

Analysis and Necessity of Developing the Strategy and Strategic Planning of Organizations in the International Coronavirus Crisis

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Abstract: Today's world is the era of information and communication technology and many experts believe that the outbreak of Coronavirus in this era has significantly affected various areas of human life, including managerial, social, political, economic, educational and other issues. This virus has crossed different boundaries in a short period of time. COVID-19 has disgraced and oppressed the organizations which had no human-like perspective on the retention of their organization. On the contrary, this virus created a new opportunity for organizations in the new managerial discipline to aggravate themselves during the outbreak, transition and post-heat of the outbreak of this crisis and also gain some benefits through management. The present study aimed to analyze the necessity of developing the strategy and strategic planning of organizations in the international coronavirus crisis. The difficulty of managing this crisis, especially in the specific conditions of Iran, the unknown nature of this disease, and the lack of sufficient experience provided the context for creativity and various innovations. Such valuable experiences will provide valuable reserves to the health care system in Iran and the world if being managed and turned into explicit knowledge. In addition, neglecting such an issue will lead to the loss of this huge capital.

Keywords: Coronavirus, crisis management, health, strategy, planning, decision making

1. Introduction

Crisis management process is mainly a preventive activity. In other words, three-quarters of activities and budgets should be spent on prevention (preparedness, increasing resilience, training, enacting and enforcing laws, reforming infrastructure) by considering the expected risk. In any crisis which may occur, it is essential to implement a scientific response (not an emotional response or a purely physical-practical response to the consequences of the crisis). A variety of phenomena can be expected from fear to extensive harm. Today, governments should consider the appropriate budget, medical equipment, and specified medical locations to implement management decisions due to the high prevalence of COVID-19. In addition, the peace of mind among the people in the society is significant in the crisis of the disease. Thus, the governments and the affiliated organizations provide daily reports on the crisis. Furthermore, they attempt to improve the spirit of people and patients of COVID-19 through different media (Davari, 2020). Due to the prevalence of Coronavirus and the effect of this disease on global trades and businesses, most organizations seek for the ways of reducing or controlling the potential harms of this crisis. The strategies which align the existing infrastructure of organizations with the new-emerging market trends will provide a significant growth for businesses. Vulnerable businesses throughout the world have had significant reductions in their revenues over the past few weeks. Many companies have been able to conduct some reactive measures to prevent major losses such as creating remote arrangements, retaining and securing supply chain cooperation, reducing workload, reducing costs, and demanding for government support. The organizations which are resilient and respond positively to changes have significant opportunities in the current conditions and can use such opportunities to change or adjust the infrastructures, products/ services, enter the market, and create new strategies (Jamali Nejad, 2018). Strategic response to the current crisis needs a high degree of creativity, an open mind to challenging assumptions, and tendency to search among threats and accept new opportunities created by COVID-19. Management and organization consultants will be with companies and organizations in this way to find and apply effective solutions. Weak and vulnerable sections of any society usually suffer the most in crises, especially the crisis of the new Coronavirus outbreak. Thus, the government and organizations should provide some facilities to this group, so that they can meet their basic needs, including their physical and mental health. In addition, there are many problems such as business closures, lack of service personnel, insufficient control over the transmission chain, the recommendations of the ministry of health to stay at home, lack of equipment, medical space, and convalescent home, and so on during the crisis. We will face lots of problems after the crisis period. The adverse economic effects on the family and society is one of the most important effects. Thus, strategic management is highly vital and important in determining the effective solutions to go through this period and the post-crisis period, as addressed in this study.

Based on the issues raised in this study, the researcher intended to find the significance and necessity of the organization's strategy and strategic planning in the international Coronavirus crisis?

Concepts

1. Crisis

From a decision-making perspective, a crisis exists only when the decision maker believes that he has faced it. Thus, any situation, no matter how unusual or dangerous, is not critical as long as the people involved with it do not believe that they are facing a crisis (Roberts, 1988). Although most of what is defined by a person or crisis group may not be defined by another, it may not be defined a crisis to someone else. However, this issue is not true at all in large global crises such as the outbreak of the new Coronavirus. Azizi and Azar, (2020). Nevertheless, crisis is an increasingly significant and influential topic in the management literature that some researchers believe that it may become the dominant condition of organizations (Pedersen et al., 2020).

