




“The mediating role of strategic intelligence in the relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence in Jordanian telecommunications companies”

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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN JORDANIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES

Abstract

Jordanian telecommunications companies deal with many turbulent conditions characterized by a high degree of complexity, intense competition, and changes in customer needs. Therefore, they had to pay attention to achieving organizational excellence and making changes that could enhance their capabilities.

This study aims to reveal the role of organizational agility for Jordanian telecommunications companies in enhancing their organizational excellence by determining the impact of organizational agility. The paper chose some dimensions (organizational sensitivity, collective commitment, and resource development) to analyze how to achieve organizational excellence by applying the mediating role of strategic intelligence to the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

The study used the descriptive analytical approach. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed to collect data; two hundred and seventy-seven were retrieved and deemed valid. SPSS and AMOS 23 were used for data analysis and hypotheses testing. According to managers in Jordanian telecommunications companies, the results showed a positive and significant correlation between organizational agility and organizational excellence. The path coefficient is 0.63, which is significant at the level of 0.01, and $R^2 = 0.41$, which means that 41% of the variance of competitive advantage can be explained by the variance in organizational agility. In addition, it was concluded that there is a significant, direct effect between strategic intelligence and organizational excellence and an indirect effect of strategic intelligence on the relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence.

Keywords

organizational sensitivity, systematic thinking,
strategic vision, leadership excellence, Jordanian
telecommunications companies

JEL Classification

M10, M12

INTRODUCTION

The Jordanian telecommunications sector is considered one of the most important economic sectors since it feeds the country's treasury with around 300 million Jordanian Dinars annually. In addition, the contribution of the telecommunications, postal, and technology sectors to the gross domestic product reaches 8.3%, and the number of employees in the sector is more than four thousand. The Jordanian telecommunications sector witnessed a significant development from the postal era to the era of information technology and the digital economy. As a result, Jordan recorded an im-



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provement in the quality and prices of services in light of the multiplicity of telecommunications companies (MODEE, 2021).

Jordan has witnessed a decline in the Global Competitiveness Index (2020), as Jordan's rank decreased over the past five years from level 52 to 58 due to the decline in information technology infrastructure (MODEE, 2021). This study attempts to show the importance that Jordanian companies give to organizational agility and its impact on achieving institutional excellence. Moreover, it draws attention to the need to deal with the problems the Jordanian telecommunications sector suffers from and its urgent need to adapt modern scientific concepts.

Studying practical organizational agility and strategic intelligence is essential because of its impact on the organizational supremacy of telecommunications companies. However, as Qandil and Al-Batayneh (2020) showed, the Jordanian telecommunications sector needs more awareness among decision-makers of the importance of organizational agility and strategic intelligence and its impact on institutional excellence, which is reflected in the performance of companies as a whole.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have been interested in organizational agility as a new topic. This concept emerged in America in order to increase the competitiveness of American industrial institutions internationally. Many writers have provided definitions for this concept. For example, Yigit (2013) defines it as "the organization's capability to allocate resources and achieve success in both exploitation and exploration activities." Mome et al. (2007) consider it as "the organization's ability to strike a balance between exploiting the existing potential and at the same time exploring new opportunities." Khoshnood and Nematizadeh (2017) indicate that organizational agility means "the organization's ability to gain necessary agility to continue in a changing competitive environment by giving this organization the ability to quickly respond to changes."

Organizational agility includes three dimensions. First, organizational sensitivity means openness to a large amount of information by maintaining relationships with various individuals and organizations (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). Sensitivity is an open strategy through the relevant parties, which can communicate and participate continuously in designing appropriate strategies. It raises the level of strategic vigilance for everything that can affect the organization in the external world with high agility, as well as a high-quality internal dialogue that requires a high level of cognitive diversity. Kettunen (2010) stresses that organizational

sensitivity includes cooperation with stakeholders and an emphasis on organizational vigilance. It includes future vision agility, high-quality internal dialogue, and cognitive diversity.

Second, collective commitment means the pledge of individuals and administrative units to work as a team that seeks to achieve goals and mission, which empower them to make decisions collectively, especially in exceptional circumstances. A set of factors contribute to the achievement of collective commitment, such as teamwork, participation in all works and interdependence, team renewal, leadership style, and capabilities of CEOs (Ivory & Brooks, 2018). Third, the development of resources means developing essential resources and providing them with agility and ease to enable the organization to meet its needs. It is done in the right place and time by allocating resources in organizational units in a way that can be developed and reorganized, as well as formulating flexible strategic alternatives that enable the redistribution of resources at speed commensurate with the speed of change (Orogloo et al., 2016).

