



The Impact of Scenario Planning on Marketing Strategy for Private Universities

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Abstract

This research aims to identify the impact of the strategic scenario and its four dimensions (environmental analysis, strategic vision, core competency, teamwork) in the success of marketing strategy for private universities, this study was applied in a sample of universities in central Iraq (Middle Furat), which adopted the questionnaire as a main tool for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of (311) respondents, A model for each of the two variables was constructed, and then tested using confirmatory factor analysis, correlation and regression coefficients.

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Introduction

In the 19th century, strategists in Germany adopted the first future approach by adopting future scenarios . (Rwibnitz, 1988), this is the first use of the concept of planning scenario.

The first actual use of this concept was in 1960, when the geographic center was established In the United States and France .(Heijden, 2005), And after more than 50 years of development of the concept has become one of the most important ways to deal with the future, where studies and research are still looking at the means of success and constraints(Varum & Melo, 2010).

The Scenario planners have dealt very well with future discovery situations and scenario-building to reach a specific number of these scenarios. Their main problem was how to reach a specific number of scenarios, so a number of techniques and methods were suggested and introduced. (Kwakkel *et al.*, 2013), Scenario planning is

a common tool that is flexible in future preparation and adaptation (Ravera *et al.*, 2011). It provides properties and descriptions rather than predicting a number of possibilities based on multiple perspectives .(Notten *et al.*, 2003)

Scenarios contribute to the discovery of complexities resulting from uncertainty in the future (Wilkinson & Eidinow, 2008), and when applied, give a future picture of future plans and how they are implemented (Foran *et al.*, 2013), these images are based on a scientific methodology linking quantitative and qualitative elements, which are important in the system's internal coherence process (Foster, 1993) In this context, (Ratcliffe, 2000) points out that good scenarios should be represented:

Management tools that contribute to the quality of executive and strategic decisions. Real representation of the future, which contributes to the clarification of current activities from a future perspective.

This study aims to identify the impact of scenario planning on marketing strategy in private universities.

Literature review

Scenario planning

Scenario planning is a process that is formed by developing its components (Focault, 2011), It is a tool that contributes to looking at the future with a broad perspective (Derbyshire & Wright, 2014), yet, despite this, scenario planning has not yet become a fully developed academic discipline. One reason is argued to be the perception that, despite recent efforts to provide it with a more solid theoretical underpinning, scenario planning remains a practical tool with limited theoretical foundations (Wilkinson, 2009).

Environmental analysis

The researchers presented multiple views of strategic and environmental analysis. They noted that strategic analysis means a continuous and complex process of leading strategic change, (Delahaye, 2000) which represents an organized effort to make the decisions about the business and strategic directions. (Mintzberg, 1998) In the same context, studies suggest that strategic analysis is a roadmap to the development of the organization's long-term aspirations.

It represents the mechanisms for creating dynamic integration between strategic capabilities and competitive pressures in a coherent process. (Lynch, 2000), This is a core of strategic business thinking and a key tool for exploring the strategic and environmental analysis (Hitt & Lerland, 2001) is based mainly on (SWOT) analysis within the external environment, which analyzes the competitive environment to diagnose growth opportunities and avoid threats, as well as the internal environment, which is concerned with the analysis of resources and distinctive capabilities (Strength) that support competitiveness, and to avoid weaknesses identified for the construction of a distinctive strategic business (Pearce & Robbins, 1997).

Strategic vision

The vision is an ideal and attractive future that has not yet been achieved, it described as a guiding star of every member in organization towards the future (Daft, 2001). It represents a strategic map for the future of the organization that contributes to providing information on

future factors such as customers, technology, geographical areas, (Thompson & Strickland, 2001). The literature suggests that strategic vision is a desirable future situation for organizations, and represents the ambition that makes a strategic leader or executive leader able to focus his concerns toward the goals by encouraging the organization's members to achieve it. (Johnson & Scholes, 2002).

