be leading the organisation's failure to implement the process of change (Kulkarni, 2016; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). Moreover, classical management theory has found difficulty in controlling staff resistance in the process of strategic change because they misunderstand the essential nature of resistance, and old management fail to explain the purpose of strategic change to motivate their staff, leading to employees' resistance to adopting the change (Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006). From the survey findings, 81% of the respondents believe that the generation gap is a barrier to adopting the process of strategic change (Table 5.16).

However, 79% of respondents believe that the generation gap could affect the way in which the process of change is adopted (Table 5.17). The respondents' answers are surprising in view of the previous finding that they consider the generation gap as a barrier. Similar to survey findings, interviewee P 1 believed that the generation gap is not

in itself a problem in adopting change; instead, the mind-set of the old leaders is the problem. This because they lack the knowledge to make participants feel comfortable with adopting the process of strategic change (P 1).

P 2 said that in his work place, “the old generation is still ruling the organisation which limits the staff’s flexibility with change”. He continued, “the old generation do not give chance for youth to participate in preparing plans for change and implementing its process”. This supports the ideas of the authors in the secondary data when they suggested that the generation gap could impact negatively when attempting to adopt the process of change (Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). P 2 was also convinced that the generation gap impacts directly on the work systems, and on organisational development (Ritchie, 2006; Waddell and Sohal, 1998). For instance, the older generation still insists on using paper rather than digital technology, which does not support other staff in their efforts to improve the methods of working and developing their efficiency (Ritchie, 2006). “This can lead to costing more money and time, although the younger generation would prefer to use technology to finish their work to save time, and protect the environment from pollution” (P 2).

P 2 also believed that the generation gap continues to make employees refuse to adopt strategic change when it sponsored by the older generation, because they believe that the older leaders are barriers to the process of strategic change. Finally, each organisation has different issues in terms of adopting the process of strategic change, and this was shown in the results of analysis of the secondary (documentation) and primary information (survey and interview results) (Kulkarni, 2016; Ritchie, 2006). Whilst the case studies used are purely anecdotal, they highlight the prevalence of the generational gap between employees within the same department, working under the same government, demonstrating that this is a main issue that is affecting the adoption of change (Adair, 2016; Hughes, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018; Waddell and Sohal, 1998).

## **6.2. Summary of the Discussion**

The researcher chose planning and implementing change using strategic leadership skills as the subject of the dissertation. The focus is on answering the question posed by the study, how strategic leadership skills might help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change. The discussion illustrated the level of staff understanding of change, strategic change and strategic leadership skills in public organisations. It also

demonstrated the importance of strategic leadership skills in terms of helping staff applying change in the public sector, as it showed that most staff believe that strategic leadership skills are essential in adopting strategic change.

Furthermore, the discussion explained the impact of acceptance of applying strategic change in the performance of public organisations. This led the researcher to identifying the main issues that might affect negatively the process of strategic change. Finally, the researcher evaluated the impact of the relationship and mind-sets in the generation gap between the older leaders and younger staff; surprisingly, the generation gap is not the main issue in public organisations in the Kingdom of Bahrain.





## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

This chapter will relate the results with the research aims and objectives of the study, as presented in the Introduction. It will include strategic results that can answer the research question from the researcher's judgement and from management and professional practice by identifying the best options that should be taken. Finally, the chapter will offer new insight arising from the researcher' findings.

#### 7.0. Introduction

Strategic change is important for organisations to develop in line with world development, and it needs unique skills of strategic leadership to adopt the process of change, especially in the public sector. This research focused on the subject of planning and implementing change using strategic leadership skills in the public sector. The study illustrated the importance of the relationship between leaders and staff in teamwork for successful adoption of the process of change in public organisations in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The researcher found difficulty in determining the research methodology because the research included both quantitative and qualitative methods as a mixed method; it was therefore difficult to complete the ethics form in time to meet the deadline. The issue was related to the participants' information sheet and the ethics framework according to the Manchester Metropolitan University requirements. It was solved by following the supervisor's suggestions, which helped the researcher to complete the ethical framework. Another issue was related to the language of the questionnaire. The researcher prepared the survey in English, but the first language of the respondents is Arabic. This was solved by translating the questionnaire into Arabic. This encouraged the respondents to participate, and the researcher was able to collect information from

157 respondents, having solved the issue of language. The researcher used the Online Bristol Analyses to support his primary research, and to give his data credibility by meeting the university requirement in terms of the use of an online survey.