Amr (2016) found a positive relationship between organizational agility and the ability to take advantage of opportunities and achieve competitive advantage in the Palestinian telecommunications sector. Likewise, Oyedijo (2012) showed that organizational resilience impacts the competitive performance of a Nigerian telecommunications company. In contrast, Abdullah and Omair (2019)

noted a direct relationship between organizational resilience dimensions of strategic sensitivity, collective commitment, core decisions, and organizational excellence.

Amr (2016) showed a statistically significant relationship between strategic agility and excellence of institutional performance in the food industry in the Gaza Strip. Radwan (2014) found a significant impact of the determinants of organizational agility on institutional excellence in the telecommunications sector in Egypt. The results showed that clarity of vision is the most influential determinant of organizational agility on organizational excellence. Al-Sanea (2013) investigated the impact of strategic agility determinants (planning, organization, personnel, and technology) in achieving dimensions of organizational effectiveness (achieving objectives, environmental adaptation, and quality of outputs) among Jordanian cement companies. Finally, Rashid and Matar (2020) concluded that organizational agility dimensions (agility, decision-making speed, agility of behavior) affect the strategic superiority of a number of Iraqi universities and colleges. Moreover, there is a mediating role for environmental dynamism in the relationship between organizational agility and strategic superiority.

According to Al-Salihi et al. (2021), the level of interest of Iraqi leather companies in organizational agility and organizational effectiveness was moderate. This reflected positively on organizational agility in its dimensions (agility, speed of decision-making, implementation speed) and organizational effectiveness and its dimensions (company growth, product quality, and employee satisfaction). Al-Azzam et al. (2017) concluded a full mediating effect of organizational agility for the relationship between intellectual capital and organizational excellence. Moreover, intellectual capital dimensions affect the agility and organizational excellence of the Jordanian service sector, and there is a positive relationship between organizational agility and institutional excellence.

Many researchers have introduced various terms for strategic intelligence, such as business intelligence, market intelligence, and competitive intelligence (Jabbar & Ahmed, 2013). Marchland and Hykes (2008) consider strategic intelligence as a

system that provides the organization with the necessary information about its business environment to anticipate change and design appropriate strategies that will create value for customers and achieve growth and profits in the future. Rahmon et al. (2019) believe that strategic intelligence is the intelligence of leaders with a vision for the future and the ability to motivate, invent, and initiate. The intelligence enables them to employ constructive ideas in decision-making. Maccoby and Scudder (2011) defined strategic intelligence as the attributes of senior management, where the dimensions of this intelligence lie in foresight, future vision, systematic thinking, motivation, and partnership.

Historically, there are three directions for the interpretation of strategic intelligence. The first focuses on looking at strategic intelligence as a tool for collecting information related to supporting decision-making. While the second focuses on viewing it as a function that deals with all the medium and long-term influencing issues, such as seizing opportunities. The third trend focuses on considering them as part of the personality characteristics of leaders as decision-makers (Al-Hashemi, 2019).

A strategic intelligence system consists of several dimensions (foresight, systematic thinking, strategic vision, partnership, and strategic motivation). Foresight means understanding the forces that shape the future and anticipating new opportunities and threats that may redefine work (BaBiker & AlTaj, 2017). Moreover, systematic thinking embodies the ability to group various elements and formulate an accurate picture of them. Systemic thinking forms a clear framework for strategic intelligence, a way to face the complexities of the environment, and provides more ways to formulate strategies (Kvedaravicius et al., 2009). Furthermore, the strategic vision is the future path of the organization, which clarifies the desired destination, the intended location, and the development of its capabilities (Kawas et al., 2012).

Partnership is considered one of the critical dimensions of strategic intelligence. It reflects the ability to establish strategic alliances with other companies, hence the role of companies in raising the possible capabilities of leaders of organi-

zations to improve partners' efficiency. Moreover, it allows them to participate in the performance of tasks, switch, and compete to work with each other (Amin, 2018). Additionally, strategic motivation expresses the ability of organizations to develop the field of recognizing, understanding, and responding to future trends and uncertainties, which allows them to assess potential impacts and enhance competitive advantage (Salih & AbdulRahman, 2015).