Core competency

The concept of core competencies has been prevalent since 1990, which represents the core competencies of organizations as competitive assets that can be assessed and adopted on organizational knowledge through experience. (Thompson & Tricklond, 1999). The concept was closely associated with the concept of ingenuity in the management of the organization's subsystems, the integration of information technology with processes and the diverse knowledge of the provision of products and services to ensure a competitive advantage. (Macmilan & Tampo, 2000).

The core competency was defined as representing the distinct business capabilities of the organization so that it distinguishes its products from other competitors' products in order to increase market share (Dessler, 2003).

The core competencies are characterized by many researchers, the most important of which are the small number and greater individual capacity, the basis of the short- and long-term assurance of the organization, the difficulty of imitation and the basis for the strategic intent and strategic options of the organization (Macmilan & Tampo, 2000).

Team Work

The team's concept is one of the common concepts of modern administrative literature and has become very important for the success of business organizations. The team represents a unit composed of two or more individuals who have a common message, a collective responsibility and work together to achieve a specific goal (Mescon *et al.*, 2003). They work together to achieve common goals and purpose (Bester field *et al.*, 2003). Team members rely on each other to complete business. They have complementary skills and commitment to goals with ability to take responsibility (Cantu, 2007), they work to achieve efficiency in work (Aslan *et al.*, 2008), which enable them to maximize the

use of human resources and produce high quality products that contribute to the overall improvement of performance (Henry, 1997).

Marketing Strategy

Authors and researchers presented multiple concepts of the concept of marketing from multiple perspectives, but the most comprehensive and best concept is presented by Kotler, who defined it as an analysis, organization, planning and customer control of an organization that involves resources, policies and activities designed to meet the needs and desires of customers (Oktay, 2017), Ensuring access to a high market share (Farshid & Foroughi, 2012), associated with a range of factors that may be unclear to the organization (Fizebakhsh, 2002). The most important of these factors are the external factors that are considered obstacles to the organization for the success of the marketing process such as (economic growth rates, inflation, exchange rate, political stability, price changes, competition, etc.) (Drani *et al.*, 2012).

In this context, organizations have used different strategies to improve their products and services and make them more attractive. This has created a marketing strategy that has become very common and which requires a set of criteria to be used successfully (Guzzo, 2012), Marketing strategy is defined as an interactive process for organizations with competitive market conditions as well as interaction with the environment to achieve the target market objectives (Lee & Griffith, 2004, Slater *et al.*, 2010). It represents a strategic plan for the organization's goals and how to achieve marketing goals (Walker, 2011), In addition, it represents a future road map for how resources are allocated and linked to environmental factors to achieve the Organization's strategic objectives (Brodrechtovam, 2008), these marketing strategies aim to improve marketing activities and positively change customer behavior and ensure loyalty (Taylor, 2004). This leads to ensuring that they acquire this service or commodity (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). the brand is linked marketing strategy (Jandaghi *et al.*, 2011), and marketing strategy will have a vital role in attracting and retaining customers, which contributes to a competitive advantage. Drani *et al.*, 2012)

Materials and Methods

The study methodology consist of several stages like literatures, data collection m structural equation

modeling and regression analysis, the literature and related studies help to discover the conceptual theory that related to scenario planning and marketing strategy and using the methods of analysis.

And the conceptual model consists from the scenario planning as independent variable and marketing strategy as dependent variable.

Sampling

The data collection was done by survey in five private universities random sample was selected, 350 questionnaire were distributed 311 were collected (where 29 not received 39 and 10 not viald). So the details of the sample characteristic shown in table (1).

Normality test

In order to test the normality of the data that been collected, the study use the normality test using (Amos v. 18), the tables (2), (3) shows the result of the normality test all values are between (-1.96, +1.96), so it refers to the following statistical decision: all the data of both variables (Scenario Planning, Marketing Strategy) follow the normal distribution.

Results and Discussion

Confirmatory factor analysis

structural equation modeling (SEM) is an appropriate technique for verifying the construction of a high latent construct factors (Pollen, 1989) in order to test the model construction Amos software were used.

