Presenting a Conceptual Model of the Effectiveness of Storytelling at Different Stages of Strategic Management in Organizations

Alireza Hajiakhondi[1], Amir Sadeghi[2], Amir Karbassi Yazdi[3,*]

[1]   University of Applied Science and Technology (UAST), Tehran, Iran
[2]   Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran
[3]   Departamento de Ingenieria Industrial y de Sistemas, Facultad de Ingenieria, Universidad de Arapaca , Arica, Chile

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ABSTRACT

In the two decades since storytelling has been called "spreading the common sense of organizations". Research and study in the field of storytelling in management has devoted a wide range of research. Organizational storytelling is a new and modern management technique that has led to the success of many executive projects in large and famous organizations. Therefore, the necessity and importance of familiarizing Iranian organizations with this new management technique is evident. Organizational strategies, like old stories, are long-term processes. Strategies and strategic plans focus on the long-term goals and processes of the organization. Strategies are a tool for achieving long-term goals. Considering these cases, this article presents a conceptual model of the effectiveness of storytelling in various strategic management processes in organizations. A conceptual model with 20 storytelling applications has been presented. Experts in this study have also approved this model, and different statistical tests, including the binomial test and Friedman, have also been used for its validity, reliability, and performance. For the case study, Madiran Industrial Group, one of the leading companies in the information technology field, is selected. The results indicate that only nine out of 20 suggested uses of organizational storytelling are used in this organization. It should be noted that this research is one of the first studies to examine and create a conceptual framework for using organizational storytelling in strategic management.

1. Introduction

In the two decades since storytelling was called "spreading the common sense of organizations", research in the field of storytelling in management has occupied a wide range of research [1]. Organizational strategies, like old stories, are long-term processes. Strategies and plans focus on the

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* *Corresponding author.*
E-mail address: akarbassiy@academicos.uta.cl

long-term goals and methods of the organization. The success of an organization's strategic plans depends on the cooperation and cooperation of managers and employees from all departments and organizational units to fully understand these strategies and present their views, opinions, and ideas. Stories can explain the importance of strategic decisions to members who were not present in the organization at the time of decision-making or those who were present but did not realize the significance of the decision. Similarly, a story can explain the importance of critical organizational processes, such as strategy formation, to those not previously joined the organization [2]. Therefore, this study has attempted to present a conceptual model and framework for applying this powerful and innovative management tool in strategic management processes [3].

Strategic management plays a key role in organizational success. Its use in various organizations has yielded successful results [4]. Strategic management enables an organization to act creatively and innovatively and not to act passively to shape its future [5]. This management style allows the organization to take the initiative and organize its activities to exert influence (rather than just reacting to actions), thus determining its destiny and controlling the future [6]. Historically, the main benefit of strategic management has been that it helps the organization choose strategic paths or options using a more systematic, reasonable, and logical method and thus develop better strategies [7]. Undoubtedly, this is one of the main benefits of strategic management. Managers and employees commit to supporting the organization by engaging in this process [8].

Madiran Industrial Group was established in 1964. The company has more than 21 service centers and 26 distribution centers nationwide. The company has over 1,800 official agencies, 6,000 subsidiaries, and over 1,300 workers throughout Iran. The company is entirely private and has no affiliation with government agencies. Madiran and its subsidiaries have reserved rights for several major regional brands. This company owns the X-Vision brand, the country's third-best-selling LCD and LED TV brand, and is the exclusive sales representative of international brands such as Sharp, HP, LG, etc. Madiran Company distributes a wide range of leading industrial goods such as office automation devices, information and banking technology, audio and video, and therefore, various strategic decisions in this organization, including the strategy for entering new products into the market, etc., are among the most critical strategic actions of this leading company in the electronics industry. This research attempts to explain the applications of organizational storytelling in various strategic management processes by presenting a conceptual model and framework, and then, as a case study, to facilitate and improve the strategic management issue in Madiran Company through organizational storytelling. This research seeks to answer these two main questions:

i. What are the applications of organizational storytelling in strategic management phases?
ii. To what extent are organizational storytelling and its applications used in the strategic management phases of Madiran Industrial Group?

