



Investigating and prioritizing the key success factors of strategic foresight in Iranian industries and organizations

Moslem Shirvani Naghani*

(Corresponding Author) Assistant Professor, Department of Futures Studies, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran. shirvani@soc.ikiu.ac.ir

Fatemehzahra Gilaninezhad

Ph.D of Futures Studies, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran. fz_gilani@yahoo.com

Ebrahim Ejabi

Assistant Professor, Department of Futures Studies, Command and Staff University, Tehran, Iran.
E.ejabi@casu.ac.ir

Khalil Koulivand

Ph.D student of Futures Studies, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran.
K.Koulivand@edu.ikiu.ac.ir

Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to identify and prioritize key success factors in strategic foresight process including pre-foresight, foresight and post-foresight and focuses on industries and organizations active in Iran.

Method: This research is an applied research and is based on descriptive-analytical method. First, in a library way and considering the three stages of the strategic foresight process, 43 factors influencing the success of this process (pre-foresight: 14 factors; foresight: 16 factors; post-foresight: 13 factors) were identified. Then these factors were checked and confirmed by holding two expert panels. In order to prioritize the aforementioned factors, 68 people from 28 different industries were selected based on "criterion-based selection" and with the help of a closed questionnaire, their opinions were collected on a five-point Likert scale.

Findings: The findings of the study, based on the t-student test, confirmed the effect of these factors on the success of the strategic foresight process. The values of the "coefficient of variation" also indicate: In the pre-foresight, balancing exploration and exploitation (0.260), setting up workshops (0.227) and trust building (0.228) are the most important factors. At the foresight stage, identifying and paying attention to milestones (0.179), designing what-if questions (0.189), and focusing on second- and third-party outcomes (0.222) are the most important factors. Finally, in the post-foresight phase, determining the fundamental planning framework (0.193), monitoring and feedback (0.220), and investing in an unlikely idea (0.220) are the most important factors.

Conclusion: Achieving key factors influencing the strategic foresight process can help managers and planners optimally allocate resources and time to design and implement this process successfully.

Keywords: Strategic foresight, prioritization, key factors, industries and organizations of Iran.

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Corresponding Author/ E-mail: Moslem Shirvani Naghani / shirvani@soc.ikiu.ac.ir

Interoduction

The use of strategic foresight in the management and planning of organizations operating in various industries can have various benefits. This process helps to reduce the surprise level of these organizations against future surprises and unexpected events. With structural changes, the mentality and assumptions of the managers of the organizations about the future and the single image they have of the future will be replaced by alternative and multiple images of the future, which will increase the speed and flexibility of the organizational action against changing environmental conditions. Also, strategic foresight helps these organizations to formulate more sustainable strategies against the changes in the trends governing the industries in which they are active and to make the necessary foresight regarding future threats. By promoting a proactive approach, strategic foresight allows organizations to proactively take advantage of environmental opportunities and create opportunities, create and maintain a competitive advantage in order to achieve their desired future and achieve market leadership and industry leadership. Considering the increasing importance of strategic foresight in today's industries and companies, it is necessary to discover and identify the factors that cause the success of a strategic foresight process. Therefore, in this research, by identifying the factors that cause the success of a strategic foresight process and prioritizing these factors, we try to help the development of this process in the direction of better planning in turbulent environmental conditions. Since the success of a strategic foresight process depends on the environmental conditions and the spatial territory of the implementation of this process, in this research, it is tried to identify the key success factors of strategic foresight, focusing on industries and organizations of Iran have been prioritized so that the research output can be used in a practical way. Therefore, the main question of the current research is, what are the key success factors in the process of strategic foresight of active organizations and industries in the country in order of importance?

Materials and Methods

The current research is applied in terms of its purpose, which is based on descriptive and analytical methods. The collection of data was done in two ways, library and field, in the document section and library study, by examining and monitoring the written opinions of experts in the field of studies related to future research and foresight, a number of (43) factors related to the research topic were extracted and in The questionnaire format was created by the researcher, two expert panels of experts and experts in fields related to future studies, including university professors and students of

"future studies" and "strategic management", were formed and the factors identified by the experts were examined by presenting a report by the researchers and specifically the responsible author. And it was approved. In this research, a questionnaire was used as a data collection tool in the field part of the research. After the aforementioned factors were provided to the experts through a questionnaire, they were asked to give their positive or negative opinion regarding the role of each of the identified factors in the success of the strategic foresight process for Iranian industries and organizations. Declare on a five-point Likert scale. Then, the data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively, first with descriptive statistics and then with inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

