

The Role of Soft Leadership in Achieving the Strategic Objectives of the Economic Institution: An Applied Study of a Sample of Economic Institutions in M'sila

دور القيادة الناعمة في تحقيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية للمؤسسة الاقتصادية:

دراسة تطبيقية لعينة من المؤسسات الاقتصادية بولاية المسيلة

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Abstract:

This study aimed to shed light on soft leadership in its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) as a new leadership style, and to show its role in achieving the strategic Objectives of a sample of active economic institutions in M'sila, Algeria. To achieve the goal, a questionnaire was designed for the purpose of data collection. It was distributed to an intentional sample of (108) workers from different administrative levels. The results of the theoretical study showed that the application of the soft leadership style will create the appropriate work environment to achieve the desired strategic objectives of the institution. The results of the practical study also showed that there is a strong and positive correlation and effect relationship with statistical significance at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). between soft leadership and strategic Objectives. In the light of these results, the study recommended adopting the soft leadership style and enhancing its dimensions in the organizational environment because of its effective role in achieving the strategic objectives of the economic institutions under study.

Key words: Soft Leadership; Strategic Objectives; Vision; Emotional Intelligence; Communication

ملخص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على القيادة الناعمة بأبعادها (الرؤيا، والذكاء العاطفي، والاتصالات) كأسلوب قيادة جديد، وتبيان دورها في تحقيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية للمؤسسة الاقتصادية بالتطبيق على عينة من المؤسسات الاقتصادية الناشطة بولاية المسيلة الجزائرية. ولتحقيق الهدف تم تصميم إستبانة لغرض جمع البيانات، وزعت على عينة قصدية مكونة من (108) عاملاً من مستويات إدارية مختلفة. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة النظرية أن تطبيق أسلوب القيادة الناعمة سيخلق بيئة عمل مناسبة لتحقيق أداء فردي ومؤسسي متميز، وبالتالي تحقيق الأهداف الاستراتيجية المنشودة للمؤسسة. كما بينت نتائج الدراسة العملية وجود علاقة ارتباط وتأثير قوية وإيجابية ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة المعتمد ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) بين القيادة الناعمة والأهداف الإستراتيجية. وفي ضوء هذه النتائج تم صياغة جملة من التوصيات أهمها اعتماد أسلوب القيادة الناعمة وتعزيز أبعادها في البيئة التنظيمية لما لها من دور فعال في تحقيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية للمؤسسات الاقتصادية المبحوثة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة الناعمة؛ الأهداف الإستراتيجية؛ الرؤيا؛ الذكاء العاطفي؛ الاتصالات.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The current environment is facing a set of successive changes and rapid developments, which has put all institutions in different ways facing many challenges that threaten their survival and the continuity of their activity. Here, the problem arises in how to exploit the human element and discover its talents in a way that guarantees these institutions a higher level of efficiency and effectiveness in order for them to survive & continue successfully. This places on the administrative leadership the responsibility of properly dealing with the human energies in the institution, which is the cornerstone and the pillar supporting the advancement for the better. The success achieved by any institution depends to a large extent on the ability & competence of its leaders to set clear goals and use the best means to achieve them. And since success in any institution depends on the extent to which the planned strategic objectives are achieved, the role of administrative leaders is to work on making high-quality decisions that keep their institutions worthy of the right to exist in the future.

Moreover, the role of these leaders varies according to the leadership styles used by each leader in managing the organization. Therefore, the need for leadership styles with interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to employ their potential to work in order to build positive relationships between workers, has emerged. And the shift from the hierarchical leadership style to the soft leadership style that focuses on positive interaction between its members and soft collaborative work. Some studies (Lynn & Woolf, 2014; Rao, 2017; Ajeel, 2018) have shown a positive relationship between soft leadership style and achieving high levels of individual and organizational performance. However, very little research has been done on soft leadership and its benefits.

Based on the foregoing, this study came to highlight the role of the soft leadership style as an important strategic choice within the modern management philosophy that today's institutions must adopt, in order to achieve integration between the organizational and human aspects to achieve effectiveness and reach the desired strategic objectives, which ensures their survival and growth in light of The changing business environment, through four chapters. The first chapter dealt with the methodology of the study, the second chapter presents the previous literature on the variables of the study, while the third chapter included the field study, and the last chapter presents a discussion and recommendation based on the findings of this study.

1.1. Chapter one: study methodology

1.1.1. Study problem:

As a result of the radical changes taking place in the work environment surrounding today's institutions, and the emergence of the style of practicing soft leadership within the modern management philosophy, because of its great impact on the behavior of subordinates; Adopting this style of leadership has become necessary to effectively achieve the desired strategic objectives, and to move away from the hard-line leadership style at work, which has become a largely failed and unacceptable style in business institutions that have been applying it for long periods.

From the above, the study problem is crystallized through the following main question:

What is the role of soft leadership in achieving the strategic objectives from the point of view of workers in the active economic institutions in M'sila?.