The researcher also found an issue when he came to the interviews, because the staff in the public organisation used as a case study were not helpful, so it took a long time to find participants. This was because of the nature of the work in the organisation, and misunderstanding by the staff of the meaning of strategic change and strategic leadership skills. The researcher also planned to use NVivo to analyse the interviews, but this was not necessary because he only carried out two interviews, and so was able to analyse the data manually.

The research question was 'How would strategic leadership skills help leaders in the public sector to adopt strategic change?' and the specific objectives of the research were, first, to identify the level of acceptance of applying change in the public sector, and the barriers to the successful adoption of the process of change. A second aim was to evaluate the impact of the relationship and mental gap between the older and younger generations. Third, the research focused on exploring staff stakeholder views and leaders' practices related to adopting change, following government requirements in order to develop the organisation. The final objective was to make useful recommendations for adapting to strategic change, to improve the strategic leadership skills of the members applying the process of strategic change in the public sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The discussion concluded that it is difficult to define and understand strategic change and strategic leadership because of the complexity in adopting them in a public organisation. However, the participants showed a good understanding of the terms, supporting authors' opinions in the literature review. The respondents also believed that strategic change is essential in the public sector to survive in the competitive economic environment of the modern world. Moreover, the participants' suggestions indicate that strategic change can be reviewed to find the weak aspects and improve it, and to develop a strategic plan that is flexible to strategic change and improvement.

The researcher illustrated the importance of strategic leadership skills in supporting staff in adopting strategic change, and to using these skills to develop application of the plan for strategic change. Thus, the primary result was supporting the opinion of authors in

the literature review findings, that strategic leadership skills are important in applying strategic change. This means that strategic leadership skills are one of the main aspects in terms of adopting strategic change. From the findings, the researcher believes that strategic leadership skills can support staff applying the change, and their absence can be a barrier to successful adoption of strategic change. Hence, the leaders need to focus on their strategic leadership skills before starting to apply the change, in order to encourage their employees to participate in the process of strategic change rather than resist its application.

The researcher also used a note to ask all the respondents to ignore any questions related to strategic leadership if they did not understand the meaning of the term strategic leadership skills. This because of the difficulty in defining strategic leadership, and the different understanding of the meaning of the personal characteristics related to them. This because each of personal characteristics is different according to the current situation of the public organisation that needs to use these skills to meet its requirements. The understanding of strategic leadership skills also impacts staff acceptance to applying the strategic change in the public sector, which would be a negative impact. This was reflected positively in respondents' interest in terms of understanding the meaning of strategic leadership skills, and in giving examples of useful strategic leadership skills to support staff in adopting strategic change.

Strategic change is essential to improve the performance of a public organisation. To adopt strategic change, the leaders need to identify the barriers that could stop its implementation, by using their strategic leadership skills. In addition, the public organisations are intending to improve staff performance in order to reach their future requirements by improving the work system, and by facing issues that encourage them to reflect their work and identify organisational weakness. This means that public organisations will succeed or fail in achieving their requirements when they adopt strategic change, which can impact the value of the public organisation in the economic environment.

Specific in this study, the researcher chose one of the most important issues identified in the literature review, that is the generation gap between leaders and staff in terms of adopting the process of strategic change. The generation gap is related to the level of leaders' knowledge, culture and personal characteristics in implementing the process of strategic change. The result of the study supported the literature, that the generation gap

is one of the most significant barriers to implementing strategic change, as it is difficult to control employee's resistance to the process. This means that leading public organisations are failing to adopt the process of strategic change, and to face resistance from the employees. However, the questionnaire findings indicated that although 81% of the respondents believe that the generation gap is a barrier, it is not the main issue affecting the work system in public organisations. 79% believed that the generation gap can impact the successful adoption of the process of strategic change in the public sector. This result was supported by the interviewees, who said that the generation gap is not the main problem in applying the change, but the mind-set and lack of knowledge of the type of leaders is the problem; the type of leaders in the case study are not giving youth a chance to participate in the process of change. This barrier has led employees to refuse to adopt strategic change, although surprisingly the barrier is not the reason why members of the public organisation continue to refuse to adopt plan for strategic change in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

