



## The role of strategic planning and its relationship in the senior management program on human resources performance in the maritime industry in the port of Aqaba in Jordan

Haron Ismail al-lawama<sup>1,\*</sup>, Shadi Said Alkhazaleh<sup>2</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to ascertain how organizational practices impact human resource performance in the maritime industry, the primary data was gathered by questionnaires, and it was assessed at a 5% significant level using multiple regression statistics. The study is grounded in human resource and decision theories. It has been demonstrated that employee-focused policies, programs, and strategies enhance both worker performance and the overall growth of the company. The results of the study indicate that managers can make decisions in response to both expected and unexpected events in the marine industry by using labor laws, programs, and organizational strategies as useful and adaptable instruments. Executives and top management can gain by researching all aspects of the environment, such as consumer behavior, staff attitudes, external influences, and competitive indications. Studying every environmental scenario competitive indices or externalities, employee attitudes, customer disposition, and developing suitable policies, programs and strategies that will result in the best and most sustainable human resource performance is instructive for top-level management and/or leaders. Motivating policies and programs backed by welfare programs should be implemented to boost employee dedication, productivity, efficiency, and profitable performance particularly in the marine industry.

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### 1. Introduction.

Given that technology cannot complete a task without assistance or guidance employees are seen as essential success factors in all organizations and work environments (Ogbor, 2019). Workers have a crucial role in organizational management and performance (Salami et al., 2013) and are an absolute necessity for the expansion and advancement of the company (Edih, 2021). The development of organizational theories on motivation and associated issues (such as Maslow's hierarchy of

needs, McGregor's theory Y & X, and Herzberg's two factor theories) (Omisore & Okufu, 2014). was spurred by the urgent need to increase employee morale, commitment, and triple productivity. All organizations, whether for profit or not, are unquestionably managed by people (both employers and personnel in the current day who are supported by ICTs. In recent years, the marine sector has emerged as a stable source of income for the Jordan economy (Osadume and Edih, 2021), a catalyst for economic expansion, and a doorway to global connections and international trade (Omoke et al., 2019; Edih et al., 2022a). This has made it necessary to examine policies and programs and create plans for enhancing its (or employees') performance in a cutthroat commercial environment.

<sup>1</sup>Royal Jordanian Air Force Technical University College for Aviation Sciences “RJATC”: amman, jordan, haron588@yahoo.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2423-0746>.

<sup>2</sup>University Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia, eng.shadi.2014@yahoo.com.

\*Corresponding author: Haron Ismail al-lawama. E-mail Address: haron588@yahoo.com.

Whether at the corporate or personal level, achieving optimal performance and/or growth depends on a number of inter-related aspects. Similar to this, the performance of human resources or workers depends on certain sociocultural factors that

drive and inspire those (Heinz et al., 2003). Social and cultural Behzad et al., (2020) found that political behaviors, negotiation expertise, communication technologies, relationships with external agents, regulatory effectiveness, and organizational factors impact strategy and policy development. Additionally, due to the complexity and constant evolution of society, organizations must adapt to unforeseen changes in order to stay competitive and survive. Organizations must embrace positive strategic changes to thrive in the competitive business environment as dynamic and strategic planning models are crucial for organizations in the ever changing world of today. One could argue that the success and longevity of a business largely depends on how well its policies, programs, and strategies adapt to changes in the business environment. According to Jayawarna and Dissanayake (2019), organizational performance, growth, and development are dependent on strategic planning (SP). Research on SP has demonstrated a combination of positive and negative outcomes, with strategic models being influenced by internal and external factors that can either hinder or drive employee performance and organizational development. In their study, Jayawarna and Dissanayake (2019) categorized "strategic planning" into two separate components: strategy and planning. The origin of strategy comes from the Greek word "strategies" which refers to a leader's or manager's responsibilities, while planning involves the process of gathering resources and utilizing them efficiently to reach the organization's goals. SP is a thorough process recorded to improve efficiency within a company. Strategic planning models offer various benefits including aligning business units, evaluating performance, discovering marketing opportunities, boosting communication channels, and inspiring employees (Aldehayyat & Twaissi, 2011). These models encompass human resource strategy, ICT strategy, and financial strategy.

