

Exploration of the Mediating Relationship for Human Resource Capabilities in Strategic Leadership and Crisis Management

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the importance of strategic leadership in supporting crisis management at training centres of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's positions with emphasis on the supporting role of human resource capabilities (HRC). The study was conducted among 202 respondents comprised of the general manager, assistant manager, and head of departments at the sector of security; these not-so-commonly-studied respondents comprised the management sectors at security firms who were only partially aware of modern management techniques associated with human resource capability and crisis management techniques. Results showed positive significance between strategic leadership and human resource capabilities dimensions, strategic leadership and crisis management dimensions, and human resource capabilities dimensions and crisis management dimensions using structural equations and confirmed factors analysis together with Sobel testing procedures showing human resource capability dimensions acted as full mediator measures because indirect influences were greater than directly established values among management sections at Iraqi firms under chronic instability while Western-supported firms under relatively stable environments would experience major challenges associated with novel management techniques related to human resource capability and crisis management principles at firms under chronic instability.

Keywords: Strategic Leadership, Human Resources Capabilities, Crisis Management, Iraqi Ministry of Interior

INTRODUCTION

Today's organizations face more intense competitive pressures that demand strategic leadership acumen. Such leadership requires a well-defined vision, the capacity for strategic thinking, competence in team building, an orientation towards innovation, adherence to ethical principles, efficient resource allocation, and the ability to plan for the long term. Strategic leaders harness

security capital using planned Orderliness and vision-based implementation, looking at internal and environmental conditions, and synthesising organisational actions across varying organisational levels for the purposes of creating changes facilitating HRC. Effective management of crises has immediate bearing on security competitiveness and preparedness to adapt to environmental changes; otherwise, territory domination and public security would not be guaranteed.

Iraqi national security bodies have been mandated with improving the individual capabilities of security forces under the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) umbrella, training like the counter-IED course at KMSS at the Kirkuk Police Academy included. There is an immediate need to establish strategic leaders/crisis planning expertise to make entities prepared to face future security threats. These training command directories operate with a tremendously high set of stakes, leadership failure directly impacting on a country's security through providing insufficiently trained personnel. But effective leaders with a capability of sustaining progressive modes of education have the prospective mandate of strengthening security forces for managing multi-faceted threats that are complex, such as manifested in the Mosul security decline. The case for Iraq identifies such dynamic, which describes how leadership developmental weaknesses led towards the inability of security forces, yet command such as the Kirkuk Police Academy illustrate their strategic investments that create discernable increments towards managing crises better. This study consequently identifies a cumulative spread of two research questions:

RQ1: In what ways can human resource capabilities and crisis management experiences contribute to strengthening strategic leadership, rather than being limited to outcomes shaped by it?

RQ2: How does the inclusion of personality development metrics advance the understanding of the interrelationships among strategic leadership, crisis management, and leader development?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic Leadership (SL)

Leadership has been described as the achievement of a vision and the fulfilment of organisational objectives through the ability to influence others within the institution (Cortes & Herrmann, 2020). It has also been defined as the integration of behaviours, traits, communication skills, authority, and relationships associated with administrative functions, coupled with the capacity to inspire and guide others in advancing the organisation (Men et al., 2021). Leadership has been found to be an important factor influencing the success or failure of an organization and is therefore viewed as part of the basic structure of developing performance improvement plans to create competitiveness (Soomro et al., 2020). Strategies Trian Leading has grown progressively interesting for management researchers, which has led to a raft of definitions drawing on a range of intellectual traditions. This variety attests to the richness of grasping both the framing and practice of leading strategically. Arguably, leadership capabilities are generated through iterative learning processes that endow leaders with a range of skills for strategic effectiveness.

Development here, consequently, necessitates structured learning, practical engagement, lifelong learning, and deliberate reflection. Strategic leadership has also been operationalized as the ability to keep developing and remain adaptable through the learning of time management, motivation of workers towards corporate objectives, and making strategic organisational transformations (Usman, 2020). Another conception views it as a leader's ability to communicate

purposes, direction, and opportunities to draw out superior performances from internal and external players (Lemoine et al., 2021). Similarly, it has been hypothesised that strategic leadership involves a leader's ability to express organisational vision and values to workers while making suitable decisions for the institution with minimal external intervention (Abu Orabi et al., 2024). It has also been portrayed as an exceptional set of competencies which aid leaders to look forward to challenges, generate conception of chances, flex adaptively, think strategically, and motivate workers to embrace creativity and innovation with the aim of organisational results enhancement (George, 2024). More recently, strategic leadership has been positioned as the capability to accommodate persistent change and unpredictability been encountered in today's management settings (Mohammad et al., 2024). In short, strategic leadership could be hypothetically posited as the total sum of capabilities and skills which aid leaders to adapt with internal and external changes with an eye on making the organisation achieve its set targets and remain competitive. Such capabilities encompass expressing a clear vision, involvement in strategic review and planning, and marshaling human resources with efficiency, consequently aiding organisational development and continuous progress.

