

Literature Review on Human Resources Agility and Organizational Resilience in Industrial Companies in Jordan

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Abstract

In today's global business landscape, which is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, industrial companies face complex challenges and a turbulent business environment. This requires it to enhance its ability to adapt to the changing circumstances surrounding it by fostering its HR agility. The industrial sector in Jordan is not isolated from these challenges. These challenges put pressure on industrial companies, affecting their survival and competitiveness. This study aims to fill the gap by investigate the relationship between HR agility (HR proactivity, HR adaptability, and HR resiliency) and organizational resilience in the Jordanian industrial sector. The methodology of the current study was through an extensive search of research and papers published in databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science. The results of the study confirm that HR agility (HR proactivity, HR adaptability, and HR resiliency) It has a positive role in organizational resilience in the industrial sector. This study will provide fruitful insight for industrial companies and valuable recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Human Resource Agility, Human Resource Proactivity, Human Resource Adaptability, Human Resource Resiliency, Organizational Resilience.

Introduction

The industry carries a prominent importance in the global economy, as it is a vital factor in achieving development and economic stability for countries and societies (Pan et al., 2023). but industrial companies face a variety of issues depending on factors such as their sector, size, location, and market conditions, shortage of raw material and high transportation costs, and steady development in technology (Coykendall et al., 2023). In an era characterized by economic volatility, regulatory changes, and unexpected crises such as natural disasters or pandemics or wars, organizational resilience has become a critical factor for the survival and growth of industrial companies (Bradley & Alamo-Pastrana, 2022). Organizational resilience is one of the most important modern management approaches that focuses on enhancing the

overall performance of the organization and adapting to surrounding fluctuations in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Gerschberger et al., 2020).

Here, the role of HR agility emerges, which is characterised by proactivity in presenting ideas and suggestions, in addition to its ability to adapt to different work conditions, and the positive attitude to accept change and new work methods, which enhances the company's ability to adapt to surrounding conditions (Das et al., 2023; Athamneh & Jais, 2023; Obaid et al., 2023). The purpose of this paper is to discover the impact of HR agility (HR proactivity, HR adaptability, and HR resiliency) on organizational resilience in the Jordanian industrial sector by reviewing and summarizing the existing literature. It was found that there is a lack of previous studies that addressed this relationship, and therefore it needs more research and some suggestions for future research.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between HR proactivity and organizational resilience.
2. To examine the relationship between HR adaptability and organizational resilience.
3. To examine the relationship between HR resiliency and organizational resilience.

Literature Review

RBV Theory

According to this theory, a company can outperform other companies by the way it combines its tangible and intangible resources, by choosing and developing resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). Based on the RBV theory, employees in the company are considered an essential element in achieving superiority over competing companies, considering that employees are one of the most important resources that control other resources (Karman, 2019; Úbeda-García et al., 2018). This theory supports that HR are the basic and most important intangible resources in facing the continuous changes surrounding the company and achieving effective performance (Jiang et al., 2021; Nijssen & Paauwe, 2012). The RBV theory confirm that HR agility is an important factor in organizational resilience which in turn leads to enhanced sustainable competitiveness (Karman, 2019).

HR Agility

The organization's ability to adapt and face intense competition and various risks depends mainly on its HR (Karman, 2019). HR agility relies on smart people rather than systems, so it is one of the capabilities that affects organizational performance and enhances an organization's chances of survival in the competitive arena of today's globalized business world (Narenji Thani et al., 2022). HR agility can be considered as the employee's ability to respond to unexpected changes in the internal and external environment in a timely manner (Trost, 2019).

While Sumukadas and Sawhney (2004), indicated that HR agility is the ability of the workforce to contribute to a rapidly changing environment. Obaid et al (2023), defined HR agility as the ability of employees to troubleshoot problems and respond strategically to uncertainty and changing business needs. Many studies conceptualize HR agility as employees' abilities to respond effectively to a turbulent and dynamic work environment (Almagharbeh, 2024; Al-Nawasrah & Alafi, 2021; Muduli, 2017). Studies Alavi (2016), and Al-

Faouri et al. (2014) considered HR agility as the ability of HR to react in a flexible manner in a right time to unexpected internal and external changes that facing the organization.

