



Eximia Journal
(ISSN 2784-0735)

Vol. 13
2024

The role of strategic Renewal in organizational immunity - analytical research in the Iraqi Ministry of Education

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Abstract. The current study aims to demonstrate the role of strategic renewal in enhancing organizational immunity through strategic renewal mechanisms represented by (Reanimating, Rejuvenation, Venturing, and restructuring). The main idea of this study relates to the extent to which organizations' immunity is achieved through strategic Renewal mechanisms, by measuring these dimensions with Organizational immunity represented by organizational learning, organizational memory, and organizational DNA. The study population was the headquarters of the Iraqi Ministry of Education, and the sample included (330) individuals from the upper, middle, and lower leadership levels. Several statistical methods were used to deal with the results of the questionnaire, especially the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson) and descriptive analysis methods using (SPSS.v23, AMOS.v25). The most important conclusion of the study was the presence of a clear and significant impact of strategic Renewal in building and designing the immune system of organizations.

Keywords. strategic renewal, organizational immunity, Iraqi Ministry of Education

1- Introduction:

All organizations face many challenges resulting from dynamic environmental changes, as organizations are no longer safe from the risks that surround them, and it is not possible to predict all changes, which sometimes leads to the destruction of the organizations' defense system, which negatively affects the on levels of performances . Organizational immunity is considered a group of Mechanisms and processes that are developed to protect organizations by identifying and removing threats that expose the values and principles of the organization to collapse or organizational stagnation. And the stronger the immune system in organizations, the more is reflected in their sustainability and survival for a longer period of time in work, as the main function of this system is to distinguish internal and external factors to enhance the organization's ability to resist risks, and adapt and deal with crises or environmental risks. Likewise, the immunity of organizations does not mean that the organization continues to proceed throughout its organizational life cycle on providing one product or service. It must respond to the fluctuations and renewed demands imposed by the work environment. In return, the work environment imposes intense competition between organizations that requires them to search and investigate renewable solutions that enable them to overcome. from competitors and

rapid response to the changes taking place, and therefore the need has emerged for strategic Rejuvenation, which is considered one of the solutions that enable organizations to do this, after it was noted that most organizational changes take place in a relatively familiar way, and we can say that organizations that have a strong immunity respond well to the processes of change and strategic renewal and on The opposite is the case if their immunity is weak, as (Ismail, 2020) indicated that organizational immunity is a blessing for dynamic organizations that respond to any change process at any time, which pushes them to innovation and renewed creativity, and it is considered a curse for those dysfunctional organizations that refuse change. Strategic renewal also makes organizations able to reshape their strategies and structures to confront actual and expected threats in the environment in which they operate (Al-romeedy & Mohamed, 2022). Strategic renewal is considered a resource for organizations that seek to gain society's trust and acceptance because it enables them to understand reality and respond to it, whether that organization is for-profit or non-profit organizations.

2- Research problem:

The research problem centers on the Iraqi Ministry of Education, as this ministry is considered one of the most important ministries sponsoring community development, which contributes to the renaissance and development of the country as it represents the factory of thinking and creative minds that lead it towards development and change. Without a doubt, the educational sector in Iraq has suffered despite the demands, strategies and plans. Many of the problems were represented by the weakness of the organizational system, inefficiency, lack of sufficient resources, weak implementation of public policies, lack of infrastructure, lack of training and retraining opportunities, and the monotonous procedures in place. This clearly contributed to the weakening of its immune system and its response as a service organization became weak. On this basis, we see that the educational sector needs to rise again and determine its strategic compass. The variable of strategic Renewal was chosen, which is considered one of the most effective solutions at the present time, as it is considered a contemporary concept linked to all the organizational joints that need it, and contemporary organizations must realize its essence and philosophy. This is due to the awareness of many large organizations of the inevitability of increasing pressures for change, and the fact that strategic Renewal is the interface and continuous response to those changes taking place, and thus the orientation of the organizations' leaders to the process of strategic Renewal is to reach more appropriate combinations between resources and capabilities, in an attempt to accelerate behavior. The proactive approach of their organizations towards the turbulent environment in a therapeutic or defensive manner. However, the basic question on which the study is based is the extent of leaders' Realization and awareness of the strategic Renewal processes, and how will employees in the ministry deal with the changes that will be imposed by the renewed reality in it?.