Therefore, this study aims to present a conceptual framework and model for the applications of organizational storytelling in strategic management phases and evaluate the extent to which this method is utilized in Madiran Industrial Group's strategic decisions. It should be noted that no research has been conducted in this regard, considering the existing literature. Therefore, this issue has been addressed in this study.

2. Literature Review

The story is one of the first offspring of human nature and taste and the oldest document of

human life and changes in human thinking. The emergence of the story does not have a specific date, but it can be guessed that its age is equal to the age of man. Man has known himself since the time he made stories, told stories, and heard stories, and although he has been able to record and record everything, his story has been passed down from generation to generation through the ups and downs of the ages, passed down and passed down from generation to generation until today [9].

The story's definitions can generally be divided into two groups. The first group includes definitions presented based on the story's components:

i.   What are the applications of organizational storytelling in strategic management phases?
ii. To what extent are organizational storytelling and its applications used in the strategic management phases of Madiran Industrial Group?
iii. A story is a statement of the cause or explanation of an event or a set of them, a prose or a legendary tale.
iv. A story includes a set of actions, characters, and goals organized in the form of a plot that is narrated from the point of view of the storyteller and provides interesting explanations that are received and understood by the listener.
v.   The second group of definitions is those that discuss the functions of the story:
vi. A story is a true story with emotion that motivates people to take action and change the world around them.
vii. A story is a powerful way to present and convey complex and multidimensional ideas.
viii. A story is a concept that is transmitted through a social group and causes the formation of relationships between group members.
ix. A story is the smallest unit through which humans transmit their experiences and knowledge about the world [10].

Some researchers have distinguished between story and narrative. One group considers the content of the narrative more than the story and believes that stories must have a plot to become narratives (the plot is a way to put events together meaningfully). Another group argues the opposite and considers the descriptive part of events that has an emotional impact to be narrative.

Some also believe there is no specific rule to distinguish between story and narrative or storytelling and narrative. There is also no consensus on the difference between stories and narratives and proverbs, legends, historical events, and other written and oral text forms. The word story and its related words, narrative, and anecdote, are all rooted in Greek and Latin words, meaning awareness, knowledge, and wisdom [11].

2.1 Storytelling and Organizational Storytelling

Storytelling uses stories as a communication tool to share knowledge in an organization. This method can be very beneficial since organizational communications are traditionally somewhat dry and lifeless [12].

Storytelling, and indeed organizational storytelling, began around the 1990s. Boget first studied storytelling in 1991 as a natural process in organizations. His work drew the attention of other researchers to its applications [13]. Storytelling is one of the oldest professions. It is inseparable from each organization's departments, family, communications, and society [6]. Various definitions of organizational stories have been made, some mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1

Definitions of organizational stories

Authors	Definitions of organizational stories
Osburn [14]	A conversation about personal experiences that is told throughout the day.
Marshall *et al.* [15]	A poetic retelling of events in which narrative accuracy is sacrificed to meet vital needs and to be disseminated by other members of the organization
Kluger and Itzchakov [16]	Organizational stories describe activities that occur in the workplace, whether these activities are real or imagined.

These definitions indicate that organizational stories are a type of communication tool often questionable in their authenticity and aim to satisfy organizational members' needs and desires. In addition, some organizational stories may lack any ontological meaning in the organizational context; that is, some stories do not aim to satisfy the unconscious needs of members or lack any color that would awaken any emotion in the listener and, thus, have no cognitive control over the sense of the reality of organizational members [8]. An organizational story is a detailed description of past management actions, employee interactions, or other internal and external events that usually occur informally within the organization. Table 2 also lists various studies conducted on the multiple applications of organizational storytelling in management topics.