Many studies have agreed that HR agility show three types of behavior in the face of their surrounding environment, including “proactivity, adaptability and resiliency” (Almagharbeh, 2024; AlAbood & Manakkattil, 2023; Das et al., 2023; Viranda et al., 2023; Obaid et al., 2023; Athamneh & Jais, 2023; Raut et al., 2022; Petermann & Zacher, 2022; Alavi, 2016; Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014; Al-faouri et al., 2014).

HR Proactivity

HR proactivity means actively searching for opportunities that contribute to organizational success, especially when facing fluctuations in the surrounding environment (Strauss & Parker, 2018). In addition to trying to solve problems and deal with crises creatively, and search for methods to help the organization exploit the opportunities available to achieve success at all levels in it (Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022). The basic idea of the HR proactivity is that the individual can actively respond to his work environment, rather than react to events passively (Parker et al., 2019). Proactive employee behavior is increasingly important for organizations seeking to adapt to uncertain economic environments (Liang et al., 2023).

HR Adaptability

HR Adaptability means the ability of employees in the organization to quickly modify to unexpected changes, learn to make their reactions responsive to new market requirements in light of the competitive environment (Natapoera & Mangundjaya, 2020). So HR adaptability depends on changing or modifying the behavior of the individual to better fit into a new work environment (Van Dam, 2013). The HR adaptability also includes the ability to assume new responsibilities in their work, learning the skills that relate to new responsibilities at work (Grass et al., 2020; Alavi, 2016). Nguyen et al. (2015) mentioned that to increase the ability of employees to adapt and deal with environmental developments, the organization must encourage them to present new ideas, discuss them, encourage competition among employees, and create channels of communication with them to adopt new ideas and behaviors.

HR Resiliency

Resiliency is another characteristic of HR agility that expresses the ability to work efficiently under pressure in the face of a changing environment (Rodríguez-Sánchez, 2021). this means that employees have a positive attitude towards changes, new ideas, differences in opinions and methods, and unexpected and unpredictable situations (Athamneh & Jais, 2023). The HR resiliency also refers to their acceptance of new ideas and changes, trying to manage the circumstances and pressures that facing employees at work, and accepting opinions and understanding different ways of dealing with work problems (Lu et al., 2023).

When an employee acts in the work environment and takes the initiative to achieve a better respond, he takes the proactivity (Athamneh & Jais, 2023). When an employee changes himself, and has the ability or behavior to deal with change and adapt to differences, he has the adaptability (Narenji Thani et al., 2022). Finally, resiliency is determined by the level of tolerance of mismatch between the employee and the environment (Muduli, 2017). Table 1 represents the description of each dimension of HR agility.

Table 1

Description of Dimension of HR agility

HR Agility	Description
HR Proactivity	✓ Anticipate problems related to the changing work environment.
	✓ Taking the initiative to solve problems related to the changing work environment.
HR Adaptability	✓ Ability to adapt on a personal and cultural level.
	✓ Cooperating with the work team and coordinating to complete changing work tasks.
HR Resiliency	✓ Positive attitude to changes, new ideas and technology.
	✓ Tolerating and dealing with an uncertain and unexpected situations.

Source: Alavi (2016).

Organizational Resilience

Organizational resilience is viewed as a dynamic approach that represents the organization's capability to survive and grow in a turbulent environment (Ho et al., 2023; Li et al., 2023; Channa et al., 2019). According to Annarelli & Nonino (2016), the notion of organizational resilience has evolved over time from operational efficiency in meeting market demands to adaptability and the capacity to deal with abrupt changes in the external environment. In a world of great complexity and fluctuations, this idea has evolved into being viewed as a strategic advantage to gain sustainable competitive advantage, particularly in light of the technology and digital revolution (Miceli et al., 2021). Chen et al (2021), suggested organizational resilience as a work style or dynamic approach that organizations adopt in all their operational, production, marketing and other activities, with the aim of achieving appropriate adaptation in the work environment.

Organizational resilience can be considered the organization's capability to respond effectively to the challenges it faces (Gerschberger et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2017). Multiple studies have demonstrated that organizational resilience can be conceptualized as capabilities that enable an organization to redirect its operations to respond to expected or emergency environmental changes in order to reach quick and innovative solutions (Santoro et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2018; Williams et al., 2017 Alavi, 2016).

