

# Similarities between Strategic Foresight and Public Policy Making among UAE and Finland

Fatma Ahmed Lari, Juzaimi Bin Nasuredin, Kamilah Binti Ahmad

**Abstract**— *This research is a comparison between UAE and Finland strategic foresight and the process of public policy making. This study employ the use of a questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data for this study. The main respondents in this research are the management staffs of government organizations in UAE and Finland. The findings revealed that, strategic foresight in UAE is mostly characterized by integrating values into future plans, early adoption of new trends, maintaining control when unrealistic plans, giving up present benefit for future rewards and starting of project today to address future. On the other hand, strategic foresights in Finland are shown to be more focused on early adoption of new trend, maintaining control during the occurrence of unrealistic plans, integration of values into future plans, seeing possibilities in all situations, and understanding what is coming.*

**Keywords:** *Strategic Foresight, Public Policy, UAE, Finland, Early Adoption, Unrealistic Plans, Integration of Values*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The UAE faces many challenges at various levels including political, economic and social agenda. At the political level, there are rapid regional changes in addition to the war on terror, at the economic level, there is a drop-in oil prices and increased competition to attract foreign investment, at the social level, there are demographic changes at the population level and an increase in the number of foreign residents from different cultures. These accelerating challenges are putting pressure on the policy maker because these politicians must take into account what may happen in the near and distant future, which imposes on the policy maker the need to Foresight the future not only for long-term decisions but also for the short-term decisions. This is because foresight is defined as the participatory process of creating shared long-term visions to inform short-term decision-making processes. (The European Foresight Monitoring Network) (Calof et al., 2012). All countries must develop a foresight strategy in order to maintain their international standing and prospects for future development.

According to UAE future strategy (Gossé et al., 2014) "State of the Future", foresight is one of the implementation mechanisms for establish the strategy, as it cited "Enhance the future foresight in the organization as a daily work style", and it was a main tool to be use in 7 future priority

sectors, Government & Services, Education, Health, Sustainable Social Development, International Political Relations & Security, Food & Water Security, and Cyber Security (<https://www.uaefutureforesight.ae/>). In Government Excellence System guide it was clear that Capabilities of future thinking are in the on top of concerns of UAE government, where it refers to the present criterion. Strategic foresight is of great benefits in these two countries because of their in ability in implementing their public policies especially in security and economic development. Strategic foresight would help in public policy that affects directly the economic wellbeing of these countries.

In this study, Finland is selected as a reference case to study the influence of strategic foresight on public procedurecreation in UAE government ministries, because of the important similarity between them. Both small in size and population compared to their regional surroundings, but both are distinguished from it by the high level of education and the advanced technological structure, which make both face the same challenges and have the same financial and technological opportunities to implement strategic foresight.

However, among the problems that forced this study are the future crimes in these countries such as cyber security. Foresight teams must consider how to address potential problems, from environmental hazards to economic slowdowns. Their goal is also to identify opportunities for policy development. In the case of environmental hazards, the issue of the horizon they need to work on varies from issue to issue, where one or both generations may be appropriate, for economic conditions, for 1–5 years with any reasonable degree of certainty. In the business context, Michael Porter argued: Strategic positions should have a horizon of a decade or more, not a single planning cycle (1996).

Foresight helps to shift the focus of bureaucrats and politicians to emerging risks and opportunities, and to highlight the unintended consequences of their proposals. This is especially important as the risks to our society become more complex. As Ulrich Beck (1992) points out, now that so many risks are ubiquitous, global and increasingly invisible, the ability of our existing structures to address them can be overstated. The challenge for policymakers is to engage in an active exploration of risk

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environments (Giddens 1998) to effectively manage these new risks.

Similarly, many issues faced strategic foresight in many countries like UAE and Finland, these include improperly implementation and many government policies affect the strategic foresight implementation in UAE and Finland. This makes it very difficult for many people to accept and abide by the rules enacted through strategic foresight towards public policy. We take police department in UAE with the aim of investigating their strategic foresight with respects to cyber security in UAE. This research will focus on public policy with respect to technological implication.

Hence, this study intend to examine the relationships between UAE strategic foresight and the process of public policy making in government ministries.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic foresight is a growing practice of corporate foresight in large corporations. Its use is increasing in both government and non-profit organizations. Strategic foresight can be practiced at multiple levels, including: personal, organizational, and social. However, based on which study are the main three steps in developing the most recent foresight? Actions:

The term "foresight" was first coined by farsighted author HG in a BBC broadcast in 1932. Wells mentioned that he called for the establishment of "professors of disciplines and foresight." This makes this term one of the oldest in the field of futures studies.

