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The Mediation Effect of QS Strategies on the Relation between Strategic Leadership and Healthcare Service Quality

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Abstract

The research examines the influence of strategic leadership on healthcare service quality according to 5QS model. The aim of this study was to assess whether there was a correlation between strategic leadership and quality of health by the mediation effect of 5QS model, The results of study using the sample of doctors in medical city in Iraq, research question was: "Is there any relation between strategic leadership in health environment and quality of healthcare service?" The research concluded that there is a positive relationship in adopting strategic leadership for the 5QS model in quality of health service.

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Keywords

Strategic leadership,
Healthcare Service Quality,
5QS Model

Introduction

A variety of studies have been done related to the relationship between leadership and service quality (Azbari & Chaijani, 2015), (Jabnoun & Juma, 2005) (Ismail *et al.,* 2009) However, these studies did not take into consecration the security conditions and did not address this issue within a sample in light of the difficult security situation and the face of terrorism in some places like Iraq, The study of (Ehsani *et al.,* 2012) indicates that leadership has a direct significant impact on job satisfaction, and this relationship is positively reflected on improving the quality of service.

A study of Kharrazi *et al.,* (2013), conducted on a sample of staff at the national bank, found that a number of factors contribute to increase job satisfaction, and the most powerful component of them was leadership. The study (Ismail *et al.,* 2009) indicated that managers of health institutions have a significant impact on quality of service.

However, achieving service quality is still a challenge today as it was in history, in particular. Currently, security conditions and situations directly affected the nature of services provided, but still, there are challenges in accessing scientific and academic material (Ferraresi, Quandt, dos Santos & Frega, 2012). Moreover, some of terrorist activities affect the quality of service (Moha5QS modelad & Alhamadani, 2011). Hence the need to find effective strategic leadership to meet these challenges (Ginter *et al.,* 2018) Where strategic leadership plays a major role in influencing job satisfaction and quality of health service (Moura *et al.,* 2017). In sum, the purpose of this paper is to study how strategic leadership (independent variable) influence quality of healthcare

service (dependent variable) and we argue that 5QS model help to enhance this relation.

Literature Review

Strategic Leadership

Leadership is a complex set of processes that develop in a timely fashion and are characterized by a variety of typologies, approaches, methods, tools and models. It is an old concept that changes as social interactions progress (Trottier *et al.*, 2008). However, the reference literature lacks definition to fully reflect the spirit and inherent complexity of leadership. Moreover, despite long-term research, it remains unclear what leadership stands precisely (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995).

In general, it is believed that leadership focuses on processes that encourage individuals to cooperate to achieve the goals of the organization. This concept focuses on the behaviors and qualities that tend to be interpreted by individuals and which depend on their perceptions and the level of their relationships with leaders and their colleagues. The strategic leadership has long been based on the hegemony of the leader through respect, power and ability to control, and participation by members of the group depends on fear, respect, seeking rewards and avoiding sanctions (Avery, 2009).

Strategic leadership represents a set of actions and decisions that contribute to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategic plans aimed at achieving the organization's vision, mission and strategic objectives within the work environment (Pearce & Robinson, 2007),Therefore, strategic leadership has become represents the ability of the leader to anticipate and conceptualize strategic flexibility and enable individuals to make the necessary strategic change (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2007).

Strategic leaders need to identify the best way to address problems when they occur and identify factors affecting strategic leadership (Cole, 2004). These factors vary according to the nature of the activities being carried out (Switzer, 2008).Often, these factors are the external challenges that are the elements of the external environment and the internal challenges that are weak in the internal environment, so it requires the commander to take care to motivate the individuals and maintain the capabilities of the organization and its capabilities and here the leader represents a leader at all times (Mison, 2014).