2. Corona

The respiratory infectious disease, which kills more than 5% of sufferers (Onder et al., 2020) and is known as the new Coronavirus, scientifically known as COVID-19, has been abbreviated to "Corona". The Coronavirus crisis refers to the challenges which began in China in 2020 and spread throughout the world. Such challenges have led to quarantine of many cities and countries around the world, long-term closure of many organizations, disruptions in the production of many products, fundamental changes in consumption and production patterns, and fundamental changes in relations patterns at the personal, interpersonal, organizational, national and international levels in addition to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

3. Strategy

The word strategy, interpreted as "Rahbord" in Persian language, is a concept which originated in the military field and has become highly applicable in other areas including economics, trade, and especially politics and statecraft. The root of the word "strategy" Greek as called "strategia" which means command and leadership. The simple meaning of strategy means an operational plan to coordinate and organize actions for achieving the goal. (Ebrahimzadeh, 2004). In the military field, strategy generally means the transfer of forces behind the frontline and on the front before getting involved with the enemy. When the military forces encounter the enemy forces on the front, this is a tactic not a strategy. In the past, especially during the era of the Napoleonic Wars, there was an obvious distinction between strategy and tactic. Strategy was related on whatever happened behind the frontline and tactic was related to leading the war from the beginning of the 20th century and strategy found a place in national tactic and policy with the advent of the word strategy and national policy. This situation made the definitions of national policy, strategy, and tactic during World War I, which were highly widespread and the involved countries had to fight on several fronts, ineffective. In this regard, the new word and concept "word macro strategy" emerged which was a combination of the concept of strategy and national policy. Macro strategy was a concept in which sectoral strategies such as military strategy, economic strategy, political strategy, and trade strategy were regarded.

The concept of strategy is highly used in politics. Carl von Clausewitz, one of the world's great strategists, has stated that war is the continuation of politics in other ways. Accordingly, when politics became military methods and was called strategy in the past, the word "strategy" was used for the macro-political plan of the country.

4. Decision-making

Decision-making is a synonym to "intention and will", but in the specialized term, decision-making is introduced as the essence of management science and different definitions have been provided. Simon in the simplest and shortest definition, considered the definition of decision-making as a synonym to will. Decision making has been also defined as the process of identifying and solving problems (Evans and Bahrami, 2020). In addition, since Panda's decision-making strategy focuses on soft and participatory decision-making, both these factors should be regarded. Accordingly, participatory decision-making can be defined as an open and continuous process which aims to provide an opportunity for all those involved in the issue to express and exchange opinions on each issue (Mintzberg, 1993). In addition, soft decision making emphasizes the problem formulation as flexible and questionable, although it can be solved using quantitative and qualitative methods (Roy et al., 2007).

5. Organizational strategic planning:

According to Carpenter and Saunders, strategic management is the process through which an organization manages to development and implementation of strategy, while they believe that strategic management is what managers conduct for developing the strategies of an organization. Pierce and Robinson defined strategic management as a set of decisions and actions which result from the development and implementation of designed plans to achieve company goals, while many other scientists defined strategic management as at least a regulatory process for long-term orientations in the organization.

Strategic management process is used for complying to the ever-changing market conditions and competitive structure with organizations which constantly develop the main resources, capabilities, and competencies. Heath et al., Carpenter, Saunders, Robbins, and Coulter considered the strategic management process as a complete set of commitments, decisions, and actions required for an organization

to achieve strategic competition and efficiency higher than the average level. Strategic inputs are normally derived from the analysis of internal and external environment and are required for developing and implementing an effective strategy (Torbatinejad and Cheraghali, 2014). Strategic planning is a process that most successful companies in the world use for guiding and advancing their plans and activities with a long-term vision to achieve goals and fulfill organizational mission. This kind of planning which has been often used by big organizations and companies leads to the selection of strategies which will bring excellence to the organization and create a competitive advantage in organizations if implemented properly in a timely manner.