And using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with (SEM) modeling of structural equations are statistical techniques can use to reduce the number of observed variables of latent variables by examining the variance between them (James *et al.*, 2006: 323)

The adequacy of this tools is is most appropriately applied to measures that are fully developed models, and its validation, and the legitimacy of the application of variables, of course, is linked to the conceptual rationale as a hypothesis test approach to data analysis. This means, based on theory, experimental research, or combination of the two, that the researcher assumes a model and then tests its validity given the sample data (Berne, 2012: 95) all based on appropriate indicators as in Table (4)

Scenario Planning

This variable consists of four main dimensions, according to the values of the indicators shown in figure (1), it is appeared that the model were not valid and not good to measure this variable, so it need to modify the model by using (modification indices). As it shown in table (5) and figure (2).

Marketing Strategy

This variable consists of eight items, according to the values of the indicators shown in figure (3), it is appeared that the model were not valid and not good to measure this variable, so it need to modify the model by using (modification indices), as it shown in table (6) and figure (4).

Hypotheses1

The relation between scenario planning and marketing strategy

According to the analysis results that have shown in table (7), the correlation between SP and MS is (0. 854) at the sig. with (0. 05), and the correlation was significant according to (t- test) that has compared with the t-table value.

The relation between Environmental analysis and marketing strategy

According to the analysis results that have shown in table (7), the correlation between EA and MS is (0. 734) at the sig. with (0. 05), and the correlation was significant according to (t- test) that has compared with the t-table value.

The relation between Strategic vision and marketing strategy

According to the analysis results that have shown in table (7), the correlation between SV and MS is (0. 714) at the sig. with (0. 05), and the correlation was significant according to (t- test) that has compared with the t-table value.

The relation between Core competency and marketing strategy

According to the analysis results that have shown in table (7), the correlation between CC and MS is (0. 835) at the

sig. with (0. 05), and the correlation was significant according to (t- test) that has compared with the t-table value.

The relation between Team Work and marketing strategy

According to the analysis results that have shown in table (7), the correlation between TW and MS is (0. 495) at the sig. with (0. 05), and the correlation was significant according to (t- test) that has compared with the t-table value.

Hypotheses2

The tradition instrument that has used to test the effect depend on its size, direction, while using SEM it find the plausibility of postulated relations from the (goodness of fit index) (Byrne, 2010: 3).

The table (8) shows the result of effect test, it refers to the effect of scenario planning on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value, the independent variable (SP) interpreted (72. 9%) of the dependent variable (MS), and the regression equation will be as follow : $Y= 0. 488 + 0. 841 SP$

There are significant impact of environmental analysis on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value, the independent variable (EA) interpreted (53. 9%) of the dependent variable (MS), Thus the first sub-hypothesis is supported, and the regression equation will be as follow : $Y= 1. 577 + 0. 590 SP$.

There are significant impact of Strategic vision on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value, the independent variable (SV) interpreted (51%) of the dependent variable (MS),

Thus the second sub-hypothesis is supported, and the regression equation will be as follow: $Y= 1. 227 + 0. 635 SV$.

There are significant impact of core competency on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value, the independent variable (CC) interpreted (24. 5%) of the dependent variable (MS),

Thus the third sub-hypothesis is supported, and the regression equation will be as follow: $Y= 1. 923 + 0. 470 SV$.

Table.1 The sample characteristic for the doctors under study

Gender					
%	No	%	No		
	M		F		
67.2%	209	32.8%	102		
Age					
51-		41-50		31-40	
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
40.9%	127	28.6%	89	30.5%	95
Work experience					
11-		6-10 years		1-5 years	
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
31.5%	98	14.2%	44	54.3%	169

Table.2 Normality test for SP data

Variable	min	max	skew	c. r.	kurtosis	c. r.
q10	1.000	5.000	-.917	-6.599	.920	3.313
q9	1.000	5.000	-1.049	-7.551	1.166	4.197
q8	1.000	5.000	-.364	-2.622	-.597	-2.148
q7	1.000	5.000	-.946	-6.810	.386	1.389
q6	1.000	5.000	-1.052	-7.576	.879	3.164
q5	1.000	5.000	-.631	-4.546	-.059	-.214
q4	1.000	5.000	-.279	-2.006	-.821	-2.956
q3	1.000	5.000	-.993	-7.150	.887	3.193
q2	1.000	5.000	-.834	-6.005	.980	3.527
q1	1.000	5.000	-.753	-5.424	.081	.290
Multivariate					41.906	23.852