Strategic Leadership Dimensions

Strategic Vision

Vision is defined as the state that embodies the ambition of the organization (Rothaermel, 2013) and the organizational goals that evoke convincing mental images of individuals (Gregory *et al.*, 2014), And develop a long-term strategic vision that reflects the personal views of the inspiring leadership (Hitt *et al.*, 2001). If the strategic leader can clarify his own point of view and involve his subordinates, they will support his strategic vision, This will representing privacy of the leader, and at the same time representing a concept for everyone in the organization (Macmillan & Tampoe, 2000)

Human capital

Human capital is the knowledge, skills and abilities of workers who contribute to economic value. Here, it is necessary for the organization to treat human capital as a source of marketing assets (Thomas & Scott, 2009).

Because it represents the abilities, knowledge, skills and experiences of individuals, that be as an intangible asset such as goodwill, employee loyalty, commitment, customer relationship, and organization values (Gregory *et al.*, 2014).

Ethical practices

The ethical practices represent the adoption of the general social beliefs and make it the basis of the behavior in the organization. The organization adopts practices that reward honesty and achievement. It is based on the values of accountability and transparency, as well as the establishment of a system of promotion and fair incentives and balance with the external environment and work in the spirit of objective and fair competition. Encourage workers to meet challenges and develop their abilities and skills (Srivastava, 2012).

Effective Organizational Culture

Organizational culture represents solutions to problems of external adaptation (control and uncertainty) and problems of internal integration (Thompson & Strickland, 1996), Focusing on the fundamental and behavioral dimensions to achieve a state of harmony between thought and behavior according to the values of the organization (Heracleovs & Longjam, 1996).

Other researchers argue that organizational culture represents the differences between values and expectations of different cultural backgrounds. The main challenge facing organizations is to adapt the external environment and to understand individual's behavior and beliefs because of their impact on the organizational performance (Belias *et al.*, 2015).

In this regard, Park (2013) points out that organizational culture is a dynamic process of interacting with others by leadership behaviors, which It includes a set of structures, routines, norms and standards that guide behavior, therefore, it express culture as the set of values and symbols shared by the organization's members. That will contribute to solving internal and external problems. Here the organizational culture is based on the permanent values embodied in organizational standards, rules and objectives, which benefit individuals in their work and decisions (Jones, 2007).Since organizational culture helps employees to understand expected and accepted values and behaviors (Ofori & Sokro, 2010),it is necessary to understand the range of factors that influence their perceptions. And the competitive values that based on a framework for effective organizational values (Zerella, 2017).

Healthcare Service Quality

The service is defined as a detailed description of what needs to be done to the customer, what his needs and desires are, how satisfied he is, and how to identify what has achieved (Goldstein *et al.*, 2002), It represents the work done by one party to the other, and when the service is offered to the customer it can be retained (Perreault & Mcathy, 2005).

The service is based on several factors (Goldstein *et al.*, 2002)

Service Process: The way the service is delivered.

Service experience: Experience the service directly by the customer.

Service Result: Customer service benefits and results.

Value of service: the extent of the customer's benefit from the service.

The service is the activity in which the customer, the service provider or the service organizations interact to solve the client's problems, and does not lead to the ownership of the service results (Li, 2011) and Service is an intangible act or performance that a party can provide to another and cannot be owned or produced by the service, and may be linked or not to physical or intangible products (Kotler & Keller, 2009), Gronroos explains the quality of the health service through two dimensions: technical quality, which refers to the results of the service or the customer's access to the health service. The second dimension is the quality of the job, which explains how the service is delivered, both of which affect the image of the organization (Kabir & Carlsson, 2010: 14).

5QS Model

Competition among health organizations has become very high at the present time, due to the lack of progress in the use of technology in various health fields, which requires the need to provide quality services by health organizations and to focus attention on issues of improvement, measurement and quality control of services (Nessim *et al.*, 2014). Despite the importance of technical and functional quality, but focuses on the importance of the environment in which health services are characterized by a general feeling between the introduction of health services and customers, A number of factors have been added to this model, such as the basic infrastructure required in the delivery of health services (Zineldin, 2012).