The organization has seen an 80% increase in business performance. Organizations with a well-developed program and strategic plan outperform enterprises that lack a documented strategic planning model. SME performance is positively linked to strategic planning or programs, involving dimensions such as environmental scanning, business vision, formal strategy plan, evaluation and control, information sources, strategy implementation incentives, employee participation, and time horizons (Sandra et al., 2014; Wijetunge and Pushpakumari, 2014). In the study by Wijetunge and PushpaKumari (2014), indicators utilized to represent the effects of strategic planning include vision, mission, goals and objectives, internal and external assessments, strategy development, execution, monitoring, and evaluation, with business or organizational success evaluated through yearly revenue and earnings, employee count, market participation, and business investments.

Organizational theory focuses on capabilities and strategic planning processes, whereas contingency theory promotes the idea that there is no single best way to organize and lead an organization. This implies that the organization's actions are dependent on both internal and external factors. Effective strategic planning, program execution, and organizational success rely on a combination of internal and external factors (Jayawarna and Dissanayake, 2019; Mohamed, 2010). Organizational per-

formance assessment can also be categorized into short-term and long-term performance evaluation. The long-term plan impacts financial performance, while growth in size and assets is shaped by strategic planning methods, policies, and programs (Jayawarna and Dissanayake, 2019, citing Baker and Thompson, 1986; Sheehan, 1975). Other research has found a positive correlation between strategic planning and financial results. Some strategic planning tools are a mission statement, competitor analysis, long-term goals, annual goals, short-term action plans, and continuous evaluation.

## 2. Literature Review.

### 2.1. Conceptual Review.

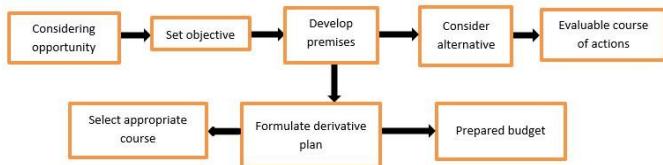
Under this section, a discourse on strategy/strategic planning model and the nexus connecting policy, programmer, strategic planning model and human resource performance, the maritime industry in Jordan were examined.

#### 2.1.1. Critical discourse on Strategy and Strategic Planning Process.

Strategy planning process (SPP) is a valuable resource available to senior management and leaders providing a framework for developing strategies. SPP is crucial for effective organization management and offers guidance for managers/leaders, as stated by Paris in 2003. Planning, policy, program, and strategic plan all look towards the future and create practical plans of action, essential for decision-making in all types of organizations, whether for profit (Shushing, et al., 2018). Strategic planning is essential for strategic management as it aids in comprehending planning methods, corporate culture, decision-making processes, organizational structure, and performance (Mohammad and John, 2012). Strategy refers to the product, processes, and techniques determined during strategic planning to achieve the company's desired goals or objectives. Many different factors impact the development of the Strategic Planning Model (SPM), leading organizations to create their own unique planning model. Kotler and Murphy created the SPP model, which consists of environmental analysis, resource analysis, goal formulation, strategy formulation, organization design, and system design. the SPP model created by the Research Foundation at the State University of New York consisted of seven coordinated steps: gathering and analyzing information, identifying critical issues/problems, creating a strategic vision, reviewing the mission statement, establishing strategic goals, devising strategies for each goal, and developing yearly objectives. The Lerner SPP model outlines strategic planning with key elements such as mission/vision, strategic issues (including gaps analysis, benchmarking, environmental scanning, and SWOT analysis), intended/emergent strategies, continuous strategic programming, and strategic learning/thinking. Approaches created a seemingly basic SPP model consisting of envisioning, social situational analysis, strategy formulation, taking action, evaluation, and sustenance. Therefore, effective strategic planning requires a detailed, ever-changing, and time-consuming approach that cannot succeed without a strong, considered, and achievable future strategy (Shushing et al., 2018).

Strategic planning serves as a means of both internal and external communication (Jarzkowski, 2010) and establishes the fundamental long-term goals and objectives of a business (Barbosa and Romeo, 2016). It involves defining goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve the mission and vision (Strickland, 2003) and serves as a tool to facilitate communication among employees in the workplace (Spee and Jarzkowski, 2011). The activity of formulating plans and giving guidance for decision-making is called strategic planning (Kathleen et al., 2023). In higher education institutions, strategic planning plays a crucial role by providing stakeholders with the chance to reach consensus and develop dedication (Allison and Kaye, 2005; Kathleen et al., 2022). SP is a structured procedure that recognizes and enhances the best outcomes (Rowley and Sherman, 2001) and serves as a leadership instrument for providing guidance (Kathleen, et al., 2022). According to Bryson (2011), strategic planning is viewed as a concentrated, structured, and essential process for making decisions that influences the organization's culture. The tactics of a company or organization are a reflection of its goals and values. The process of planning involves specific actions like identifying chances, establishing goals, creating assumptions, exploring different options, assessing these options, choosing the best course of action, designing backup plans, and creating a budget.

