Strategic network: Managerial myopia point of view

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CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	The strategic network of any organization plays a significant role in the industry. Therefore, companies must study the factors hindering the construction of this network. Companies need a strategic network of alliances and partnerships to complement each other and constitute a superpower that competitors cannot overcome. This study explores the size of obstacles posed by managerial myopia in weakening the ability of organizations to build their strategic network. Current paper tests the influential relationship between managerial myopia and the ability of organizations to build their strategic network in one of the most important institutions within the oil sector. Results show a negative impact of managerial short-sightedness on an organization's ability to build a successful strategic network that enables it to coexist within an atmosphere of competition. This study recommends that organizations adopt the concept of managerial hyperopia as a valuable tool for organizational success.

1. Introduction

An organization characterized by (Myopia) is one that usually sacrifices long-term strategic goals to obtain short-term profits. This organization is vulnerable to acquisition by others because such organizations are not interested in establishing strong partnerships with other supporting partners. Organizations that do not believe in establishing strategic alliances and partnerships (whatever the size of these organizations) and rely only on themselves in the competition will be subject to exit from the market in the future. Therefore, these companies need to unite with similar companies through various alliances, such as Mutual Service Consortia or Value-Chain Partnership (Wheelen et al., 2018, p.217). Such companies must study the factors hindering establishing strategic alliances and partnerships. When referring to short-sightedness, authors found that it relates to immediate situations and distances the company from dealing with the future. This condition dramatically emphasizes the importance of studying the impact of myopia on the strategic network (SN). It gives a great premise to explore its impact on companies, especially companies working in the oil sector. The oil sector is the first sector that is considered the primary source of national income in Iraq.

On the other hand, a study by Bonner et al. (2005) showed that the strength of a strategic network appears in the ability to build relationships and manage them well. This matter certainly needs good management and awareness of variables. It is difficult for the company to choose a partner to establish a strategic alliance since it must rely on objective studies. Many organizations in general, and Iraqi ones in particular, cannot build a strategic network because of the weakness in diagnosing

the variables around them, including competitors' movements. Competitors' movements may result in either future opportunities or potential threats. Accordingly, this study aims to measure the effect of short-sightedness on the administration and the consequent weakness in building a strategic network of alliances with others.

Further, the study provides recommendations with the appropriate mechanisms for their implementation. The importance of this study is evident in its handling of two new business administration topics, considered one of the organization's most critical and sensitive topics. Highlighting these topics increases the organization's awareness of the importance of monitoring variables and events around them. Therefore, it is necessary to work on diagnosing the factors affecting the inability of the organization to build successful alliances with reliable companies that may be its opponent one day.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Managerial Myopia

The literature describes the concept of managerial myopia as narrow views toward environmental variables at both internal and external levels. Others define it as a concept of sacrificing future gains at the expense of current gains (Abdullah et al., 2021; Ridge et al., 2014, p. 604) as a result of the organization's lack of foresight towards its surroundings (Tunyi et al., 2019, p. 5). Therefore, an organization affected by this disease makes confusing and illogical choices without considering the time factors, organizational capacities, external environmental forces, and overall strategies (Miller, 2002, p. 693). Due to learning imbalances in decision-makers, these individuals cannot sufficiently develop their learning abilities and lack experience in the field of work. Lack of learning restricts the process of anticipating and predicting future opportunities and leads to an inability of a manager to solve the organization's problems (Mehmood et al., 2021; Levinthal & March, 1993). Managerial myopia is a highly influential element in the organization's ability to interpret the nature of the competitive environment due to the inability of the organization's staff to analyze the strategic elements well. Consequently, myopia would create uncertainty in identifying future opportunities and threats, negatively affecting strategic decisions in the external and business environments. Managerial myopia consists of two main dimensions, temporal myopia and spatial myopia (Miller, 2002; Ridge et al., 2014; Sato, 2012, p. 46; Anderson et al., 1994).