A 5QS model has been developed to measure the quality of service, product or process and is experimentally tested and applied to measure the quality of health and educational services. It can be used as an effective tool to identify the advantages and disadvantages of health organizations and minimize errors by the remedial actions (Zineldin, 2006), Therefore, this model is one of the most important models adopted in health services.

5QS Model Dimensions

Quality of Object

This dimension refers to the patient's access to health services and measures the method of treatment, which is the main reason for the patient to be satisfied and visits the hospital, including all medical and clinical procedures that focus on technical accuracy in diagnosis, treatment, medical devices, medicines and hospital and other aspects (Akdag & Zineldin, 2010), It focuses on

the technical aspects of health services and is designed to meet the expectations and needs of customers (Zineldin *et al.*, 2012).

Quality of process

The process is any task or work that is divided into stages linked in the form of a series of each stage carried out by one individual or group of work, so that each stage is linked to the previous and subsequent stage, in a manner that can apply the concept of the quality chain, which emphasizes that the quality of performance for each phase is linked to quality performance of the previous phase, and rely on the recognition of errors and propose solutions (Hussain & Rehman, 2012: 8).

Quality of infrastructure

This dimension measures the basic resources required to perform health services that include financial, technical, human resources, internal competencies, skills, expertise, technology, and various activities and how they are managed (Neij & Martensson, 2013).

The quality of the infrastructure is an indirect measure of health services and includes tangible features of the provision of services through the provision of the necessary resources necessary to provide this service. It also refers to the physical facilities or services provided by individuals in the health organization and internal activities such as design, planning and equipment, Has a direct relationship with the quality of health services (Azizan & Mohamed, 2013), Hussain & Rehman (2012) noted that the use of technology infrastructure can play a vital role in achieving patient satisfaction and has become a major factor in the practice of health services.

Quality of interactions

This dimension measures the interaction between customers and the health team as well as the managers and the community. The good relations between the community, the managers and the technicians in the health organization, on the one hand, and the health team on the other, inspire trust, respect and patient response to medical instructions, Poor relationships lead to non-response to service. The quality of the interaction measures the quality of the exchange of information between the service provider and the customers, and the perceived quality of the interaction reflects the level of communication with the customer (Akdag & Zineldin, 2010).

Quality of atmosphere

This dimension refers to the impact of the relationship and the process between the provider and the customer with the quality of the general feeling in a particular environment where they cooperate and work together.

The indicators of the general feeling are crucial and important indicators because of their importance in facilitating and providing health services and is used to measure the working environment in the health service delivery system (Nessim *et al.*, 2014).

The general feeling also refers to the physical aspects of the environment in which health services are provided, that affect the intentions of the customers when they request service, as well as service providers. This dimension can be used to increase customer satisfaction as it plays a crucial role in the process of evaluating customers for health services (Boshoff & Plessis, 2009).

And there are important factors affecting general feeling are design characteristics, levels of noise, lighting, and ventilation, as these factors affect customer and employee satisfaction (Jager & Plooy, 2011).

Method

Research Instrument

This research was a descriptive analytical study carried out across the board. Research subjects consisted of doctors at medical city. Sample size was calculated based on the principle of (Thompsom, 2002), A sample size of 160doctors was chosen for this research and a total of 134 completed surveys were retuned with a response rate of 83.75%. Survey data was collected by a questionnaire during December 2017.

Research Hypotheses

According to the above discussion, the following research hypotheses was developed.

H1: Strategic leadership affects positively the service quality.

H11: Strategic vision affects positively the service quality.

H12: Human capital affects positively the service quality.

H13: Ethical practices affects positively the service quality.

H14: Organizational culture affects positively the service quality.

H2: 5QS Components affects positively the service quality.

H21: Quality of Object affects positively the service quality.

H22: Quality of Process affects positively the service quality.