Table.3 Normality test for MS data

Variable	min	max	skew	c. r.	kurtosis	c. r.
Y8	1.000	5.000	-1.094	-7.875	.830	2.988
Y7	1.000	5.000	-.589	-4.241	.313	1.128
Y6	1.000	5.000	-.399	-2.874	-.407	-1.466
Y5	1.000	5.000	-.323	-2.327	-.135	-.487
Y4	1.000	5.000	-.757	-5.448	.961	3.461
Y3	2.000	5.000	-.423	-3.044	-.555	-1.997
Y2	1.000	5.000	-.524	-3.775	-.236	-.848
Y1	1.000	5.000	-1.096	-7.894	1.167	4.202
Multivariate					26.668	18.590

Table.4 Fit indices for modeling

Fit Index	Acceptable Threshold Levels	Description
<i>Absolute Fit Indices</i> Chi-Square X2	Low χ^2 relative to degrees of freedom with an insignificant <i>p</i> value ($p > 0.05$)	
Relative χ^2 (χ^2/df)	2:1 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007) 3:1 (Kline, 2005)	Adjusts for sample size.
(RMSEA)	Values less than 0.07 (Steiger, 2007)	Has a known distribution. Favours parsimony. Values less than 0.03 represent excellent fit.
GFI	Values greater than 0.95	Scaled between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating better model fit. This statistic should be used with caution.
AGFI	Values greater than 0.95	Adjusts the GFI based on the number of parameters in the model. Values can fall outside the 0-1.0 range.
RMR	Good models have small RMR (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2007)	Residual based. The average squared differences between the residuals of the sample covariance and the residuals of the estimated covariance.
SRMR	SRMR less 0.08 (Hu& Bentler, 1999)	Standardized version of the RMR. Easier to interpret due to its Standardized nature.
<i>Incremental Fit Indices</i>		
NFI	Values greater than 0.95	Assesses fit relative to a baseline model which assumes no covariance between the observed variables. Has a tendency to fit in small samples.
NNFI (TLI)	Values greater than 0.95	Non-normed, values can fall outside the 0-1 range. Favours parsimony. Performs well in simulation studies (Sharma et al, 2005; McDonald and Marsh, 1990)
CFI	Values greater 0.95	Normed, 0-1 range.

Source: Daire H., Joseph C., Michael R. Mullen, *Structural Equation Modeling: Guidelines for Determining Model Fit*, Journal of Business Research Methods Volume 6 Issue 1 2008: p58.

Table.5 Indicators for modified model for SP

Indicator	Value	Condition
Chi/DF	4. 677	support
GFI	0. 971	support
AGFI	0. 904	support
RMSEA	0. 077	support
CFI	0. 954	support

Table.6 Indicators for modified model for MS

Indicator	Value	Condition
Chi/DF	2. 518	support
GFI	0. 985	support
AGFI	0. 921	support
RMSEA	0. 077	support
CFI	0. 986	support

Table.7 Correlation coefficient results

IV	r	T	Sig.	DV	Hypotheses
EA	0.734	19.022	0.000	Marketing Strategy	supported
SV	0.714	17.918	0.000		supported
CC	0.835	10.015	0.006		supported
TW	0.495	26.685	0.000		supported
SP	0.854	28.797	0.000		supported

Table.8 Simple regression results

IV	a	B	F	R ²	Sig.	DV	Hypotheses
EA	1.577	0.590	361.85	0.539	0.000	Marketing Strategy	supported
SV	1.227	0.635	321.072	0.510	0.000		supported
CC	1.923	0.470	100.30	0.245	0.006		supported
TW	0.641	0.792	712.08	0.697	0.000		supported