2.1.1 Temporal Myopia

Temporal myopia refers to the inability of an organization to choose between times. In other words, short-sightedness toward the dimension of time about its decisions. For example, an organization finds itself very challenged between two options. First, this organization should decide whether to change short-horizon activities that will allow for current profitability in the short term. The other option is to focus on activities that consider the organization's changes in the long term, usually, activities that reduce short-term returns but strengthen the company in the long term (Abdullah et al., 2019; Lafferty, 1996, p. 828). In the context of time short-sightedness, management encourages immediate solutions and usually shies away from investing in future opportunities based on the time factor, which does not allow it to prioritize competitors. Thus time short-sightedness creates a kind of ambiguity in choosing the correct times to deal with them (Sato, 2012, p. 46).

2.1.2 Spatial Myopia

This dimension illustrates the nearsightedness in the organization's management at the spatial level, which is not well aware of the importance of strategic locations around them, at the level of markets and competitors, as well as customers and suppliers. Organizations characterized by spatial nearsightedness are described by Levinthal & March (1993) as the ones "neglecting the distant places" and have "the tendency to ignore the bigger picture." This type of nearsightedness results in a lack of spatial variables and affects the organization (Ridge et al., 2014).

2.2 Strategic Network

According to the literature on strategic management, the concept of the strategic network was widely used in the early 1960s as an expression of the interaction with a strategic dimension between individuals and organizations and has therefore been applied in many different fields, such as sociology, political science, organization theory, and more recently business strategy (Antoldi et al., 2011). This concept began to be used in business organizations in the 1980s when Jarillo (1988) defined strategic networks as long-term agreements between independent organizations linked to specific objectives. This agreement allows those companies to gain a competitive advantage over competitors outside the network. The nature of the work between these alliances within the same network is necessary to sustain their ultimate competitive position in the market. Researchers depict the concept of a strategic network as a variety of alliances applied between different organizations or business units of various large organizations, such as strategic alliances, joint ventures, agreements, suppliers, buyers, trade associations, industrial areas, franchise rights, and other (Antoldi et al., 2011; Bonner et al., 2005; John, 2003; Aman-Ullah et al., 2021). Therefore, an organization's strategic network is an expression of a variety of activities of a cooperative nature between the organization and other organizations within one industry. Members of the single strategic network are thus given access to

information, resources, markets, and technologies and easily gain benefits from economies of scale, learning, and experience (Wheelen et al., 2018).

Moreover, such alliances allow organizations to share risks and outsource certain activities that add something important to the value chain or organizational functions, all of which are advantages that the organization alone will not be able to access. Therefore, organizations must have a high vision and foresight to build an excellent strategic network and thus be able to develop an identity for their strategic network (Bonner et al., 2005). When a company reaches that level of success within its strategic network, it will undoubtedly be a valuable partner and influence the strategic choices of partners, depending on the level of communication quality and network management. The strength of an organization's identity within the strategic network comes from its role in the strategic relationship network. The strength of an organization's identity redirects the organization's position within the alliance as a key and influential player. An organization with a strong strategic identity and a good understanding of its position can entice others into new alliances, re-establish previous relationships, and reach out to unique partners due to others' convictions. Burt (2000) believes that the strength of an organization's social capital is crucial to its strategic network's success and ability to understand its identity clearly. Furthermore, Burt shows that an organization cannot achieve a valuable identity without positive relationships between working individuals and between individuals and their subordinates.

Based on the theoretical background of managerial myopia, the authors assumed that myopia would significantly affect the organization's awareness of competitors and its ability to understand the necessities of competition. On the other hand, there is no doubt that organizations can not work in isolation from each other. Further, managerial myopia creates a state of unconsciousness, which leads to confusion in the organization's work on dealing with partners and other allied parties. This apparent lack of understanding of environmental variables would significantly affect the achievement of its objectives with those partnerships and alliances, creating a kind of blur in the organization. Therefore, this paper assumes that:

Main hypothesis: *There is a significant impact of managerial myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*
Sub-hypothesis one: *There is a significant effect of temporal myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*
Sub-hypothesis two: *There is a significant effect of spatial myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*

3. Methodology

3.1 Study sample

This study was applied at a general company for the distribution of petroleum products in Iraq (Oil Products Distribution Company- OPDC). Study sample consisted of (132) members of key and subsidiary managers.