H23: Quality of Infrastructure affects positively the service quality.

H24: Quality of Interactions affects positively the service quality.

H25: Quality of atmosphere affects positively the service quality.

H3: Strategic leadership affects positively the service quality through 5QS.

The hypotheses have been formulated according to the conceptual framework that shown in figure (1)

Validation Tests

The validation tests conducted on the data represented on the excel file is valid. The test focused on validating whether or not the data used was valid, whereby the test used was whole numeric.

In essence, the results obtained ascribed that the data was valid because it belonged to the custom range of a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5, The validity of the questionnaire was evaluated and approved by eight experts of the management and medicine team, and reliability was reported at Cronbach alpha that shows accepting values above 0.60 as it shown in table (1)

Results and Discussion

Simple Relation

For the sake of the analysis of the relationship between variables correlation and regression and structural equations were used as described below.

Table (2) shows the correlation between strategic leadership and its components as independent variable and service quality and its components as a dependent variable. It is clear from the correlation coefficient of R=0.787, there is a direct relationship between the variables and the correlation is high. High correlation coefficient between variables shows a significant relationship between all independent and dependent variables. And the correlation of the components are (0.534 – 0.778) and significant.

Table (3) shows the correlation between strategic leadership and its components as independent variable and 5QS model and its components as a mediator variable. It is clear from the correlation coefficient of R=0.779, there is a direct relationship between the variables and the correlation is high.

High correlation coefficient between variables shows a significant relationship between all mediator and criterion variables. And the correlation of the components are (0.364 – 0.816) and are significant.

The result of the study show that strategic leadership has a significant positive impact on the service quality. This is especially considering the results obtained from the regression analysis pitching strategic leadership against service quality. In this analysis, various features of strategic leadership were contrasted against various dimensions of service quality to provide a clear understanding as to how the two affect one another in an organizational success (Pantouvakis & Patsiouras, 2016).

The first dimension was the impact of strategic vision as part of strategic leadership over the service quality. The graph below in figure (2) shows that strategic leadership has a direct impact on the service quality.

The second analysis is human capital under strategic leadership and service quality in figure (3). In this case, the results obtained proved that strategic leadership in terms of human capital was equally instrumental in promoting service quality by promoting the provision of appropriate working human labor requirements of the employees and the skills. According to (Ployhart *et al.*, 2013) this is notable as one of the key factors supporting the service quality within an organization. Therefore, promotion of good working conditions will subsequently result in job satisfaction of the employees, which will in turn lead to increased productivity and profitability, as the employees give their very best to their employers and high level of service quality.

Table.1 Strategic leadership reliability and descriptive analysis

Variable	Mean	Std. deviation	no. of items	items dropped	Cronbach's α
Strategic Vision	17.60	2.92	4	2	0.899
Human capital	17.55	2.46	4	2	0.911
Ethical practices	17.23	2.64	4	0	0.754
Effective Organizational Culture	16.87	3.33	4	0	0.888
Quality of Object	17.07	3.58	4	0	0.936
Quality of process	17.66	2.86	4	0	0.916
Quality of infrastructure	17.50	2.72	4	0	0.806
Quality of interactions	17.14	2.36	4	0	0.877
Quality of atmosphere	17.25	3.17	4	2	0.927
Service Quality	41.83	5.40	10	2	0.770

Table.2 Result of correlation between variables strategic leadership and service quality

	Independent				
Dependent	**Strategic Vision**	**Human Capital**	**Ethical Practices**	**Effective Organizational Culture**	**Strategic Leadership**
Service Quality	0.733**	0.534**	0.654**	0.778**	0.787**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table.3 Result of correlation between variablesstrategic leadership and QS

