The Relationship between Strategic Leadership and Institutional Performance in University Youth Welfare Agencies

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ABSTRACT

The current study aimed to determine the status of strategic leadership practice in terms of strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and ethical practices within university youth welfare agencies. Furthermore, it sought to describe the status of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies, determine the nature of the relationship between the level of strategic leadership practice and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies, and propose mechanisms to improve institutional performance. A descriptive study used a comprehensive social survey tool for (104) employees of the university youth welfare agencies at Fayoum University. The results of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the level of strategic leadership practice- which includes strategic direction, developing human capital, promoting organizational culture, ethical practices- and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies. The study recommended the need to monitor external environmental changes and develop information and communication systems to improve the performance of university youth welfare agencies, as well as continuous follow-up of employee performance and continuous benchmarking to improve institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies.

KEYWORDS: Strategic Leadership, Institutional Performance, University Youth Welfare Agencies.

INTRODUCTION

Youth, especially university youth, constitute one of the most active groups in society. Therefore, most countries adopt policies to provide care for this group, recognizing that they represent a renewable and creative energy that contributes to social and cultural change in countries in order to achieve sustainable development. Hence, society has the responsibility of providing various services for youth to meet their needs and address their problems.

Universities, as state entities, provide services to university youth through university youth welfare agencies, which are dedicated to offering various activities (social, cultural, sports, artistic, and scientific) to meet their needs and address their problems.

The Community Organization Method, as one of the methods of social work, seeks to improve societal conditions, help meet citizens' needs, and find solutions to their problems within the limits of available resources (Obaid & Jawdat, 2008, p.130). This is usually

done through community organizing agencies, including service delivery agencies such as University Youth Welfare Agencies (Abdellatif, 2003, p. 161). The Community Organization Method contributes to increasing the effectiveness of these agencies by employing the energies of young people and encouraging their participation in various activities to develop the spirit of citizenship and social responsibility towards their community (Abdellatif, 2010, p. 298). This is achieved by supporting the leadership behaviors of leaders (managers) within the university youth welfare agencies, focusing on concrete facts when making decisions, and leveraging all experiences, storing them in the form of knowledge to be transferred to workers in these agencies (Mohamed, 2011, p.189).

In light of the ongoing societal changes, effective leadership practices in general, and strategic leadership with its indicators (strategic orientation, human capital development, fostering organizational culture, and emphasizing ethical practices) in particular, are crucial for the success of organizations (Mashhadani, 2019, p.13). Such success is what improves organizational performance, which is reached after a set of accomplishments that are achieved due to the implementation of a set of practices (George & Walker, 2019, p. 812)

Institutional performance is the sum of both individual performance and the performance of organizational units as well as the influence of economic, social and cultural environments (Macpherson & Pabari, 2004, p.8). Since there are many external factors that are beyond the scope of the organization's management and can impact its performance, it is necessary to pay attention to research on strategic leadership and its relationship with institutional performance. To identify the problem of the study, the researcher has reviewed the literature on strategic leadership and institutional performance.

LITERATUE REVIEW

Many previous studies have been conducted on strategic leadership, including: Lee & Shih-Hao's study (2007) which emphasized that strategic leadership is characterized by its ability to work efficiently in routine and complex work environments and that strategic leaders work to shape the organization's directions, define its goals, and even transfer their expertise to workers, and help them successfully complete their administrative tasks. Alzahrani's (2018) study indicated that strategic leadership seeks to bring about change

that promotes the university to a better status according to scientific foundations and procedural steps, and to guide the behaviors of employees in light of a system of values and ethics that contributes to achieving its goals effectively and institutional sustainability. Institutions are required to select employees characterized by leadership skills and work to discover them and determine the criteria that must be present in leaders.