To answer this question, the following sub-questions can be formulated:

- What is the extent of soft leadership and its dimensions among the leaders of active economic institutions in M'sila?
- What is the level of importance of achieving the strategic objectives in the active economic institutions in M'sila?
- What is the nature of the relationship and influence between soft leadership and its dimensions and the achievement of strategic objectives in the active economic institutions in M'sila?

1.1.2. Study objectives:

The current study aims to achieve four main objectives:

- Detecting the level of application of soft leadership and its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) in the economic institutions under study.
- Indicating the level of importance of achieving the strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study.
- Identifying the type and degree of relationship between soft leadership and its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, communication) and achieving strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study.
- In the light of the results that will be reached, several recommendations can be presented that decision-makers in the economic institution under study can be guided by.

1.1.3. The significance of study:

The subject of soft leadership is one of the recent topics in the field of business administration science & organizational behavior in particular, so this study will shed light on the philosophy of soft leadership & its effectiveness in achieving strategic objectives. The current study also provides an intellectual discussion in the field of interrelationships between soft leadership & the achievement of strategic objectives, & thus it will make a knowledge contribution at the local level & the Arab world. Moreover, the achievement of the strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study represents a national wealth for Algeria, as it has a large share in the national income.

1.1.4. The hypothetical model for the study:

The hypothetical study model represents the development of a detailed plan for the study to achieve its goals. Accordingly, the variables of the study were determined, as in Figure No. (01).

- The independent variable: represented by " soft leadership ", and it included three (3) dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) based on the measures approved by (Rao, 2014; Ajeel, 2018; Al-Mayali & Hamza, 2022).
- The dependent variable: It is represented in the "strategic objectives of the institutions", which are the objectives that the institutions seek to achieve during the period that you specified.

1.1.5. Study Hypotheses:

The current study is based on the following hypotheses:

- **The first main Hypothesis:** There is a statistically significant correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between soft leadership & its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) & the achievement of strategic objectives.

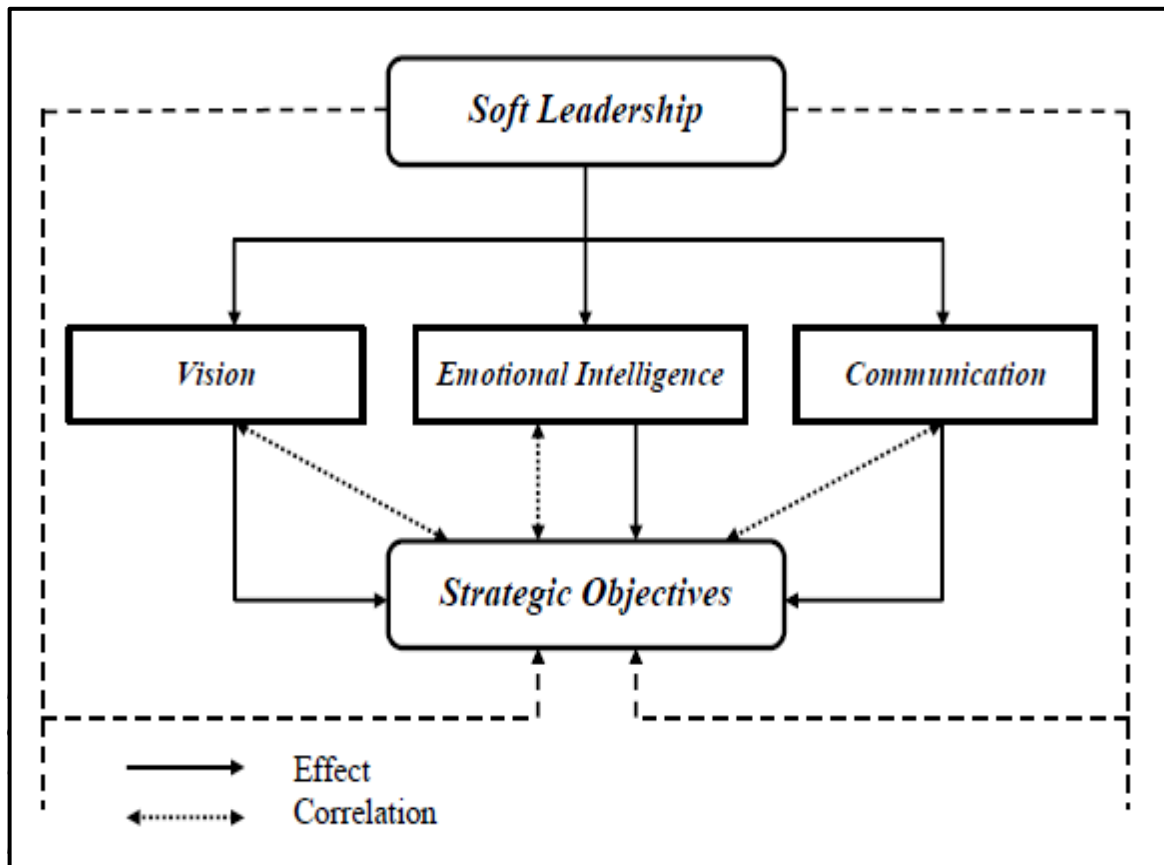
The following hypotheses are derived from the first main hypothesis:

- a. **H₁**: There is a statistically significant correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the dimension of the vision and the achievement of the strategic objectives.
- b. **H₂**: There is a statistically significant correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the emotional intelligence dimension and the achievement of strategic objectives.
- c. **H₃**: There is a statistically significant correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the communication dimension and the achievement of strategic objectives.
- **The second main Hypothesis**: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the application of soft leadership and its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) in achieving the strategic objectives.