Academics (Hitt et al., 2020) further contended that successful strategic leaders go through four major phases when facing abrupt crises: unification, protection, challenge, and integration. They also hold that strategic leadership goes beyond planning and outlining strategies but also involves a mindset that is adaptive with matters relating to ambiguity and unpredictability. Among the top frameworks employed on the topic is the model of Hitt and Hoskinson, which has also been a seminal reference for conceptualising and critiquing strategic leadership. Through the model, strategic leaders are successful because they have the capacity of tying core practices together, such as cautious resource management, the building of human capital, capitalising on competitive advantages, creating a healthy organisational culture, creating balanced mechanisms of control, and being guided at all times through principles of morality and ethics. The model also captures successful leaders as ones descriptive through their capability of making educated decisions at strategic places such as declaring strategic direction, optimising places for resources, attaining organisational balance, creating places for work to a pleasure, and putting morality and ethics at centre circuit.

Human Resources Capabilities (HRC)

Human resource (HR) capabilities are known to play a critical determiner of organisational success and long-term competitiveness. According to argument from (Finsterwalder & Kuppelwieser, 2020), HR capabilities are constructed through the compilation of workers' knowledge and skills applied in the execution of their professional assignments. Such compiled expertise not only refines personal competence but also organisational value through the enabling of implementation of customer results-enhancing strategies. From such an argument, Agustian et al. (2023) operationally defines core HR capabilities as distinct and professional capabilities present in workers, who utilise them to boost efficacy and effect organisational excellence. Similarly, Hirudayaraj and Matic (2021) defines such capabilities as an integrated makeup of experience, capabilities, knowledge, and creativity collectively enabling workers to execute their assignments with heightened efficacy. Additionally, Menne et al. (2022) defines fortifying HR capabilities and skills as value creation enhancement through the development of principles such as integrity, responsibility, cooperation, creativity, and discipline. Collectively, such arguments posit HR capabilities to encompass beyond technical competence, with an integrated assimilation of knowledge, experience, and principles defining worker delivery and organisational success.

Therefore, teams are also actively developing capabilities in order to lay the groundwork for improved results-based performances through carefully planned steps with considerable organisational commitment and operational efficiency impacts (Rezaei et al., 2021). The HR capabilities concept can then be conceived as the repertoire of some attributes required in every position to ensure successful task completion. Their lack makes organisational success an impossible feat to achieve. Competitive advantage maintenance and creation is an area where the HR function has an overriding strategic role to play through an enabling environment supportive of employee-related and work-related capability building. These capabilities constitute success bedrock through enabling processes such as appraisal, development, and recognitions of the employee. Individual capabilities delivery comes first because they empower workers to efficiently and effectively work with positive organisational results feedbacks. It is also stated that rising HR importance is due to an orientation treating the employee as an enthusiastic organisational goal-achievement partner. Out of this orientation, human resource quality emerges as an overriding behaviour determinant of an organisational capability to meet organisational goals. Human capital here refers to a crucial determinant arrived at through employees unique attributes—capability, assumption, needs, and experience—jointly determining behaviour and enabling organisations with regularity and reliability to achieve stated goals (Saks, 2022).

The writer elaborates that work quality is deeply connected with human resource quality, reflected through three principal dimensions: knowledge, including intellectual power, strength of reasoning, and dominance over specialisation expertise; skills, reflecting the potential to utilise operating technologies in prescribed specialties; and capabilities, encompassing characteristics such as loyalty, discipline, cooperation, and responsibility (Balouei Jamkhaneh et al., 2021). For this reason, it is advanced here that superior work is accomplished and sustainable competitive position is preserved with human resources opponents find difficult to replicate, and that HR capabilities are a prime provider of long-term success when organisational objectives correspond with HR capabilities. Successful workers enable organisations to satisfy markets' needs efficiently, either through quality services, product distinction, innovation, or technological development (Roziq et al., 2021). Accordingly, HR becomes an organisational principal preoccupation, considering high-performing organisations' attempts to capitalise staff potential on a higher level of individual effectiveness, organisational continuity maintenance, and institutional objectives attainment.

The author further asserts that developing the cognitive capacities of human capital represents the cornerstone of institutional performance, and preserving this resource necessitates continuous investment in training and organisational learning programmes aimed at improving employee experience and productivity (Chen et al., 2020). Moreover, it is emphasised that HR management's initiatives to strengthen employee capabilities are fundamental to achieving organisational objectives, as HR constitutes the driving force behind institutional activities (Olayinka & Ridwan, 2025). It is argued that human capabilities emerge as the chief drivers for organizational success with regard to different organizational functions and that these represent the basis of institutional assets. It has been found that talent attraction, development, and retention rank among the greatest challenges faced by human resource (HR) managers under competitive circumstances; henceforth, human capability development has been established to be an imperative for fulfilling different organizational objectives (Faugoo, 2024).