3.2 Tools of study measurement

In order to o reach study objectives, it was necessary to build a measuring instrument that best reflects the study variables. The independent variable tool (managerial myopia) was extensively adapted from Ridge et al. (2014). (10) items were developed to measure this variable. (1-5) associated with the first dimension (temporal myopia) while (6-10) associated with the second dimension (spatial myopia). For the dependent variable (strategic network), the scale was adapted from both Bonner et al. (2005) and Partanen et al. (2020). (5) items were developed to measure this variable (11-15). Likert scale was used (strongly disagree – strongly agree). The study variables are described and encoded in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Characterization and coding of study variables

Variable	Dimension	Items	Coding	Location in scale	Source
Managerial Myopia	Temporal myopia	5	Tem	1-5	(Ridge et al., 2014, P. 620)
	Spatial myopia	5	Spa	6-10	
Strategic Network	_	5	SN	11-15	(Bonner et al., 2005, P. 1376) (Partanen et al., 2020, P. 17)

3.3 The applied side of study

3.3.1 Missing data

Researchers used a statistics package (SPSS V.23) to explore the missing data by adopting the method of duplicates. This step is enough to determine the number of missing data and valid data. Table (2) shows the items, sample size, and missing data. The analysis showed the absence of missing data.

Table 2
Statistics of missing data

Cod & Items		Tem1	Tem2	Tem3	Tem4	Tem5	Spa1	Spa2	Spa3	Spa4	Spa5	SN1	SN2	SN3	SN4	SN5
N	Valid	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: this table shows that the Tem= Temporal myopia; Spa=Spatial myopia; SN= Strategic Network.

3.3.2 Normal distribution of data

To ascertain the nature of the data distribution, the researchers adopted a statistic (Kolmogorov-Smirnov). Results shown in Table 3 indicate that the data are distributed normally.

Table 3
One-sample kolmogorov-smirnov test

		Tem	Spa	SN
N		132	132	132
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	4.3288	4.3424	4.2197
	Std. Deviation	.58695	0.52974	0.60777
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.145	0.130	0.132
	Positive	0.126	0.107	0.100
	Negative	-0.145	-0.130	-0.132
Test Statistic		0.145	0.130	0.132
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000[c]	0.000[c]	0.000[c]

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Note: this table shows that the Tem= Temporal myopia; Spa=Spatial myopia; SN= Strategic Network.

3.3.3 Stability of study measuring tool

The stability measurement tool is the coherence scale of the study and firming results for different periods (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Therefore, researchers used a coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) to verify the stability of the structural tool of measurement for this study. Cronbach Alpha is used widely in Social Sciences (Mohajan, 2017). Results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Constancy coefficients for the study measuring instrument

(Cronbach Alpha) for scale	(Cronbach Alpha) for dimension	Dimension	Variable
0.91	0.79	Temporal Myopia	Managerial Myopia
	0.79	Spatial Myopia	
0.73	-	-	Strategic Network

It is noted from Table (4) that Cronbach Alpha stability factor values range from (0.73 – 0.91). However, they are statistically acceptable in management and behavioral research because they are greater than (0.70), according to Tavakol & Dennick (2011, p.54). Results indicate that the measurement instrument is consistent and not internally contradictory.

3.3.4 Statistical description of study sample

This section is to express the results of descriptive analysis of the study variables in the Oil Products Distribution Company in Iraq, as shown in Tables (5-7). Tables 5 and 6 represent the results of the independent variable (managerial myopia), with two dimensions (temporal myopia and spatial myopia). Table 7 shows the results of the dependent variable (strategic network).