	Dependent					
Independent	Quality of Object	Quality of process	Quality of infrastructure	Quality of interactions	Quality of atmosphere	5QS model
Strategic Vision	0.768**	0.605**	0.516**	0.422**	0.448**	0.662**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Human capital	0.535**	0.475**	0.538**	0.427**	0.364**	0.550**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Ethical practices	0.678**	0.620**	0.573**	0.576**	0.499**	0.694**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Effective Organizational Culture	0.815**	0.679**	0.655**	0.547**	0.563**	0.775**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
strategic leadership	0.816**	0.692**	0.661**	0.570**	0.546**	0.779**
sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table.4 Regression result (SL*SQ)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.778[a]	.605	.602	.57513
2	.818[b]	.669	.664	.52837
3	.847[c]	.718	.712	.48951
a. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture				
b. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture, Human capital				
c. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture, Human capital, Strategic Vision				

Table.5 ANOVA (SL*SQ)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.826	1	66.826	202.031	.000b
	Residual	43.662	132	.331		
	Total	110.488	133			
2	Regression	73.916	2	36.958	132.382	.000c
	Residual	36.572	131	.279		
	Total	110.488	133			
3	Regression	79.337	3	26.446	110.362	.000d
	Residual	31.151	130	.240		
	Total	110.488	133			
a. Dependent Variable: y						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture						
c. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture, Human capital						
d. Predictors: (Constant), Effective Organizational Culture, Human capital, Strategic Vision						

Table.6 Coefficients of regression result (SL*SQ)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.640	.258		2.485	.014
	Effective Organizational Culture	.851	.060	.778	14.214	.000
2	(Constant)	.051	.264		.194	.847
	Effective Organizational Culture	.670	.066	.612	10.202	.000
	Human capital	.312	.062	.302	5.039	.000
3	(Constant)	-.589-	.279		-2.111-	.037
	Effective Organizational Culture	.432	.079	.395	5.476	.000
	Human capital	.283	.058	.274	4.906	.000
	x1	.403	.085	.323	4.756	.000
a. Dependent Variable: y						

Table.7 Regression result (5QS*SQ)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.929[a]	.862	.861	.33925
2	.956[b]	.914	.913	.26858
3	.970[c]	.941	.940	.22318
4	.974[d]	.948	.946	.21138
a. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure				
b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process				
c. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process, Quality of interactions.				
d. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process, Quality of interactions, Quality of Object.				

Table.8 ANOVA (5QS*SQ)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	95.295	1	95.295	827.980	.000[b]
	Residual	15.192	132	.115		
	Total	110.488	133			
2	Regression	101.038	2	50.519	700.339	.000[c]
	Residual	9.450	131	.072		
	Total	110.488	133			
3	Regression	104.012	3	34.671	696.038	.000[d]
	Residual	6.475	130	.050		
	Total	110.488	133			
4	Regression	104.724	4	26.181	585.967	.000[e]
	Residual	5.764	129	.045		
	Total	110.488	133			
a. Dependent Variable: y						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure.						
c. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process.						
d. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process, Quality of interactions.						
e. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of infrastructure, Quality of process, Quality of interactions, Quality of Object.						

Table.9 Co-efficients of regression result (5QS*SQ)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.735	.125		5.877	.000
	Quality of infrastructure	.832	.029	.929	28.775	.000
2	(Constant)	.361	.107		3.357	.001
	Quality of infrastructure	.443	.049	.495	8.997	.000
	Quality of process	.463	.052	.490	8.922	.000
3	(Constant)	.248	.090		2.740	.007
	Quality of infrastructure	.237	.049	.265	4.863	.000
	Quality of process	.458	.043	.486	10.632	.000
	Quality of interactions	.246	.032	.286	7.727	.000
4	(Constant)	.076	.096		.793	.429
	Quality of infrastructure	.241	.046	.268	5.201	.000
	Quality of process	.305	.056	.324	5.462	.000
	Quality of interactions	.263	.030	.306	8.658	.000
	Quality of Object	.168	.042	.165	3.991	.000
a. Dependent Variable: y						