Challenging categories in management and planning in the Coronavirus crisis

1. **Gap of allocated credits:** One of the challenges of crisis management at the local level is the lack of required credits to deal with unexpected situations. One of the complaints expressed by participants was the lack of allocating the required credits to deal with crises. Preserving medical measures and the need to personal protective tools such as masks for infection ward, scrubs, shields, and disinfectants are the necessary measures in the Coronavirus crisis management. In addition, the thermometer was one of the urgent needs of patients that required credits. The local manager asked for the help of donors to provide it immediately and the Crisis Management Headquarters had no credit for meeting the urgent needs. In the face of dealing with crisis and damages caused by it, as well as its consequences, they often resort to the help of donors and the crisis headquarters has no credit to deal with the crisis. The lack of sufficient credits to deal with the emergency situation caused by a crisis causes many pervasive challenges to local managers. One of the problems of Iran in solving the consequences of the crisis, as well as managing and addressing the problems caused by the crisis is that there is no special budget for dealing with the crises. In addition, insufficient funds and budgets have been allocated for dealing with the crisis and more extensive problems will occur while facing the crisis. The lack of allocated credits is one of the underlying conditions which makes it difficult to deal with the crisis and solve its consequences. In order to deal with the Coronavirus crisis, a lot of money and credit is required to enable managers make decisions with more confidence and less stress to manage and reduce the damages caused by the crisis and provide medical expenses. (Mesbah and Jacobs, 2020).
2. **Weak organization:** Organizing in any institution and organization is one of the most significant goals of management that is constantly flowing in the life of organizations and ensures the survival of the organization. Organization requires the coordination and division of tasks. Weak organization is one of the discovered categories. They often complained about the cooperation and coordination of the various organizations. They often pointed out that when a decision was made to accommodate some staff to control the entry and exit of cities, providing accommodation conditions faced many difficulties such as providing tents, equipment, cabling, etc., that some of the organizations did not accept the responsibility and declared that it was not their responsibilities. The participation and non-synergy of organizations delayed the work and doubled the challenges. The lack of coordination in organizations and the lack of specific instructions for cooperation in critical conditions with a specific order creates extra problems for managers. As long as the executive organizations and related organizations have not learned network function, problems will still manifest in any crisis. Network thinking and belief in common interests cause sincere cooperation and increase the sense of responsibility among organizations. Weak organization hinders early measures and implementation of principled crisis management because organization requires mutual confrontation, division of tasks, balance, coordination, and cooperation. In our country, the division of tasks is not supported objectively and scientifically and is often performed based on attributive features. In addition, no precise executive guarantees have been defined for violating the organizational norms, leading to disruptions and weaknesses in the organization.
3. **Crisis management inefficiency:** Crises usually occur unexpectedly and unpredictably and involve the society and all or part of institutions. Precise organization is a prerequisite for success in dealing with a crisis. The concepts such as lack of precise monitoring of events, lack of attention to comprehensive monitoring, lack of attention to the experience of other countries, reliance on domestic experiences, gap between elites and governance, inaccurate description of tasks, lack of experts in the field of epidemics, weak forecast, delay in information, late presentation of patients' statistics, etc. have been mentioned many times. In this regard, crisis management inefficiency is known as one of the most important challenges in crisis management. One of the most critical points which is not regarded is the precise monitoring of events and a comprehensive examination of the details of the crisis, which is unfortunately disregarded. Currently, there is no precise monitoring of what is happening and the actions are always too late. The lack of sufficient skills and expertise for investigating the crisis and insufficient attention to examining the details and current events show the reasons for the crisis management inefficiency. Selecting individuals and

assigning responsibilities based on the characteristics of development are among the problems of developing societies, including Iran. Assigning a specific position and responsibility according to the expertise and skill of the individual, in other words, the assigned role based on acquired characteristics, is one of the factors which minimize damages and leads to more successful management. Assigning roles based on competence leads to the precise monitoring of events and information, thus decisions are made with less probability of loss. However, the emphasis on domestic experience, failure to make the critical situation comprehensive, and the presence of unexpected and accidental faults lead to crisis management inefficiency (Koehn, 2020).

4. Inefficiency of laws: The laws of every society are defined and enacted based on its own culture, rules, conditions, religion, and principles. The efficiency of laws is one of the characteristics of developed societies. Laws become inefficient in developing and underdeveloped societies due to structural problems, ambiguity, and displacement of structures.

The inefficiency of laws, which was discovered from the interviews, involves the concepts such as carelessness in paying enough attention to equipment, late measures, disregard for the importance of time, citizens' confusion, contradictory information, information scattering, inconsistency in different sectors, confusion of organizations, etc. Inefficiency of laws is one of the underlying conditions which highlights challenges more and makes crises more difficult to be solved. Inefficiency of laws is an underlying condition in which crisis management and dealing with it are challenged as every society needs the confidence and support of its people to follow the laws and support them by enforcing the laws. When people are confused, the conditions of disobeying the laws are provided to them because weakness in management and single decision creates distrust among people; In other words, the effectiveness of laws not only challenges managers and those involved in crisis management, but also creates disobedience among the citizens and increases institutional distrust in society (Jenkins, 2020).