Hussein (2020) and Bashabsha (2022) also agreed with Al-Asasfa &Al-Bashabsha (2022) on the indicators of strategic leadership, which include: defining the strategic direction, which is the future image that organizations aspire to reach; developing human capital, which is the capabilities possessed by workers in the organizations; promoting organizational culture, which is the approach derived from leaders that depends on the values of achievement and justice; emphasizing ethical practices, which are the rules and ethical values followed by the leader towards workers. Al-Mughiriya (2023) added that strategic leadership can identify the best means to implement the organization's strategy and achieve its goals of survival, growth and development through the interactive practices it performs. Thus, the organization acquires a strategic orientation that enables it to implement the organization's strategy, invest in its core competencies, which raises the level of organizational competitive excellence, and helps in establishing ethical practices in the work environment, which leads to improved institutional performance.

This leads us to a review of the literature related to institutional performance. For example, Diab (2021) indicated that improving institutional performance is a continuous process that involves measuring performance at the level of processes and services of relative importance in the organization and identifying developments that can enhance its performance. Gadalla (2023) added that institutional performance improvement includes planned and comprehensive activities for the organization as a whole and is carried out in accordance with clear strategies, plans and programs that are specific in their objectives, priorities and approach.

Ali's (2022) study also confirmed that organizations where workers benefit from the successful experiences of their managers have better performance levels, unlike organizations where authority is only held by managers. On the other hand, Abdelhady's study (2021) indicated that the lack of success in some organizations is due to the misuse of knowledge, which negatively impacts the

performance of the organization. Additionally, managers' lack of knowledge capabilities in the field is reflected in their employees, leading to poor performance of the organization.

Tabuk (2016) and Belhaj (2023) added that performance indicators include two types: effectiveness indicators, which focus on achieving the objectives of the institutions and developing them, and efficiency indicators, which focus on the use of resources (material/human) in the institutions in relation to the specified outputs.

Mostafa, et al (2019) recommended that employees be allowed to express their opinions and participate in making decisions related to their work in order to enhance institutional performance. There should be clear and specific policies related to motivating and attracting the best employees. Al-Maidama & Al-Qutaibi (2024) added that there is a need to continuously promote the practice of strategic leadership in different agencies and to retain talented and skilled employees to grow and keep pace with developments and societal changes.

It is clear from the previous literature review that in order for organizations to cope with the changes they face, they must possess strategic leadership and a vision that they are keen to achieve through interaction between managers and employees, which in turn improves their institutional performance.

THE STUDY PROBLEM

University youth welfare agencies face many challenges influenced by many changes and transformations in their internal environment and external influences. This requires them to continuously improve their performance levels and develop their capabilities to face these challenges. This can only be achieved by supporting managers' practices of strategic leadership and transferring their behaviors to employees in those agencies to improve their institutional performance and ensure development and competitive readiness for the benefit of the work environment as a whole. The interaction process that takes place between managers and employees, including social workers, within university youth welfare agencies leads to the provision and implementation of activities and services for university youth, who are the primary beneficiaries of these departments. Therefore, there is a real need to improve institutional performance. Thus, the main issue of the study is: "Determining the nature of the relationship between the level of strategic leadership and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies".

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
1. The concept of Strategic Leadership

Leadership is defined as "the process of influencing others to perform a common action" (Fieldler, 1967, p. 362). Strategic leadership is also defined as "The ability to anticipate and envision while maintaining flexibility and helping individuals to bring about strategic change in a way that enables the organization to obtain a competitive advantage," and can be measured through the following indicators: strategic orientation, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and emphasizing ethical practices (Hitt et al., 2007, p. 1390). Strategic orientation is defined as "defining the vision, mission, and values of the organization and involving employees in formulating them to make its goals understandable to all" (Willis, et. al., 2022, p. 25). Human capital development is defined as: "the ability of the manager to develop the knowledge and skills of employees" (Son, 2010, p.2), while organizational culture is defined as "the set of behaviors that reflect the shared beliefs and expectations of employees (Lok & Crawford, 2004, p.329). Ethical practices are defined as" the behavior that a manager performs in accordance with societal values and principles such as basic rights, justice, power sharing, and integrity, which affect the behavior of employees in the organization and thus affect its performance (Langlois, et al., 2014, p.319).