A survey regarding the factors related to all three stages of Pre-foresight (14 factors), foresight (16 factors) and Post-foresight (13 factors) was conducted through 43 questions from the statistical sample. In order to analyze the data collected from experts' opinions (statistical sample), descriptive and inferential statistics were used, which were done in two parts, descriptive and inferential. After calculating the central index (mean) and dispersion index (variance) based on the scores of the factors on the five-point Likert scale, the coefficient of variation index was used to prioritize the factors. The main advantage of the coefficient of variation index, which is equal to the result of dividing the standard deviation by the mean, is that it considers the central and dispersion indices at the same time, and the smaller this index is, the higher priority the desired factor will be. Also, the 95% confidence interval (lower limit and upper limit) was taken into consideration for the average factors, which represents the minimum and maximum average value in the statistical population of the study. In the statistical column of the test (Student's t-test), the hypothesis of the mean being greater than the mean of the measurement (number 3) and the agreement of all people with the presence of each factor in the process of strategic foresight was tested and according to Critical value and significance level, approval or disapproval of these factors were checked. Student's t-test statistic being larger than the limit of 1.64 indicates the significant confirmation of the relationship.

Conclusions

In order to answer the main research question, this article aims to identify the key success factors of the strategic foresight process for active organizations and industries in Iran and determine the order of importance of these factors

from second-hand (library) and hand-written sources. First (field) has been used to collect data. The results of the collected data analysis showed that each of the 43 identified factors, with a different order of importance, can affect the success of the strategic foresight process in the studied area. Table 1 shows the prioritization of the key success factors of strategic foresight in each stage based on the value calculated for the coefficient of change index

Table 1: Prioritizing the key success factors in each stage of the strategic foresight process along with the coefficient of change

Post-Foresight	Foresight	Pre-Foresight
Determining the basic planning framework (0.193), Continuous monitoring and feedback (0.206), Investing in an unlikely idea (0.209), Identifying indicators that are easy to understand and collect (2.218), Creating job turnover in the foresight institution (0.235), Being stimulating and motivating (0.248), Repetition of strategic foresight activities in a regular way (0.251), Sharing results (0.254), (creating a foresight system (0.262), making decisions with limited information (0.279), Cherishing small successes (0.305), making people aware of changes through experience, insight and reframing (0.315), Drafting contingency plan against unexpected cases (0.346)	Identifying and paying attention to milestones (0.179), Designing what-if questions (0.189), Focusing on second and third category consequences (0.224), Relying on positive points (0.228), Evaluation of the presented strategy from various dimensions (0.261), Quality control and consistency of the results obtained from alternative options (0.266), Use of official methodology (0.266), Reviewing conventional wisdom (0.282), Replacing operational goals instead of simple goals (0.283), Identifying common areas (0.284), Studying the background of a process (0.285), Dealing with taboos (0.285), Combination of precision and creativity (0.287), Comprehensive attitude (0.291), Identification of drivers and uncertainties (0.292), Supporting alternative futures with data Alternatives (0.294)	Creating a balance between exploration and exploitation (0.260), Setting up educational workshops (0.276), Building trust (0.283), Setting a suitable time horizon (0.286), Identifying values (0.297), Identifying bias (0.299), Creating a suitable environment for thinking (0.299), Establishing a foresight institution or team (0.311), Focusing on the external environment and future time (0.316) (Trying to clarify presuppositions (0.332), Goal setting (0.345), Improving the mental patterns of decision makers (0.363) Expanding tests and pre-patterns (0.375), Recognition more than organizations (0.392)

According to the research output, "creating a balance between exploration and exploitation (0.260)", "establishing educational workshops (0.276)" and "building trust (0.283)" are the most important key success factors in the pre-future stage, respectively. They are writing. These findings are in line with the researches and opinions of Courney (2001), Godet and Durance (2011) and Iden et al (2017).

According to table (1), in the foresight stage, "identifying and paying attention to milestones (0.179)", "designing what-if questions (0.189)" and "focusing

on the consequences of the second category and Third (0.224)" are considered to be the most important key factors of success, and these findings are in line with the researches and opinions of Hines and Bishop (2006), Morrison and Wilson (1997) and Glenn (1972).

Also, the findings of the research show that "determining the basic planning framework (0.193)", "continuous monitoring and feedback (0.206)" and "investing in an improbable idea (0.209)" respectively. The most important key success factors are in the post-foresight stage, which is in line with the researches and opinions of Ackoff (1999) and Hines and Bishop (2006).

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