Several studies addressed the relationship between organizational agility and strategic intelligence. Tablawi (2017) showed an effective and significant relationship between the dimensions of strategic intelligence and organizational agility in the telecommunications industry in Egypt. One of the most important findings of the study by Atrash and Aldouri (2020) is that there is a statistically significant effect of strategic intelligence (represented in its dimensions of foresight, strategic vision, and intuition) on strategic agility and its dimensions (human capital agility, technical agility, competitive agility, agility, and service provision) at the Union Bank of Jordan. Chen (2012) concluded the presence of a direct statistically significant effect of business intelligence on organizational agility and a direct impact of organizational agility on competitive advantage. In addition, disruption and environmental variables have a medium effect on the relationship between business intelligence and organizational agility. Jafari et al. (2021) conducted a sample study on 390 Iranian industrial companies using structural equation modeling (SEM). It was shown that business intelligence, agility, and integration of the supply chain have a vital role in its performance. The results also showed that business intelligence positively affects supply chain integration. Rasouli et al. (2016) tested the relationship between the dimensions of organizational intelligence (participation purpose, strategic vision to pressure change performance, knowledge dissemination, spirit, alignment, and compatibility) and organizational resilience. The results indicated a strong relationship between organizational intelligence and agility, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.79.

Previous organizational excellence studies have expressed views on the concept of organizational excellence. Khatib (2016) indicated that excel-

lence is an administrative process. Administrative functions are implemented to achieve excellence. To reach this goal, it was necessary to involve customers in the process in an organized manner to face the continuous changes and help the management face the competition. Araújo and Sampaio (2014) indicated that organizational excellence means excellence in strategies, business practices, and stakeholder performance outcomes achieved through proven organizational excellence assessment models. Kanji and Moura e Sá (2002) defined excellence as a way to measure achievements by determining the satisfaction of customers, employees, and stakeholders in the organization. Therefore, organizational excellence can be considered a superior practice in managing the organization to achieve the best results. For the organization to achieve the maximum benefit from excellence, it must adopt the concepts and fundamentals of excellence. Based on concentrating on performance excellence, leadership and unity of goals, management by processes and facts, development and engagement of employees, continuous improvement, and assuming social responsibility (Gadrlurb, 2013; Mahdi, 2017; Iyad, 2019).

A group of global approaches clarified the meaning of excellence to find a comprehensive practical approach that guarantees success in establishing a culture of excellence. The most important are the Japanese approach, the American approach, and the European approach. According to the Deming Award, the Japanese model focuses on the processes that lead to total quality without regard for its consequences or results. Among the most prominent criteria of the Japanese model are management policies, product development, improvement of processes and work systems, and human resource development (Gupta, 2013). The American model represented by the Malcolm Baldrige Award for National Quality focuses on leadership, strategic planning, customer and employee interest, measurement and analysis, knowledge management, operations management, and results. While the European model of the European Quality Foundation Award is based on nine criteria, five of which are related to work systems and methodologies implemented by the institution, or call aids and components, and four are related to the results (Gómez Gómez et al., 2011).

At the local Jordanian level, the King Abdullah II Award focuses on nine criteria, five factors of empowerment (leadership, people, strategy, partnership, resources, and processes), and four outcomes (individuals, service recipients, community outcomes, and key outcomes as enablers). The standards cover regardless of how the organization operates and the results standards of any organization (KACE, 2018).

Many studies dealt with the relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational excellence. For example, Bani Yassin and Alraba'ah (2021) found the impact of the dimensions the strategic intelligence (insight, vision, partnership, motivation, and systemic thinking) on strategic success in the dimensions of the Jordanian National Center for Crisis Management (adaptation, growth, innovation, and risk).

On the other hand, Farah and Amal (2021) showed the impact of strategic intelligence and its dimensions (foresight, future vision, motivation, partnership, and systemic thinking) on institutional excellence. Of the Algerian economic institutions, 62% of strategic intelligence explained the variance in institutional excellence. Finally, Al-Hashemi (2019) found the effect of the independent variable represented by strategic intelligence on the organizational excellence of the Algerian Twilight Battery Manufacturing Corporation. The study found 56% of the variance in organizational excellence and that operational excellence is the most affected by strategic intelligence.