Therefore, HR capabilities have been able to mature to become strategic drivers that help achieve organizational outcomes and determine future courses, requiring multiple skill sets to cope with diverse HR challenges and requirements. It is therefore that this study proposes to adopt four

existing constructs of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practice introduced in previous research efforts—that define HR capabilities—and identify these four constructs because of their importance as necessary elements (Alnoor, 2020). They aim at allowing HR to have the needed capability to fulfill developmental objectives and assist with transformation efforts and adaptability improvement. Since human abilities rather than organization ones are captured by these dimensions, it can easily be noted that they are applied on account of research objectives because they are well-known constructs among academics in the field.

Crisis Management (CM)

The idea of crisis management was born out of management science and has found increasing importance in the present era when there are sudden shifts taking place in the environment that impact human life at different levels. It acts as a scientific method and prevention strategy to deal with different types of crises (Raymond et al., 2020). Crisis management can be described as a holistic process which considers a wide range of risks with the potential to threaten stability (Sawalha, 2020). Its main aim is to ensure that operations and response abilities can run effectively while ensuring that interests and reputation are protected (Sawalha, 2020). Proactive efforts are taken by organizations to prevent or minimize negative outcomes while simultaneously concentrating on improving positive outcomes using various techniques with specific focus on organizational learning. They can utilize abilities for gathering and sharing information; making well-informed decisions; and critically analysing alternatives by constructively examining interpretations, alternatives, and their supporting evidence beforehand (Evenseth et al., 2022). According to academicians, to prevent damage to reputation, there is a need to focus on response strategy development efforts, which would necessarily entail engagement with human resources management to address different scenarios and develop related responses (Thakur & Hale, 2022).

A crisis normally entails major updates with regard to management positions and decision-making procedures; hence, it emphasizes the need for systematic preparation to cope with these circumstances. Therefore, crisis management can be described as the rigorous evaluation and forecast of prospective risks that could face an organization with the goal of mitigating uncertainty and taking necessary measures to overcome critical events while ensuring the well-being of workers, the environment, infrastructural assets, and company finances. Over the past decades, crisis management has gradually become an expanding field of academic inquiry owing to growing numbers of crises and natural catastrophes. Evidence shows that structured crisis management plans can prevent loss of life and management expenses associated with particular catastrophes or unexpected events. On this note, the importance of crisis management is evident owing to the major strategic measures taken together by entities to cope with unexpected events requiring rapid responses for fast restoration of normalcy within an organization if not immediate ones. (Abdel-Latif et al., 2022). These efforts range from planning before the occurrence of the crisis to activating mitigation plans when the crisis happens and fast-track processes to get back to normal functioning. It has additionally been argued that implementing crisis management at the strategic level over the whole crisis period ensures that teams can work efficiently and improves individual motivative and empowerment abilities (Buhagiar & Anand, 2021). Therefore, strategic solutions and processes are viewed as critical mechanisms for addressing negative outcomes because they offer responses that assist in managing crises. Crisis situations can indeed cause stress and threats; however, they create possibilities for acquiring new knowledge and improving organizational capabilities (Thakur & Hale, 2022).

BUILDING HYPOTHESES

The Relationship Between Strategic Leadership and Human Resource Capabilities

Studies show that strategic leadership dimensions offer overarching effects on human resource development at the organizational level and can define strategic ways and means of developing these dimensions by implementing: firstly, maintaining a strategic focus; secondly, achieving balanced control at the organizational level; thirdly, efficient management of resources; fourthly, strategic development of the organizational culture; and fifthly, integrating strategic and intangible dimensions of ethics at an organizational level (Zaheenah Chummun & Nleya, 2021). Research also shows that human resource capability results in knowledge creation, development of skills, and expertise application on diverse tasks, as a result, strengthening institutional performance. This is, however, conditional upon effective strategic leadership, which acts as the organisations' motivator through their reliance on strategic thinking. This observation is vindicated by scholars who posit that strategic leadership is the organisations' principal enabler of human resource capability activation and growth (Papa et al., 2018).

Strategic leadership involves looking into the future, identifying what is likely to happen, planning appropriate action for responding, while at the same time inspiring staff members to be active organisational processes participants and individual professional developmental participants. This guarantees organisational long-term sustainability. This isn't a managerial approach, but a way of thinking, practice, and leverage which allows for knowledge transferral, knowledge of expertise, and best exploitation of individual talent. Without this, activation and developmental exploitation of man-power capabilities become erratic and incapable of satisfying organisational or future goals needs. In addition, strategic leadership is seen as a foundation for talent acquisition, retention of skilled workers based on formal training, qualifications, developmental activities on a continuous basis, motivational plans, and capacity development activities. Current evidence shows that its role goes beyond talent management, which includes stimulating organisational innovations within the sphere of man-resource, making it a crucial mechanism for gaining sustainable competitive advantage (Liu et al., 2019).

H1: There is a significant effect of strategic leadership on human resources capabilities.