Table 2

Previously conducted studies

Category	Function	References
Leadership	Leader of people	[17]
	Core values of the organization	[18]
	Supporting the strategy	[11]
	Communicating vision and mission	[11]
	Time and conversation	[5]
	Scenario and business planning	[18]
Change management	Responsive and productive action urgency	[19]
	Developing acceptance of change	[20]
	Communication change	[21]
	Supporting culture change	[22]
	Overcoming resistance to change	[23]
Customer relationship	Acquiring new customers	[24]
	Maintaining relationships with customers	[25]
	Enhancing creativity	[26]
Innovation	Innovation inspiring production	[19]
	New ideas	[27]
	Organization transformation	[28]
Professional development	Developing services	[29]
	Coaching and mentoring	[22]
	Dissemination of knowledge	[30]
	Educating audiences	[31]
	Managing self-structure	[15]
	Building relationships	[32, 33]
Relationship working	Collaborating to create a story	[34]
	Communicating with employees	[35]
	Building trust	[36]
	Fostering teamwork	[37]
	Focusing on quality and service	[25]
	Fostering collaboration and loyalty	[6]

2.2 Strategic Management

Strategic management is the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating multi-task decisions that enable an organization to achieve its long-term goals. As this definition suggests, strategic management emphasizes several factors for organizational success: coordinating management, marketing, finance (accounting), production (operations), research and development, and computer information systems. In many universities and colleges, the stages of strategic management include strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

2.3 Strategic Management Processes

Organizations use different processes to formulate and direct strategic management activities. Organizations with advanced planning (such as General Electric, IBM, etc.) have developed more detailed processes. Organizations with diversified operations use advanced strategic management systems because they rely on products, market, or technology diversity. But despite the differences in detail and degree of formality, the essential components of the models used to analyze strategic management operations can be grouped into three general categories, which are:

   i. Strategy formulation;
   ii. Strategy implementation;
   iii. Strategy evaluation.

2.4 Strategic Management and Organizational Storytelling

Strategic management is the art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating multiple decisions (marketing, finance, production, and MIS) that enable an organization to achieve its long-term goals [38].

Organizational strategies, like old stories, are long-term processes. Strategies and strategic plans focus on the organization's long-term goals and methods. Strategies are "tools for achieving long-term goals" [39]. Strategic planning is "the process by which an organization makes decisions and acts on them in a way that affects its long-term performance". Strategic planning is not necessarily a single, idealistic process but is usually a set of methods in which organizational strategies are formed, not just authoritarian processes but also evolutionary, logical, learning, and political processes [40].

However, strategies always focus on long-term outcomes, and therefore, the analysis of strategic processes must include organizational consequences that are not temporary. Furthermore, regardless of the processes from which strategies are derived, strategies must necessarily be related to the organization.

Storytelling is the process through which organizations communicate with each other. Stories should be used as communication mechanisms in organizations. They can be viewed as having many functions, but some organizational stories are more successful than others. Stories exist because they unite members of an organization with different subcultures. Stories also create and perpetuate tension in the organization, differentiate subcultures from each other, and create different levels, such as the executive versus the non-executive level. Stories are used to reduce the skepticism of organizational members. Other functions of stories are that they become a source of organizational intelligence, transmit organizational beliefs to the next generation, control or guide the behavior of

organizational members, legitimize power and political relations in the organization, are an essential part of the sense of belonging of members to the organization, and help socialize new members.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in using organizational culture and symbols as an alternative to, or in addition to, organizational structure in the strategic management of organizations [41]. Instead, they communicate their meaning through cultural products such as stories. In analyzing the concept of organizational culture as a metaphor for conceptualizing the organization, argues that stories produce and convey meanings that define the essential nature of the organization [42]. These essential meanings emphasize the particular values that members of the organization have about the validity of the organization's activities, such as the strategy process. Although some organizational stories may be wildly inaccurate based on events that happened, they are no less important than accurate stories. These stories may have more to say based on the perceived reality of the organization from the perspective of different members [43]. The differences between different versions of a story are not only not a barrier to examining the socially constructed reality of the organization, but they may also contain meaningful clues. Although these clues may not be meaningful in light of the history of the organization's strategies, they are significant in terms of what different members believe about what happened in the organization and why it happened. Table 3 demonstrates organizational stories can be divided into some categories.

Table 3
Organizational stories

Stories we imagine	Stories we tell others	Stories we tell ourselves	Story types
Daily personal events	Biographies of personal connections	Self-memories	Personal events
Lessons that reveal opportunities	Wisdom-building guides	Stories reflecting meanings	Incidents, experiences
Adventures of embracing opportunities	Sharing a vision for the future	Fantasy and dreams	Future

These stories clearly describe the organization's values and strategic direction. But they express their meaning symbolically rather than directly. Therefore, these stories are remembered more than stories that lack symbols [44].