## **7.1. Recommendations**

1. The dissertation methodology and question should focus on;
  - I. Conducting more interviews, with a larger sample across a number of government departments, to further explore and understand barriers to effective implementation of strategic change
  - II. Understand the wide-ranging nature of issues encountered in adopting strategic change to keep improving the public organisation
  - III. Measuring the impact of greater understanding of strategic change on its effective implementation within the Government of Bahrain
2. The researcher suggests for the future research to not use the generation gap as a main barrier in the public sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain, allowing for a greater understanding of the wide-ranging causes of a complex issue.
3. The research highlights the importance of continuous analysis of adopting the process of strategic change with a focus on its impact on reaching the organisation aims; specifically within the context of public bodies in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
4. The public organisations in the Kingdom of Bahrain should focus on;

- I. Continued education and knowledge building on strategic change and strategic leadership skills across all departments and levels.
- II. Highlighting the positive benefits on work outcomes and realising organisational aims following the effective implementation of strategic change.
- III. Greater inclusion of all generations, departments and expertise in the planning and implementation of strategic change, particularly for those employees and departmental teams whose participation in change will need individual strategic approaches.
- IV. Enhanced, improved communication between managers and subordinates on the importance of participation in strategic change for the department and government's ability to serve the public; with a focus on efficiency, resourcefulness and transparency.
- V. Clearer channels of communication between the planners, implementors and participants of strategic change, with the possible implementation of a scheme for major strategic change projects to nominate employees who have the skills and resources to track change and offer a channel of communication.



## الفصل 7

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الاستنتاجات

هذا الفصل سيوضح التوصيات المتعلقة بموضوع الدراسة، وسيشمل النتائج الاستراتيجية التي يمكنها الإجابة على سؤال البحث من وجهة نظر الباحث ومن خلال عمله في الإدارة والتجربة المهنية، وذلك من خلال تحديد أفضل الخيارات التي ينبغي اتخاذها. وأخيراً، سيتم توضيح أهم نتائج البحث.

### المقدمة

يعتبر التغيير الاستراتيجي مهمًا لتطوير المؤسسات بما يتوافق مع التنمية العالمية، ويحتاج القائد إلى مهارات فريدة لبناء قيادة استراتيجية تساهم في تبني عملية التغيير، خاصة في القطاع العام. وقد ركز هذا البحث على موضوع استخدام مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية في تخطيط وتنفيذ التغيير في القطاع العام. حيث أوضحت الدراسة أهمية العلاقة بين القادة والموظفين في تطبيق العمل الجماعي من أجل التبني الناجح لعملية التغيير في المؤسسات العامة في مملكة البحرين واثر هذه العملية على تحقيق التنمية المستدامة.

وجد الباحث صعوبة في تحديد منهجية البحث، لأن البحث شمل الطريقة العلمية الكمية والنوعية كطريقة مختلطة لجمع ومناقشة المعلومات. ولذلك كان من الصعب إكمال نموذج الأخلاقيات الخاص بالجامعة في الوقت المناسب للوفاء بالموعد النهائي لتسليم النموذج. وتعتبر هذه المسألة بورقة معلومات المشاركين وإطار الأخلاقيات وفقاً لمتطلبات جامعة مانشستر متروبوليتان. تم حلها باتباع اقتراحات المشرف، مما ساعد الباحث على إكمال الإطار الأخلاقي. كما ان الباحث واجه

مسألة أخرى تتعلق بلغة الاستبيان حيث أعد الباحث الدراسة باللغة الإنجليزية، لكن اللغة الأولى للمشاركين هي العربية. تم حل هذا عن طريق ترجمة الاستبيان إلى اللغة العربية مما شجع ذلك المجبين على المشاركة، مما ساعد الباحث على جمع المعلومات من 157 مشاركاً. استخدم الباحث تحليلاً بريستول عبر الإنترن特 لدعم بحثه الأساسي، ولإعطاء بياناته المصداقية والقانونية، تم اتباع متطلبات الجامعة من حيث استخدام المسح عبر الإنترن特.

كما ان الأهداف المرتبطة للبحث تتعلق أولاً بتحديد مستوى قبول تطبيق التغيير في القطاع العام، والحواجز التي تعيق نجاح اعتماد عملية التغيير. اما الهدف الثاني فهو عبارة عن تقييم تأثير الفوارق العقلية والعمرية على علاقة القادة والموظفين. ثالثاً، ركز البحث على استكشاف آراء أصحاب المصلحة من الموظفين وتجارب القادة المتعلقة بتبني التغيير، وفقاً للمتطلبات الحكومية من أجل تطوير المؤسسات العامة. وكان الهدف النهائي هو تقديم توصيات مفيدة للتكيف مع تطبيق عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي، لتحسين مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية للأعضاء الذين يطبقون عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي في القطاع العام في مملكة البحرين.