Fig.1 Research framework

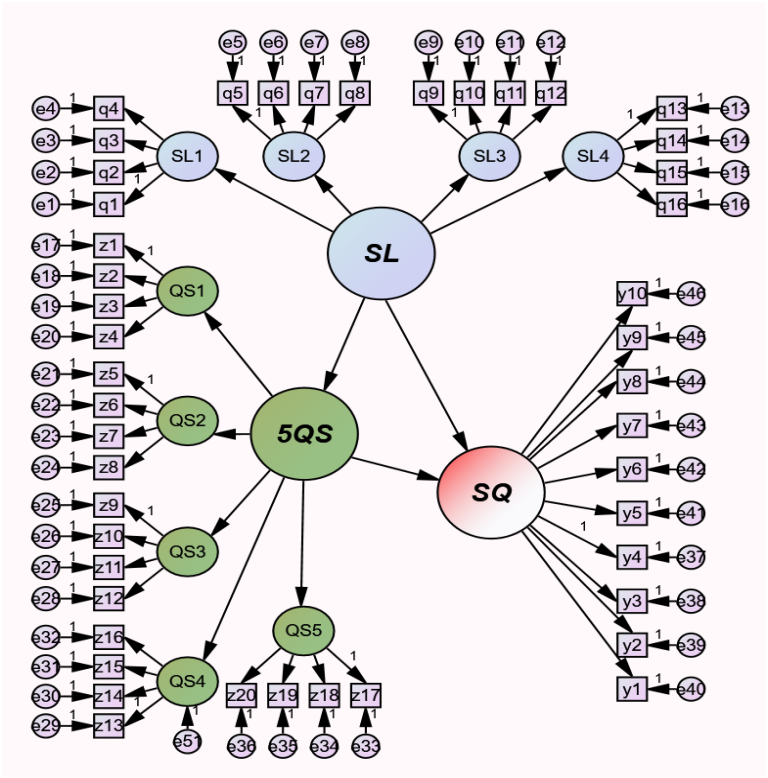


Fig.2 Regression analysis of strategic vision and service quality

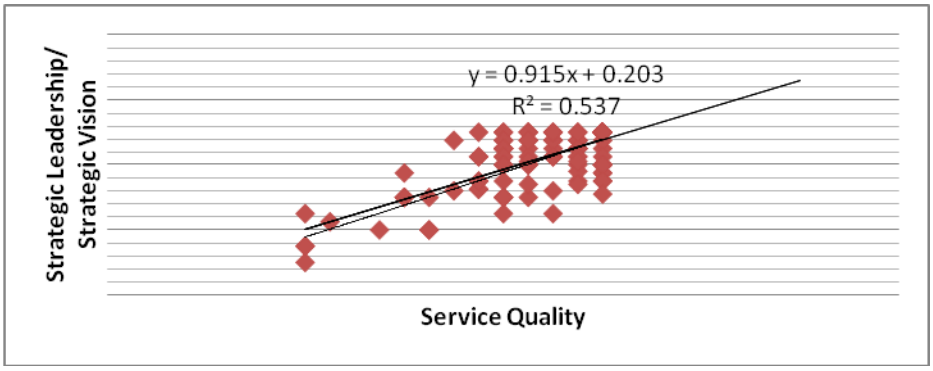


Fig.3 Regression analysis of human capital and service quality

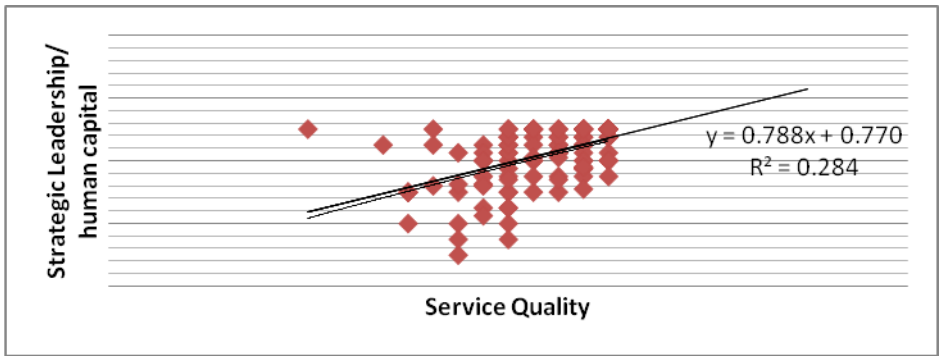