The following hypotheses are derived from the first main hypothesis:

- a. **H₁**: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the vision dimension in achieving the strategic objectives.
- b. **H₂**: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the emotional intelligence dimension in achieving the strategic objectives.
- c. **H₃**: There is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the communication dimension in achieving the strategic objectives.

Fig.1. The hypothetical model for the study.



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source: Prepared by the researcher based on previous studies.

1.1.6. Study population and sample:

The field study was applied in some public and private economic institutions active of M'sila, Algeria. The study population consists of all employees in these institutions and from different administrative levels. As for the study sample, it was chosen intentionally - not randomly - as this type of sample is distinguished by the researcher's assessment of his need for a type of information and chooses the sample that achieves his goals. (150) questionnaires were distributed to workers in the institutions under study, of which (108) were retrieved valid questionnaires for analysis by (72%) of the original population. Table No. (01) shows the distribution of the study sample according to the levels of its functional variables.

Table 1. The distribution of the study sample according to the levels of its functional variables

Variable	Category	Iterations	Percentage %
Job title	<i>Head of department</i>	19	17.59
	<i>Administrative supervisor</i>	33	30.56
	<i>Executive worker</i>	56	51.85
Educational level	<i>Diploma or less</i>	27	25.00
	<i>Bachelor</i>	39	36.11
	<i>University and higher</i>	42	38.89
Years of Experience	<i>Less than 5 years</i>	20	18.52
	<i>From 5 to 10 years</i>	59	54.63
	<i>More than 10 years</i>	29	26.85
Institution ownership	<i>Public</i>	46	42.59
	<i>Private</i>	62	57.41
Total		108	%100

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (Spss V.27).

Table No. (1) shows the following:

- **Job title:** The results of Table (1) showed that the majority of respondents are executive workers, at a rate of (51%). Supervisors come in second place with (30%). While heads of departments come in third place with (17%).
- **Educational level:** The results of table (1) showed that the majority of respondents held university degrees or higher, with a rate of (38%). Baccalaureate holders came in second place with a percentage of (36%). While diploma holders or less come in third place with (25%).
- **Years of Experience:** It is noted from table (1) that respondents according to group (from 5 to 10 years) of experience are the highest compared to other groups at a rate of (54%). The group (more than 10 years old) comes in second with a percentage of 54%. The third group came (less than 5 years old), with a rate of (18%).
- **Institution Ownership:** It is noted from Table No. (1) that the majority of respondents are from private institutions (57%). While the percentage of respondents from public institutions (42%).

1.1.7. Study tool (Questionnaire):

The current study relied on the questionnaire, which is the main tool for collecting data related to the practical side of the study. The five-dimensional Likert scale was used, which is considered one of the most widely used measurement tools in addition to being easy and accurate at the same time. Responses on this scale range from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The purpose of using an already developed scale was that it provided more reliable information related to this type of study. Respondents who did not complete the questionnaire were not included in our study.

The researcher indicates that a criterion has been used to judge the degree of approval according to the following:

- Low if the arithmetic mean value is less than (2.33).
- Medium if the value of the arithmetic mean is greater than or equal to (2.33) and less than (3.67).
- High if the arithmetic mean value is greater than or equal to (3.67).

1.1.8. Validity and reliability of the study tool:

To ensure the validity of the content of the tool, the researcher presented it to a group of arbitrators and specialists in this field to verify the suitability of the questionnaire for the study's questions, objectives, and its ability to measure the study's variables. To ensure the stability of the study tool, with regard to the variables of soft leadership and strategic objectives, it was applied to a sample of (20) individuals from the study population from outside its sample. And by calculating the stability coefficient "Cronbach alpha" so that it is acceptable if its value is equal to or greater than (60%), as determined by (Hair et al, 2018). By looking at the results of the statistical test, it was found that the general stability coefficient of the questionnaire was high, reaching (0.905). This indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of stability & is suitable for the purposes of the study. Table No. (02) shows Cronbach's Alpha value for the study variables.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha value for the study variables

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha value	N°. Of items
<i>soft leadership(SL)</i>	.933	20
<i>Vision (L)</i>	.895	6
<i>Emotional Intelligence (EI)</i>	.911	7
<i>Communication (C)</i>	.954	7
<i>Strategic Objectives (SO)</i>	.881	15
All items	.905	35

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (SpssV.27).