The Relationship Between Strategic Leadership and Crisis Management

Strategic leadership is a primary driver of the organisational ability of managing crises efficiently and effectively. Strategic leadership allows for planning, which looks towards the future, for protecting organisational functions and activities from the continuity perspective of the long-term perspective. It can be achieved in the long run with efforts directed at training and developing employees and building organizational capacity with appropriate incentives provided by adequate finances. On the other hand, strategic leadership optimizes the capacity of the organization for internal and external environment analysis and resource allocation with optimal utilization simultaneously building positive engagement with various stakeholders. By formulating strategic plans effectively, leaders can make sound judgments on how to implement these plans and schedule tasks so that individual efforts would be optimized to achieve outstanding performances with constituting competitive advantages simultaneously because strategic leadership is viewed as an immediate requirement for crisis management (Sunoto & Eko, 2025).

Furthermore, strategic leadership is closely linked with motivating members of an organization to work towards achieving strategic objectives while at the same time increasing the ability of human resources to timely and efficiently react to crises. The level at which leaders can inspire members of an organization and create a spirit of teamwork directly influences their commitment and efficiency in reaching strategic objectives, thus increasing the efficiency of members of an organization in responding to crises. Essentially, strategic leadership entails the systematic development and advancement of members of an organization with an objective of ensuring these members fit well into crisis response management. It enhances response mechanisms through strategic management practices (Gandrita, 2023).

In this regard, strategic leadership can be pointed out to be an important tool for developing methodologies which can reduce effects of crisis while conserving integrity within an organization. Thus, strategic leadership can pointedly be declared to be an important tool for every organization which aims at improving the quality of operations with growth and viability.

H2: There is a significant effect of strategic leadership on crisis management.

The Relationship Between Human Resources Capabilities and Crisis Management

Human resource capabilities represent an indispensable aspect of organizational processes because of their inherent closeness to knowledge development processes necessary for improving individual capability and ensuring activity alignment with strategic objectives. By leveraging human resource capabilities, it becomes possible to manage crises effectively through systematic gathering and sharing of information among employees, ensuring strategic adjustment and accomplishment of objectives within internal and external contexts simultaneously. In addition, human resource capabilities help create new knowledge from previous experiences, which tends to increase overall capability and competitiveness within organizational performances. These elements, therefore, demonstrate strategic importance for establishing organizational trends and policy formulation processes. Development of human resource capabilities acts as an activity facilitating dynamic capability development together with human potential capability development for knowledge acquisition and application processes related to sustainable performances and crisis management efficiency. Achievement of this requirement requires significant efforts at organizational knowledge utilization and integration of various abilities or skills under an overarching structure that entails processes, information systems, organizational structure, and strategic focus (Akdere & Egan, 2020). Therefore, human resource capabilities form vital pillars for efficient management of crisis situations within any organization.

H3: There is a significant effect of human resources capabilities on crisis management.

The Relationship Between the Study Variables (Strategic Leadership, Human Resource Capabilities, Crisis Management)

In scholarly investigations of empirical relationships between research variables, there appears to be conceptual interrelatedness between strategic leadership dimensions and human resource capabilities related to crisis management. Strategic leadership can virtually be perceived more or less as a strategic channel or avenue for ensuring an efficient crisis management system, providing mechanisms for formulating an organizational vision and setting an implementation schedule for said vision or mission. For instance, strategic leadership influences human resource capabilities related to processes of improvement and innovations. The human resource

capabilities are virtually responsible for responding to environmental organizational dimensions and generating knowledge necessary for an enhanced efficiency and productivity output.

In this paradigm, human resource capability with intellectual, technical, behavioral, and skill-based perspectives becomes increasingly important for improving the efficiency of crisis management activities not only before any given crisis but also with regard to restoration of business activities. Strategic leadership influences the growth of human resource capabilities with perspectives associated with resource management, team-building, and creation of an environment conducive to sharing knowledge and experience. Hence, while conceptualizing the roles associated with strategic leadership, human resource capability, and crisis management practice, these constructs can themselves be looked at from interrelated perspectives associated with complementary roles. Activation of strategic leadership enhances human resource capability and hence optimises efficiency associated with crisis management practices. Crisis management practice reiteratively enhances leadership trust and trustworthiness with roles associated with improvement of human resource capabilities. Strategic leadership becomes an important basic element for ensuring organisational success with roles associated with optimised human resource development and crisis management efficiency; strategic leadership roles can impair unfavourable outcomes associated with organisational challenge management practices.

H4: There is a significant indirect effect of strategic leadership on crisis management through the mediating role of human resources capabilities.

A conceptual research model was developed to clarify the mediating role of HRC in the relationship between SL and CM. In line with the objectives of the study, a hypothetical framework was formulated, as presented in Figure 1, which depicts how HRC operates as a mediating variable within the significant association between SL and CM.