Table 5
Descriptive statistics of temporal myopia

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative Importance
1. An extreme case of inability to discern the current organization's decisions.	4.4394	0.73368	0.887
2. Limited single-period future foresight.	4.4091	0.69847	0.881
3. Limits in the scope of choices alternatives through time.	4.1667	0.89243	0.833
4. Limits in sequential attention to goals.	4.2879	0.86077	0.857
5. Follows tunnel vision when looking for the future.	4.3409	0.77980	0.868
General Average	**4.3288**	**0.7930**	**0.8652**

Table 5 shows the computational averages, standard deviations, and the relative importance of the study sample answers towards the dimension (temporal myopia). It is noted in this table that item (1) of the "An extreme case of inability to discern the current organization's decisions" obtained the highest arithmetic averages, reaching (4.4394) with a standard deviation (0.73368), and shows the consistency and harmony answers of the study sample towards this paragraph, where the relative importance of this item (88%). On the other hand, item (3) on "Limits in the scope of choices alternatives through time" had

the lowest arithmetic average, it reached (4.1667), with a standard deviation.89243), which shows the harmony of the responses of the sampled individuals, it was the relative importance of this item (83%). According to the previous, the overall rate of myopia was 4.3288 and with a general standard deviation of (0.7930). Therefore, the relative importance of this dimension (86%), compared with the other dimension of the variable (managerial myopia), is located in the sequence (2). Table 6 reviews the computational averages, standard deviations, and relative importance of the study sample answers towards dimension (spatial myopia). Item (2) of "Managers cannot recognize suitable competitive markets" obtained the highest arithmetic averages, reaching (4.5682) and standard deviation (0.60775). Table (6) shows the extent of consistency and harmony answers of the study sample towards this paragraph, where the relative importance of this item (%91). On the other hand, item (5) of "Organizations may possess mysterious options" received the lowest arithmetic averages; it reached (3.9848) and standard deviation (0.90785), which shows the level of harmony of the responses of the individual's sample study, the relative importance of this item (79%). Based on the preceding, the general rate of spatial myopia was (4.3424), the general standard deviation was (.7882), and the relative importance of this dimension (86%) was compared with the other dimension of the variable (managerial myopia) falls in sequence (1).

Table 6
Descriptive statistics of spatial myopia

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative importance
1. Lack of awareness of work mechanisms within or outside the firm.	4.4394	0.83124	0.88788
2. Managers cannot recognize suitable competitive markets.	4.5682	0.60775	0.91364
3. limits the set of alternative technologies considered for implementation	4.3258	0.79595	0.86516
4. Considering investment decisions singularly rather than evaluating them as part of the firm's overall portfolio.	4.3939	0.79845	0.87878
5. Organizations may possess mysterious options.	3.9848	0.90785	0.79696
General Average	**4.3424**	**0.7882**	**0.868484**

Table 7 shows the computational averages, standard deviations, and relative importance of the study sample answers towards a variable (strategic network). It is noted in this table that item (4) of "The company can identify and seize opportunities" obtained the highest arithmetic averages, reaching (4.4318) with a standard deviation (0.83065), and shows the consistency and harmonious answers of the study sample towards this paragraph, where the relative importance of this item (88%). On the other hand, item (1) concerning "The company has a good reputation in the market as a preferred partner over others" had the lowest arithmetic average, it reached (4.0682), with a standard deviation (0.83065), which shows the harmony of the responses of the sampled individuals, it was the relative importance of this item (81%).