3- Research importance:

The importance of the current research is evident through the following

A - Achieving and implementing the organizational benefits resulting from activating the role of strategic renewal in organizational immunity in the Ministry.

B- A statement of the Ministry of Education's ability to diagnose the reality of strategic renewal and its role in organizational resilience.

C- Explaining the extent of the impact of strategic renewal on organizational immunity.

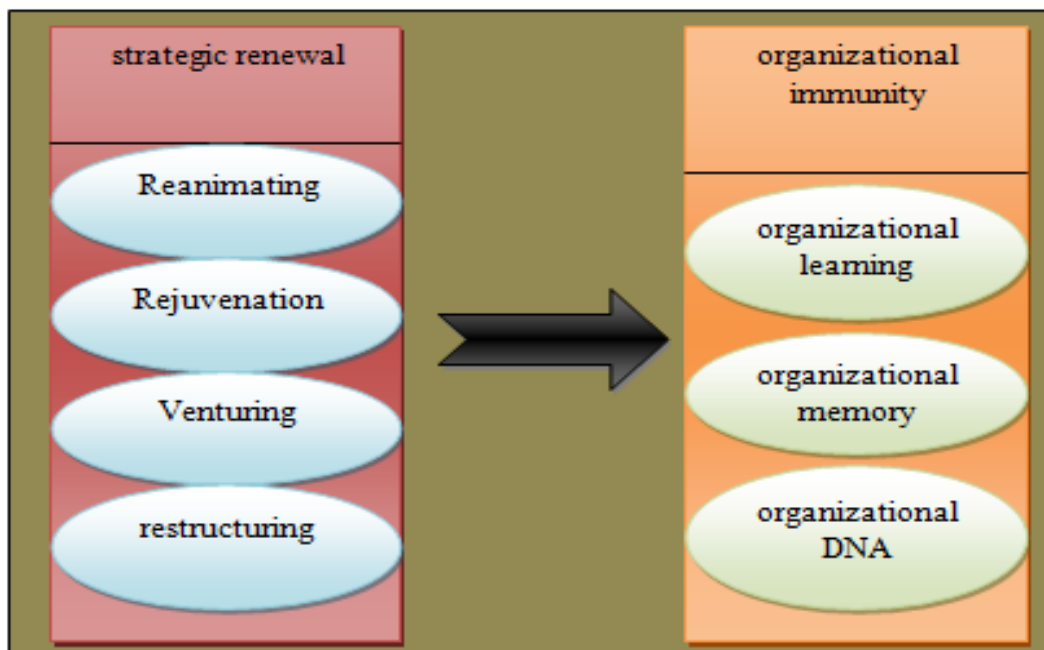
4- Research aims:

The main objective of the current research is to shed light on the role of strategic renewal in influencing organizational immunity, and there are a set of sub-objectives that are as follows:

- A- Identifying the reality of strategic renewal and organizational immunity in the Ministry of Education.
- B- Knowing and diagnosing the deficiencies that weaken the immunity of the ministry under investigation.
- C- Highlighting the innovative practices taken by the Ministry to enhance its organizational immunity .
- D- Providing a set of conclusions and recommendations to the ministry based on the results of the study.

5- Hypothetical chart:

Through reviewing the literature related to strategic Renewal and organizational immunity, work was done to develop a hypothetical research plan in light of the research problem and objectives. This plan included two variables, the independent variable represented by strategic renewal in its dimensions (Reanimating, Rejuvenation, Venturing, restructuring), while the responding variable was organizational immunity in its dimensions (organizational learning, organizational memory, organizational DNA) as shown in Figure (1)



6- Research assumes: -

Testing the main hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of strategic renewal in its dimensions on organizational immunity) and the following sub-hypotheses branch out from it:

- A- The first sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational learning).”
- B- Testing the second sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational memory).
- C- Testing the third sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational DNA).

