

Original Article (Qualitative)

# Designing a model of foresight intelligence for government managers

Ali Pishadast<sup>1</sup> , Mohammad Rafati<sup>2</sup> , Azam Babki Rad<sup>2</sup> 

1- PhD student in Public Administration, Department of Management, Sari Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sari, Iran.

2- Assistant Professor, Department of Accounting and Management, Mashhad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran.

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**Abstract**

The aim of the present study is to design a future-oriented intelligence model for government managers in the Khorasan Governorate. The research method is applicable in terms of its purpose, and qualitative in terms of its implementation method, using a data-based approach. The statistical population includes 33 experts, university professors, and doctoral students familiar with the intelligence of government managers with a future-oriented approach, selected using a theoretical and non-probability purposeful sampling method. The data collection tool includes a semi-structured interview. Data analysis is performed using coding and a data-driven method and MAXQDA 2020 software. The findings showed that 800 open codes, 75 axial codes, and 31 selected codes were classified as causal factors, background factors, and interfering factors, which were reduced to 46 axial codes or secondary factors and finalized using MAXQDA software after removing unimportant factors. Also, the strategies and outcomes identified from field studies were finalized in 3 categories of development strategies and outcomes after theoretical matching with the strategies and outcomes identified through library studies, screening, removing similar items, combining items with similar content, and adding new items; and were designed according to the stages of developing the paradigm model, the Foresight Intelligence Model of Government Managers of Khorasan Governorate.

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**Publisher:** Research Center of Resource Management Studies and Knowledge-Based Business

**Corresponding Author:** Mohammad Rafati

**Email:** mrafati82@yahoo.com



## Extended abstract

### Introduction

Moving by trial and error, especially in management matters, is a kind of task-solving, time-passing, and evasion of responsibility. The foresight perspective and development of futures research methods can be widely used to face possible global phenomena and prospects, as well as upcoming opportunities to improve the living conditions of current and future generations (Sakellariou et al, 2020). Unfortunately, the complexity of everyday issues and the need to quickly manage current issues leave little opportunity for governments to delve into the broad and long-term picture of the future and its consequences; therefore, many political decision-makers tend to solve short-term problems in order to remain in power (Lee et al, 2019). At lower levels of decision-making (corporate and company), the attitude of prioritizing profitability forces managers to engage in short-term activities and seek to solve problems whose deadlines are coming to an end (Haroon et al, 2018). Therefore, in order to avoid trial and error, one must look ahead and recognize the future. A foresight strategy enables managers to consider the existence, survival, growth, and development of the organization in the perspective of the organization and to use the insight to promote useful organizational methods. Foresight is a systematic effort that attempts to map the extent and quality of current changes or lack of changes and their impact on creating future realities, and aims to analyze the source, patterns, and causes of change and stability to strengthen, predict, and map alternative futures. Futureists tell us what events are likely to occur in the future (Lindgren et al, 2021).

In order to fulfill their mission and achieve success, government institutions must be able to serve their audiences and meet their needs and expectations in the best possible way, thereby generating superior value for them and maintaining their competitive advantage. Therefore, competitive advantage emerges in a way that organizations are guided and led based on foresight. Given the continuous environmental changes, intense competition between organizations, increasing organizational expectations in the future, the growth of governance and e-government, technological changes; as one of the important political institutions, with the aim of providing services to a wide range of audiences in all sectors, governorates are trying to achieve sustainable competitive advantage by relying on organizational capabilities, through applying appropriate strategic approaches, and by directing them towards foresight intelligence, and by increasing their performance and profitability to a desirable level. Therefore, this research seeks to answer the question: what are the intelligence models of government managers with a foresight approach in the Khorasan Governorate?

### Theoretical Framework

#### Foresight

Foresight is the knowledge and understanding of shaping the future in a conscious and proactive manner, and protects humans from being caught unawares by the storm of rapid changes and advances. In foresight, we are always talking about the future, and futurists believe that there are different futures ahead of every individual, organization, or society, and that the desired future must be designed and architected. This knowledge teaches humans how to draw a desired future for their organization or society (Jalali Vand & Pedram, 2019).