Organizational members use stories as symbolic structures to convey meaningful actions in the form of organizational values, goals, traditions, and expectations. Stories are a good tool for transmitting organizational culture and reflecting members' perceptions of where they work. Stories can shape acceptable strategies based on organization. In other words, stories create another symbolic form of interpreting events in the organization's history, giving them meaning from the managerial perspective.

Also, stories can manage meaning and construct realities through the interpretations they provide. To achieve strategic competitiveness, an organization's managers must encourage initiative and communication. Using stories combined with creativity and imagery, managerial influence can be symbolically created in members. This way, stories can help managers influence members' perspectives on strategies and convey content about accepted organizational values, meanings, and activities.

Although storytelling can be an effective tool for symbolic management, it is a neutral human phenomenon, and its presence is felt throughout the organization, regardless of the intentions of senior managers. Stories told by lower-level members of the organization, like those suggested by senior managers and higher-ranking members, reveal their beliefs and values. While senior management members of the organization can benefit from articulating the organization's values

because they have a more remarkable ability to develop leaders and reward/punish other members, members at all levels of the organization have the power to articulate cultural values through storytelling; in other words, they can express their opinions according to the strategies available to them. This shared power creates a set of multiple and sometimes conflicting stories in the organization, and thus, multiple realities are formed. According to the above, the effective use of organizational storytelling in strategic management is quite evident. Still, it was found that a comprehensive study on the use of organizational storytelling in different phases of strategic management has not been conducted so far. Therefore, this study presents a conceptual model and framework for this issue to include a complete picture of the use of organizational storytelling in all phases of strategic management.

In the continuation of this research, the research methodology and the extent of application and effectiveness of organizational stories in different phases of strategic management in the company under study are discussed.

3. Research Methodology

Given that the present research aims to present a conceptual model for examining the applications of organizational storytelling in different phases of strategic management, the framework and model mentioned above will be presented by first studying the existing literature. This model will be validated using experts' opinions in the next stage. In the next stage, the extent of the organizational storytelling in the strategic management of the organization under study (Madiran Industrial Group) will be evaluated using the created model. The tool used to collect data and information is a questionnaire consisting of 40 questions with a five-point Likert scale. In this article, two questionnaires were developed and distributed. The first questionnaire was experts' opinions to validate the framework among 35 selected experts in strategic management, and 33 people responded to this questionnaire. Due to the limited number of experts available in this field, the snowball sampling method was used. Given that the suitability or otherwise of the proposed model is tested at this stage and given that the population distribution is not precise, the binomial test was used, and the Friedman test was used to prioritize the applications of organizational storytelling. In the second questionnaire, to assess the extent of storytelling use in the Madiran Industrial Group, 25 people from among 30 senior and middle managers and strategic management consultants of this organization completed the questionnaire, and data analysis was also performed using the binomial and Friedman tests.

3.1 Conceptual Model of the Effectiveness of Organizational Storytelling in Strategic Management

After reviewing and reviewing the literature on strategic management and organizational storytelling and how it is used in different parts of strategic management and similar cases, the applications of organizational storytelling in various phases of strategic management were extracted and based on the various stages and sub-phases of strategic management. A framework was obtained to examine the effectiveness of organizational storytelling in strategic management, which is given below according to the phases of strategic management:

The first phase of strategic management, formulating and adjusting strategies, begins with determining applicable perspectives and solutions, and the ability to implement the solutions is critical. Therefore, one of the crucial tasks of the planning team is to identify the obstacles to achieving the solutions and goals and receive or provide suggestions to overcome them. The

applications and objectives of organizational storytelling in this phase of strategic management are given in Table 4, separated by each sub-process of this phase.