Rebiai and Saouse (2021) showed no statistical effect of strategic intelligence on excellence in the performance of the Algerian University of Adrar. The study also did not support a mediating role to ensure quality for the relationship between strategic intelligence and distinguished intelligence or a direct role in the impact of quality assurance on outstanding performance. Kaddory and Alalousi (2018) found a statistical impact of strategic foresight on organizational excellence, a direct impact of strategic agility on organizational excellence, and an intermediate effect of strategic agility on the relationship between strategic foresight and organizational excellence of the health sector in the Iraqi province of Kirkuk. Chawla and Joshi (2011), comparing award-winning and non-award-winning or-

ganizations, showed that knowledge management processes, knowledge management culture, and knowledge management measurement are essential determinants of organizational success, performance development, and excellence. Thus, organizations winning awards for excellence were more concerned with knowledge management processes.

2. AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

The literature review reveals a statistically significant relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational agility (Atrash & Aldouri, 2020; Tablawi, 2017). Therefore, this study expects a relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational agility, in addition to a positive effect of organizational agility on organizational excellence. The research gap regarding the mediating role of strategic intelligence in the direct relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence is considered.

The study aims to analyze the impact of organizational agility and its dimensions on organizational excellence, with strategic intelligence as a mediating variable, from the telecom managers' points of view. Moreover, it aims to explore the nature of the relationship between strategic intelligence, organizational agility, and organizational excellence. Therefore, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- H1: *There is a positive relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in Jordanian telecommunication companies.*
- H2: *There is a positive relationship between organizational agility and strategic intelligence at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in Jordanian telecommunication companies.*
- H3: *Strategic intelligence mediates the relationship between organizational agility and business excellence at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in Jordanian telecommunication companies.*
- H4: *There is a positive relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational excellence at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ in Jordanian telecommunication companies.*

3. METHODOLOGY

The study collected data by relying on primary and secondary sources. Secondary data were retrieved from the annual reports of telecommunications companies and official departments and studies related directly or indirectly to the variables of the study. Moreover, the study relied on the questionnaire as the main tool for collecting primary data.

The study sample consists of managers in the telecommunications companies operating in Jordan, namely Zain, Orange, and Umniah. Human resources departments of each company were reached; 300 questionnaires were distributed to a relative sample representing the study population. Within the upper and middle departments, the inspection unit was included (general manager, department manager, branch manager, and department head). Two hundred eighty-five questionnaires were returned, and seven were excluded because of their insufficiency. Thus, the final sample size is 277 questionnaires used for further analysis.

The questionnaire contains four main parts. The first part included questions related to the demographic characteristics of the study sample (gender, qualification, experience, job title), while the second part assessed the independent variable (organizational agility) and its related dimensions (organizational sensitivity, collective commitment, resource development). The questions for this variable are based on Amr (2016) and Abdullah and Omair (2019). The third part relates to the dependent variable (organizational excellence) with its dimensions (human resource development, product development, process improvement, leadership excellence), where the questions were based on Al-Azzam et al. (2017) and Farah and Amal (2021). The fourth part checks the mediating role (strategic intelligence); the questions for this variable were adapted from Tablawi (2017) and Atrash and Aldouri (2020).

4. RESULTS

The study used AMOS 22 Graphics to run the structural model and test the hypothesized relationships between the constructs. Table 1 represents the goodness of fit indices.

Table 1. The goodness of fit indices

Goodness of fit index	Fit indices	Result	Status
CIMIN(χ^2)	≤ 0.05	2.574	Fit
Significance Probability	≤ 0.05	0.055	Fit
RMSEA	≥ 0.08	0.05	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	.96	Fit
CMIN/DF	≤ 2	1.64	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.95	0.94	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.95	0.95	Fit

Note: CIMIN(χ^2): Chi-square. RMSEA: Root mean square error of approximation. GFI: Goodness of fit index. TLI: Tucker Lewis index. CFI: Comparative fit index.

Results presented in Table 1 indicated probability (p) = 0.055, CMIN = 2.574, (CMIN/DF) = 1.64, Goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.96, Tucker Lewis index (TLI) = 0.95, RMR = 0.004 and RMSEA = 0.05. Therefore, the model fits the data well.

Table 2. Correlation matrix and descriptive statistics

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Sensitivity	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2. Commitment	0.65	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
3. Resources	0.56	0.47	1	–	–	–	–	–
4. HR	0.63	0.53	0.42	1	–	–	–	–
5. Process	0.65	0.65	0.34	0.42	1	–	–	–
6. Product	0.03	0.13	-0.08	-0.06	0.02	1	–	–
7. Leadership	0.35	0.40	0.21	0.24	0.42	0.36	1	–
8. Intelligence	0.36	0.34	0.22	0.20	0.42	0.03	0.24	1
Mean	4.05	3.99	3.90	3.98	3.76	3.76	3.84	3.90
SD	0.49	0.58	0.59	0.48	0.57	0.57	0.61	0.56
Cronbach's Alpha	0.93	0.88	0.92	0.85	0.81	0.90	0.90	0.88
CR	0.93	0.88	0.92	0.86	0.82	0.91	0.90	0.89
VIF	3.822	3.86	3.86	3.78	3.16	2.89	2.65	3.10

Table 2 shows the correlation matrix between the study variables, the means, and the standard deviation, where Cronbach's alpha coefficient and CR are much higher than the limits. Therefore, the reliability and validity of the research model are sufficient.