It's not about foresight, it's about showing the entire spectrum of future alternatives, and asking "what if" for each alternative. It is a systematic process to assess the likelihood of each alternative reality and to be comprehensive and grounded about the options available in different contexts. Principles of foresight are embedded in strategic intelligence (Kuosa, 2014). An appraisal usually does not give way to expectations or "prediction" of probability, but a reference is always a statement of probability. Two features that are linked to assessment are accuracy and accuracy. Prophecies are very accurate, but very inaccurate. Future directions can be self-fulfillment or even self-defeating. Assessing the presence of a condition or technology may change that situation or technology more, referred to as self-fulfillment (Kuosa, 2014).

Strategic foresight: Customer-driven projects with well-defined goals. Its goal is to produce strategically viable policy alternatives for government or private decision-makers who want to stay in power and win political, military or economic wars. It relies on strategic analysis, but adds a long-term future aspect to it. Strategic foresight creates strategic and often confidential alternatives, and they can be created in collaboration with experts and decision-makers, or by external experts. The strategic foresight process involves the foresight and desk work foresight when needed.

Hines and Bishops (2006) describe strategic foresight as "the ability to create a variety of quality forward-looking and apply insights that are emerging in institutionally useful ways; For example, identifying negative situations, guiding policy, shaping strategy; To explore new markets, products and services. "Strategic foresight operates in strategic thinking (alternatives and what-if questions) and strategic

planning (breaking down objectives into several phases of strategic thinking), the two main modes of strategic work defined by Mintzberg (1994).

It can also work in strategic analysis and market intelligence, providing alternatives that rely on long-term overview. Market Intelligence and Strategic Analysis both refer to the related market trends, drivers and competitors, competitive environments and continuous analysis of new business opportunities, while the first focuses on comprehensive knowledge gathering and business opportunity intelligence and secondly strategic evaluation options in dynamic markets.

In its duties, foresight plays a corrective role (fixing errors, system failures and policy lock-ins), interrupting role (emphasizing on wildcards, crisis or progress events that can completely change current events) and a creative role (developing new networks and structures) Growing conditions Accelerate) (Schoen et al., 2011).

### III. FORESIGHT AND POLICY MAKING

Impart: "data strategy" alludes to earlier information or "insight" as the elements of progress, future difficulties, dangers and openings, the qualities and shortcomings of the present framework, dreams and potential alternatives for change. Its crucial to improve the information base for intuition and structuring strategy. Likewise, a more extensive scope of new thoughts that emerge from the innovative procedure that enacts a various scope of information assets is a significant viewpoint to advise. Data framework "has for some time been viewed as the primary capacity of premonition and its outcomes have generally been blended into authentic items, for example, reports. These items may incorporate direct approach suggestions, for example, need records and activity plans, however may likewise incorporate data that may add to arrangement structure, for example, future improvements, guides toward various prospects, arrangements of basic advances, or dreams of wanted fates. Encouraging Policy Implementation: Everyone realizes that the elements of progress in the financial structure are getting progressively intricate. The changing examples of information creation and development, for example, the expanding dissemination of information creation and the expanding decent variety of information assets. In equal, developing new types of administration, for example, European reconciliation (Kuhlman 2001) and staggered administration driven by different political difficulties, incorporating dynamic by and large (Smits 2001), are basic. Therefore, the conventional straight model of strategy configuration is never again satisfactory as a procedure that includes a progression of steps, for example, conceptualization, usage, assessment and adjustment to begin another cycle. Arrangement and key advancement are progressively being depicted as a persistent reflexive learning process. Right now, specialists have underscored the requirement for "foundational gear" (Smits and Kuhlmann 2004) to supplement conventional guiding frameworks.