According to the current study, strategic leadership is defined as "*the ability of managers of youth welfare agencies to positively and strategically influence employees in a way that is reflected in the performance of youth welfare agencies at the university in providing distinguished services to university youth*". It can be measured through:

- **Strategic guidance:** The ability of managers to make employees committed to a clear vision by analyzing the external and internal environment and working to formulate and apply an appropriate strategy.
- **Human Capital Development:** The ability of managers to develop the knowledge and skills of employees in order to successfully formulate and implement strategies.
- **Fostering organizational culture:** This refers to the ability of managers to introduce new values, beliefs, and changes that require effective communication and problem solving.

- ▪ **Emphasis on ethical practices**: It refers to the fact that managers should maintain integrity and trust among workers, and they should create an ethical work environment by encouraging workers at all organizational levels to practice ethical rules.

2. The Concept of Institutional Performance

Institutional Performance is defined as "An integrated system of business results in the organization in light of its interaction with the elements of the internal and external environment, the tasks carried out in accordance with regulations and standards, and the way these tasks are presented to the beneficiary to achieve the required service" (Tuama & Alqhiwi, 2014, p.85). It is also defined as "a concept that reflects both the objectives and the means necessary to achieve them, i.e. it is a concept that links the aspects of activity with the objectives that the agencies seek to achieve through the tasks and duties performed by the workers in those agencies" (Zwick, 2016, p.5).

According to the current study, institutional performance is defined as "*the ability of employees in university youth welfare agencies to fulfill their duties and responsibilities through interaction between internal and external elements with the aim of providing distinguished services to university youth*."

3. Rationale of the study

The current study relies on the interaction theory of leadership, which focuses on leadership as a process of social interaction. The leader must be one of the members of the team, sharing their problems, standards, goals and hopes, and should be keen to strengthen the relationship with the members (Lotfy, 2007, p.77). Interaction theory focuses on the interaction between the leader and the workers by expanding their responsibilities with the leader in order to achieve the goals of the organization (McLaughlin & Kunk-Czaplicki, 2020, p.260).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The current study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1- Determining the status of the practice of strategic leadership (strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, emphasis on ethical practices) in university youth welfare agencies.
2- Determining the status of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies.

3- Determining the nature of the relationship between the level of strategic leadership practice (strategic guidance, human capital development, enhancing organizational culture, emphasis on ethical practices) and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies.

4- Finding mechanisms to improve institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies.

STUDY HYPOTHESES:

The current study seeks to test the following hypotheses:

1- It is expected that the level of strategic leadership practice in university youth welfare agencies will be high. This hypothesis can be tested through the following dimensions of strategic leadership: (strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and emphasis on ethical practices).

2- It is expected that the level of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies will be high.

3- There is a statistically significant direct relationship between the practice of strategic leadership (strategic direction, human capital development, promoting organizational culture, emphasis on ethical practices) and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies.

METHODOLOGY

1- **Study Type**: This is a descriptive study, aiming to determine the status of the practice of strategic leadership among managers of youth welfare agencies from the perspective of employees, and to determine the status of institutional performance in those agencies to ascertain the nature of the relationship between them.

2- **Methodological instruments**: The current study relied on the use of a comprehensive social survey of all the employees of the university youth welfare agencies at Fayoum University.

3- **Tools of the study**: The current study relied on two scales, namely: the Strategic Leadership Scale and Institutional Performance Scale, both of which were constructed by the researcher as follows:

A- Gaining access to specialized technical writings, previous studies, and scales related to the topic of the current study.

B- The dimensions of the two scales were determined according to the study's objectives and hypotheses:

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-*The Strategic Leadership Scale* included two axes: The first axis included the primary data and included (5) questions, while the second axis included (20) statements.
- The *Institutional Performance Scale* included two axes: The first axis included the initial data, comprising (5) questions, while the second axis consisted of (20) statements.
- Both scales used a three-point Likert scale: disagree (1), somewhat agree (2), and agree (3).

-Procedures for Validity of the Study Instruments
  Apparent Validity (Validity of the Arbitrators):
   The two scales were presented to (8) faculty members at the Faculties of Social Work at Fayoum University and Helwan University. An agreement rate of not less than (80%) was adopted. Based on their feedback, some phrases were deleted, and others were rephrased. Accordingly, the two scales were formulated in their final form, which included (24) phrases for the Strategic Leadership Scale became, and (20) phrases for the Institutional Performance Scale.