Figure 1: The Planning Process.



Source: Authors.

According to Heinz et al. (2011), effective management of an enterprise requires the implementation of strategies and policies. Plans of action known as tactics are implemented to carry out strategies. Strategies, plans, and regulations are created to guide all aspects of organizational development, including financial management, HR, public relations, product and service promotion, and marketing in general. The strategic planning process (SPP) plays a key role in decision-making within the organization. Ogbor (2019) defines strategy as a planned approach selected to reach organizational goals, build customer confidence, achieve a competitive edge, and secure a market position, among other considerations. Hence, Strategy can be defined as a cohesive and holistic plan, flexible with a forward-looking view typically developed by senior leadership. Attempted to differentiate policy from strategy. He believes that strategy involves planning actions, whereas policy is based on principles. Strategy tends to be more flexible than policy, which is often standardized. Policy consists of standard rules and regulations that form the foundation for everyday activities. Policies are driven by internal factors, while strategies are driven by external factors. Both policies and strategies are created by senior management.

### 2.1.2. The Connection between Policy, Program and Strategy.

According to Heinz et al., (2011), planning is defined as the process of choosing goals, objectives, and strategies to accomplish them. Planning involves making decisions, selecting a plan of action from various options. The plans were categorized by the authors as mission/purpose, objectives/goals, strategies, policies, procedures, rules, programs, and budgets. The trio ideas - policy, program, and strategy are methods of planning or ways to plan. Policy, program, and strategy are interconnected in their utilization and implementation. There might be a slight distinction, but it is aimed at reaching the organization's target objectives and goals. Policy is a strategy that illustrates a broad statement or comprehension.

### ***The Maritime Industry in Jordan.***

The maritime sector involves the transportation of goods and people by water and the provision of services that support maritime operations. The sector is primarily associated with waterborne transportation, as opposed to land and air transportation. The sector mainly uses large vessels such as container ships, oil tankers, cruise ships, and passenger ferries, as well as smaller boats for fishing trips. Maritime transport is largely associated with ports and their activities such as loading and unloading cargo at docks and marinas. Human Resource Management, etc.). The sector is divided into categories including cruises, ferries, marine activities, ports, cargo shipping, marine vessels, fishing, environmental concerns, etc. The most valuable sectors are shipping, ports, shipbuilding, marine equipment supply, marine engineering, offshore wind energy, and marine research and development (MRD). Eddie et al. (2022b) suggest that the maritime industry is partly dependent on seaports and is subject to global laws such as treaties and conventions. Ports are seen as the gateway to global trade, economic development, and global connectivity (Inah and Elia, 2018). Thus, the maritime industry can be understood as including shipping and port activities. Elim (2008) lists the various functions carried out in ports such as dry docking, coastal shipping services, tugboat services, construction of terminal and quay infrastructure, marine construction and manufacturing. Additional activities include barge and houseboat operations, dredging services, tourism, pilotage, towing and fuel provision for mooring vessels (Edeh et al., 2022b; Beritumoud, 2014). The maritime industry in Jordan is supervised and managed by the Aqaba Ports Authority in Jordan and the Maritime Administration and Safety Agency. It aims to ensure efficient service delivery and growth. It is crystal clear that the various business segments in the maritime sectors are carried out by the employers and employees (human resource) who are rather indispensable to proper functioning of the industry (Edih, 2021; Omisore and Okufu, 2014). Therefore, to enhance smooth running, and improve organization and performance, the need to formulate policies and strategies (in recruitment, selection, training, placement, motivation, rewards, productivity, etc) is very important in the face of a dynamic and competitive business environment.