Table 4
Strategy formulation

Phase of strategic management	Sub-processes	Application of storytelling	Objectives of storytelling
Phase 1: strategy formulation	Defining the organization's mission	Precise definition of the organization's mission	- Gaining sufficient understanding of how to define organizational missions - Accurate understanding of organizational missions
	Identifying internal factors	Understanding internal factors	- Detailed explanation of internal organizational factors - Employee participation in identifying internal factors - Clarification of the internal factor identification stage
	Identifying external factors	Understanding external factors	- Detailed explanation of external organizational factors - Employee participation in identifying external factors - Clarification of the external factor identification stage
	Identifying opportunities and threats	Identifying all opportunities and threats	- Precise identification of all potential opportunities - Precise identification of all potential threats - Employee participation in accurately identifying opportunities and threats
	Identifying strengths and weaknesses	Identifying all strengths and weaknesses	- Identifying weaknesses that have not been previously addressed - Gathering employee opinions on potential strengths and weaknesses - Identifying strengths that have not been properly recognized
	Setting long-term goals	Precise understanding and defining the importance of long-term organizational goals	- Communicating long-term organizational goals to all employees - Visualizing long-term organizational goals
	Reviewing and considering various strategies	Finding various strategies	- Identifying different strategies applicable to the organization - Supporting initiatives to find new strategies
	Selecting specific strategies for organizational activities	Correct selection of specific strategies	- Correctly selecting specific strategies for organizational activities with the collaboration and suggestions of all members
	Resource allocation methods	Explaining resource allocation methods	- Understanding various resource allocation methods
	Decision-making process in the organization	Determining appropriate decision-making techniques	- Creating coordination in decision-making - Healthy negotiations for proper decision-making

The second phase of strategic management, strategy implementation, has become an essential issue in management today. A survey of senior executives of organizations has shown that their most significant concern about the strategic management phase is the "strategy implementation" phase. The uses and goals of organizational storytelling in this phase of strategic management are also given in Table 5, broken down into each sub-process.

Table 5
Strategy implementation

Phase of strategic management	Sub-processes	Application of storytelling	Objectives of storytelling
Phase 2: strategy implementation	Setting annual goals and policies	Determining appropriate annual goals and effective policies	- Precise determination of suitable annual goals - Explanation of organizational policies
	Linking strategies and plans to the operational budget	Facilitating the connection between strategies and operational budgets	- Developing unity and empathy among various organizational members to accept strategies for linking operational budgets - Explaining how operational budgets are connected to organizational strategies
	Monitoring and reviewing during the process	Evaluating monitoring and reviewing actions	- Explaining the necessary monitoring during the process - Understanding the importance of reviewing during the process for all organizational employees
	Creating a systemic perspective in the company for continuous improvement	Visualizing the systemic perspective for managers and employees	- Explaining the systemic perspective in the organization - Explaining the importance and benefits of a systemic perspective for continuous improvement in the organization
	Establishing appropriate and capable infrastructure	Determining the required infrastructure	- Understanding existing limitations - Identifying the necessary infrastructure for implementing strategies
	Establishing organizational coordination for strategy implementation	Determining how organizational coordination is achieved	- Negotiating with organizational members to establish the necessary coordination for implementing strategies

The second phase of strategic management, strategy implementation, has become an essential issue in management today. A survey of senior executives of organizations has shown that their most significant concern about the strategic management phase is the "strategy implementation" phase. The uses and goals of organizational storytelling in this phase of strategic management are also given in Table 5.

The third phase of strategic management, strategy evaluation, evaluation does not necessarily have to be done after the end of strategy implementation. It can also be done in parallel with implementation to examine the implementation performance. The uses and objectives of organizational storytelling in the final phase of strategic management are given separately for each sub-process in Table 6.