5. Contingent decisions: Making contingent decisions is one of the challenges that widely involves local managers. Due to the lack of preparation, forecast, and foresight in Iran, this country always faces contingent decisions in critical conditions. In the Coronavirus crisis, decisions were constantly made based on new requirements due to the lack of necessary preparations and late measures. In the Coronavirus crisis, new decisions are made based on every new information and news. The unpreparedness of the crisis management headquarters and the lack of forecast and foresight on the crisis conditions in other countries, as well as considering the probabilities to create the same crisis in Iran, have led to contingent decisions with any new information, statistics and conditions. This issue has made managers face various challenges. The shock and disbelief caused by the Coronavirus outbreak in the world and in Iran has become a reason for cancelling decisions and making new decisions. In other words, decisions were made spontaneously because the condition is changing and moving unpredictably and new decisions are made in proportion to the change in conditions. With every new discovery by medical institutions and physicians, as well as with any unforeseen consequences, previous decisions are cancelled and new decisions are made, resulting in a new challenge for the crisis management (Goldhill, 2020).
6. Disqualification of local managers: Managers and specialists in each province and city make the required decisions and make predictions by reviewing the current conditions. Disqualification of local managers is one of the discovered categories. People were dissatisfied with limiting their authorities to solve crises and consult with local managers. They often referred to the concepts such as discrimination in facilities, discrimination in attention and care, lack of a single decision, inattention to local context, and disregard for the facilities and equipment of cities. Disqualification of local managers is one of the intervening conditions in coping with a crisis and creating a challenge. Lack of coordination and confidence in all organizations, institutions, and sectors of society and among the officials at the national level, decisions are always made without consulting local managers and they are often disregarded. Contingent decisions, the cancellation of decisions spontaneously, and the re-making of new decisions at the national level have caused some problems for the management and control of consequences and dealing with the crisis at the local and national. Decisions are made at the national level and orders to enact the decisions are issued while the lack of conditions and equipment for the enactment of the national order at the local level causes new challenges to local managers and disqualify local managers (Ganji and Heydari, 2018).
7. Social dissatisfaction: Every crisis leaves adverse effects on society at the level of structure and agency. The Coronavirus crisis, like other crises has caused inclusive consequences for society and social activists to a greater extent. In fact, social dissatisfaction is one of the challenges caused by the Coronavirus crisis for managers. Most of the participants complained that quarantine, widespread closures, and entry and exit bans reduced their incomes, cut off their livelihood, caused financial loss, bankruptcy, and so on. In addition, some of the participants who suffered from Coronavirus complained about being rejected by others and having a sharp drop in their economic income. According to most people, the Coronavirus crisis has caused economic pressures, as well as financial and livelihood difficulties for social activists. The small and large consequences of the Coronavirus crisis on the agents and structures are huge and have threatened

the lives of some activists or caused bankruptcy. Due to unpreparedness and late actions, no thought was already considered in advance to solve the consequences. The challenge of frequent referrals by the clients for whom no measures or decisions have been considered to address their different conditions has made decisions at the local level with different limitations. As a result, it has aroused the clients and caused their dissatisfaction. Most of the decisions which are made at the macro and national levels cause some problems and dissatisfaction for activists. Social dissatisfaction is one of the consequences of the Coronavirus crisis at the micro level and among human actors (Kamali and Mirzaei, 2018).

8. Liberation of popular movements: In Iran, the sincere and voluntary cooperation of people was always present in critical conditions. Such assistance in natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes is highly appreciated. The point is that in the Coronavirus crisis, they were endangered because of human gatherings as the virus was known and there was a need for expertise. On the other hand, due to the lack of disinfection instructions during the first weeks, it caused some damages to the ATMs and door openers. They often referred to the lack of personal protective clothes, lack of awareness, waste of resources and financial damages and believed that voluntary public movements to follow specific instructions and being covered with relevant organizations are required in such conditions to protect and prevent the waste of resources. The freedom of popular movements along with the inefficiency of crisis management and weakness in organization have placed managers in a wider dilemma while facing the challenges. In order to minimize the damages and loss of required resources, it is necessary to form an organization to increase the knowledge of people about the Coronavirus crisis, be present during the mobilizations and public aid, and warn them of the necessary cases. Due to the lack of a specific organization to accept popular movements, the benevolent and voluntary work of the movements causes the society to waste more resources despite being in a positive and efficient direction. In fact, popular movements act in a free, self-sufficient, and separate way from the organization. (Danaeifard and Nasiri, 2011).
9. Core category: The executive organizations often act according to their interests and only think of their own interests. Every organization acts differently to achieve its goals, make profits, and provide its interests.

The point in this type of performance is acting as island or acting separately. Weak cooperation in coordination and responsibility to other organizations, as well as lack of network thinking and behavior in organizations lead to different challenges in dealing with crisis for managers. Precise planning gaps which are subject to defined rules are among the factors which drive operations towards an island. In the island performance of systems, we witness the overlapping roles, contradictions in outputs, lack of appropriate relationships between system members and non-compliance with standards. Island performance prevents synergy and harmony between organizations and their managers and fails to allow a sense of cooperation, partnership, and connection between organizations, their managers, and their employees and components. However, teamwork and partnership among organizations improve their quality and functions. When organizations work together and meet each other's needs, they grow, overcome problems and crises more effectively, and minimize the loss. Meanwhile, island thinking prevents a sense of empathy, harmony, synergy, and participation. A variety of conditions (causal, underlying, and interventional) drive systems towards island thinking. Causal conditions of weakness in organization and crisis management inefficiency along with the underlying conditions of inefficiency of laws and allocated credit lines, as well as the intervening conditions of contingent decisions have led to the formation of island performance in systems (Jamali Nejad, 2018).