1.2. Chapter two: Literature review

1.2.1. Soft Leadership:

Leadership is very attractive to a large number of researchers and scholars because of its influence in all areas of life. Leadership is everywhere, in our daily lives in our schools, in our work, in social groups, in religious organizations and public bodies, in communities and national governments (Yousfi, 2019).

The role of the leader today is manifested in setting long-term strategic plans and goals for what he wants in the future as well, and not just planning for the short term. In addition to creating motivation and desire among employees to achieve and embody this vision, which is expressed in the need to reach organizational excellence and work to preserve it and the position gained in the market (Zayed, 2005, p25).

The leader is basically a thinker rather than a practitioner of specific leadership tasks in the organization, and this is what characterized the current global leaders who transferred their advantages by reformulating the practices of the various institutions. The emphasis here is that the leader is more or less effective depending on how organized the task is, how strong the leader is, and how good the relationships are. (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2019, p680). In this sense, leadership is the process of influencing, as leaders are the people who, through their actions, encourage a group of people to move towards common desired goals (Kumar, 2011).

Interest in the concept of leadership and its role in business organizations has increased, because the current organizations are subject to many challenges and pressures that impose on them the need to be the best, fastest, and strongest in achieving goals and competing in the market. Moreover, the challenge of contemporary leadership is about how leaders mobilize others to want to accomplish extraordinary things in organizations. It is about the practices leaders use to turn values into action, visions into realities, obstacles into innovation, disconnection into solidarity, and risk into rewards (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p2).

These challenges necessitated the need to provide those core skills, capabilities and competencies that are represented by good leadership that adopts leniency and flexibility to meet these challenges as a new approach and manage its organizations to adapt to the changing environment for the benefit of the organization. Therefore, The use of leniency and flexibility in work will make success in achieving goals less dangerous and more interactive within the scope of performing the required work.

Although different organizations are always looking for the right way to develop future leaders by adopting the distinctive leadership style, it seems that developing leadership skills will be more complex than it has ever been. In this context, many researchers, specialists and practitioners - in the science of organizational behavior and human resources management - found in soft leadership a fundamental choice and a new approach to serve the advancement of organizations and enable them to face challenges and achieve strategic objectives by paying attention to the human element, as the style of leadership followed It affects the morale of the human resource as well as its affiliation, commitment, creativity & innovation...etc. Soft leadership is completely different from other leadership styles. In addition, there are a number of weaknesses in current leadership styles and soft leadership effectively overcomes and overcomes these challenges (Roa, 2013, p144).

a. The concept of soft leadership

Soft leadership is a new concept that has been added to many applied sciences and modern literature. It adds value to the field of leadership (Roa, 2013, p143). Recently, interest has increased in the concept of soft leadership as a concept that focuses on a set of skills that will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. These skills include a group of personal and behavioral capabilities of the leader that help influence workers and build

relationships and communication between them. It also focuses on empathy and the human aspects of encouraging and persuading others (Marques, 2013, 163).

Soft leadership depends on the behavioral attitudes of the leader towards the workers to achieve the goals, and also focuses on the importance of precious human resources. It is an integrative, participatory, relational, and behavioral leadership style that adopts tools such as persuasion, negotiation, appreciation, motivation, and collaboration to accomplish tasks effectively (Rao, 2017, p2).

(Rao, 2013, p28) indicates that soft leadership is not submissive leadership or lame hard leadership, but firm leadership. Where leaders adopt the method of communication among themselves and collaborators to carry out tasks. Thus, soft leadership is a mixture of courageous leadership, thought leadership, servant leadership, and inspiring leadership.

Through a brief description of soft leadership, and based on what the researchers found for the concept of soft leadership, it can be defined as exemplary leadership whose application leads to the acquisition of more skills, experience, and a mixture of technical and leadership skills, which stresses the importance of human resources. (Klaus & Fernando; 2016, p235).

For his part, (Gorringe et al., 2016, p553) defined soft leadership as integrative leadership based on participation and establishing friendly relations within the scope of work, & this is achieved through clear vision, effective communication & emotional intelligence in order to accomplish tasks effectively. It is the exercise of influence through a set of soft leadership skills to accomplish tasks efficiently and effectively (Ariratana et al, 2015).

Soft leadership is defined as the process of setting goals and influencing individuals through the use of flexible persuasion, building strong work teams, and negotiating them with a win-win situation, as well as respecting their failure, which ultimately leads to their motivation and cohesion, by aligning their energies and efforts, and appreciating their contribution in achieving organizational goals. (Ajeel, 2018, p41).

Soft leadership can be defined as a leadership style that adopts soft skills to influence others, make decisions, and exercise administrative authority in the organization.

b. The significance of soft leadership

The importance of soft leadership comes from exploring the new leadership style of the concept of leadership that differentiates between hard and soft leadership. This explains how soft leadership differs from other leadership styles. This means that leaders exert influence through a range of soft skills to get things done efficiently and effectively.