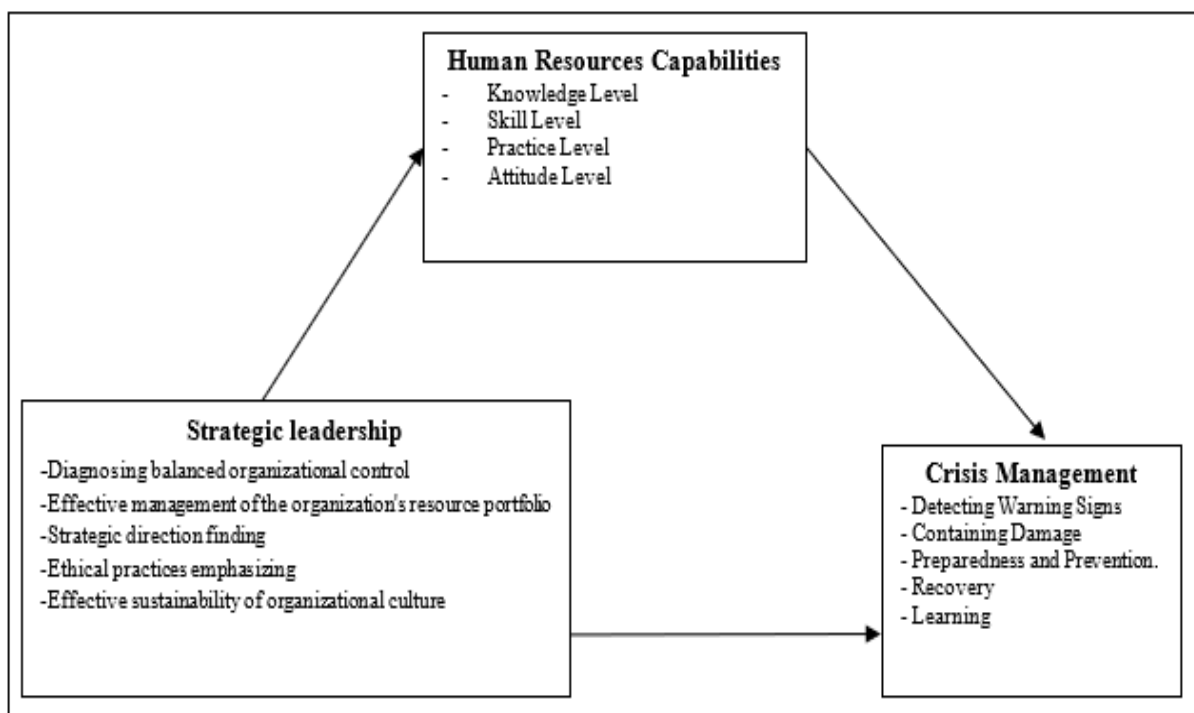


Figure 1: Research Model

METHODOLOGY

The basis for this study rests with the challenges and shifts that have been occurring at the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's training complex, exemplified by the subordinate directorates: the General Directorate of Training and Qualification; the Police College; the Higher Institute for Security and Administrative Development; the Police Commissioners' Training Institute; the Leadership Preparation and Qualification Centre; and the Women's Training Institute. There appears to be empirical verification of this system's propensity for experiencing crises at random yet with considerable regularity; hence, the need for urgent intervention measures becomes important. On this theme, strategic leadership becomes a fundamentally important intervention instrument for facilitating strategic thinking and fast action on behalf of leaders using well-mobilized human resource capabilities. Henceforth, well-mobilized human resource capabilities reduce the risk of negative consequences associated with experiencing system crises; therefore, research seeks to explore strategic leadership's contribution to facilitating crisis management with specific emphasis on human resource capabilities's role within this case study's specific research paradigm.

STUDY SCALES

The research used three main scales for measurement with regard to analyzing variables. For strategic leadership as the independent variable, the research applied the measurement scale designed by Hitt and Hoskisson; this scale has five dimensions: defining strategic direction, acquisition of balanced strategic control of organization, acquisition of efficient management of organizational resource portfolios, maintenance of organizational culture, and strategic behavior with regard to ethics. The scale has a total of twenty items arranged equally into every dimension. For crisis management, which acts as the dependent variable, the study used a scale with five dimensions: recognition of early signs of an event, preparedness and prevention of the event's consequences, limiting damage caused by the event, restoration processes, and organizational learning. The scale has a total of eighteen items with four items for every first three dimensions and three items for every other two dimensions. For human resource capabilities, which acts as the mediator variable, the research applied a scale with four dimensions: knowledge, skills, attitude, and practice (Zhu & Li, 2021). The scale has a total of twenty-seven items with six items for knowledge and seven items for every other three dimensions. Altogether, these three measures cover a total of sixty-five items.

These were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree." Reliability analysis was done using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to test how well items relate to measures of internal consistency and construct validity using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To test these measures and models using structural equations, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used because of the large-scale applications of this model not only within management studies but other studies including sociology and economic studies too. Both analytical and descriptive models were applied to test these measures and models. Data analysis was done using "SPSS" and "AMOS," which was applied with necessary references to management studies and human resource management theories respectively.