Multicollinearity happens when any single predictor variable is considerably correlated with another set of predictor variables. Table 2 displays that variance inflation factor (VIF) values were less than 5, which means that recent data is free from multicollinearity.

4.1. Hypotheses testing

Figure 1 shows the structural model, which exhibits its hypotheses testing. Table 3 showed that proba-

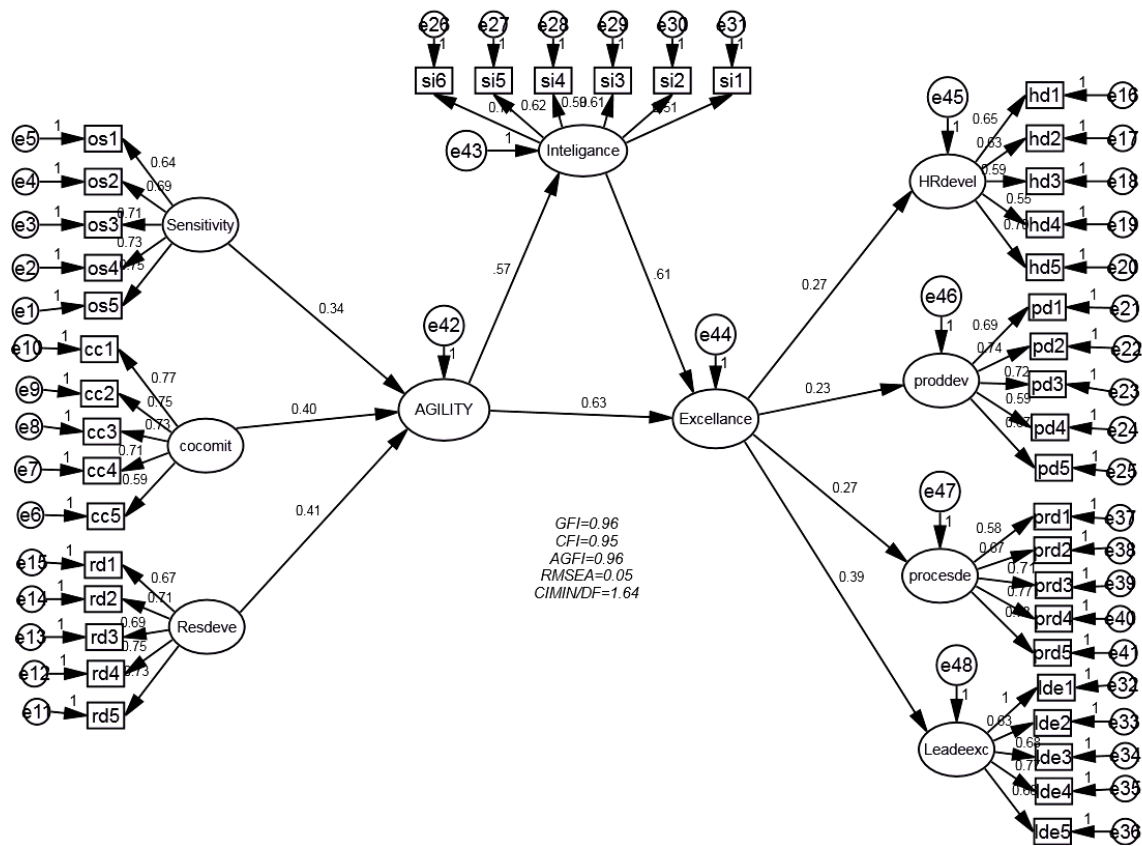


Figure 1. Structural model

bility (p) = 0.055, (CMIN/DF) = 1.64, Goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.96, (CFI) = 0.95, and RMSEA = 0.05. Thus, the model fits the data very well.