7- Research variables:

A- Strategic Renewal

Strategic renewal is considered a gateway to developing the work of current organizations in the long term to enhance their success by identifying a set of future options in an effort to achieve continuous improvement and development to accommodate changes in the environment in which they operate and to excel over competitors (Al-Rawi and Al-Nama, 2023). (Fuller & Volberda, 1995) are considered the first to establish dimensions of strategic Rejuvenation, which the researcher adopted in this study, which are as follows (Reanimating, rejuvenation, Venturing, restructuring): -

- **Reanimating** : It is an approach to make the organization able to exploit business opportunities and seize competitive advantages, which ultimately leads the organization to redefine its relationship with its competitors in the market or industry through radical change in it (Colabi & Khajeheian, 2018).
- **Rejuvenation**: This is the process through which a series of complete changes are implemented in the structure, systems, operations and strategies of the organization, which comprehensively affect the entire organization (Ghazzawi & Cook, 2015: 5).
- **Venturing**: It refers to the creation of new, independent entrepreneurial work units to test new and advanced creative ideas and practices, as flexible units should be organized through which existing competencies and routine procedures can be rearranged towards innovation and development (Mustafa and Jatheer, 2022).
- **Restructuring**: Restructuring consists of a change in the organization's investments, operation, governance, and financing structure. Therefore, restructuring as a process entails reorganizing the ownership, operations, legal affairs, or structures of the organization with the aim of becoming more organized and profitable in meeting the current needs of the organization (Kinyua & Kihara, 2021).

B– Organization immunity

It is the ability of the organization to confront all environmental viruses, risks, and internal and external threats in a way that enables it to survive, continue to work, and achieve organizational goals (Abu Shabqa, 2022). The researcher addressed the dimensions of organizational immunity based on what was proposed by (Assayah, 2020), and these dimensions are (organizational learning, organizational memory, organizational DNA):

- **Organizational learning**: It refers to the organization's use of its capabilities in the field of knowledge and information in order to change inherited behaviors and create knowledge of higher value (Fanjan et al., 2020).
- **Organizational memory**: An intentional and directed process through which organizations seek to obtain, retain, retrieve and use historical and cognitive information for current and future organizational purposes and decisions (Almomani et al., 2019).
- **Organizational DNA**: It is the basic building blocks or genetic code of the organization that shows its characteristics and qualities that distinguish it from other organizations (Ardalan et al., 2021).

C - The relationship between strategic renewal and organizational immunity

Strategic renewal reflects a change in the content of the organization's strategy, its path, and its capabilities. Strategic Renewal also reflects great importance through its role in the type of activities that the organization must pursue to enhance its strategic capabilities. It is an evolutionary process linked to enhancing, absorbing and using new knowledge and innovative

behavior in order to Creating a change in the organization's core competencies that enhance its survival (Pedersen et al., 2020). The importance of strategic renewal is also evident in organizational immunity, by enhancing the organization’s ability to continuously improve and enjoy organizational flexibility to achieve sustainability in its competitive advantage (Sachit et al., 2022). (Aboudi, 2019) believes that it is necessary to strengthen and pay attention to all the activities that strategic renewal performs in building a strong immune system that protects organizations from the threats imposed by the work environment. The importance of strategic renewal in organizational immunity is evident through the following (Al-Taie 2023): -

- Strategic renewal generates proactive opportunities through which the organization overcomes organizational diseases and organizational shortcomings and strengthens its comprehensive immune system.
- Strategic renewal works to address cases of weakness and frailty of the organization’s cells by reading the future and determining treatment mechanisms for all potential diseases
- Strategic renewal helps organizations redistribute their resources, organize knowledge, and prevent it from being concentrated and accumulated in a specific section rather than another.
- Strategic renewal enables medium and small-sized organizations to remain in business for a longer period .
- Strategic renewal enables smooth solutions to the pathological situations to which parts of the organization are exposed without affecting the rest of the other parts of it.
- Strategic renewal works to create a sound entrepreneurial mentality that helps reduce organizational diseases, and makes them capable of seizing the best organizational treatments and vaccines.

8- Analysis of the research sample

A- Description of the research community

The research community represented the Iraqi Ministry of Education, and a purposive sample was selected consisting of all levels of leadership (higher, middle, and lower). The size of that sample was (349), and (330) questionnaire forms valid for analysis were obtained from the aforementioned sample.