Fundamental instruments center around the mix, correspondence and cooperation between social entertainers in a specific field of progress or change. They give stages to learning and experimentation and invigorate the development of normal dreams. What's more, they serve to build up the particular "foundation" of "disseminated knowledge" (Kuhlmann 2001), which can be gotten to by different partner gatherings, including policymakers, to suit their requirements. The idea of foundational gadgets was first evolved with regards to an advancement procedure where the making of interconnections and systems turned into its own objective. Rather than focusing on explicit parts of the framework, foundational instruments center around by and large framework proficiency by advancing associations among science and innovation entertainers, clients and makers of new items and administrations (Smits 2001), and improving the nature of associations among components and advancements. Procedure. Hence, the general coordination and stream of information over the advancement framework are upgraded (Webster 2002); A group of specialized arrangements or openings known to each budgetary entertainer is extended (Smith 2000) and the framework's ability for self-association improves. In any case, this contention is plainly legitimate for some other approach areas, for example, ecological arrangement (Kerkhoff and Wickzorek 2005).

#### IV. PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

According to Simon (1997), theories of boundary rationality can be derived from Subjective Expected Utility (SEU) theories by selecting one or more of a set of fixed alternatives (SEU) umphs to choose from, generating known probability distributions or maximizing utility function and alternatives Ume the process, assess And satisfactory knowledge of probability and hincani idhanalanu enter or do not represent a strategy to look for strategies to deal with uncertainty (Simon, 1997).

Instrumentalism or Mudling by Model: Instrumentalism is an official title known as the science of mudling, which suggests that one should not move too far from the goal and try this or that little trick with no great plan or sense. The ultimate purpose (Etzioni, 2001). The term was coined by mudling. The other problem highlighted by Lindblom (1982) is that the concept of instrument is widely used in policy analysis, but upon closer inspection, he has identified three meanings:

A. Simple incremental analysis: Analysis is limited to the consideration of alternative approaches, all of which differ from the actual state.

B. Disassemble the instrument: a simplified associative analysis with only one simplified and focused correlation analysis.

C. Strategic analysis: limited to any set of calculated or thoughtfully chosen strategies to simplify complex policy issues.

Extending from the decisive realm to the public policy sphere, instrumentalism means that policy choice at a particular time is a marginal adjustment from the previous policy choice (Jones & Baumgartner, 2005).

Anderson (2006) defines public policy as "the approach adopted by a government agency to address the problem

faced by society or particular groups of people," and more specific ones such as Birklands (2005). A statement of what to do or not to do, such as a combination of these ". He argues that "the absence of such statements may also be an implicit statement of policy" (Birkland, 2005).

Similarly, Stone (2008) defines policy as a rational endeavor to achieve goals, and about communities trying to achieve something as public policy societies. The primary objectives, in her opinion, are trade in equity, capacity, security, freedom and society, among these goals.

#### V. METHODOLOGY

This study employ the use of a questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data for this study. The main respondents in this research are the management staffs of government organizations in UAE and Finland because of the role they play in strategic foresight implementations. This research is a comparison between UAE and Finland strategic foresight and the process of public policy making.

The statistical approach to this study stands to be structural equation modelling (SEM) with AMOS and factors loading with statistical package for the social sciences. The data collected are analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and SmartPLS versions in testing the structural development of the construct. This study implement a series of confirmatory analysis to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model before testing the structural model. Prior to the main data analyses, preliminary data screening and transformation which involved, missing value analysis, descriptive statistics and normality test of the data were conducted in order to ensure that the data meets the requirements for the chosen multivariate data analysis (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010; Pallant, 2014).

#### VI. FINDINGS

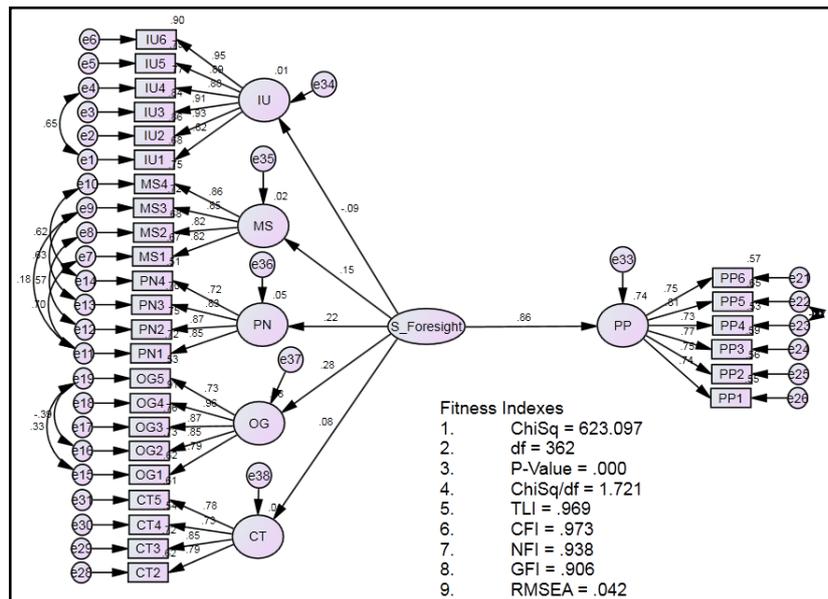
The quantitative analyses involved analysis of questionnaire administration to account for valid returned questionnaires, demographic information to ascertain the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and inferential analysis of the impact/relationship between strategic foresight and public policy using Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) to test the hypotheses of the research.