Fig.4 Regression analysis of ethical practices and service quality

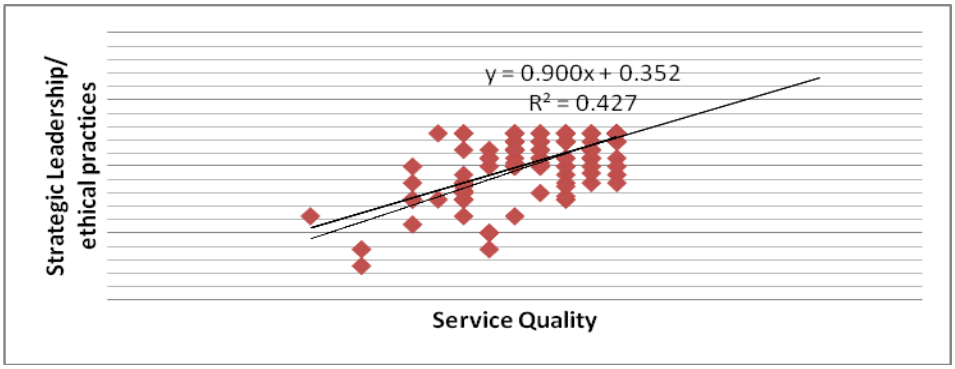


Fig.5 One: Regression analysis of effective organizational culture and service quality

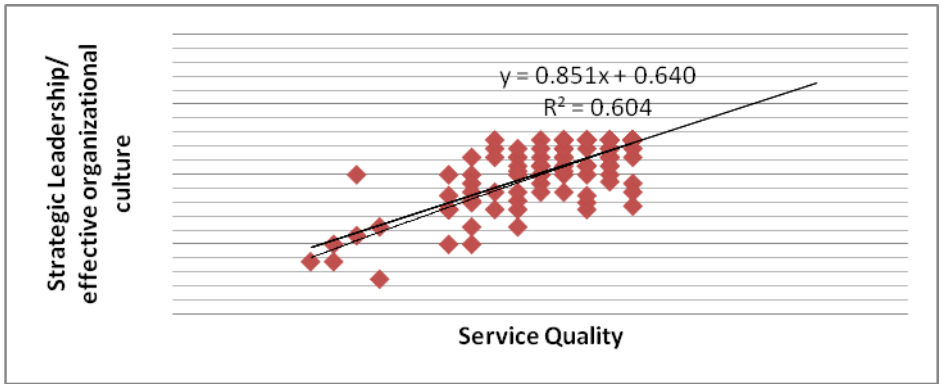
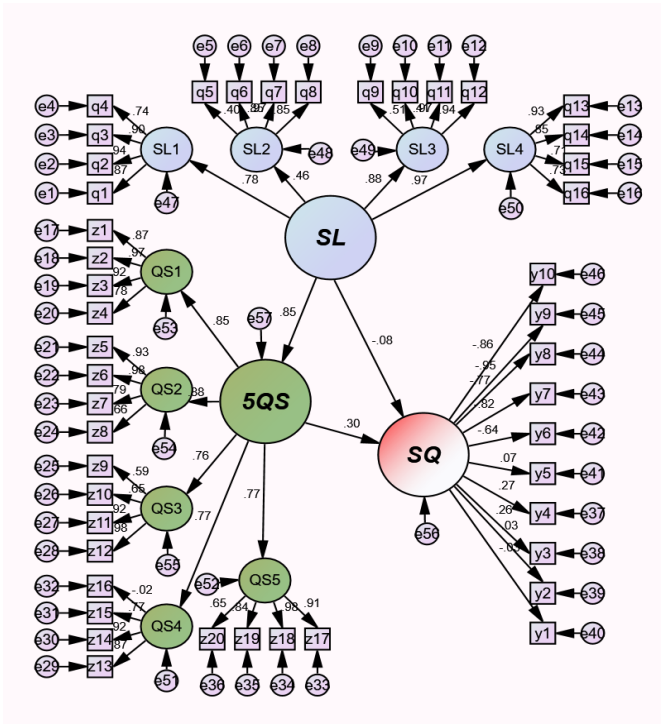