   Internal Validity: To verify that the study's tools fully represent the content to be measured, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between the score of each axis and the total score in both scales. In the Strategic leadership Scale, the internal validity results were:

(0.968**) for strategic guidance, (0.952**) for developing human capital, (0.982**) for fostering organizational culture, and (0.984**) for emphasis on ethical practices.
These numbers confirm that the scale has a high degree of reliability. As for the *Institutional Performance Scale*, the internal validity coefficient of the scale reached (0.972**), confirming that the scale enjoys a high degree of validity.

‒ **Reliability of the Study Tools**
   The reliability of the scales was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the estimated reliability values of both scales. The reliability coefficient was extracted at the level of each instrument as a whole and at the level of the axes, as follows: Strategic Leadership Scale. The reliability results of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient were as follows: (0.949) for the strategic direction dimension, (0.957) for the human capital development dimension, (0.970) for the organizational culture dimension, (0.950) for the ethical practices dimension, and (0.987) for the scale as a whole. This indicates that the Strategic Leadership Scale has a high level of stability.

As for the Institutional Performance Scale, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the scale as a whole was (0.984). This ratio indicates that the scale has a high level of reliability.

4- **Sample:**

The study population consisted of all employees in the youth welfare agencies at Fayoum University (128), including managers and employees. The study sample included all employees (108), except for managers since they are the leaders who are evaluated through the scale questions from the employees' point of view. The actual application was conducted on all (104) employees who were still working at the time of the field study.

Youth welfare agencies at Fayoum University include the General Administration of Youth Welfare, and the Youth Welfare Departments of all university faculties, namely: Education, Agriculture, Engineering, Social Work, Dar Al Uloom, Science, Tourism and Hotels, Diversified Education, Archaeology, Medicine, Arts, Computers and Artificial Intelligence, Early Childhood Education, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Law, Physical Education, and Al-Alsun. The field study was conducted in May 2024.

5- **Statistical processing:**

Data were processed statistically using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 28, many statistical treatments were applied. The average responses of employees to the metrology were judged according to the following scale: (2.34-3 High, 1.67-2.33 Medium, 1-1.66 Low).

RESULTS

Characteristics of the sample

Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample Study (N = 104)

Characteristics	Sub Characteristics	N	%
Gender	Male	45	43.3
	Female	59	56.7
Age	*(mean±SD)*	43.73±8.729	
Educational	average qualification	5	4.8
	Above average qualification.	13	12.5
	Bachelor degree	74	71.2
	Postgraduate studies (Diploma - Master - PhD)	12	11.5
Years of Experience	> 5 years	26	25
	5>10 years	8	7.7
	10>15 years	29	27.9
	<15 years	41	39.4
Total		104	100%

It is clear from the previous table (1) that the size of the applied sample of employees in university youth welfare agencies is (104), of whom 43.3% are male and 56.7% are female. Most of them have a bachelor's degree (71.2%), and the majority have 15 years of experience or more (39.4%.).

Results of the First Hypothesis:

The first hypothesis of the study states that "The level of strategic leadership practice in university youth welfare agencies is expected to be high." This hypothesis can be tested through the following strategic leadership dimensions: strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and emphasis on ethical practices.

The Strategic Guidance Dimension:

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Strategic Direction (N = 104)

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	Level	Rank
1	I am allowed to modify future business plans.	1.96	0.481	5	Medium
2	I have a supportive work environment to carry out unique activities.	1.99	0.429	4	Medium
3	I find adequate support when I encounter issues in implementing activities.	1.89	0.520	6	Medium
4	Realistic strategic goals are set for the business.	2.27	0.561	1	High
5	Work patterns are being modernized to keep up with societal changes.	2.01	0.583	3	Medium
6	I receive the "success and failure" experiences of similar departments to benefit from them in developing the work.	2.02	0.623	2	Medium
Total Dimension		2.02	0.479	Medium	

The results of the previous table (2) indicated that the strategic guidance dimension had a medium percentage, with the general average of the sample's responses to the statements of this dimension being (2.02), which is a medium average. The arithmetic averages of the statements of the dimension ranged between (1.89 - 2.27) compared to the general arithmetic average of the dimension as a whole, with statements No. (3) and (4) being the lowest and highest, respectively.