STUDY COMMUNITY AND SAMPLE

The directorates of training complexes in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior were purposefully selected as the research setting because of their importance within the ministry. These directorates bear major roles in qualifying human resource capabilities, promoting strategic leadership at different levels, supporting efficient management processes, dealing with emergencies at strategic moments, and implementing joint immediate actions. The directorates included within this research project are: The General Directorate of Training and Rehabilitation; The Police College; The Higher Institute for Security and Administration Development; The Institute for Preparing Police Commissioners; The Centre for Preparing and Rehabilitating Leaders; and The Women's Training Institute. The study sample comprised 202 respondents, which included general managers, assistant directors, and heads of sections for these directorates. These were selected based on their considerable knowledge of the study variables and their close affinity with the objectives and strategic vision of the directorates. Table 1 below shows a detailed scientific description of members included in the study sample:

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics for Study Sample

Demographic Characteristics	Target Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Males	180	89.10
	Females	22	10.89
Age Groups	30 and Under	7	3.46
	31 – 40	59	29.20
	41 – 50	74	36.63
	51 – 60	57	28.21
	61 and Over	5	2.47
Educational Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	29	14.35
	Higher Diploma	19	9.40
	Master's Degree	106	52.47
	Doctorate	48	23.76
Years of Service	10 and Under	9	4.45
	11 – 15	33	16.33
	16 – 20	69	34.15
	20 – 25	79	39.10
	26 and Over	12	5.94
Job Position	Manager	12	5.94
	Assistant Manager	48	23.76
	Head of Department	142	70.29

RESULTS

Measurement Model Analysis (Descriptive Statistics and Correlation)

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis outcomes. The mean score, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation for different major variables can be given as: strategic leadership (mean = 3.528, SD = 0.726, CV = 20.58%), human resource capabilities (mean = 3.472, SD = 0.748, CV = 21.55%), and crisis management (mean = 3.223, SD = 0.675, CV = 20.94%). On performing Pearson correlation analysis, it was revealed that there exist statistically significant positive linkages between strategic leadership and human resource capabilities ($r = 0.865$, $p < 0.10$) and strategic leadership and crisis management ($r = 0.790$, p

< 0.10). In addition to that, an intense positive association was found between human resource capabilities and crisis management ($r = 0.884$, $p < 0.10$). These outcomes seem consistent with the test hypotheses; hence, they reinforce the strength of the proposed research's theoretical framework.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviations, Coefficient of Variation and Correlations for Main Variables

Variables	M	SD	C.V	1	2	3	3
Strategic Leadership	3.528	0.726	20.58	1	**0.865	**0.790	**0.790
Human Resources Capabilities	3.472	0.748	21.55	0.865**	1	0.884**	0.884**
Crisis Management	3.223	0.675	20.94	**0.790	**0.884	1	1

Note: N=202, ** $p < 0.01$

Reliability and Validity Measurement

Table (3) shows the output of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The estimates of parameters were considered reasonable and acceptable if their estimates were more than 40%. The critical ratio or statistical criterion was used to establish significance, with lower values of standard error reflecting higher reliability of estimates. These estimates were found significant if the value of critical ratio was more than 2.56 at 1% significance level or 1.96 at 5% significance level (Fadhil et al., 2023). With the exception of two factors under the Continuous Improvement factor, all other factor loading scores were well above 0.40. Further still, basic fit criteria under structural equation modeling were met. Comparison of reliability analysis was summarized in a table below; alpha scores stood well above 0.7, which can only mean that there was much consistency within the instrument. It can therefore be safely concluded that both validity and reliability criteria were met under structural analysis using the instrument under study.

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Alpha

Variables (Dimensions)	Cronbach's Alpha	Loading	Quality Indicators
Strategic Leadership	0.907		
(Determining Strategic Direction)	0.922	.780	$\chi^2 = 333.144$
		.777	CIMN/DF=2.177
		.643	CFI=0.926
		.316	TLI=0.908
(Diagnosing Balanced Organizational Control)	0.873	.529	RMSEA=0.077
		.648	
		.630	
		.656	
(Effective Management of the Organization's Resource Portfolio)	0.878	.730	
		.801	
		.595	
		.741	
(Effective Sustainability of Organizational Culture)	0.871	.782	
		.819	
		.732	
		.747	
(Emphasizing Ethical Practices)	0.881	.861	
		.776	
		.771	
		.875	

Table 3 (continued): Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Alpha

Variables (Dimensions)	Cronbach's Alpha	Loading	Quality Indicators
Human Resources Capabilities	0.94		
(Knowledge Level)	0.927	.804	$\chi^2=541.444$
		.736	CIMN/DF=1.769
		.729	CFI=0.937
		.688	TLI=0.928
		.596	RMSEA=0.062
		.761	
(Skill Level)	0.923	.694	
		.780	
		.755	
		.838	
		.811	
		.788	
		.703	
(Attitude Level)	0.915	.775	
		.755	
		.599	
		.730	
		.818	
		.684	
		.660	
(Practice Level)	0.922	.774	
		.774	
		.803	
		.777	
		.863	
		.714	
		.739	
Crisis Management	0.791		
(Detecting Warning Signs)	0.706	.837	$\chi^2=149.289$
		.876	CIMN/DF=1.623
		.855	CFI=0.970
(Preparedness and Prevention)	0.798	.698	TLI=0.961
		.414	RMSEA=0.056
		.469	
		.775	
(Containing Damage)	0.817	.859	
		.835	
		.536	
(Recovery)	0.701	.885	
		.845	
		.808	
(Learning)	0.702	.900	
		.759	
		.719	

Tests of Hypotheses

This study examined the influence of strategic leadership on crisis management through the utilisation of human resource capabilities. The SEM, together with the results presented in

Table 4, outlines the direct effects, critical ratios (C.R.), and levels of statistical significance (p-values).