Table.9 Multiple regression results

IV	a	B	T	R ²	F	Sig.	Hypotheses
EA	0.414	0.138	3.902	0.759	141.56	0.000	supported
SV		0.202	5.669			0.000	supported
CC		-0.054	-1.498			0.135	Not supported
TW		0.567	11.374			0.000	supported

Fig.1 Proposed model of (SP) according to (SEM)

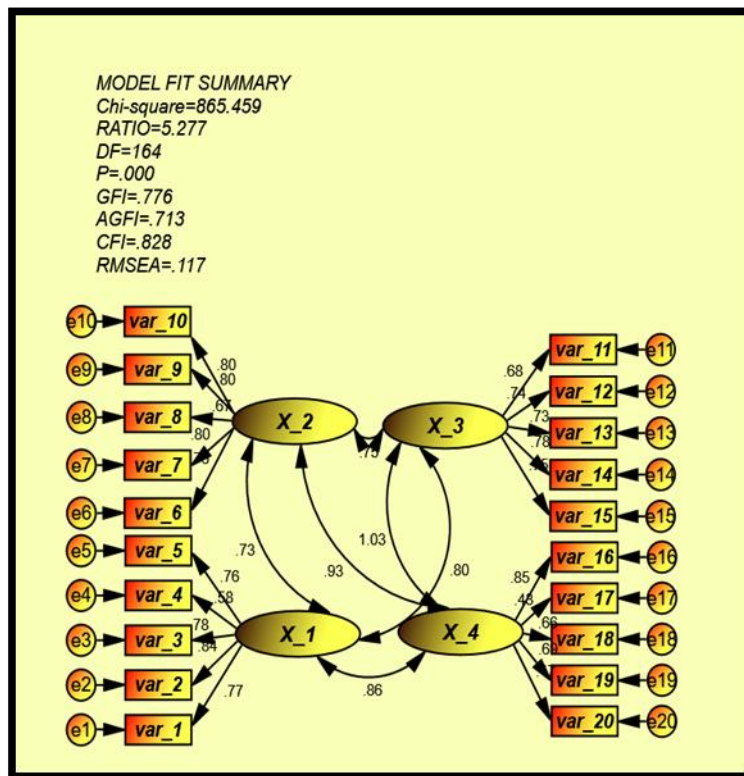


Fig.2 Modified model of (SP) according to (SEM)

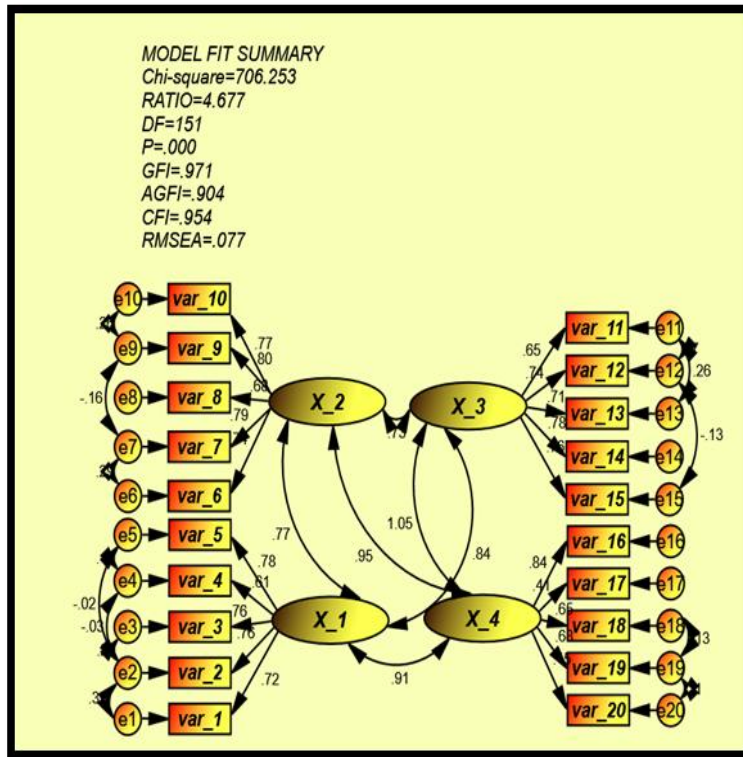


Fig.3 Proposed model of (MS) according to (SEM)