Crisis management and strategic organizational planning in the Coronavirus era

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in the world and its different effects on industry and the world economy, organizations as one of the most significant pillars of the world economic system have been involved in a crisis and a great uncertainty. No exact time can be considered for this crisis because of the unknown characteristics of this virus. On the other hand, different organizations have prepared their plans and strategies for the years 2020-2021 before the crisis. Now, with the occurrence of such a widespread crisis throughout the world, previous strategies lack the required efficiency and organizations are required to review their strategic management document. Undoubtedly, overcoming this crisis requires different activities in the organization and reviewing the strategic plan of the organization will be part of it. The manager and leader of the organization will play the most key role in overcoming this crisis and entering the new normal state after the Coronavirus, as discussed below:

- 1- Standardization: The significance of standardization in the organization appears in times of crisis. Whenever demand, supply chain, human resources, etc. fluctuate because of crisis, the organization feels the need for an appropriate organizational system and standard. Where tasks and responsibilities accelerate, different limitations slow down the organization's processes, customer satisfaction drops, and the overall quality of the organization fluctuates. A quality management system, for instance, based on the ISO 9001 standard can provide better resilience to quality in the organization and control the effect of the crisis on quality and customer satisfaction.

- 2- Involving more personnel in decisions: Uncertainty and high speed of changes of conditions in times of crisis make the needed information for decision-making change regularly and cause the decision made by the manager encounter many challenges. Thus, the leaders of top organizations aimed at speeding up decision-making and enclosing information in times of crisis, involve more people of the organization in different decisions in times of crisis to speed up identification and actions against various risks. Thus, the leader forms various teams with different members, responsibilities, and authorities, so that each team is responsible for reviewing the conditions and news.
As senior managers should be prepared to transfer the organizational responsibilities and authority to a network of teams temporarily and hierarchically, they also should empower others to orient the required response aspects of crisis. This fact includes empowering them to make and implement decisions without the need for a license. One of the critical roles of senior managers is to design a decision-making process quickly, so that responsibilities are transparent and decisions are made by appropriate people at various levels of the organization (Mir Jalili et al., 2019).
- 3- Dealing appropriately with COVID-19 pandemic and personnel health: In times of such a crisis which depends on the physical and mental health of the organization's personnel, managers and leaders should allocate most of the organizational centralization, resources, and policies to personnel health. This issue should play a big role in both the behavior and speeches of the leader in the organization to fully transfer its significance and the fact that the leader is responsible and sympathetic to the personnel in the organization. It is not only highly important for leaders to show empathy, but also to show empathy for others and take care of their own health. Since stress, fatigue, and uncertainty are created in times of crisis, leaders may find that their ability has reduced to process information, be a role model, and make good judgments. Leaders will have a better chance to deal with reduced performance if they encourage colleagues to express their concerns and pay attention to the warnings. Investment on time in times of health will enable leaders to maintain their effectiveness during the weeks and months which there may be a crisis.
- 4- Appropriate behavior and persistence of the organization in the minds of customers, staff, and society: The measures taken to facilitate customer problems at this time of crisis will be always remembered. From video game companies that quickly prepare crisis-related content to online training providers that provide free access to classrooms, and also from factories that have switched their use to disinfectants production to many other companies that take action to deal with the crisis bring them closer to the customer and display the amazing values of the organization. Colleagues and employees of organizations should regard the expressed culture in a meaningful way in the organization. This issue can happen through top-down communication and leaders who play role models of such values can flow these values in the organization by encouraging middle-level or operational individuals in the organization.
- 5- Continuity in reviewing the organizational processes system: In crisis, time becomes significantly important and implementing organizational processes as soon as possible helps the resilience in the organization. In times of crisis, leaders use their process experts in quality assurance units, quality management, systems and methods and similar units to build agility in processes as much as possible. Reviewing organizational processes will lead to its simplification and sometimes the same process may be used after the crisis. The leader of the organization aims at improving the process of the organization to continuously reviews the processes, especially the processes related to customers and employers in times of crisis and also use the strategies of the executive teams to simplify and streamline the processes. Thus, the significance of not losing information in the organization should not be forgotten. As a result, the information and their registration process are reviewed by the leader and teams such as the quality assurance team with each review of the processes and their review (Davari, 2020).

Perhaps there is a crisis called Coronavirus and it will continue and even disappear, leadership and management of the organization requires a manager and a leader with high knowledge and ability and obviously, this manager requires a lot of training and learning. Studies have indicated that resilient organizations have one thing in common at different times that is a capable manager. Managers have always been, are, and will always be with all managers and owners of Iranian industry.