The table (1) shows this

Number of questionnaires suitable for analysis	Number of unreturned questionnaires	Number of invalid questionnaires	percentage	Number of questionnaires returned	Number of questionnaires distributed
330	11	8	97%	338	349

B- Stability

“The stability of measures is the extent to which the measure provides a stable and consistent result, and the (Cronbach's Alpha) coefficient is adopted to measure the reliability between many items, measurements, or assessments. In other words, it estimates the reliability of questionnaire responses (or questionnaire field), which is a tool or classification that is evaluated by Before the subjects that will indicate the stability of the tools, this method was originally used to measure the reliability of the psychometric tool (Bujang et al., 2018: 85). In this regard, (Sharma, 2016: 273) indicated how to interpret Cronbach alpha values to evaluate

the achieved state of stability. In a specific application environment and as shown in the table (2).

Table:2 Stability test

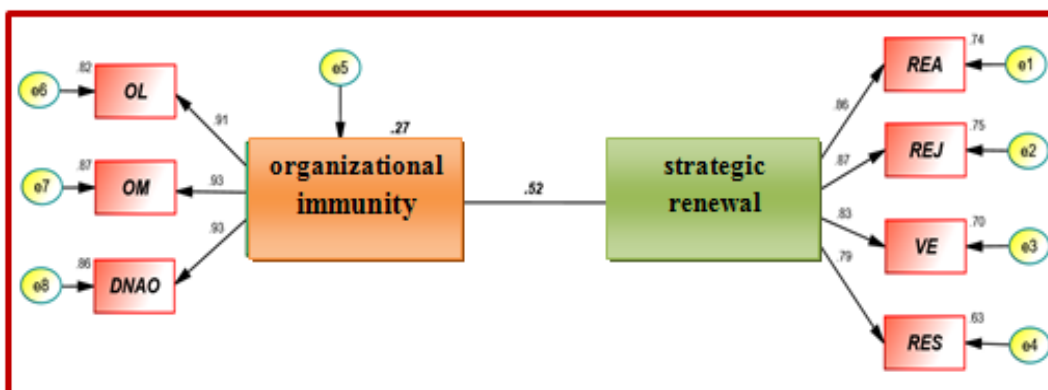
T	Cronbach alpha value	Stability level
1	$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
2	$0.9 < \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
3	$0.8 < \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
4	$0.7 < \alpha \geq 0.6$	Doubtful
5	$0.6 < \alpha \geq 0.5$	Weak
6	$0.5 < \alpha$	Unacceptable

9- Testing the study hypotheses

A-Testing the first main hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of strategic renewal in its dimensions on organizational immunity)

The figure (2) shows the presence of a significant effect of the strategic renewal variable on organizational immunity, as it is clear that the estimate value of the standard parameter (standard effect factor) reached (0.52). This means that the strategic renewal variable affects the organizational immunity variable by (52%). At the level of the Ministry of Education, the study sample, this means that the organizational immunity variable will increase by (52%) if interest in strategic Renewal increases by one unit. We also note that the value of the impact factor is a significant value because the value of the critical ratio (C.R.) shown in Table (4) amounting to (10.978) is a significant value at the level of significance (P-Value) shown in the same table. The value of the interpretation coefficient (R2) reached (0.27), which means that the changes that occur in the organizational immunity variable are due to (27%) changing the strategic Rejuvenation, and the remaining percentage (73%) is due to other variables not included in the study model. Based on what was mentioned above, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be accepted which states (there is a significant effect of strategic renewal in its dimensions on organizational immunity).

Figure (2): The effect of strategic renewal on organizational immunity



Source: Amos V.25 program

Table 3: Paths and parameters for testing the impact of strategic renewal on organizational immunity