This concept refers to the ability of firms to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to incremental changes and sudden disruptions in order to survive and thrive (Rahman et al., 2024; Akpınar & Özer-Çaylan, 2023). According to Ngoc Su et al (2021), Organizational resilience is the organization's capability to adapt effectively to any sudden circumstances that could cause a radical change that would negatively affect it. The concept of organizational resilience revolves around the ability of organizations to adapt to transformations and changes in the rapidly changing business environment (Ruiz-Martin et al., 2022). Organizational resilience is evident in the ability of organizations to quickly modify their organizational structures and operations to meet the needs of the market and customers (Cheng & Kao, 2022).

HR Agility and Organizational Resilience

Prior research revealed that HR influence organizational resilience (Yu et al., 2022; Ngoc Su et al., 2021; El Dessouky, & Al-Ghareeb, 2020; Mitsakis, 2020; Sabuhari et al., 2020; Channa et al., 2019; Al-Ayed, 2019). Therefore, the relationship between HR agility and organizational resilience is a critical aspect in the context of organizational effectiveness and adaptability (Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022). In essence, HR agility and organizational resilience are interlinked as agile HR practices enable organizations to build a responsive and adaptive workforce, fostering the resilience needed to navigate uncertainties and challenges effectively (Mitsakis, 2020).

HR Proactivity and Organizational Resilience

HR proactivity is significant to keep up with the surrounded changes, the workforce who is proactive behaves through scanning for change opportunity, setting effective, change-oriented goals, anticipating and preventing problems, doing different things or doing things differently, taking action, persevering and achieving results (Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022; Wu & Wang, 2011). Lee et al (2019), argued that many organizations rely on HR proactivity to identify areas of development and make constructive in the turbulent work environment. Therefore, the HR proactivity plays an important role in enhancing the organization's ability to confront the volatile circumstances surrounding it, and thus enhancing organizational resilience (Alavi, 2016). Proactive HR take the initiative in providing new work-related suggestions and ideas (Athamneh & Jais, 2023; Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022; Muduli, 2017; Alavi, 2016; Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014). HR proactivity work as complementary factor to enhance the organization's resilience and increase its ability to adapt to transformations and achieve success in the changing business environment (Sławińska & Kubasiński, 2021).

HR Adaptability and Organizational Resilience

HR adaptability is a prominent factor in enhancing the company's ability to survive and continue in the market (Grass et al., 2020; Sabuhari et al., 2020; Do et al., 2016; Nguyen et al., 2015). Apascaritei & Elvira (2022) indicated that the ability of HR to adapt to changes and challenges in the work environment is important for the success of companies in the era of rapidly changing dynamism. Many literatures have supported the perspective that HR adaptability plays a pivotal role in facing challenges and changes in the surrounding environment and achieving rapid response to fluctuating surrounding conditions, considering that the human element is one of the company's most important resources (Athamneh & Jais, 2023; El Dessouky & Al-Ghareeb, 2020; van den Heuvel et al., 2020; Mitsakis, 2020).

HR Resiliency and Organizational Resilience

HR resiliency includes the suitable reactions of company workers toward changes, new ideas, and technology, and dealing with uncertain and unexpected situations (Kuntz et al., 2017). Therefore, HR resiliency supports the assessment of the situations facing employees in the company, enables them to interpret events logically, and adopt effective organizational responses to the various circumstances surrounding the company (Alavi, 2016). This enhances the company's interaction and adjusts its activities according to the new situations it faces (Prayag et al., 2024). In proportion to the prevailing competitive environment and the different contextual conditions surrounding the company, and interaction with partners and entities associated with the company's external environment (Mitsakis, 2020). HR resiliency is represented by employees' positive reactions and attitudes towards work requirements

and surrounding conditions, with the aim of supporting the company's ability to adapt effectively to sudden environmental changes in a timely manner (Athamneh & Jais, 2023; Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022). Liang & Cao (2021) emphasized the importance of linking employee resiliency to organizational resilience, which leads to enhancing the company's ability to face changes in the work environment.