For his part (Kouzes & Posner, 2012, p76) indicated that the use of the control method in the practice of leadership is not considered important at the present time, but rather the leadership style of trust & cooperation must be practiced. The world is changing rapidly, & the basic knowledge, skills & capabilities of workers are also changing rapidly, as workers must keep pace with rapid changes in the changing & evolving world of technology. In addition, working individuals are more focused on their jobs & are willing to do their best in order to maintain their career. Therefore, leaders must provide new & innovative leadership styles through the leadership tools, techniques, skills that they possess & use towards the workers in the management of their organizations.

Accordingly, soft leadership as a new leadership style helps leaders a lot in meeting all work procedures to achieve their public interests & achieve the desired goals.

Moreover, many researchers and writers (Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Rao, 2013; Lynn & Woolf, 2014; dawn et al., 2016; Rao, 2017; Ajeel, 2018) have pointed out the importance of soft leadership can be summarized as follows:

- The ability to interact with internal users and external customers, contributing to work collaboratively, understanding the work environment, proactive and self-direction, and finding solutions to work problems.
- Transforming the personality of individuals, their attitudes and behaviors. As soft leadership balances the capabilities of individuals and the tasks assigned to them in a proportionate manner without prejudice to the goals, & focuses on empathy (knowing others), which is represented in the ability to understand and realize the affairs of other partners, & consider issues objectively.
- Reducing conflicts and minimizing the use of organizational policy, and diminishing in the workplace, where workers can achieve a balance between their personal and professional lives.
- Reducing stress levels, maintaining employee sustainability, and enhancing their loyalty to their organization, thus promoting excellence and achieving organizational effectiveness.

c. Soft leadership dimensions:

The researchers differed in defining the dimensions of soft leadership as a result of the difference in their way of thinking & the organizational environment in which they conducted their research. The current study relied on three dimensions: (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication), which were addressed in the study of (Nancy & Woolf, 2014; Gotsis & Grimani, 2017). Here is a brief explanation of these dimensions:

- **Vision:** is the ideal future that can be reached (Daft & Noe, 2001, p404). It carries a clear and convincing imagination that facilitates the way for the development that it defines, draws according to traditions, and is linked to the actions adopted by individuals to achieve change (Robbins, 2008, p344). Vision, in this sense, works to activate the feelings and capabilities of individuals, if it is drawn correctly, then it works to find the spirit of the group within the souls in spare time. This means putting both energy and commitment into the context of the work. (Al-Mayali & Hamza, 2022, p344) indicated that the ability to find a vision is not the same as the ability to sell it, while (intelligence, analytical ability, experience and knowledge) are the main characteristics of an individual with vision and insight. That is, the individual is able to find a vision & implement it. The ability to effectively sell a vision or idea, on the other hand, is closely related to the rhetorical (linguistic) ability of a particular individual and his social skills.

On the other hand, one can judge the quality of a vision in terms of whether it creates a reasonable balance between realism and risk, and whether it balances goals and values with the capabilities possessed by business organizations. Thus, it is a clear description of what the organization and society will be like after it successfully implements its strategies and achieves its goals. It is an expression by individuals about what they want the organization to be like in the future, and presents the best image of the organization (Nancy & Woolf, 2014, p34).

Based on the above; It can be said that the vision is a strategic concept that gives the organization a clear philosophy and mission in addition to a vital description that is consistent with the general interests of the leadership.

- **Communication:** is one of the vital aspects of managing business organizations, as it represents an effective means by which one can influence the behavior of others and direct them towards achieving goals (Bekhti, 2016, p33). Communication is considered one of the necessary and important processes that work to ensure communication within the work team. Thus, leaders seek to transfer information and administrative orders to higher administrative levels and receive and exchange this information with managers at different administrative levels effectively through work experience, procedures and good organization (Bodnar & Hopwood, 2012, p124). On the other hand, sharing communications between all members of the organization, whether individuals or groups, leads to the development of the organization's skills and the achievement of its goals. Therefore, communication is one of the important activities that leaders use frequently and permanently at all administrative levels and everywhere, whether it is at work, the social environment, or within the work team (Astakhova, 2015, p2).

Based on the above; It can be said that communication is a concept generally associated with the process through which the advertising message, whatever its type or form (text, sound, image) can be transmitted from the leader (sender) to other managers and workers (receiver).

- **Emotional intelligence :** is the self-mastery, discipline, and capacity for empathy that allows a leader to channel personal emotions and appeal to others. Emotional intelligence must be built in to be permanent, as individuals focus their interests on their leader with a personality that has the ability to control emotional discipline. Thus, it is more mature and more effective in achieving success throughout the organization (Casimir et al., 2014, p15). It is a set of social and emotional skills that individuals possess that are necessary for professional success (Goleman, 2005, p38). On the other hand, leadership is one of the smart leadership practices that organizational leaders use to motivate employees (Crosbie, 2012, p2). Emotional intelligence, in this sense, refers to the positive dealings of smart leadership with itself & with others, its ability to control itself in all circumstances. That is, the emotional leader is a leader who possesses a set of skills through which he can understand others, understand himself, control his emotions & feelings, & then deal with the situations he goes through within the organization. Thus, emotional intelligence is a key set of managerial skills that contribute to an organization's success (Zhang et al., 2018).