Table 7 Descriptive statistics of strategic network

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Relative importance
1. The company has a good reputation in the market as a preferred partner over others.	4.0682	0.83065	0.81364
2. The company can build a strong strategic network within the industry.	4.1288	0.79507	0.82576
3. The company has good relations with other parties within the industry.	4.2652	0.84582	0.85304
4. The company can identify and seize opportunities.	4.4318	0.83065	0.88636
5. The company can successfully manage negotiations.	4.2045	1.02442	0.8409
General Average	**4.3288**	**0.7930**	**0.84394**

3.4 Study hypotheses test

This section is concerned with exploring the level and direction of the significant relations between the study variables, as follows:

Main Hypothesis: *There is a significant impact of managerial myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*

Table 8 shows the value of the marginal inclination factor (β) of 0.688, which means that increasing the availability levels of management myopia practices by one unit of standard deviation will result in increasing the levels of inability to establish a strategic network by 69% of one unit of standard deviation. Therefore, the main hypothesis is accepted based on the structural model of the influence impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Fig. 1 and Table 8 illustrate the tested structural model and regression paths.
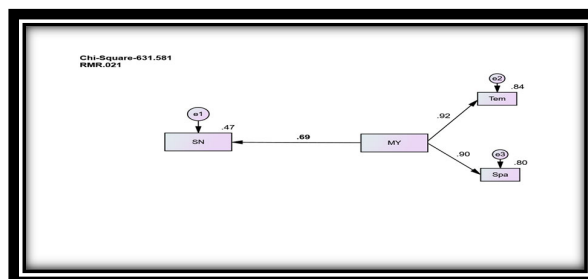

Fig. 1. Structural model

Table 8
Estimates of effect model

Variable	Path	Dimensions	S.R.W	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SN	←	MY	0.688	0.826	0.041	10.846	***

Table 8 also shows the summary of the analysis, showing that all model estimates are below the level of (P<.001) and the critical ratio (C.R.) is greater than (1.96), and it achieves the required condition.

Sub-hypothesis one: *There is a significant impact of temporal myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*

Fig. 2 represents the structural model of the study, in which the dimensions of the independent variable dimensions (temporal myopia and spatial myopia). In the one-way arrows from independent to dependent variables representing standard regression coefficients (B), the apparent value above the strategic network variable represents the interpretation coefficient (determination coefficient), called standard coefficients (used to test hypotheses) (R2). This shows that the dimensions of the managerial myopia variable can explain 51% of the changes in the strategic network variable, while the remaining 49% are due to other variables not included in the study model. As shown in Table 9, the value of the marginal inclination coefficient (β)between temporal myopia and strategic network variable equals (R= 0.166, p<.05), which is a positive and moral value. The value of critical ratio (C.R.) is greater than (1.96), it has reached (2.088), and it fulfills the required condition. This result matched the expectations of the study. Based on the results of the structural model of the impact of temporal myopia on the strategic network variable, the first sub-hypothesis of the direct effect of managerial myopia on the strategic network variable is accepted. Figure (2) and Table (9) illustrate the tested structural model, regression paths, and summary of analysis (model estimates).

Sub-hypothesis two: *There is a significant effect of spatial myopia on the ability to build a strategic network.*

Fig. 2 and Table 9 review the results of the spatial myopia effect on the strategic network. This hypothesis predicts that spatial myopia will positively affect the strategic network. The results show that the spatial myopia effect was (X= 0.597, p< . 01). It is a positive and moral effect at the level of (% 1). Furthermore, the value of the critical ratio (C.R.), which amounted to (7.492), is greater than the standard set for its acceptance, which must be greater than (C.R. > 1.96). This result came in line with the expectations of the study. Therefore, based on the output of the structural model of the spatial myopia effect on the strategic network variable, the second sub-hypothesis of the direct effect of managerial myopia on the strategic network variable is accepted.
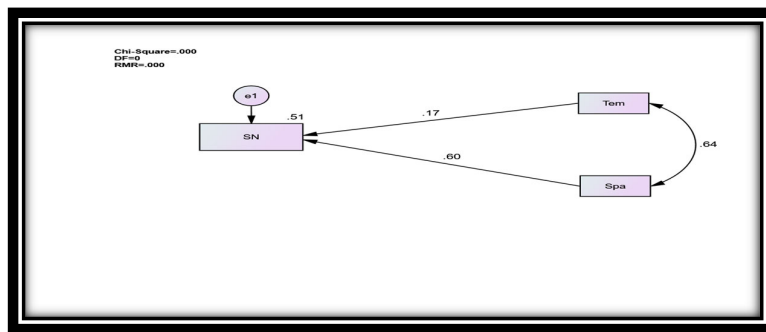