وتبيّن في المناقشة إلى أنه من الصعب تحديد وفهم التغيير الاستراتيجي والقيادة الاستراتيجية بسبب صعوبة تبنيها في المؤسسات العامة. ومع ذلك، أظهر المشاركون فهماً جيداً للمصطلحات، مؤيدین آراء المؤلفين في مراجعة الأدبيات. حيث اعتقد المستجيبون أيضاً إلى أن التغيير الاستراتيجي ضروري في القطاع العام من أجل البقاء ومواكبة التطور في بيئة اقتصادية عالمية تنافسية. وعلاوة على ذلك، تشير اقتراحات المشاركين إلى أنه يمكن استعراض التغيير الاستراتيجي لإيجاد جوانب الضعف وتحسينها، ووضع خطة استراتيجية مرنة للتغيير الاستراتيجي بالعمل على تحسين وتطوير مهارات الموظفين.

وأوضح الباحث مهارات القيادة الإستراتيجية في دعم الموظفين في تبني عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي، واستخدام هذه المهارات لتطوير تطبيق خطة التغيير الإستراتيجي. وبالتالي، كانت النتيجة الأولية داعمة لرأي المؤلفين في نتائج مراجعة الأدبيات، وهي أن مهارات القيادة الإستراتيجية مهمة في تطبيق التغيير الاستراتيجي. وهذا يعني أن مهارات القيادة الإستراتيجية هي واحدة من الجوانب الرئيسية التي تساهم في اعتماد التغيير الاستراتيجي. كما أنه من النتائج أن مهارات القيادة الإستراتيجية يمكن أن تساهم بدعم الموظفين الذين يطبقون التغيير، ويمكن أن يشكل

ضعف المهارات القيادية عائقاً أمام تبني التغيير الاستراتيجي بنجاح. ومن ثم، يتعين على القادة التركيز على تطوير مهاراتهم في القيادة الاستراتيجية قبل البدء في تطبيق التغيير، من أجل تشجيع موظفيهم على المشاركة في عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي بدلاً من مقاومة تطبيقه.

كما استخدم الباحث أيضاً ملاحظة للتوضيح لجميع المشاركين في الاستبيان بضرورة تجاهل أي أسئلة تتعلق بالقيادة الاستراتيجية إذا لم يتم فهم معنى مصطلح مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية. وذلك بسبب صعوبة تعریف القيادة الإستراتيجية والفهم المختلف لمعنى المهارات الشخصية المتعلقة بها. وذلك لأن كل مهارة شخصية تختلف باختلاف الوضع الحالي للمؤسسة العامة التي تحتاج إلى استخدام هذه المهارات لتلبية متطلباتها. كما إن فهم مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية يؤثر أيضاً على قبول الموظفين لتطبيق التغيير الاستراتيجي في القطاع العام، والذي سيكون له تأثير سلبي. وقد انعكس هذا بشكل إيجابي في اهتمام المستجيبين من حيث فهم معنى مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية، وفي إعطاء أمثلة مفيدة على مهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية لدعم الموظفين في تبني التغيير الاستراتيجي.

كما ان التغيير الاستراتيجي ضروري لتحسين أداء المؤسسة العامة وذلك لتبني التغيير الاستراتيجي. حيث يحتاج القادة إلى تحديد العوائق التي قد تحول دون تنفيذ هذا التغيير، وذلك من خلال استخدام مهاراتهم في القيادة الاستراتيجية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يجب على المؤسسات العامة تحسين أداء الموظفين من أجل الوصول إلى متطلباتهم المستقبلية من خلال تحسين نظام العمل، ومن خلال مواجهة القضايا التي تشجعهم على تطوير عملهم وتحديد نقاط الضعف التنظيمي. وهذا يعني أن المؤسسات العامة قد تنجح أو تفشل في تحقيق متطلباتها عندما تتبني تغييرًا استراتيجيًّا، مما قد يؤثر على قيمة المؤسسة العامة في البيئة الاقتصادية المحلية والعالمية.