Table 4: Path Coefficients, S.E, C.R, and P-Values

Effect	Hypotheses	B	S.E	C.R.	P
Direct Effect	Strategic Leadership → Human Resources Capabilities	0.891	0.037	24.401	***
	Strategic Leadership → Crisis Management	0.096	0.061	1.582	0.114
	Human Resources Capabilities → Crisis Management	0.717	0.059	12.180	***
Indirect Effect	Strategic Leadership → Human Resources Capabilities → Crisis Management	0.639			

Hypothesis 1: There is evidence that strategic leadership has statistically significantly positive effects on human resource capability with beta = 0.891 and significance < .001.

Hypothesis 2: The result reveals that there is a statistically significant positive impact of strategic leadership on crisis management ($\beta = 0.096$, $p < 0.001$).

Hypothesis 3: The result shows that human resource capability has a positive impact on crisis management ($\beta = 0.717$, $p < 0.001$).

Hypothesis 4: For examining the role of human resource capabilities as a mediator between strategic leadership and crisis management, bootstrap analysis was carried out with 5,000 subsamples at a 95% confidence level. The analysis showed that the mediator's effect was statistically significant; therefore, hypothesis four was supported.

Composite interpretation: Results from structural equation modelling attest to the fact that strategic leadership has both direct and indirect influences on crisis management, which occur indirectly through human resource capabilities, as illustrated in Figure 2 below:

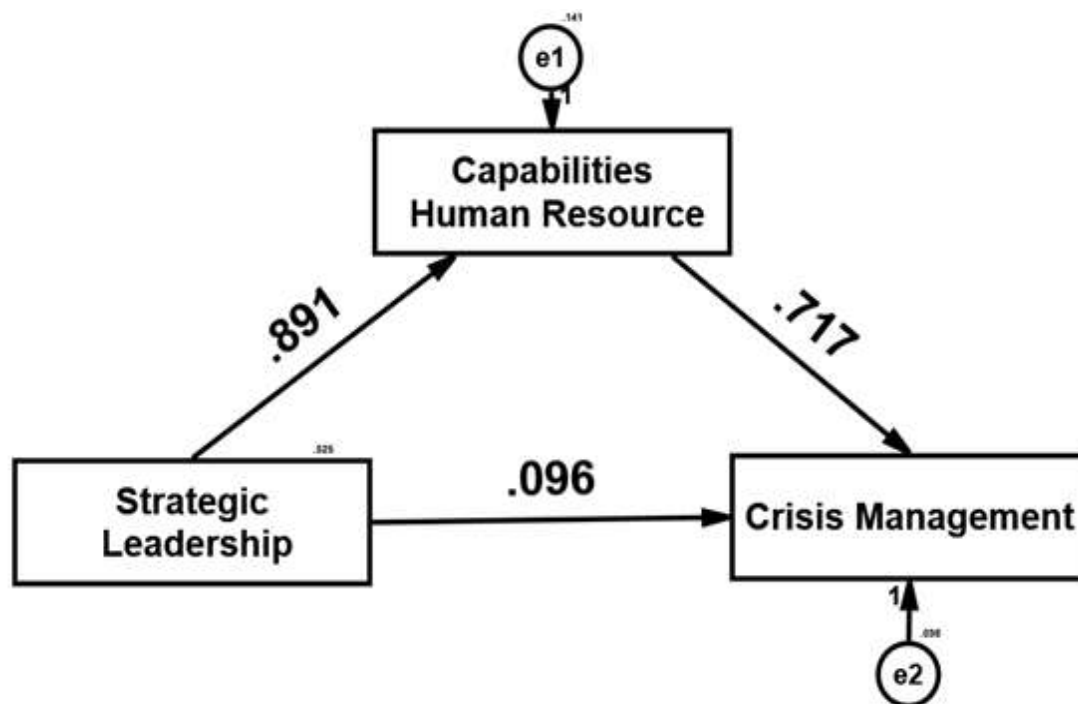


Figure 2: Structural Model

The outcomes show that human resource capabilities form an important mediating variable that influences both strategic leadership and crisis management systematically. In particular, it was established that the indirect effect of strategic leadership on crisis management via human resource capabilities was 0.639, which was significantly higher compared to the direct effect of strategic leadership on crisis management at 0.096. In addition, it was found that the critical ratio (CR) value of the direct effect of strategic leadership on crisis management was 1.582, which was lower than the required significance level of 1.96. The result therefore confirmed that when human resource capabilities were held constant, strategic leadership would not affect crisis management significantly. The finding therefore provided evidence to support the conclusion that human resource capabilities fully mediate the strategic leadership and crisis management relationship because strategic leadership does not directly affect crisis management but only affects it indirectly through the development and improvement of human resource capabilities. It can therefore be concluded that human resource investment at training institutions could play a central role in promoting crisis management efforts through efficiency improvement in addressing and overcoming specific crises among training entities. The hypothesis suggesting strategic leadership's significant positive effect on crisis management because of human resource capabilities was therefore statistically significant. Finally, to determine if human resource capabilities form an important mediator among strategic leadership and crisis management, it was necessary to conduct a Sobel test (Enkvetchakul, 2014). The test is represented in Figure 3 below: Figure 3: Sobel Test