Fig. 2. Structural model

Table 9
Estimates of effect model

Variable	Path	Dimensions	S.R.W	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SN	←	Tem	0.166	0.172	0.083	2.088	0.037
SN	←	Spa	0.597	0.685	0.091	7.492	***

4. Conclusion

Results of the study showed an inverse relationship between the independent variable (managerial myopia) and the dependent variable (strategic network). This relationship demonstrates a clear role in the organization's weakness and inability to build its strategic network. The results showed a negative relationship between the first dimension of the independent variable (temporal myopia) and the dependent variable (strategic network). When the company's management ignores time and takes no accurate measures to keep up with the events, it will fall into the window of chaos. This company will be unable to distinguish between competitors, which will lead to incompetence in forming a strategic network. Results of the research showed

a negative relationship between the second dimension of the independent variable (spatial myopia) and the dependent variable (strategic network). Results indicated that the organization's disregard for its strategic sites would make it unable to seize competitive opportunities and identify companies essential in building its strategic network.

From the results provided by the study, the authors concluded that the ambiguity of the company about challenges and events would lead it to isolation, which poses a significant risk to its future. Furthermore, results showed that management myopia represents a primary concern about trusting potential partners because the organization does not have a clear vision of which of them might be more useful in the future. Therefore, it can be concluded that managerial myopia has a significant role in destabilizing the ability to focus on the variables surrounding the company; as a result, the company will be unable to analyze these variables and make the best decisions.

5. Recommendations

This research recommends that the Oil Products Distribution Company of Iraq pay more attention to managerial myopia and work on getting rid of it. This paper recommends that the company move towards the opposite concept of managerial myopia (managerial farsightedness or hyperopia). This can be done by issuing regulations that illustrate the negative consequences and their reflection on the organization if it remains within that thinking space—in addition to running training and development programs for the company's key and subsidiary managers. Due to the rapidly changing nature of the competitive conditions, the Oil Products Distribution Company of Iraq must perceive managerial short-sightedness as the main factor of confusion in the company. Managerial short-sightedness has a negative impact on the company's ability to explore opportunities or react quickly to events. Individuals with high experience should be brought to classify environmental elements (both internal and external), detect opportunities and threats well, and explain the mechanisms that are relied upon this. Experts, consultants, and university professors can be hired.

The Oil Products Distribution Company in Iraq needs to classify its leaders based on their level of myopia and diagnose their abilities based on the different circumstances and crises. Bridging relations well between leaders themselves as well as between leaders and subordinates is recommended. These relations help in sharing discussions and exchanging ideas and information, as this comes within the concept of Socialization. Socialization is an essential tool in raising the capacity of individuals at a low cost. The company should raise its leaders' mental and cognitive fitness by preparing various training programs and workshops, which rely mainly on exchanging tacit knowledge among them. Equipping managers with various technologies and modern means of communication is also recommended. All this may enable them to see closely how other companies work and plan around them.

This study recommends providing the managers with the appropriate physical environment and organizational climate regarding place capacity, sense of safety, and work tranquility, as well as other positive aspects. This appropriate work climate is essential in making the right strategic decisions. In addition, reducing red tape at work, especially regarding managers' behavior towards variables and events, is also recommended. For example, the company should not require them to make decisions at a specific time, which in the eyes of the leaders, requires further analysis and scrutiny, or on the contrary, may require haste.

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