Based on the above; It can be said that emotional intelligence is a concept related to the leader's ability to deal with his feelings, manage them, and control his emotions, as well as deal with others transparently, manage his relationships with them, motivate them, realize their needs, and use that in making appropriate decisions and directing his thoughts.

1.2.2. Strategic Objectives:

The effective administrative leaders in the various organizations are keen on continuously directing all resources and efforts towards achieving the set goals, and the business organizations must define the strategic objectives and the mechanism for achieving them. The strategic objectives represent the general objectives that affect the organization's entity and its future, for which everyone bears the responsibility to achieve them and reap the benefits resulting from their achievement or bear the consequences of not achieving them and the consequent damages that affect the organization and threaten its survival.

a. The concept of Strategic Objectives

Goals are the starting and ending point of any human activity. It is the basis for the existence and survival of organizations and part of their design. Organizations cannot operate without a deep awareness of their goals, because organizations seek to achieve certain goals and objectives, which are determined by workers and senior management. The organization's mission and strategic objectives are determined in the light of the outcomes of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the organization's internal environment compared to other environments operating in the same industry. Based on the strategic objectives of the organization, strategies are developed and its practical objectives are formulated (Hitt et al., 2016, p50).

Objectives also express the desired results that the organization seeks to achieve, and they must be measurable, specific to a specific time, and constitute a challenge for workers, but within their capabilities and achievable (Wayne, 2015). As for the “strategy”, it is a set of related actions that managers take to increase their organization's performance (Hill & Jones, 2012, p4).

Accordingly, the objectives represent the results expected to be achieved by following certain strategies, while the strategy represents the actions that will be taken to achieve the objectives.

(Alkurdi, 2015) indicates that the strategic objectives is directly related to the mission and vision of the organization and is closely related to its elements, and to know the strategic objectives of the organization, this question must be answered: What does the organization seek to accomplish in the long, medium & short term? And he adds that defining strategic objectives is considered the foundation through which the decision-maker expands and develops the organization's activities.

Strategic objectives can be defined as the strategic intent that carries boldness, ambition, & a strong long-term challenge to achieve a specific position or leadership in a specific field, discover a new field or establish a positive & promising culture (Thompson & Strickland, 2004, p46). In other words, it is a special case of the general objectives that represent the basic & first component of the strategic management process. Strategic objectives are also defined as the essential ends or results that the organization seeks to achieve through activities, through the best use of available & future resources. The strategic objectives relate to the foreseeable & unforeseen future period, in light of the organization's organizational, technical, competitive resources & capabilities (Pitts & Lei, 2002).

Based on the above; It can be said that the strategic objectives are: a set of future goals that the organization seeks to achieve, translates its vision and contributes to strengthening and enhancing its competitive position. A strategic objective is most effective when it is quantifiable either through statistical results or observable data.

b. The significance of Strategic Objectives

Many researchers and writers (Pitts & Lei, 2002; Thompson & Strickland, 2004; Hill & Jones, 2012; Alkurdi, 2015) have pointed out the importance of strategic objectives and their identification in institutions; It can be summarized as follows:

- Strategic objectives help in drawing the paths of the strategic direction of the organization clearly reflecting its future expectations.
- The strategic objectives outline the desired future for the organization in a procedural way that can be observed and measured.

- Strategic objectives are a guide for decision-making, as they represent a guide and criterion for senior management in determining the most appropriate option.
- The strategic objectives represent a criterion for evaluating organizational performance and indicating its strengths and weaknesses.
- Strategic objectives play a distinct role in motivating employees and sharpening their efforts towards achievement.
- The strategic objectives contribute to reducing frustrations through their realism and consistency with the available organizational capabilities.
- Strategic objectives help an organization's leaders articulate its needs to the stakeholders who have power and control.
- Strategic objectives help define the objectives of the organization's marketing, public relations and human resources departments.
- Strategic objectives help the organization build talent and develop a strong workforce capable of greater competitiveness, improved efficiency, productivity and better customer satisfaction.
- Strategic objectives allow the organization to create more sustainable and successful operations with a strong foundation for future growth..

(Ahmed, 2016, p46) believes that the strategic objectives contribute to defining the organization in the environment in which it operates, in addition to being considered a guide for senior management in decision-making, defining the authorities and responsibilities for each of the departments, departments, and individuals, defining the relationship and role for each of them, and placing them in the appropriate place within the organizational structure that ensures that it performs the required tasks correctly.

(Alkurdi, 2015, p49) mentioned that there are conditions and attributes of goals that must be met in any strategic objectives, namely:

- **Clarity:** It does not include vague or loose phrases.
- **Measurability:** The strategic objective must be measurable to determine whether the required results from this objective have been achieved and what level has been reached, and to determine the method that will be used to measure the objective and the level of results to be achieved in it.
- **Achievable:** That is, the goal should be practical and achievable within the specified time frame.
- Determine the time: that is, to be linked to a specific time for its completion and achievement.
- **Challenge:** In the sense that the goal ceiling should not be low at the level of the organization and individuals, but rather it must generate motivation for workers to achieve the objectives.