Fig.6 Indirect Effect



The third analysis is ethical practices under strategic leadership and service quality.

In this case, the results obtained in figure (4) proved that strategic leadership in terms of ethical practices was equally instrumental in promoting service quality this idea has been supported by (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2008)

The fourth dimension was the impact of effective organizational culture as part of strategic leadership over the service quality. The graph below in figure (5) shows that effective organizational culture has a direct impact on the service quality.

Multiple Regression

Table (4-6) shows the stepwise multivariate regression analysis for predicting the variable (service quality). As shown in the table up to the third stage four variables were included in the regression equation. Strategic Vision is the first variable that entered the equation and had the most effect on service quality with determination coefficient (R2 = 0.605), after this comes the variable Human capital with the determination coefficient (R2=0.064), and then comes the variable effective organizational culture for change with determination coefficient (R2=0.049).In total these four variables have shown 0.718 of changes of the service quality and the model is significant according to (F-statistic)variable and the regression equation will be as follows:

Service Quality = 0.589 + 0.403Strategic Vision + 0.283Human capital + 0.432Effective Organizational Culture

Table (7-9) shows the stepwise multivariate regression analysis for the mediator variable 5QS predicting the variable service quality. As shown in the table up to the four stage five variables were included in the regression equation. quality of infrastructure is the first variable that entered the equation and had the most effect on service quality with determination coefficient (R2=0.862), after this comes the variable quality of process with the determination coefficient (R2=0.052), and then comes the variable quality of interactions for change with determination coefficient (R2=0.027), and then comes the variable quality of object for change with determination coefficient (R2=0.007). In total these four variables have shown 0.948 of changes of the service quality. and the model is significant according to (F-statistic) variable and the regression equation will be as follows:

Service Quality =0.076+0.168 Quality of Object +0.305 Quality of Process+0.241 Quality of Infrastructure + 0.263 Quality of Interactions

The Mediation Effect

The figure (6) shows direct and indirect relationship between strategic leadership and service quality. It shows trends and values of strategic leadership effect on service quality by mediating effect of a 5QS. The direct effect is - 0.08, while the indirect effects of strategic leadership on service quality through 5QS is (0.255), so the indirect effect is more than indirect effect that means the service quality increases through 5QS and this result allows supporting the hypothesis of indirect effect.

This study aimed to test the effect of four dimensions of strategic leadership (strategic vision, human capital, ethical practices, effective organizational culture) in health service quality, by adopting a strategic model (5QS). The study was conducted in medical field in medical city in najaf, The study found that the strategic leadership level of the organization was high. The results showed that strategic leadership has a direct effect on quality of service.

The effect of strategic leadership on service quality has been done, and the most influential dimension is (ethical practices), The weakest effect was (human capital).In case of the adoption of the 5QS model, the indirect effect has clearly increased, indicating that the adoption of this model will contribute to enhancing the strategic leadership effect on service quality as it focuses on persuasion and influence in others. (Mat, 2008), An advanced 5QS model components are shows that the quality of the service is greatly increased if the model is adopted.

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