### **Previous studies:**

#### **A review was conducted on the studies mentioned earlier.**

Strategic planning in Nasratullah (2022) was evaluated using measures like mission and vision statements, SWOT analysis, cooperation agreements, R&D, and database. Performance was assessed based on factors including inclination to cooperation, experience exchange, rewards, market share, profit, growth and innovation. The research confirms the beneficial impact on performance. Creating and implementing strategic plans leads to organizational growth (Hani, 2021; Okolocha, 2020), with a strong link between innovation and strategic objectives (Donkor et al., 2018; Efendioglu and Karabulut, 2010; Mohamed, 2010), as well as strategic human resource planning impacting performance (Murriithi et al., 2018). A strong link between strategic planning and innovation exists, as fostering an innovative culture is crucial for developing new products, solving problems in new ways, gaining a competitive edge, and enhancing performance.

Gumel (2019) used a qualitative method to investigate how strategic planning affects the growth of small businesses. The findings did not show a clear link between planning and growth, but suggested that the planning process and communication can enhance customer loyalty, increase sales, and foster business growth. According to Gumel (2019), strategic planning impacts the financial performance of small businesses, as well as human resource recruitment and management (Davila and Foster, 2007), and also helps in securing venture capital (Rue and Ibrahim, as cited in Gumel, 2019).

The following previous studies were reviewed; A review was conducted on the studies mentioned earlier. Strategic planning in Nasratullah (2022) was evaluated using measures like mission and vision statements, SWOT analysis, cooperation agreements, R&D, and database. Performance was assessed based on factors including inclination to cooperation, experience exchange, rewards, market share, profit, growth and innovation. The research confirms the beneficial impact on performance. Creating and implementing strategic plans leads to organizational growth (Hani, 2021; Okolocha, 2020), with a strong link between innovation and strategic objectives (Donkor et al., 2018; Efendioglu and Karabulut, 2010; Mohamed, 2010), as well as strategic human resource planning impacting performance (Murriithi et al., 2018). A strong link between strategic planning and innovation exists, as fostering an innovative culture is crucial for developing new products, solving problems in new ways, gaining a competitive edge, and enhancing performance. Gumel (2019) used a qualitative method to investigate how strategic planning affects the growth of small businesses. The findings did not show a clear link between planning and growth, but suggested that the planning process and communication can enhance customer loyalty, increase sales, and foster business growth. According to Gumel (2019), strategic planning impacts the financial performance of small businesses, as well as human resource recruitment and management (Davila and Foster, 2007), and also helps in securing venture capital (Rue and Ibrahim, as cited in Gumel, 2019).

Ogonji (2014) suggests that the strategic planning model is customized to suit the specific requirements of each organization, showing that SPM differs between different firms. Strategic planning is an essential tool in organizational management. It assists in recognizing strengths and weaknesses and offers a guide for leaders. The optimization of goals and purposes Several organizations are responding to the big question of "opportunities and threats" through three levels of strategic plans - organizational, pragmatic and Previous studies operational strategies (Joe, 2015). Other strategic planning dimensions include, conventional, issues-based, organic, real-time, and alignment models. Each model is designed to fit the situational problem, mission and vision, objectives of the organization. Effective application of strategies assist in identifying long-term goals, organize productive workforce, allocate scarce resources, necessitates growth and monitors Multiple entities are addressing the significant issue of "opportunities and threats" by utilizing three tiers of strategic plans - organizational, practical, and operational strategies (Joe, 2015). Additional dimensions of strategic planning consist of conventional, issue-oriented, organic, immediate, and alignment models. Every model is created to align with the specific issue, purpose, and goals of the organization. The successful use of strategies helps in determining long-term objectives, managing a productive team, distributing limited resources, promoting growth, and monitoring performance (Odongo and Dutche, 2015). Firms are required to develop appropriate strategies in order to stay competitive and survive in the market due to technological progress (Jovica et al., 2016; Vargo and Servile, 2011). Kingsley (2018) explains that policy is a fundamental tool in management that is utilized to improve the quality of work done by employees, increase engagement, and improve the overall administration of a business. Some say that employees are more involved and efficient when they participate in creating policies. Workers' motivation is increased by their involvement in shaping company policies, leading to a competitive edge (Kingsley, 2018, citing Fopohunda, 2013; Lasrado, et al., 2016). The involvement of employees in policy development has resulted in improved work-life balance and increased performance (Maxwell, 2005; Walter, 2015, as cited in Kingsley, 2018). Worker commitment is essential for the effective implementation of organizational policies (Danaei-far et al., 2016). It is widely accepted that change is a significant aspect of human life (Lucie, 2013), and policy change refers to the gradual alteration of current systems and/or in other words, advancements (Bennett and Howlett, 1992, as cited in Lucie, 2013). Various theories, including path dependence, advocacy coalition framework, policy learning diffusion, punctuated equilibrium, institutional change, multi-level governance, policy networks, and others, were utilized to examine policy and policy change. Policy has emerged as a fundamental instrument.