Education in the Coronavirus era

Education in the Coronavirus era has been one of the most challenging eras in all countries. In Iran, many efforts have been made to continue the education process along with the preservation of health protocols. It seems that the decisions made at the national level in this area are inclusive and complete. As the analysis of the perspective and goals of this method of education shows, the overall goal of creating and developing e-learning is to provide equal, free, and searchable access to courses, create a uniform learning environment for various classes of society everywhere, and optimize the presentation method of lessons for deeper and more serious learning because educational institutions play a major role in the transition to the information society and the digital age. Thus, teaching and learning should be based on new approaches. The expansion of e-learning at different levels is one of the most effective tools in entering this area. E-learning means a new paradigm which has emerged in the field of teaching and learning and is a type of learning that is available to any person in any field, any time, and any place

for ever. Today, everyone knows that the international community, including Iran, is facing new conditions with the COVID-19 outbreak. In this regard, e-learning is an artistic education system and a comprehensive solution, allowing the countries that want to move in the direction of modern technology and change their methods and educational environments, to access new educational methods. However, any scientific approach has effective output provided that it is properly designed and implemented. Therefore, expecting to solve all educational problems and the ability of making any changes in learners in the short term can be simplistic. Nevertheless, educational planners are expected to do their best to reduce potential harm to let learners fulfill their desired activities and receive their required content in relief far from anxiety and preserve their independence and self-esteem. The record of the efforts made during the last seven months indicated useful points such as quick understanding of the made change, fast synchronization and accompaniment with work in the cyberspace, use of new tools and technologies, and creativity in producing scientific content.

Framework of strategies in the Coronavirus era

The Mackenzie Group, in their latest published report entitled “Advancing the next step of the Coronavirus crisis” presented the following step-by-step strategic action plan in crisis.

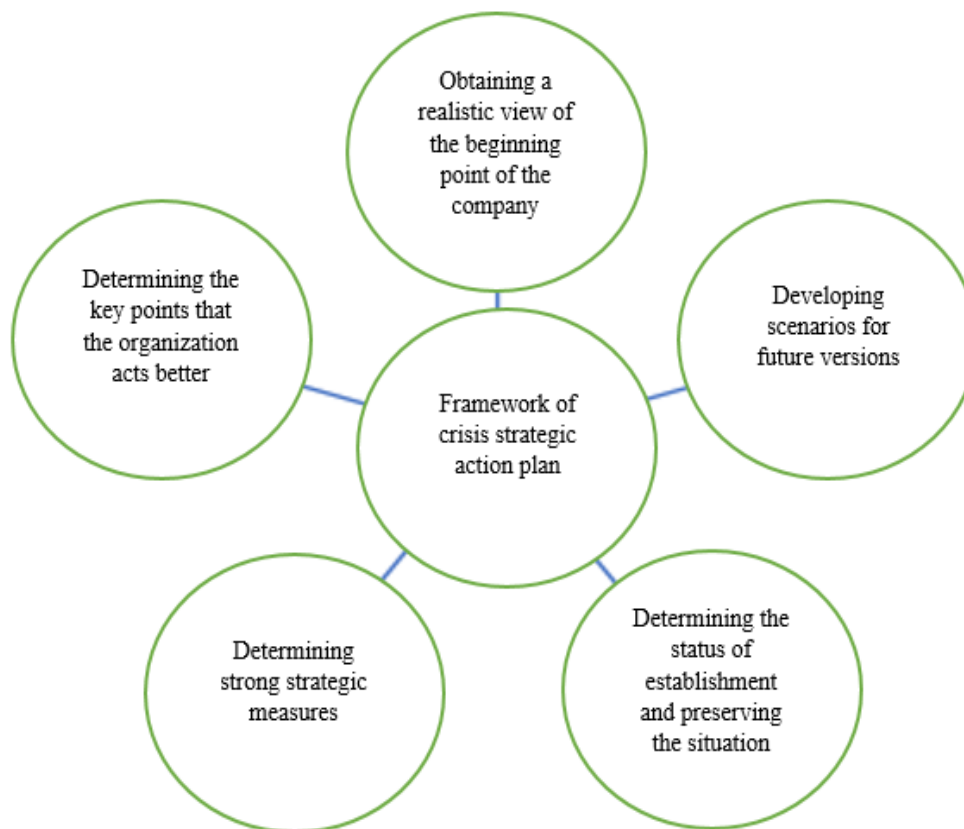


Fig. 1. Framework of the strategic action plan in the Coronavirus era

Business resilience strategy in the Coronavirus crisis

Resilience strategies in abusiveness emphasize new techniques and tools to cope with complex changes, helping to adapt rapidly to uncertainty and use new opportunities. Thus, entrepreneurs and senior managers need resilience strategies to reduce threats, increase the possibility of survival, and use future opportunities in the post-Coronavirus period. In order to survive in crisis, businesses should have a macro view and act strategically (Davari, 2020). In addition, resilient systems should be designed in such a way to respond to the crisis, respond quickly to the crisis, and reduce and solve problems. High ability to recognize the crisis is one of the requirements of this issue.