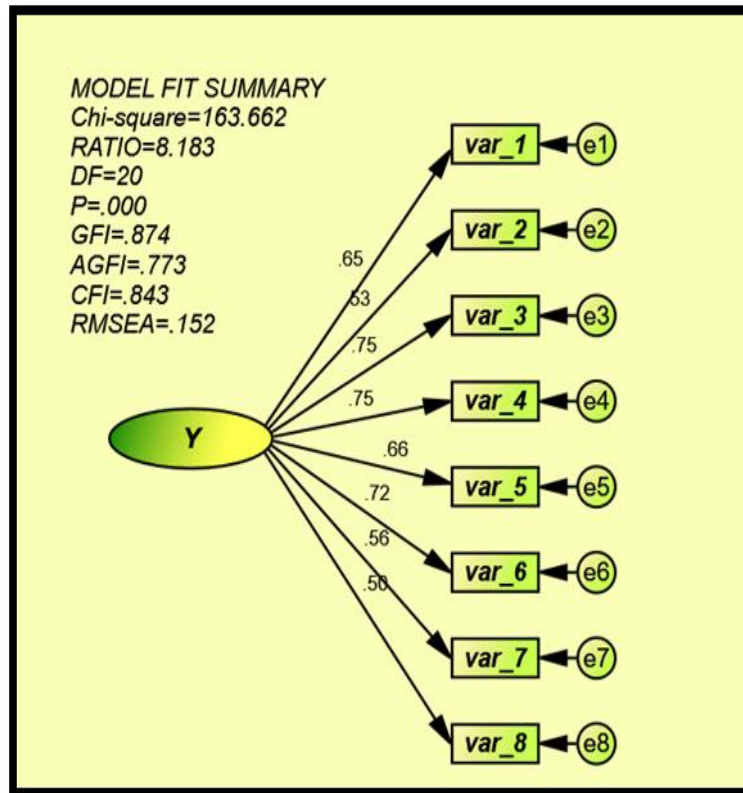


Fig.4 Modified model of (MS) according to (SEM)