1.3. Chapter Three: results and outcomes

The results of descriptive statistics are presented below that include the value of mean, standard deviations, and the rate of importance.

1.3.1. Description and Diagnosis of Soft leadership Dimensions:

- Table (3) shows The general level of soft leadership and its dimensions is relatively high (79%). The arithmetic mean was (3.96) and the standard deviation was (0.79). The standard deviation confirms the low degree of variance between the respondents' responses regarding the realization of the dimensions of soft leadership in the economic institutions under study..

- Table (3) shows The vision dimension came in the first place with an arithmetic average of (4.11) and a high score of (82%), and after communication came in the second place with an arithmetic mean of (3.97) and a high score of (79%), and came third after emotional intelligence with an arithmetic average of (3.90) and a score high (78%).
- This high result of the level of soft leadership reflects the awareness of the study sample working in the economic institutions under study of the importance of the role of soft leadership, and their ability to realize the different dimensions of it.

Table 3. mean, standard deviations, and relative importance to soft leadership dimensions

Rank	Dimension	Mean	St. Deviation	Rate of importance	Level
1	<i>Vision (V)</i>	4.112	0.831	82.24	high
3	<i>Emotional Intelligence (EI)</i>	3.905	0.682	78.10	high
2	<i>Communication (C)</i>	3.971	1.007	79.42	high
General level of soft leadership		3.966	0.783	79.32	high

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (SpssV.27).

1.3.2. Description and diagnosis the importance of achieving strategic objectives:

- Table (4) shows the general level of importance of achieving the strategic objectives is high at (78%).The arithmetic mean was (3.90).The standard deviation was (0.85).The standard deviation confirms the low degree of variance between the respondents' responses regarding the realization of the importance of achieving strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study.
- This high result of the level of strategic objectives reflects the awareness of the study sample working in the economic institutions under study of the importance of achieving the strategic objectives, and their desire to upgrade and improve their job conditions.

Table 4. mean, standard deviations, and importance to strategic objectives

Rank	Dimension	Mean	St. Deviation	Rate of importance	Level
General level of achieving strategic objectives		3.909	0.851	78.18	high

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (SpssV.27).

1.3.3. Testing study hypotheses:

To test the hypotheses of the study, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to find out the relationship between the variables (Table 5). As well as the use of Multiple linear regression analysis, in addition to the use of the interpretation coefficient (R^2), to measure the percentage of changes that soft leadership explains and affects the level of achieving strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study (Table 6).

a. Analyzing correlation hypotheses:

- Table No. (5) indicates the correlations between soft leadership and the achievement of strategic objectives collectively. Where the correlation coefficient was (.725), which is statistically

significant at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

- Moreover, Table No. (5) shows a strong and positive correlation between the dimensions of soft leadership and the achievement of strategic objectives.
- According to the results, the strongest correlation was between the vision dimension and the strategic objectives, as the correlation coefficient reached (.691), which is statistically significant at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). As for the weakest correlation, it was between the dimension of emotional intelligence and the achievement of strategic objectives, as the correlation coefficient reached (.633), which is statistically significant at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
- Consequently, accepting the first main hypothesis & the three sub-hypotheses emanating from it.

Table 5. Pearson Correlations for All the Variables

Variables	(V)	(E I)	(C)	(SL)	(SO)
<i>Vision (V)</i>	1				
<i>Emotional Intelligence (EI)</i>	.619**	1			
<i>Communication (C)</i>	.580**	.566**	1		
<i>soft leadership (SL)</i>	.653**	.542**	.617**	1	
<i>Strategic Objectives (SO)</i>	.691**	.633**	.685**	.725**	1

**correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (Spss V.27).

b. Analysis the effect between the study variables:

- Table (06) shows that there is a statistically significant positive effect of the application of soft leadership on achieving strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study, as the calculated (F) value was (58.121), which is greater than its tabular value, which amounts to (3.082) within the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This indicates that there is a statistical significance in interpreting the dependent variable (strategic objectives) through the independent variables (soft leadership dimensions).
- The coefficient of determination (R^2) has a value of (.526), which means that the independent variables (soft leadership dimensions) explain (52%) in the dependent variable (strategic objectives). As for the remaining percentage, which is estimated at (48%), its interpretation is due to the influence of other factors that were not covered by the model.
- The effect score (β) amounted to (.458), which means that an increase of one degree in the application of the dimensions of the human resources empowerment strategy leads to an increase in the achievement of strategic objectives by (.458).

Table 6. Results of Regression Analysis of soft leadership on achievement of strategic objectives

R	R ²	Adjusted R	SE of the estimate	F	Significance
.725 ^a	.526	.497		58.121	.000
<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardized coefficients</i>	<i>Standardized coefficients</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>Significance</i>
	<i>B</i>		<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta (constant)</i>	
<i>Soft leadership</i>	.458		.132	7.624	.000

$F_{tab}(\alpha=0.05; df1=2; df2=106)= 3.082 \quad N=108$
****correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (SpssV.27).