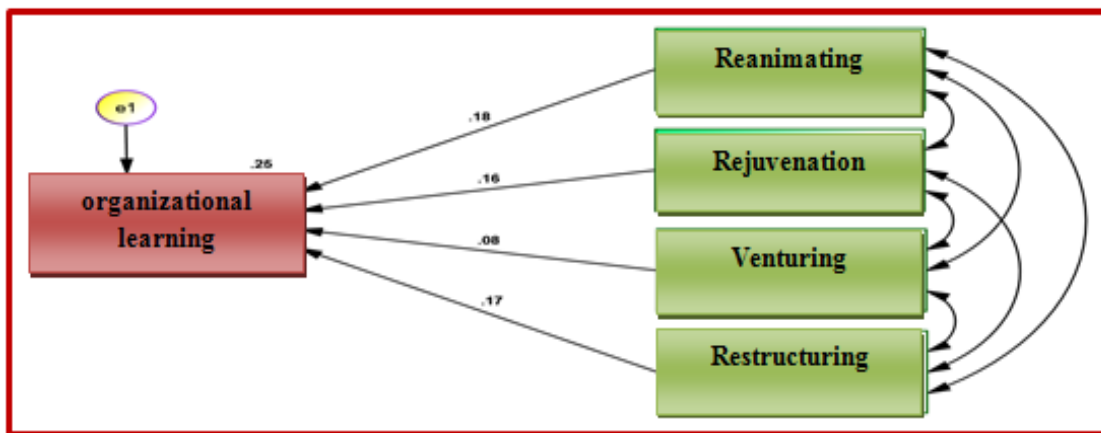
Tracks		Standard regression weights	Non-standard estimation	Standard error	Critical ratio	Moral percentage	
Organizational immunity	<---	Strategic renewal	.518	.816	.074	10.978	***
REA	<---	Strategic renewal	.862	1.106	.036	30.809	***
RES	<---	Strategic renewal	.791	.925	.039	23.423	***
REJ	<---	Strategic renewal	.866	.998	.032	31.424	***
VE	<---	Strategic renewal	.834	.971	.035	27.446	***
OL	<---	Organizational immunity	.905	.942	.024	38.626	***
OM	<---	Organizational immunity	.934	1.001	.021	47.454	***
DNAO	<---	Organizational immunity	.926	1.057	.024	44.573	***

B- Testing the first sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational learning)."

The figure (3) shows that the explanatory capacity (the value of the R2 coefficient) of the model of the effect of the strategic renewal dimensions combined on the organizational learning dimension has reached (0.25). This means that the changes that occur in the organizational learning dimension are due (25%) to changing the dimensions of strategic Rejuvenation. The remaining percentage (75%) is due to other variables not included in the study model. It is also clear that there is a positive effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the organizational learning dimension, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.18, 0.16, 0.08, 0.17) for the dimensions (Recovery (Rejuvenation), Rejuvenation, Venturing, and restructuring) respectively at the level of the Ministry of Education, the study sample. From Table (4), it is clear that the values of the critical ratio (C.R.) have recorded significant percentages at the dimensions (recovery (Rejuvenation). , Rejuvenation, and restructuring), as their values reached (2.532, 2.160, 2.754) at significant ratios reaching (0.011, 0.031, 0.006), respectively, which are morally acceptable ratios because they are less than (0.05), as for the effect of the dimension Venturing in the organizational learning dimension recorded a non-significant effect at the level of (0.236), which is a percentage that is not morally acceptable because it is higher than (0.05). This contradicts the expectations of the study. Based on what was mentioned above, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be

accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational learning).

Figure 3 : The effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the dimension of organizational learning



Source: Amos V.25 program

Table 4: Paths and parameters for testing the impact of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the dimension of organizational learning

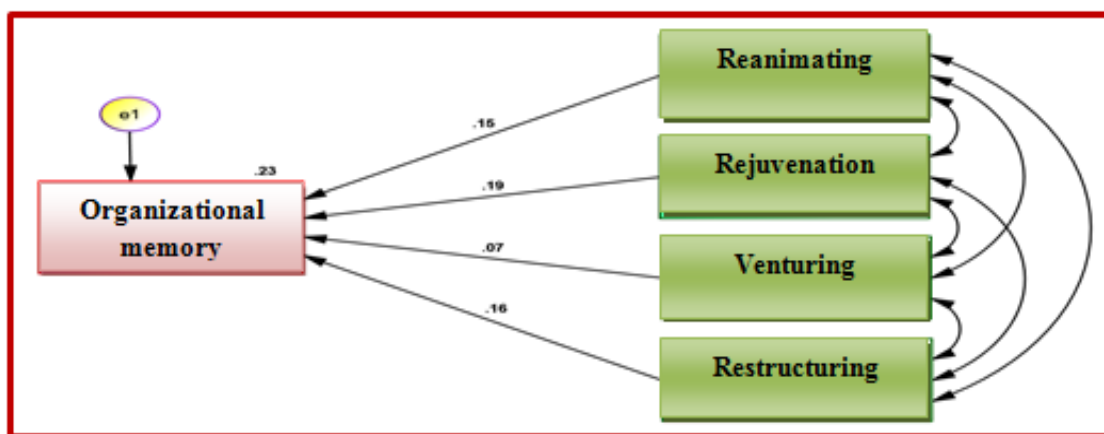
Tracks		Standard regression weights	Non-standard estimation	Standard error	Critical ratio	Moral percentage	
Organizational learning	<---	Reanimating	.180	.228	.090	2.532	.011
Organizational learning	<---	Rejuvenation	.161	.224	.104	2.160	.031
Organizational learning	<---	Venturing	.081	.112	.095	1.185	.236
Organizational learning	<---	Restructuring	.170	.236	.086	2.745	.006