The Human Capital Development Dimension:
Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of developing human capital (N = 104)

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	Level	Rank
7	Panel discussions are held to share experiences on the latest field knowledge.	1.45	0.667	4	Low
8	I am trusted to organize centralized events.	1.52	0.682	3	Low
9	I receive rewards for achieving high ranks in activities.	2.07	0.612	1	Medium
10	I have access to various training courses.	1.38	0.610	5	Low
11	Experienced talents are attracted according to work needs.	1.32	0.658	6	Low
12	I am guided to make the right decision to overcome work challenges.	1.76	0.675	2	Medium
	Total Dimension	1.58	0.590		Low

The results of the previous table (3) indicated that the dimension of human capital development had a low percentage, with the general average of the sample's responses to the statements of this dimension being (1.58), which is a low average. The arithmetic averages of the statements of the dimension ranged between (1.32 - 2.07) compared to the general arithmetic average of the dimension as a whole, with statements No. (11) and (9) being the lowest and highest, respectively.

The Dimension of Enhancing Organizational Culture:
Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation of Enhancing Organizational Culture (N = 104)

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	Level	Rank
13	I am authorized to perform certain key business functions.	2.10	0.549	1	Medium
14	Practicing teamwork values is supported among colleagues.	1.99	0.599	5	Medium
15	There is confidence in my ability to deal with issues at all levels.	2.04	0.606	4	Medium
16	I am allowed to participate when any decision is made.	2.06	0.572	3	Medium
17	I have a conflict-free work environment.	1.64	0.736	6	Low
18	There is fairness in the distribution of tasks between me and my colleagues.	2.09	0.576	2	Medium
	Total Dimension	1.98	0.568		Medium

The results of the previous table (4) indicated that the dimension of promoting organizational culture had a medium percentage, with the general average of the sample's responses to the statements of this dimension being (1.98), which is a medium average. The arithmetic averages of the statements of the dimension ranged between (1.64-2.10) compared to the general arithmetic average of the dimension as a whole, with statement No. (17) and statement No. (13) being the lowest and highest, respectively.

The Dimension of Emphasizing Ethical Practices:

Table 5. Mean and standard deviation of emphasizing ethical practices (N = 104)

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	level	Rank
19	I am guided to ethical rules when practicing work.	1.94	0.620	5	Medium
20	I am encouraged to practice ethical behavior with my peers.	1.85	0.620	6	Medium
21	I am instructed to announce contests to all students at the same time.	2.35	0.571	1	High
22	The initiative is available to carry out activities that support the moral values of university youth.	2.10	0.549	3	Medium
23	I was instructed to follow the principle of confidentiality to preserve students' privacy.	2.09	0.593	4	Medium
24	I am encouraged to follow transparency in the publication of contest results.	2.30	0.573	2	Medium
Total Dimension		2.10	0.525	Medium	

The results of the previous table (5) indicated that the dimension of emphasizing ethical practices had a medium percentage, with the general average of the sample's responses to the statements of this dimension being (2.10), which is a medium average. The arithmetic averages of the statements of the dimension ranged between (1.85-2.35) compared to the general arithmetic average of the dimension as a whole, with statements No. (20) and (21) being the lowest and highest, respectively.

The results show that the first hypothesis of the study is invalid: "*The level of strategic leadership practice is expected to be high in university youth welfare agencies*." This hypothesis was tested through the following dimensions of strategic leadership: (strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and emphasizing ethical practices) (strategic direction, developing human capital, enhancing organizational culture, and emphasis on ethical practices). The results of the leadership practice level are as follows:

- The level of practice of the strategic direction dimension in university youth welfare agencies is (2.02), which is a medium level.
- The level of practice of the human capital development dimension in university youth welfare agencies is (1.58), which is a low level.
- The level of practice of the dimension of promoting organizational culture in university youth welfare agencies is (1.98), which is a medium level.
- The level of practice of the dimension of emphasizing ethical practices in university youth welfare agencies is (2.10), which is a medium level.