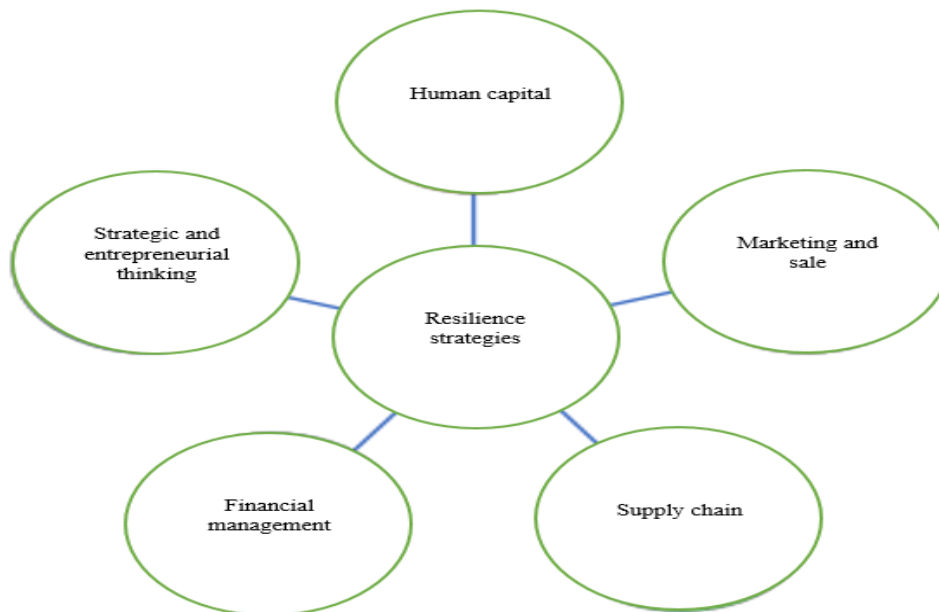


Fig. 2. Resilience strategies in times of crisis

Coronavirus response strategies

1. **Retreat strategy:** In this case, companies reduce operations with product production activities temporarily or permanently. However, this reduction is not always bad because the company can provide the resources needed by other sectors that have been more successful. Retreat strategy is a strategic response which is widely visible in the face of crisis. Such a response refers to the reduction of costs, assets, products, and production lines. Thus, such actions limit the company's business activities potentially. As previous studies indicated, limiting the scope of trade through a retreat strategy causes turnover in trade (Wenzel, 2020). Some researchers considered retreat strategy as an important part of a company's recovery in the long term because it reduces performance and provides a solid basis for strategic renewal (Gartenberg, 2014). Researchers indicated why reducing the scope of trade in times of crisis may be related to net loss for manufacturing companies? The studies on the closure of several Chinese funds during the global financial crisis of 2007-2009 indicated that the performance of the funds associated with this decision was negative. This trend was even strengthened and it seemed that the crisis would continue for a longer time of if the hedge funds were more closely interdependent. Thus, the basic principle is that managers should be aware of the degradation of synergistic effects by reducing the probable actions in critical situations (De Figueiredo, 2019).

Although a retreat strategy may be an inevitable response to a crisis in the short term, the long-term sustainability of this strategic response is uncontrollable, especially when a crisis continues for a longer period of time, the retreat strategy may lead to the erosion of a company's valuable resources, capabilities, and culture. This issue draws our attention to alternative strategic responses to the crisis (Ndofor, 2013).

2. **Perseverance strategy:** It refers to the actions aimed at maintaining a company's business activities in response to a crisis. Thus, contrary to the limited scope of activities through the retreat strategy, such actions are taken with the aim of maintaining the status quo and decreasing the negative effects of the crisis. Previous studies showed that perseverance strategy can be a surprising and effective strategic response to a crisis. Particularly, in uncertain conditions that all companies face. On the contrary, all of the competing companies that undertake strategic renewal may act better to respond to the crisis, especially in the uncertain circumstances faced by firms because frequent directional changes undermine the value of strategic renewal and shift the performance benefits to ineffective organizations that maintain and preserve the status quo (Wenzel, 2015). For example, studying the Asian manufacturing companies during the 1997 economic crisis showed that restructuring more asset may lead to malfunction and they face more risks for failure. This study indicated that the fundamental resumption of business in times of crisis is not always the superior answer because such strategies have added to the negative effect of the economic shock on the company performance and survival. Thus, a fundamental insight is that perseverance strategy can be more strategic than the use of sedentary resources for strategic modernization and have a higher share in the company survival. Furthermore, powerful external institutions decrease the devastating effects of a shock by providing firms with access to capital and information (Chakrabarti, 2015). In another study on the economic consequences of the September 11 attacks, researchers the researchers examined the factors which reduce

the effect of crises. They mentioned that multinational corporations are more likely to grow over time if they become more diversified internationally because multinational companies may have to use the benefits which are obtained in the future to continue establishment. Thus, one of the key insights is that companies may leave potential benefits much faster in times of crisis while leaving the previous paths (Li and Tallman, 2011). In fact, companies consider some strategies to maintain their business activities and are directed towards globalization. Multinational companies deal with this trend using flexible and conservative measures. By doing so, multinational companies maintain the status quo of the company rather than changing their business fundamentally (Cuervo-Cazurra et al., 2020).