C -Testing the second sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational memory)."

The figure (4) shows that the interpretability (R2 coefficient value) of the model of the effect of the strategic Renewal dimensions combined on the organizational memory dimension has reached (0.23). This means that the changes that occur in the organizational memory dimension are (23%) due to changes in the strategic renewal dimensions. The remaining percentage (77%) is due to other variables not included in the study model. It is also clear that there is a positive effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the organizational memory dimension, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.15, 0.19, 0.07, 0.16) for the dimensions (Recovery (Rejuvenation), Rejuvenation, Venturing, and restructuring)

respectively at the level of the Ministry of Education, the study sample. From Table (5), it is clear that the values of the critical ratio (C.R.) have recorded significant percentages at the dimensions (recovery (Rejuvenation) Rejuvenation, and restructuring), as their values reached (1.994, 2.440, 2.556) at significant ratios reaching (0.046, 0.015, 0.011), respectively, which are morally acceptable ratios because they are less than (0.05). As for the effect of the dimension Venturing in the organizational memory dimension recorded a non-significant effect at the level of (0.295), which is a percentage that is not morally acceptable because it is higher than (0.05). This contradicts the expectations of the study. In light of the above, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the combined dimensions of strategic renewal on organizational memory).

Figure 4: The effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the dimension of organizational memory



Source: Amos V.25 program

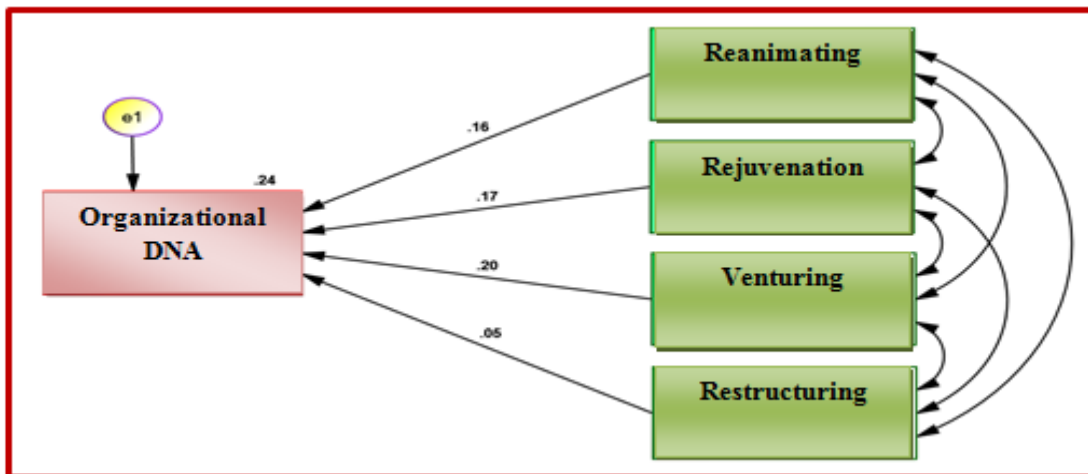
Table 5: Paths and parameters for testing the effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the organizational memory dimension

Tracks			Standard regression weights	Non-standard estimation	Standard error	Critical ratio	Moral percentage
Organizational memory	<---	Reanimating	.148	.194	.097	1.994	.046
Organizational memory	<---	Rejuvenation	.189	.273	.112	2.440	.015
Organizational memory	<---	Venturing	.073	.106	.101	1.048	.295
Organizational memory	<---	Restructuring	.157	.227	.089	2.556	.011

D- Testing the third sub-hypothesis: (There is no significant effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal combined on organizational DNA).”