### **Theoretical Studies.**

The study relied on Decision and Human Resource-Based Theories because of their relevance to planning or decision making process towards improving organizational performance and sustenance.

### Decision Theory.

Decision making has become one of the interdisciplinary sciences (Steve, 1990). According to the designation of Suppes (1961 as cited in Steve, 1990), the major sciences involve in decision theory (i.e., then) on the basis of normative and descriptive theories are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: The decision sciences.

	Individual designs	Group decisions
Normative theory	Classical economics statistics decision theory moral philosophy	Game theory welfare economics political theory
Descriptive theory	Experimental decision learning theory survey studies of voting behaviors	Social psychology political sciences

Source: Suppes 1961 (cited in Steve, 1990, P.5).

Decision theory focuses on determining the best course of action from a set of options available. It involves a methodical and organized way of making decisions. Decisions can be effective when grounded in logic, viable options, and numerical evaluation, but may be problematic when the opposite occurs. Simply put, decision theory focuses on decisions and how they are made (Steve, 2005). There are various methods to reach a conclusion or formulate theories concerning decisions. Individuals, private organizations, and government institutions make decisions every day. The decision making process is categorized into normative and descriptive methods. The theory of decision-making based on norms or rationality is called normative theory, while descriptive theory focuses on how decisions are actually made. There are conditions or steps or elements for making rational decisions or standards of rational behavior. Decision theory offers tools, strategies, and evaluation for managers and/or leaders to enhance business expansion, employees' top performance, and increase profits (Steve, 2005). Dewey (1978, as cited in Steve, 2005) suggests that problems can be solved by first identifying the felt difficulty, defining the characteristics of the difficulty, proposing possible solutions, assessing the solutions, and conducting additional observation and experimentation before making a decision. Simon's work (Steve, 2005) adapted these procedures into three primary phases: identifying opportunities for decision-making, considering possible actions, and selecting a course of action. The three phases are known as the intelligence stage, design stage, and choice stage. Brim et al. (1962) outlines a five-step decision-making process: pinpoint the problem, gather pertinent information, etc.

### 2.2. Human Resource Based Theory.

The central focus of the human resource-based theory is the crucial role of human capital in carrying out organizational

functions (Charlotte and Jan de, 1999). The workforce is the organization's most important asset, emphasizing the significance of effective human resource management for overall success (Eromafuru, 2016). Human resource management practices are highly relevant in the recruitment, education, and growth of the workforce within a company. Certain businesses have made investments in technology to increase the efficiency of their employees, whereas others have implemented motivational programs to improve job satisfaction and overall performance. HRB theory highlights the significance of different stakeholders in the "dominant coalition" within an organization such as employers, employees, shareholders, customers, competitors, government, etc. The dominant coalition's values and attitudes determine the long-term goals and methods of worker management. The HRB theory takes into account the limitations (such as products, organization, and social aspects) that restrict the ability to make changes (Charlotte and Jan de, 1999). Paauwe (1998) created a theoretical framework outlining the allocation of human resources, the impact of various factors on their deployment, and the potential results. Walker (1978) found a connection between human resource planning and strategic planning and Wright et al., (2001) acknowledged the alignment between strategies and strategic human resources management (SHRM). Devana et al. (1984) investigated the relationship between business strategy and performance, while Wright et al. (2001) determined that the Resource Based View (RBV) is crucial for shaping HR practices. Lado and Wilson (1994) recommend that companies utilize human resource management strategies to improve their competitive edge.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of the variables.

constructs	BPY	OPM	SPM	HRP
BYP	1.0000			
OPM	0.4564	1.0000		
SPM	0.5463	0.4321	1.0000	
HRP	0.5213	0.6321	0.4333	1.0000

Source: Authors, SPSS compilation, 2023.  $P < 0.01$ .