#### Foresight Intelligence

Foresight intelligence refers to the ability to enter the future and perceive it and the sequence of events leading to it in the present; a talent that allows individuals to perceive ongoing developments, regardless of the requirements of the present, and enables them to interpret sequential events (Ravetz & Miles, 2016).

Calof & Colton (2024) in a study titled “The Impact of Developing Foresight on Senior Management Decisions” while referring to extensive research on the potential effects of foresight, emphasized that studies on the factors that lead to the impact of foresight on senior management decisions are relatively sparse; therefore, they conducted a field study by means of a Delphi and a panel of experts including eight senior managers of the Canadian government. The results of the study indicated that factors such as foresight methodology; while leading to good foresight, will not necessarily have a significant impact on senior decision makers alone, but a strong understanding of the organization’s internal functioning plays an important role. The expert panel also recommended that three mediating variables, including time orientation, senior management’s foresight orientation, and the nature of the relationship between foresight and the senior decision maker, play a role in the development of foresight in senior management decision-making.

Zhang et al, (2023) in a study titled "The Role of Foresight and Strategic Orientation in Overcoming Organizational Innovation Deficits" pointed out that innovation deficits occur when organizations and companies reduce investment and engagement in exploratory innovation, ultimately leading to an insufficient amount of such innovation efforts. Therefore, a study was conducted to examine the relationship between foresight with three components of dynamic capabilities (environmental monitoring capabilities, strategic choice capabilities, and integration capabilities) and innovation, including the moderating variable of progress orientation/financial orientation, and concluded that the three components of organizational foresight (i.e., environmental monitoring capabilities, strategic choice capabilities, and integration capabilities) positively affect exploratory innovation.

### **Research Methodology**

The research method is applied in terms of its purpose and qualitative in terms of its implementation method, using a data-based method. The statistical population includes 33 experts, university professors, and doctoral students familiar with the intelligence of government managers with a forward-looking approach, who were selected through a purposeful theoretical and non-probability sampling method. The data collection tool includes a semi-structured interview.

### **Research findings**

Data analysis was performed using the coding and data-based method and MAXQDA 2020 software. The findings showed that 800 open codes, 75 axial codes, and 31 selected codes were classified as causal factors, underlying factors, and interfering factors, which were reduced to 46 axial codes or secondary factors and finalized using MAXQDA software after removing unimportant factors. Also, after theoretical comparison with strategies and outcomes identified through library studies, screening, eliminating similar items, combining items with similar content, and adding new items; the strategies and outcomes identified from field studies were finalized into three categories of development strategies and outcomes, and according to the stages of developing the paradigm model, the model of foresight intelligence of government managers in the Khorasan Governorate was designed.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was conducted with the aim of designing a model of foresight intelligence of government managers in the Khorasan Governorate. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Calof & Colton (2024), Calof & Colton (2024), Zhang et al, (2023), Ambrosat & Grünwald (2023), Mohammed & Saadaoui (2023), Pourezzat & Rezayan (2021), Lindgren et al, (2021), Hassanzadeh kafshkar kalaei et al, (2020), Gholipoor et al, (2020),



Taghvaeeyazdi & Niaz Azari (2020), Ahmadi et al, (2020), Baei et al, (2017), and Schmidt (2015). Calof & Colton (2024) showed that factors such as foresight methodology, while leading to good foresight, will not necessarily have a significant impact on senior decision makers, but a strong understanding of the organization's internal performance plays an important role. The expert panel also recommended that three mediating variables, including time orientation, senior management's foresight orientation, and the nature of the relationship between foresight and the senior decision maker, play a role in the development of foresight in senior managers' decision-making.

Considering the results of the present study, the following suggestions were made:

Educate and train experts in different sectors and apply new knowledge and increase management knowledge by taking advantage of current science.

In order to strengthen foresight intelligence and achieve its consequences, managers and leaders of organizations should provide a platform for developing integration capabilities and implementing strategic choice capabilities.