Conceptual Framework

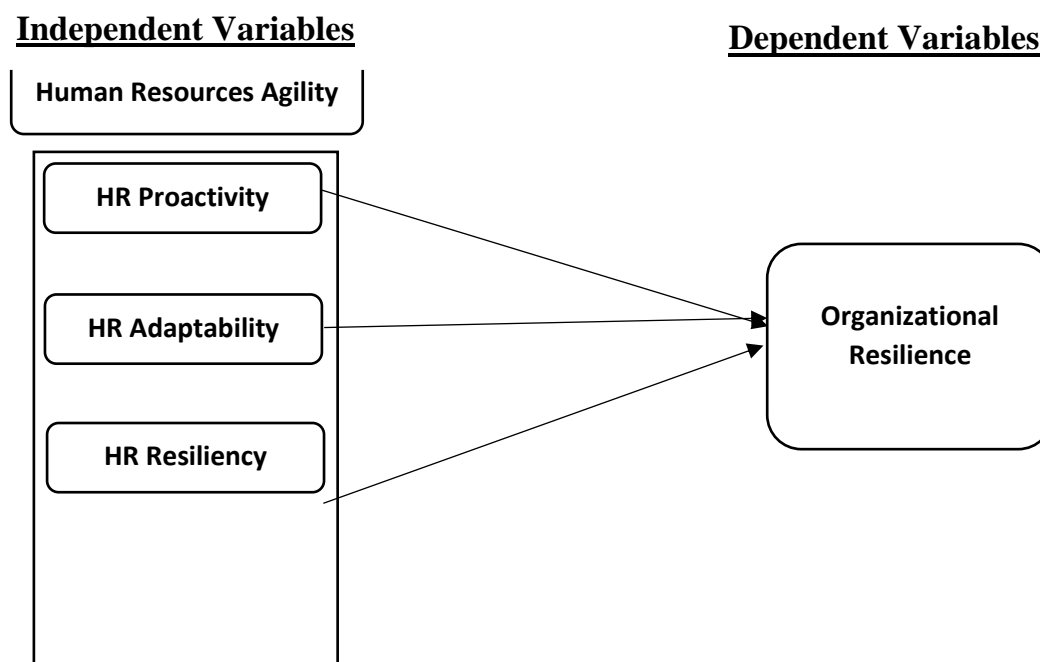


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher, 2024

Jordanian Industry Sector

Industrial sector in Jordan contribute directly to about a quarter of the national economy (25% of GDP); this contribution increases to 40% due to their close ties with various economic sectors and their role in increasing their activity (Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply, 2022; Jordan Chamber of Industry, 2023). The Jordanian industrial companies also employ approximately 251 thousand workers, most of whom are Jordanians working in approximately 18,000 industrial establishments scattered in all governorates of the Kingdom, constituting about 21% of the total Jordanian workforce; this percentage increases to reach about 28% of the total volume of employment in the private sector (Jordan Chamber of Industry, 2023; Economic & Social Council of Jordan, 2023).

it's worth noting there is a decrease in the number of industrial companies in 2023 compared to 2021 to more than (3700) company, this means that (17%) of Jordanian industrial companies closed and did not have sufficient organizational resilience to adapt to these sudden and turbulent circumstances (Jordan Chamber of Industry, 2023).

Methodology

The literature review paper employed a methodological approach focused on conducting a thorough and systematic examination of relevant academic literature. The current study's methodology involved a comprehensive search of research and articles published in databases like Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, utilizing keywords and related search terms such as "HR agility" and "organizational resilience". To maintain relevance and ensure up-to-date information, the inclusion criteria were restricted to peer-reviewed journal articles and academic publications within a specified time frame.

Conclusions

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive review of the literature to investigate the impact of HR agility (HR proactivity, HR adaptability, and HR resiliency) on organizational resilience in Jordanian industry companies. Through reviewing the previous literature, it was found that there is a lack of studies that examine the direct relationship between HR agility and organizational resilience especially in the context of industrial companies in Jordan. However, previous studies have indicated that HR agility plays a pivotal role in enhancing companies' ability to adapt to the circumstances surrounding them (Athamneh & Jais, 2023; Abou-AL-Ross & Shatali, 2022; Mitsakis, 2020; Alavi, 2016; Sherehiy & Karwowski, 2014). Future studies could take into account some other factors that could enhance HR agility with organizational resilience, such as organizational learning and empowerment.

The current study provides a novel contribution by filling the gap about the impact of HR agility on organizational resilience in the context of Jordanian industrial companies. This study also contributes theoretically by integrating RBV theory within the framework proposed for this study, and as such it provides a clearer view regarding their variables and their relationship with each other. In addition to enhance the awareness about the pivotal roles that HR agility plays in achieving organizational resilience of Jordanian industrial companies, and provide practical recommendations and guidelines for the management of industrial companies and concerned government agencies.

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