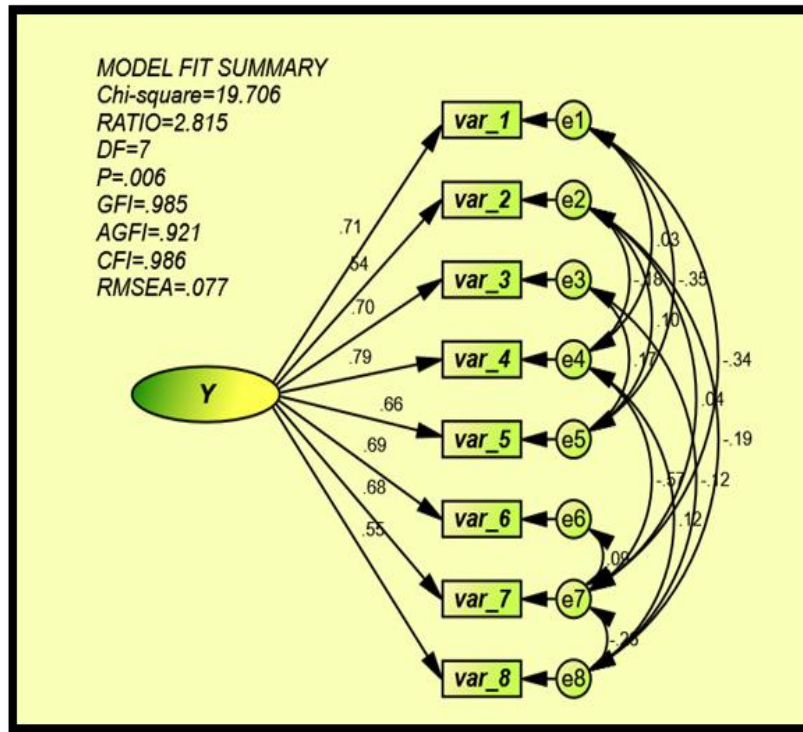


Fig.5 Multiple regression results

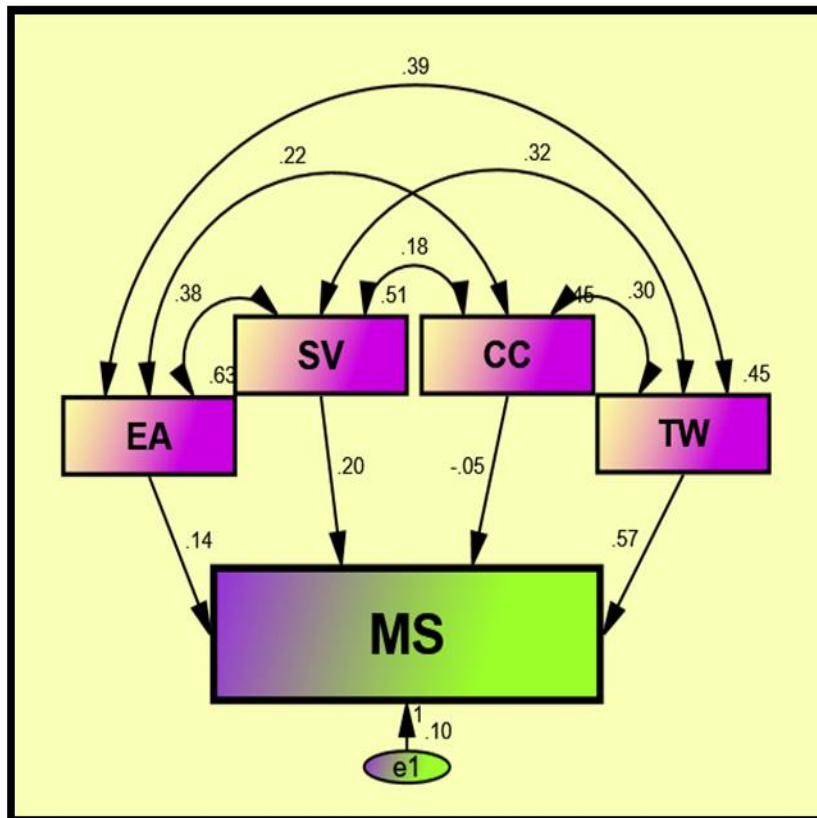
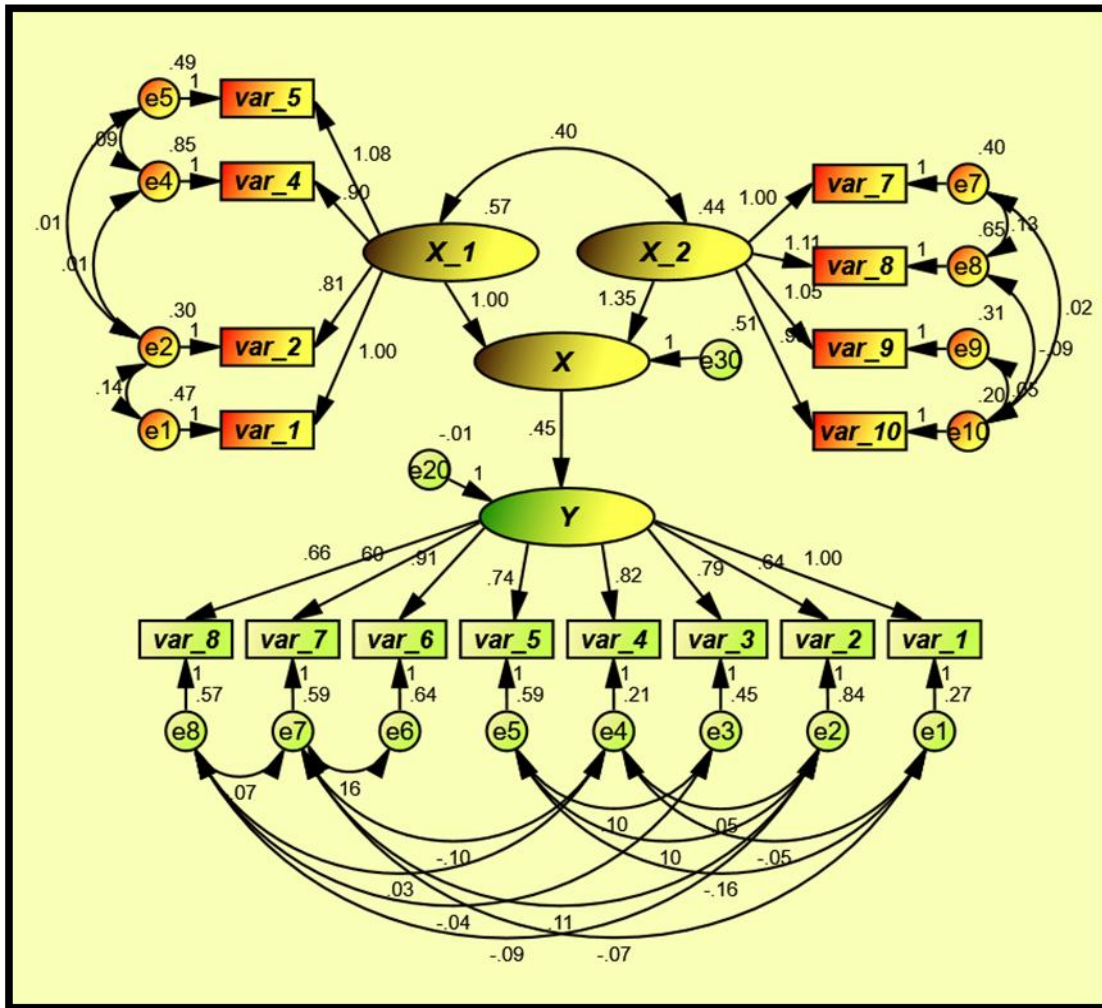