Results of the Second Hypothesis of the Study "The level of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies is expected to be high".

Table 6. Mean and standard deviation of institutional performance (N = 104)

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	level	Rank
1	I use modern approaches to address the issues of university youth.	2.07	0.612	6	Medium
2	I use the latest professional methods in my work practice.	1.59	0.633	17	Low
3	I make sure to share knowledge with academic experts.	2.22	0.682	3	Medium
4	I initiate activities based on innovative ideas.	2.20	0.742	4	Medium
5	I get competitive ranks in the activities I organize every year .	2.19	0.559	5	Medium
6	I endeavor to periodically refurbish worn-out tools used for practicing activities.	2.00	0.639	8	Medium
7	My colleagues provide me with the information I need to carry out the various activities.	1.68	0.627	13	Medium
8	I delegate my colleagues to carry out the centralized activities assigned to me.	1.61	0.674	16	Low
9	I always listen to student feedback after each activity.	2.20	0.564	4	Medium
10	I take into account the application of total quality standards in all steps of implementing activities.	1.82	0.707	9	Medium
11	I work after office hours to finish my work assignments.	1.36	0.637	18	Low

No	Phrases	MEAN	SD	level	Rank
12	I rely on technology-based expert systems to enhance my skills.	1.66	0.691	14	Low
13	I make sure to attend additional trainings to improve my skills.	2.04	0.637	7	Medium
14	Utilize the results of my annual performance evaluation.	1.81	0.725	10	Medium
15	I make sure my colleagues are involved in defining organizational procedures for work.	2.23	0.561	2	Medium
16	I ensure that activities are carried out according to the announced schedule.	2.07	0.488	6	Medium
17	I provide facilities for students to join youth welfare activities.	2.49	0.607	1	High
18	I always to stick to my role in the administration.	1.64	0.637	15	Low
19	I always organize orientation meetings to advertise the various activities.	1.80	0.510	11	Medium
20	I help mentor new employees even if I'm not asked to do so.	1.72	0.675	12	Medium
Total Dimension		1.91	0.556	Medium	

The results of the previous table (6) indicated that the responses of the study sample on the Institutional Performance scale were medium, with the overall mean of the sample's responses to the statements of this scale being (1.91), which is a medium mean. The arithmetic means of the statements of the scale ranged between (1.36 - 2.49) compared to the overall arithmetic mean of the scale as a whole, with statements No. (11) and statement No. (17) being the lowest and highest, respectively.

It is clear from the previous results that the second hypothesis of the study, i.e. "*The level of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies is expected to be high*," is invalid, as the results show that the level of Institutional Performance was (1.91), which is an average level.

Results of the Study's Third Hypothesis:

"There is a statistically significant direct relationship between the practice of strategic leadership (strategic direction, developing human capital, promoting organizational culture, emphasis on ethical practices) and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies".

Table 7. The correlation between the level of strategic leadership and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies through Pearson's correlational matrix (N = 104)

strategic leadership	institutional performance
strategic direction	0.924**
developing human capital	0.934**
enhancing organizational culture	0.939**
emphasizing ethical practices	0.967**
Scale as a whole	**0.972****

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The results of the previous table (7) indicated that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the level of strategic leadership practice (emphasizing ethical practices, promoting organizational culture, developing human capital, and strategic direction -dimensions arranged according to the strength of correlation) and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies. This confirms that the higher the level of strategic leadership practice with its sub-dimensions, the higher the level of institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies. These results come in line with the results of Al-Mughiriya's study (2023) which indicated a positive correlation between strategic leadership and institutional performance.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study revealed that the level of strategic guidance - as one of the dimensions of strategic leadership - came at a medium level. Therefore, managers of university youth welfare agencies must be keen to provide adequate support to employees when they face any issues in implementing activities and allow them to modify work plans. This result is consistent with the study of Alzahrani (2018), which confirmed that strategic leaders work to formulate the directions of the organization, define its goals, and even transfer their expertise to employees.