3. Innovation strategy: While crises can have devastating effects on economies and societies and open an opportunity for strategic renewal, innovation is used as the realization of a new strategy in response to the crisis.

In particular, studies indicated how companies discover new options to expand their activities to other sectors and contemplate on new ways of business followed by environmental uncertainties. Unlike persistence strategy or retreat strategy, investors decided to participate in strategic innovation (Reymen et al., 2015).

4. Exit strategy: Previous studies clarify the dynamics of exit strategy in response to the crisis. Some researchers studied large European multinational companies whose managers reacted to terrorist attacks, technological disasters and natural disasters. The main consequence of their study is that selecting managers for exit strategy depends on the type of disaster a company encounters. Exit strategy is less likely to occur in response to natural disasters and is more likely to happen in the face of terrorist attacks with technological disasters. In addition, researchers indicated that developed foreign institutions have reduced this trend. Exit strategy is not imposed on companies by business environments. For this reason, companies form a conscious strategic response to the crisis. Previous research indicated that exit strategy can be an essential basis for a company's strategic renewal. Thus, it can be concluded that exit strategy is not free for companies (Wenzel et al., 2020).

2. Suggestions

- 1- Emphasizing that Coronavirus as a global virus is not a political issue and is just a disease which is highly influenced by cultural, social, and economic interactions. Thus, there is a universal social responsibility for it beyond individual responsibility.
- 2- As this disease depends on cultural and social issues beyond the biological aspect in terms of reproduction and prevalence, prescribing a prescription in one part of the world to fight it is not necessarily a warrantee for a positive response in other regions. In dealing with Corona disease, cultural diversity and sociological contexts should be considered.
The kind of action taken in China and Japan to counteract and even reduce the incidence and treatment of the disease may not respond in Iran, Turkey, and Italy. Thus, every action should be formed with the knowledge of its social contexts.
- 3- Blaming a person, institution, a specific country, etc. in the current conditions will not cure any pain and will only increase social anxiety. Although China has been the source of this disease and has spread it to the world, we should sympathize with the Chinese. Nobody should condemn the people of this country, their culture, lifestyle, and nutrition. We must try to avoid blaming each other in Iran, we should not accuse any city, place and class or certain social class. Unfortunately, people and even government officials face each other. Currently, we need empathy and support more than anything else.
- 4- Non-critical regions need as much attention as critical regions and no point should be left out of intervention plans. This issue is important because we must know that it is not safe anywhere and a carrier alone can be the source of transmission and infection in a society. Thus, protective measures and interventions should be considered everywhere and we should not consider the low prevalence of Coronavirus in an area or city as the reason for our absence and intervention.
- 5- Relying on public participation as the strongest factor of dealing with Coronavirus; We must believe that fighting against the disease will never be successful without the help of people. All possible tools should be used for connecting people with the health care system. The solution is to make every member of the society accept a responsibility. Making people responsible is not only about individuals but it is related to the whole society. This issue will have the most effect on disease control.

3. Conclusion

Complex problems need non-traditional methods. Corona is a complex problem and complex systems science suggests that its management should be in a decentralized manner. In other words, local management should be performed by considering local information and conditions at any level. In this condition, centralized management

is mainly not possible and the system will face a collapse since it does not allow local management. In the current centralized management of the Coronavirus crisis, this issue leads to long-delayed and costly feedback to cause change in management while many opportunities are missed. In addition, the severity of the disease is not currently the same in the provinces, thus it is impossible to implement exactly the same measures. Due to the COVID-19 crisis in the world, the countries which faced this crisis tried to provide better health services to the people and adopted significant management decisions to control the epidemic of the new Coronavirus. Despite the increase in the number of patients in the world, Iran has managed to control the increasing slope of the number of patients and reach them to an acceptable number of recoveries to some extent by implementing management decisions and providing appropriate health services. Although there is still a need to implement more serious, appropriate, and practical decisions in this pandemic. there is no comprehensive and practical plan for the systematic use of other basic fields of knowledge and technology, including psychology, sociology, communication science, health policy, public policy, information technology, etc., in the fight against COVID-19. Numerous cases of sacrifice by front-line operations manpower (i.e., doctors, nurses, and support forces) to save the lives of humans during this epidemic can be observed in Iran. However, if no proper management is not made for controlling and disrupting the transmission chain, a second wave of epidemics will occur, leading to fatigue in the health care team and an increased probability of death. Another problem and concern in Iran and the world is the long-term economic threat caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At present, many countries including Iran, have taken measures to delay taxes and somehow improve the living conditions of people by implementing financial aid plans. However, irreparable economic losses will likely to occur after this period.

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