The figure (5) shows that the interpretability (value of the R2 coefficient) of the model of the effect of the dimensions of strategic Renewal combined on the organizational DNA dimension has reached (0.24). This means that the changes that occur in the organizational DNA dimension (24%) of them are due to changing dimensions. Strategic renewal and the remaining percentage (76%) are due to other variables not included in the study model. It is also clear that there is a positive effect of the dimensions of strategic Renewal on the organizational DNA dimension, as we note that the value of the standard influence factor reached (0.16, 0.17, 0.20, 0.06).) for the dimensions (recovery (Rejuvenation), Rejuvenation, Venturing, and restructuring) respectively at the level of the Ministry of Education, the study sample. From Table (7), it is clear that the values of the critical ratio (C.R.) have recorded significant percentages for the dimensions (recovery). (regeneration), Rejuvenation, Venturing), as their values reached (2.172, 2.188, 2.849) at significant ratios of (0.030, 0.029, 0.004), respectively, which are morally acceptable ratios because they are less than (0.05). The effect of the (restructuring) dimension on the organizational DNA dimension was recorded as a non-significant effect at the level of (0.389), which is a percentage that is not morally acceptable because it is higher than (0.05). This contradicts the expectations of the study.” Based on what was mentioned above, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be accepted, which states (there is a significant effect of the dimensions of strategic Renewal combined in the organizational DNA).

Figure 5: The effect of the dimensions of strategic renewal on the organizational DNA dimension



Source: Amos V.25 program

Table 6 : Parameters for testing the impact of strategic renewal dimensions on the organizational DNA dimension

Tracks			Standard regression weights	Non-standard estimation	Standard error	Critical ratio	Moral percentage
Organizational DNA	<---	Reanimating	.159	.222	.102	2.172	.030
Organizational DNA	<---	Rejuvenation	.167	.258	.118	2.188	.029
Organizational DNA	<---	Venturing	.196	.302	.106	2.849	.004
Organizational DNA	<---	Restructuring	.052	.081	.094	.861	.389

10 - Discuss the results

Through the results mentioned above, the study was able to achieve the research objectives set in the research methodology, which states:

- 1-What are the organizational benefits resulting from activating the role of strategic renewal in organizational immunity in the ministry?
- 2-What is the Ministry of Education’s ability to diagnose the reality of strategic renewal and its role in organizational resilience?
- 3- To what extent does strategic renewal affect organizational immunity?

We can say that one of the most important benefits resulting from implementing the strategic renewal is the Ministry’s serious endeavor to move away from routine methods and rely on ready-made templates to respond to societal needs and follow renewable methods that keep pace with the modernity of the current stage. Diagnosing the reality of strategic renewal helps to prepare a fertile and appropriate ground for decision makers and inform them of the importance of strategic renewal at the ministry level in particular and of the educational system in general at a time when educational systems in the world are competing with each other to improve the quality of educational service through strategic renewal mechanisms. It was also shown that there was a significant effect of strategic Renewal on organizational immunity at the level of the Ministry of Education, the study sample.

The study showed a significant effect of the strategic renewal variable on organizational immunity, as it is clear that the estimated value of the standard variable (standard impact factor) reached (0.52). This means that the strategic renewal variable affects the organizational immunity variable by (52%). At the level of the Ministry of Education

11- Conclusions

- 1- The more the leadership in the Ministry of Education pays attention to the mechanisms of strategic renewal at the work level, the stronger its immunity will be and the more it will be able to respond to environmental changes.
- 2- Following strategic renewal mechanisms in the Ministry creates a significant impact among its employees in changing obsolete behaviors and giving a innovative nature to work practices.
- 3- The application of the dimensions of strategic renewal positively affects the adoption of renewable methods to build an organizational memory for the ministry that enables it to save,

document and retrieve data or information accurately and easily when it is needed, which enhances its organizational resilience.

4- Following innovative methods of work enhances its identity and institutional status and makes it have a genetic imprint that distinguishes it from other organizations.

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