Table 3 shows significant positive direct effects of organizational agility (AGIL) on business excellence (EXC) ($\beta = 0.628$, $P = 0.000$) and strategic intelligence (ITEL) ($\beta = 0.569$, $P = 0.001$). Strategic excellence (ITEL) also significantly and directly impacted CL ($\beta = 0.613$, $P = 0.000$). These results supported *H1*, *H2*, and *H3*. Results also showed that organizational agility significantly indirectly affected business excellence through strategic intelligence ($\beta = 0.349$, $P = 0.002$), which means that *H4* is accepted.

Table 3. Results of hypotheses testing

Relationships	B	p-value	B	p-value	B	t-value	p-value
AGIL → EXC	0.628**	0.000			0.413**	16.991	0.001
AGIL → ITEL	0.569***	0.010			0.352***	14.565	0.000
ITEL → EXC	0.613***	0.002			0.686*	18.317	0.000
AGIL → IT → ELEXC	0.628***	0.002	0.349*	0.000	0.977*	25.576	0.000

Note: AGIL: Organizational Agility. EXC: Business Excellence, ITEL: Strategic Intelligence; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the first hypothesis testing show a positive effect of organizational agility on organizational excellence in telecom companies. This result is consistent with Abdullah and Omair (2019), Oyedijo (2012), Amr (2016), Radwan (2014), and Rashid and Matar (2020). Strategic agility is essential for organizations, especially intense competition in meeting customer needs effectively and providing distinguished services, which are the most important criteria for determining strategic choices for organizations. Organizational excellence depends on the appropriate construction of all organizational components represented in

policies, systems planning, structure development, operations planning, resource investment, and potential human development to achieve performance excellence within a framework of agility.

Moreover, the results of the second hypothesis testing showed a positive effect of organizational agility on the strategic intelligence of telecom companies. This result is consistent with Tablawi (2017), Atrash and Aldouri (2020), and Chen (2012). The challenges faced by telecommunications companies require the adoption of strategic intelligence in order to enhance organizational excellence and organizational agility, as achieving survival and growth is no longer an easy matter. This is due to the complexity of business management processes in organizations, which become active in an environment characterized by many risks and uncertainties. It is known that strategic intelligence plays a vital role in adopting organizational agility and influencing performance excellence. It describes the risks and threats facing organizations in a way that helps managers define the organization's programs and policies, make decisions, provide support to achieve goals, and predict future challenges. The organizational agility dimensions should be present whenever using methods and techniques of strategic intelligence due to their connection with the strategic intelligence dimensions, such as foresight and strategic vision. Thus, managers

can define an organization's directions, strategies, and decisions that the organization should formulate accurately and successfully for a positive impact on the environment.

The results of the third hypothesis testing showed a mediating role for strategic intelligence in the relationship between organizational agility and outstanding performance in telecom companies. This result supports Kaddory and Alalousi (2018). They urged telecom companies to develop strategic intelligence and its capabilities, develop skills and prepare future scenarios for decision-makers to provide analysis that leads to wiser strategic decisions and the need to link the potential of strategic intelligence to organizational agility.

Furthermore, the results of the fourth hypothesis testing show a positive impact of strategic intelligence on the outstanding performance of telecommunications companies. It is consistent with Bani Yassin and Alraba'ah (2021), Farah and Amal (2021), and Al-Hashemi (2019). On the other hand, Rebiai and Saouse (2021) showed the same matter, but they disagreed with the results. The results indicate the importance of strategic intelligence in giving an image or vision for the organization's future, which helps to develop strategic plans and alternatives that take into account the capabilities and environmental changes and their impact on the activities and goals of the organization.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence in Jordan, measured through human resource development, product development, process improvement, and leadership excellence. The results revealed that there are statistically significant correlations between organizational resilience and organizational excellence. This result indicates that the Jordanian telecom companies are aware of reading the indicators of the external environment. Thus, they can deal with them and interact with their variables before they occur or direct them for the institution's benefit if it occurs.

Additionally, this study explored the relationship between strategic intelligence and organizational excellence. The findings conclude statistically significant correlations between the moderate variable and the endogenous variable. This result indicates that telecommunication companies seek to improve their performance through clear vision. Moreover, the study investigates the intermediate role of strategic intelligence in the direct relationship between organizational agility and organizational excellence. The findings reveal that organizational agility significantly indirectly affected business excellence.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Data curation: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Formal analysis: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Funding acquisition: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Investigation: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Methodology: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Project administration: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Resources: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Writing – original draft: Bassam Aldiabat.
 Writing – review & editing: Bassam Aldiabat.

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