Fig.6 Final model



There are significant impact of team work on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value, the independent variable (CC) interpreted (24. 5%) of the dependent variable (MS), Thus, the fourth sub-hypothesis is supported, and the regression equation will be as follow : $Y= 0. 641 + 0. 792 SV$.

With the multiple regression as shown in table (8) and figure (5), there are significant impact for the model of scenario planning on marketing strategy, this effect was significant according to the (f-test) value and (P-value) for three factors (environmental analysis, strategic vision, teamwork), however, it is not significant with one factor (core competency) due to (P-value) that indicate (more than 0. 05), the model interpreted (75. 9%) of the variation of marketing strategy.

The final model in figure (6) refers to the direct effect of the scenario planning as independent variable on the

marketing strategy as dependent variable with value (0. 45), which takes into consideration all factors and their items.

Survival and growth in an uncertain and rapidly changing environment with many possibilities in the future is largely reflected in how the future marketing strategy is defined.

In recent years, the private universities concerned with the shift from production orientation to marketing orientation in order to be able to face competition in higher education. The Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education has started granting licenses to establish private universities on high conditions in order to encourage them to reduce their performance. Private universities are trying to find out the successful methods to build a strategy to ensure that their services are successfully marketed, this requires organizations to identify their

chances of success and look for the factors needed to prepare for the future. Scenario planning has emerged as one of the important factors that can contribute to the success of the marketing strategy.

Despite some of the difficulties that this study faced when collecting data from private universities that are linked to the future marketing plans, the study found that it is very important to adopt the scenario planning in building the university marketing strategy.

In this situation it became clear that scenario planning factors contribute to the formation of marketing strategy, which leads to the marketing strategy to be effective and successful. It has become clear that understanding the environmental factors and conducting strategic environmental analysis of a clear strategic vision with the availability of the core competency and team work capabilities, are important requirements for building strategic scenarios that achieve more effective marketing strategy.

Limitations

This study has a limitations, The study has been carried out in a sample of private universities within the central region of Iraq (Middle Furat), therefore cannot be generalized to all private universities in the country. So, future studies should try to expand the sample to include a larger number of private universities throughout the country

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