في هذه الدراسة، اختار الباحث واحدة من أهم القضايا التي تم تحديدها في مراجعة الأدبيات، وهي الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفيين من حيث اعتماد عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي. وترتبط الفجوة بين القادة والموظفيين بمستوى معرفة القادة وثقافتهم وخصائصهم الشخصية في تنفيذ عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي وتعاملهم مع موظفيهم. كما أكدت نتيجة الدراسة ما تناولته الأدبيات، التي تعتبر الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفيين واحدة من أهم العوائق التي تحول دون تنفيذ التغيير الاستراتيجي، حيث يصعب التحكم في مقاومة الموظف لهذه العملية. وهذا يعني

أن المؤسسات العامة الرائدة قد فشلت في تبني عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي، ومواجهة مقاومة الموظفين في تطبيق عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي. ومع ذلك، أشارت نتائج الاستبيان إلى أنه على الرغم من أن 81٪ من المستجيبين يعتقدون أن الفجوة العمرية (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفيين تمثل عائقاً، إلا أنها ليست القضية الرئيسية التي تؤثر على نظام العمل في المنظمات العامة. 79٪ اعتقادوا أن فارق السن بين القادة والموظفيين يمكن أن تؤثر على التبني الناجح لعملية التغيير الاستراتيجي في القطاع العام. تم دعم هذه النتيجة من قبل الأشخاص الذين تمت مقابلتهم، والذين قالوا إن فارق السن بين القادة والموظفيين ليس المشكلة الرئيسية في تطبيق التغيير، لكن المشكلة هي الفجوة الذهنية والافتقار إلى المعرفة. حيث لم تسمح مهارات القادة وشخصيتهم في المؤسسة العامة بإعطاء الفرصة للشباب من الموظفين للمشاركة في عملية التغيير. وقد أدى هذا الحاجز إلى رفض الموظفين تطبيق التغيير الاستراتيجي، على الرغم من أن فارق السن ليس السبب الرئيسي وراء استمرار أعضاء المؤسسة العامة في رفض تبني خطة للتغيير الاستراتيجي في مملكة البحرين.

## 7.1. توصيات

1. ينبغي أن يركز الباحث في أسلوب البحث على:

- .I. إجراء المزيد من المقابلات، مع عينة أكبر وعبر عدد من الدوائر الحكومية المختلفة، وذلك لمواصلة استكشاف وفهم العوائق التي تحول دون التنفيذ الفعال للتغيير الاستراتيجي.
- .II. فهم طبيعة القضايا التي تواجهها المؤسسات العامة في اعتماد التغيير الاستراتيجي للحفاظ على تحسين القطاع العام ووضع آلية عمل مناسبة لتطويره.
- .III. قياس أهمية فهم التغيير الاستراتيجي على فعالية تنفيذ خطة التغيير داخل المؤسسات العامة.

2. من الأفضل على الباحثين الآخرين تجنب استخدام مشكلة (فارق السن) بين القادة والموظفيين كحاجز رئيسي في القطاع العام في مملكة البحرين، مما قد يعيق تحليل الأسباب الفعلية لمقاومة عملية التغيير في المؤسسات العامة.

3. التأكيد على أهمية التحليل المستمر لنتائج عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي مع التركيز على تأثيرها في تحقيق أهداف المؤسسة والعمل على تطوير جوانب الضعف في عملية تطبيق خطة التغيير؛ تحديداً في سياق المؤسسات العامة في مملكة البحرين.

4. يجب على المؤسسات العامة في مملكة البحرين التركيز على:

التعليم وتطوير المعرفة بالاعتماد على توضيح أهمية التغيير الاستراتيجي ومهارات القيادة الاستراتيجية لجميع الإدارات وعلى كافة المستويات.

II. تسلیط الضوء على النتائج الإيجابية في حال تحقيق رؤى واهداف المؤسسة بعد التنفيذ الفعال للتغيير الاستراتيجي.

III. العمل على إشراك جميع الموظفين بمختلف فئاتهم العمرية والإدارات والخبرات الموجودة في تخطيط وتنفيذ عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي.

IV. إيجاد آلية لتحسين التواصل بين المديرين والمرؤوسيين وتوضيح أهمية مشاركة الجميع في تنفيذ التغيير الاستراتيجي للإدارة؛ مع التركيز على الكفاءة والحيوية والشفافية وقت التنفيذ.

5. إنشاء قنوات اتصال واضحة بين المخططين والمنفذين والمشاركين في عملية التغيير الاستراتيجي، مع إمكانية اعداد وتطبيق مخطط واضح لعملية التغيير الاستراتيجي وترشيح الموظفين الذين لديهم المهارات والموارد اللازمة والثقافة العلمية المطلوبة لتبني عملية التطبيق ومراجعة نتائجها لتطويرها والمساهمة في انجاحها.





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