Input:		Test statistic:	p-value:
t_a	24.401	Sobel test:	10.89778294
t_b	12.180	Aroian test:	10.89046419
		Goodman test:	10.90511647
Reset all		Calculate	

Figure 3: Sobel Test Based on Critical Values

DISCUSSION

The evidence suggests that strategic leadership does not directly affect crisis management but rather indirectly through human resource capability, which acts as the main mediator between strategic leadership and crisis management. It can be confirmed that human resource capability sustains an indirect effect greater than the direct effect of strategic leadership because human resource management acts as the main channel or system that translates strategic orientations into action so that these problems can be efficiently addressed by the organization. The main points addressed in this study can be summarized below:

1. Cross-national comparisons highlight the need for investment in human resource development for enhanced institutional recovery credibility and effectiveness for crises aftermaths. For example, the post-genocide experience of Rwanda describes how trauma-sensitive leadership and specialised training allowed security institutions to survive despite limited resources.
2. South Africa faced serious problems subsequent to the eradication of apartheid, primarily because of a lack of investment on the part of skill development. This deficit turned institutional culture into a barrier, which resisted the implementation of new practice.

3. In Iraq, tribal leadership and social networks held a double position, sometimes reinforcing, at other times undermining, state crisis responses. Nonetheless, those programs which brought tribal entities into action and involved women at the grassroots level of community-based policing showed innovative ways of turning potential disrupters into vital bases of security support.
4. Essentially, every case reported implies that strategic leadership reaches optimal performance if it can activate human resources and integrate these resources into crisis management mechanisms within an organization.
5. On the other hand, these interdependencies imply inherent risks with which or under which these systems coexist and function.
6. The awakening of strategic leadership enhances human resource development efforts, improves mechanisms for crisis management, eases resource management portfolios, and ensures ethical governance. For instance, Singapore's Civil Defence introduced strategic national response measures to threats of health crises like SARS, hence ensuring an established proactive crisis management system.

Evidence obtained from different settings shows that strategic leadership and human resource capacity development together lead to complementary resilience in health crises, security threats, or economic struggles. Training-focused strategies using foresight techniques show superior effectiveness over resource-focused plans that can actually become inefficient because of rigid management structures and ineffectual adaptability to innovative techniques. Cross-case analysis shows systematically interrelated outcomes related to strategic leadership and crisis management scenarios wherein human capacity development holds a pivotal position at which strategic thinking yields real grassroots-level deliverables. Organizations with proactive focus on diverse human capital and located at an innovative frontier seem more receptive and prepared to face imminent threats and challenges. Thus, strategic leadership together with human resource development appears vital for defending robustness and system stability at times of crisis (Amanah et al., 2022; Shyaa et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Findings show that strategic leadership, with emphasis on strategic guidance, resource management acumen, protection of organizational culture, and moral guidance, has a positive effect on crisis management effectiveness within the Iraqi security sector. The positive impact would be reinforced if strategic leadership concerns focus on human resource capability-building because leaders create an environment wherein technical abilities, behavioural potentials, and procedures can similarly develop. On this score, human resource capability serves as an intervening variable that bridges strategic leadership processes with improved crisis management outcomes because it enhances human resource resilience with proactive leadership supervision and resource management acumen. The study, however, does not show that strategic leadership can benefit from strategic thinking or moral/personality development because these two were not subject matters directly investigated. Although growth factors related to moral/personality concerns could and would normally relate to capability-building indirectly because capability-building was not regarded as a separate subject matter but related to strategic thinking directly and leadership/organizational management concerns. On balance, strategic leadership integration with structured capability-building efforts would seem necessary if sustained organizational performance or adaptability was to occur or improved because of improved adaptability brought about by capability-building efforts related to crisis management response preparation and organization management at large because improved adaptability makes these public sector bodies more efficient with sustained capability-building efforts related to leadership/organizational management concerns or capability-building efforts on specific human

resource matters at large because these affairs directly relate to improved adaptability because improved adaptability translates into efficiency or adaptability with sustained capability-building efforts related to leadership matters at large because improved adaptability translates into efficiency or adaptability with sustained capability-building efforts because improved adaptability would make these public sector bodies more efficient with sustained capability-building efforts because these two directly relate to improved adaptability because improved adaptability translates into efficiency or adaptability because improved adaptability would make these public sector bodies more efficient with sustained strategic leadership efforts because improved adaptability would make these public sector bodies more efficient because improved adaptability translates into efficiency or adaptability because improved adaptability would make

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