The correlation analysis of variables reveals a positive correlation among the variables used. This shows that, business policy (bpy) has a positive association with organizational programme (opm) and strategic planning model (spm) and human resource performance (hrp), ( $r = 0.4564$ ,  $0.5463$ , &  $0.5213$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) respectively, and human resource performance (hrp) has a positive relationship with bpy, opm, and spm ( $r = 0.5213$ ,  $0.6321$  &  $0.4333$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) respectively.

Table 3: Regression's analysis of the variables.

source	ss	df	ms	N of obs=344	
<b>Moodle 1</b>	133.6578	4	47.1256	<b>F(4.432)=223.20</b>	
<b>residual</b>	53.8703	245	0.3145	<b>Prob</b>	
<b>Total</b>	196.4447	246	0.876	<b>R-Squared=07432</b>	
				<b>Root Ms=0.6547</b>	
<b>Cad</b>	<b>Coef</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>ms</b>	<b>P/t</b>	<b>96% conf</b>
<b>Bpy</b>	0.1200	0.0432	2.86	0.004	0.0445
<b>Opm</b>	0.1266	0.0445	3.76	0.001	0.0532
<b>Spm</b>	0.6543	0.3786	16.45	0.000	0.6433
<b>-cons</b>	0.2921	0.1518	1.67	0.054	0.0060
					0.5822

Source: Authors, SPSS compilation, 2024.

### 2.3. Discussions of Findings.

The findings in Table 4 show how each independent variable contributes to the single dependent variable. In terms of statistics, the impact of business policy on human resource performance is both positive and significant (Coef. = 0.11, p = 0.005<0.05); has a positive and significant impact on (Coef. =0.1266, p= 0.001< 0.05); and demonstrates a positive and significant effect on performance (Coef.= 0.6543, p=0.000<0.05). It can be concluded that policies, programs, and strategic planning models have an impact on human resource performance in Jordan's maritime sector. The independent variables have p-values below 0.05 (5% significance level), leading to the decision to reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative. Additionally, the model's R-squared value is 0.7289, signifying that 72.89% of the variance in human resource performance can be attributed to the organization's top-level management strategies, programs, and strategic planning model.

### Previous research supports these results.

#### Studies on Policy versus Performance.

Consequently, there is a strong and beneficial relationship between business strategies and performance, as shown by Dannaifar et al. (2016) and Jayawarna and Dissanayake (2019), and strategies improve competitiveness, according to Kingsley (2018) and Sunday and Idodo (2016). Research comparing Organizational program with Human Resource development has been conducted. Some research indicates that organizational programs impact employee performance. Training programs, including study leave can enhance workers' morale, skills, and abilities, leading to better performance according to Sandra et al. (2014) and Wije-tunge and PushpaKumari (2014). Comparison between strategic planning model and corporate culture on performance. Research conducted by Nasratullah (2022), Okolocha (2020), and Khan and Khalique (2014) all indicate that strategic planning models or strategies have a beneficial impact on performance, resource allocation efficiency, and cor-

porate culture, according to Mohamed and John (2012). A well-coordinated recruitment plan or policy strategically brings in skilled employees.

### Conclusion and Recommendations.

In theory, the connection between policy, program, and strategy was analyzed, while in practice, the specific impacts of these three concepts on human resource performance were evaluated. The research confirms the complex relationship between the three abstract variables when it comes to planning or the planning process. However, they belong to distinct planning categories within the organization. Furthermore, it is essential for senior management to create suitable policies, initiatives, and strategic plans to promote the growth and advancement of the organization. It is further stated that business policies, programs, and strategies should not remain fixed as society is constantly changing, and change is the only consistent element in the global economy. The competitiveness and sustainability of modern enterprises significantly rely on effective and strong yet flexible business policies, programs, and strategies. Different institutions have varying policies, programmers, and strategies driven by their overarching policy, mission, and vision statements. Acknowledging the vital importance of the human element in the success of an organization goes beyond measure, as supported by various theories and past research. Certainly, the policies, programs, or strategies created by senior management are put into action by the organization's employees. It is necessary for top management to create worker-centric policies, programs, and strategies. Meanwhile, empirical findings demonstrated that business strategies, Organizational initiatives and strategic planning frameworks have a beneficial and important impact on employee commitment, motivation, and performance within the maritime sector. Because policies, programs, and strategies.

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