The results of the study indicated that the level of human capital development - as one of the dimensions of strategic leadership - came at a low level. Therefore, managers of university youth welfare agencies must be keen to attract competent and experienced staff according to the needs of the work and provide them with opportunities to obtain various training courses. These results are consistent with Al-Mughiriya (2023) study, which confirmed that the strategic leader can achieve the organization's goals of survival, growth and development through interactive practices that depend on investing in the core competencies of workers and developing their skills and knowledge.

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The results of the study also showed that the level of promoting organizational culture -as one of the dimensions of strategic leadership- came at a medium level. Therefore, managers of university youth welfare agencies must be keen to provide a conflict-free work environment for employees and supporting their practice of teamwork values. These findings are consistent with the study of Hussein (2020) and Bashabsha (2022) Al-Asasfa & Al- who explained that promoting organizational culture depends on managers' acquisition of the values of achievement and justice in the work environment.

The results of the study showed that the level of emphasis on ethical practices -as one of the dimensions of strategic leadership- came at a medium level. Therefore, managers of university youth welfare agencies should be keen to encourage employees to practice ethical behaviors and guide them to ethical controls when practicing work.This is consistent with the study of Alzahrani (2018), which found that strategic leadership seeks to bring about change that enhances the university institution to a better situation by working to direct the behaviors of employees in light of a system based on valuable and ethical practices.

The results of the study also revealed that the level of institutional performance of the university youth welfare agencies came at a medium level. Therefore, employees must be keen to use professional approaches when practicing work, delegating colleagues to carry out some centralized activities, as well as adhering to permanent participation in management. In addition, they should rely on expert systems to keep pace with societal changes. The study confirmed a statistically significant correlation between the level of strategic leadership practice in its dimensions and institutional performance. The results are consistent with the study of Mostafa, et al (2019) and Al-Maidama & Al-Qutaibi (2024), who concluded that to enhance institutional Performance, employees should be allowed to participate in making decisions related to their work and keep pace with all societal changes.

The results of the study also confirmed that there is a statistically significant direct relationship between the level of strategic leadership practice with its dimensions and institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies The results of the current study can be interpreted in light of the interaction theory since the existence of good interpersonal relationships between strategic leaders and employees makes workers feel better and accomplish more administrative tasks, thus improving their institutional performance.

Based on the results of the current study, a set of mechanisms have been proposed to improve institutional performance in university youth welfare agencies. They were designed taking into consideration the following elements: The basics of the community organization method, the theoretical framework of the study, the results of the field study, and the researcher's vision. This can be summarized in the following points:

1- Developing the internal processes of the university youth welfare agencies by adopting a vision and mission directed towards achieving institutional excellence, adopting a flexible administrative and organizational structure, shifting decision-making from centralization to decentralization, in addition to continuously developing the services and activities they provide according to changes.

2- Monitoring external environmental changes to improve the institutional performance of university youth welfare agencies by following up on the surrounding technological developments and encouraging their employees to follow these changes, in addition to continuously monitoring the needs of university youth.

3- Developing human resources in university youth welfare agencies by ensuring the development of their employees' capacities, enabling them to optimize the use of information, supporting their professional development in a sustainable manner, and ensuring the selection of leaders who possess right decision-making skills.

4- Developing information and communication systems to improve the performance of university youth welfare agencies through electronic documentation of all decisions, establishing a university information network that includes its various faculties and units, and linking departments to each other to maximize the use of each department's expertise.

5- Continuous monitoring of the performance of university youth welfare agencies with the aim of improving their performance, through the use of modern administrative approaches to evaluate performance and continuous benchmarking.

To fully achieve these mechanisms, we should adopt the principles of the Community Organization Method, which are social responsibility, participation, and the right to make decisions. Other professional tools can also be used, such as conferences, committees, discussions, and meetings, as well as the following professional roles, which include professional leader, enabler, planner, and mediator.

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