In order to give detailed indications of the nature of the impact of soft leadership dimensions on achieving the strategic objectives, this will be analyzed as shown in Table (6).

Using the input method, Table (6) shows:

- The effect of vision dimension in achieving the strategic objectives, and this is shown through the value of (β) which amounted to (9.755), which is a significant value within the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This dimension is considered the strongest influencing dimension compared to the influence of other dimensions. This can be explained by the importance of seeing the economic institutions under study in relation to their employees, as they play an important role in achieving strategic objectives, which must include satisfying employees & improving their material and moral conditions.
- The effect of communication dimension in achieving the strategic objectives, & this is shown through the value of (β) which amounted to (9.630), which is a significant value within the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This can be explained by the realization of workers in the economic institutions under study of the importance of ensuring communication within the work team through conversation and listening to them in order to reach the desired results.
- The effect of the emotional intelligence dimension in achieving the strategic objectives, and this is shown through the value of (β), which amounted to (9.72), which is a significant value within the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This dimension is considered the weakest dimension in its impact compared to the influence of other dimensions. This can be explained by the feeling of the individuals working in the economic institutions under study that their leaders do not understand their feelings, and that they are not managed as a single work team. This requires attention to enhance cooperation through achieving long and stable relationships in the integrated work team.
- Consequently, The previous statistical results support the validity of the second main hypothesis and the three sub-hypotheses emanating from it.

Table 6. Analyzing the effect of soft leadership on achievement of strategic objectives

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.2737	.291	-	7.624	.000**	-	-
(V)	.561	.142	.731	6.832	.000**	.530	4.711
(EI)	.301	.155	.584	3.790	.013**	.331	6.392
(C)	.539	.137	.848	5.933	.007**	.287	2.835

a. Dependent Variable: Strategic Objectives (SO)
****correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the program (SpssV.27).

1.4. Discussion and conclusion

Soft leadership is a new approach in administrative leadership, as having soft leadership skills represented in (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) can make a big difference in the lives of organizations and employees. You will help build and manage relationships effectively. By mastering these skills, leaders will be able to understand the best ways to improve performance and productivity and thus achieve the desired strategic objectives.

This study reached a number of results, which can be summarized as follows:

- The results of the study showed that there is a relatively high agreement on the level of application of soft leadership dimensions in the economic institutions under study. As the vision dimension came first with an arithmetic average of (4.11) and a high degree, and it got the highest arithmetic average, and after communication came in the second place with an arithmetic average of (3.97) and a high degree, while it ranked third after emotional intelligence with an arithmetic average of (3.90) and a high degree;
- The results of the study showed that the general level of the importance of achieving the Strategic objectives for workers in the economic institutions under study is high, with an arithmetic mean of (3.90).
- The study found that there is a strong and positive correlation with statistical significance at the approved significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the dimensions of soft leadership (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication) and the achievement of strategic objectives in the economic institutions under study, as the correlation coefficient reached (.725). The strongest correlation was between the vision dimension and the strategic objectives, as the correlation coefficient was (.691). As for the weakest correlation, it was between the emotional intelligence dimension and the achievement of Strategic objectives, as the correlation coefficient was (.633).
- The results of the study showed that there was a statistically significant positive effect ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between soft leadership and its dimensions (vision, emotional intelligence, and communication), and the achievement of strategic objectives by the economic institutions under study. The effect of the communication dimension in achieving the strategic objectives reached the strongest influential relationships, while the effect of the emotional intelligence dimension in achieving the strategic Objectives reached the weakest influential relationships.

1.5. Recommendations:

This study recommended the following:

- The need to choose leaders who have the characteristics of soft leadership, who have experience and characteristics that affect subordinates when achieving the desired strategic Objectives in order to develop expertise and adapt to the unstable surrounding environment.
- The need for work and training, in order to build capable leaders who are able to understand all matters, study all surrounding environmental variables, and determine the best ways to make the administrative process a success through preparing a set of scientific studies, and discussing them in a conference that includes all leaders in the economic institutions under study.
- Providing a work environment in which communication is facilitated between all administrative levels and employees, enabling them to use and exchange information quickly and easily.
- Work to integrate the modern leadership cadres with the old leadership cadres in order to learn and benefit from the experiences possessed by the old administrative leaders in the economic institutions under study.
- Adopting a soft leadership style in leading subordinates and avoiding, as far as possible, the strict style of work, which has become an unacceptable method in business organizations, which has proven to be largely unsuccessful.
- The need to define the economic institutions under study, and in advance the strategic Objectives that they seek to achieve, and to determine the time period required to achieve these goals, and the necessary tools that enable these institutions to achieve the set goals.
- Encouraging team work as an effective mechanism in establishing the soft leadership approach, while giving work teams full responsibilities for developing and implementing plans and making the necessary decisions to carry out their work.
- Conducting more studies on soft leadership and the need to link it to other variables such as job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior and in other research communities such as banks and companies.

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