Prior to the main data analyses, preliminary data screening and transformation which involved, missing value analysis, descriptive statistics and normality test of the data were conducted in order to ensure that the data meets the requirements for the chosen multivariate data analysis (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010; Pallant, 2014).

Upon satisfying the requirement for measurement model validity, the next stage in the SEM analysis involved the evaluation of the structural equation model in order to determine the causal relationship between the exogenous and the endogenous constructs. Using the AMOS graphics the structural relationship between the constructs in the research framework was evaluated in line with the working hypotheses outlined.



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**Figure 1: Structural model of the research constructs**

The result showed that Information Use (IU) is negatively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=-.09$ ;  $CR=-.960$ ;  $p=.337$ ). The results did not support hypothesis Ha1 as the respondents differed in their opinions about the relationship between Information Use (IU) and strategic foresight. The results imply that Information Use (IU) in both UAE and Finland doesn't influence strategic foresight.

Method Sophistication (MS) is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.150$ ;  $CR= 1.979$ ;  $p=.272$ ). This means that Method Sophistication (MS) positively influence strategic foresight in both UAE and Finland public sector.

People Network (PN) is positively related with Strategic foresights ( $\beta=.219$ ;  $CR= 2.771$ ;  $p=.038$ ). This means that People Network (PN) positively influence strategic foresight in both UAE and Finland public sector.

Model of Organisation (OG) is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.283$ ;  $CR= 3.779$ ;  $p=.031$ ). This means that Model of Organisation (OG) positively influence strategic foresight in both UAE and Finland public sector. Culture (CT) is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.078$ ;  $CR= 1.098$ ;  $p=.272$ ). This means that

Culture (CT) positively influence strategic foresight in both UAE and Finland public sector.

Similarly, the relationship between Strategic Foresight and Public Policy is ( $\beta=.861$ ;  $CR= 1.468$ ;  $p=.142$ ). This means that Strategic Foresight positively moderate the relationship between Strategic foresights dimensions in both UAE and Finland public sector. The result also shows that Strategic Foresights explained about 74% of public policy.

Table 1 presented the extract from Figure 1 showing the standardized regression coefficients between PP and IU, MS, PN, OG and CT. The result showed that IU is negatively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=-.09$ ;  $CR=-.960$ ;  $p=.337$ ), CT is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.078$ ;  $CR= 1.098$ ;  $p=.272$ ), MS is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.150$ ;  $CR= 1.979$ ;  $p=.272$ ), OG is positively related with Strategic Foresights ( $\beta=.283$ ;  $CR= 3.779$ ;  $p=.031$ ) and PN is positively related with Strategic foresights ( $\beta=.219$ ;  $CR= 2.771$ ;  $p=.038$ ). Similarly, the figure shows the relationship between Strategic Foresight and Public Policy ( $\beta=.861$ ;  $CR= 1.468$ ;  $p=.142$ ). The result shows that Strategic Foresights explained about 74 percent of public policy.

**Table 1: Standardized regression weight of the path relationship**

Path relationship	Estimate	S.E	C.R.	P-value	R <sup>2</sup>
PP ← S_Foresights	.86	8.508	1.025	.305	.74
IU ← S_Foresights	-.090	.597	-1.297	.337	.009
MS ← S_Foresights	.150	1.979	1.098	.272	.023
OG ← S_Foresights	.283	.958	2.160	.031	.080
PN ← S_Foresights	.219	.715	2.074	.038	.048
CT ← S_Foresights	.078	.419	1.098	.272	.006

## VII. CONCLUSION

According to the result, strategic foresight in UAE is mostly characterized by integrating values into future plans, early adoption of new trends, maintaining control when unrealistic plans, giving up present benefit for future rewards and starting of project today to address future. On the other hand, strategic foresights in Finland are shown to be more focused on early adoption of new trend,

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