Table 6
Strategy evaluation

Phase of strategic management	Sub-processes	Application of storytelling	Objectives of storytelling
Phase 3: strategy evaluation	Calculation, monitoring, and evaluation of strategies	Evaluating strategies	- Highlighting the importance of monitoring proper execution - Explaining how to evaluate strategies accurately
	Reviewing performance and indicators	Analyzing the execution of strategies	- Tracking performance - Evaluating performance - Precisely determining the necessary indicators for performance review
	Investigating potential failures in the implementation phase	Identifying existing risks	- Identifying challenges in executing strategies - Understanding specific situations - Simulating existing risks in strategies - Explaining solutions to address strategy execution failures
	Performance measurement and goal achievement mechanisms	Establishing a performance evaluation framework	- Improving performance evaluation - Operationalizing the measurement of goal achievement

3.2 Validation of the Proposed Conceptual Model

The first questionnaire examines experts' opinions to validate the above-proposed framework. This questionnaire was ultimately distributed among 35 selected experts in the field of strategic management, of whom 33 responded to this questionnaire. Due to the limited number of experts available in this field, the snowball sampling method was used, and thus, the questionnaire was first divided among five experts. Then, using the snowball technique, this questionnaire was finally distributed among 35 people, of whom 33 responded utterly. Therefore, the return rate of the questionnaires was more than 94 percent, which is quite ideal. After validation, the Cronbach's alpha test was used to measure the reliability of this questionnaire. As a result, this coefficient was calculated to be 89%, which indicates that this questionnaire has the necessary reliability. The descriptive statistics of the experts used in this section are also given in Table 7.

Table 7
Population indicators

Indicators	Indicator details	Frequency (%)
Education	Bachelor's degree with over 10 years of management experience	10
	Master's degree	55
	PhD and higher	35
Age (years)	30-35	25
	35-40	22
	40-50	38
	Above 50	15
Work experience (years)	3-5	30
	5-10	35
	Over 10	35

4. Data Analysis

As previously stated, the first questionnaire asked experts about the uses of stories in different subphases of the main phases of strategic management. A binomial test was then used to examine the validity and suitability of the proposed framework. At a 95% confidence level, the claim (H1 hypothesis) that the proposed model is desirable was tested against the H0 hypothesis, which states that the proposed model is not desirable. According to the table below, the H0 hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the proposed model is evaluated as a desirable model to examine the impact of organizational storytelling in strategic management phases. Table 8 demonstrates the testing hypothesis proposed in the framework.

Table 8
Proposed framework

H0	H1	Observed probability	Test probability	Significance level	Error rate	Test result
The proposed framework is not desirable	The proposed framework is desirable	0.2	0.6	0.000	0.05	H0 rejected

Furthermore, the Friedman test was used to determine each application's ranking in the phases and sub-phases of strategic management. The final rankings and results are given in Table 9.

Table 9
Ranking of application of storytelling factors

Rank	Application of storytelling	Sub-process	Average rank
1	Identifying all strengths and weaknesses	Strategy formulation	50.26
2	Identifying all opportunities and threats	Strategy formulation	48.71
3	Precise understanding and defining long-term organizational goals	Strategy formulation	44.95
4	Understanding internal factors	Strategy formulation	42.23
5	Finding various strategies	Strategy formulation	40.34
6	Visualizing the systemic perspective for managers and employees	Strategy implementation	38.77
7	Precise definition of the organization's mission	Strategy formulation	32.02
8	Identifying existing risks	Strategy evaluation	29.12
9	Correct selection of specific strategies	Strategy formulation	25.76
10	Understanding external factors	Strategy formulation	23.13
11	Facilitating the connection between strategies and operational budgets	Strategy implementation	22.34
12	Explaining resource allocation methods	Strategy formulation	20.22
13	Determining appropriate decision-making techniques	Strategy formulation	19.25
14	Evaluating strategies	Strategy evaluation	18.65
15	Determining appropriate annual goals and effective policies	Strategy implementation	18.12
16	Analyzing the execution of strategies	Strategy evaluation	16.34
17	Evaluating monitoring and reviewing actions	Strategy implementation	14.15
18	Determining the required infrastructure	Strategy implementation	13.87
19	Determining how organizational coordination is achieved	Strategy implementation	11.11
20	Establishing a performance evaluation framework	Strategy evaluation	10.25

According to the results and rankings, organizational storytelling has the highest ranking in the first phase of strategic management, which indicates the greater effectiveness of storytelling in the strategy formulation and adjustment phase. Table 10 demonstrates the average ranking of each of

the three stages of strategic management based on the importance of storytelling in that phase from the experts' perspective.

Table 10
Average ranks in terms of the importance of organizational storytelling

Phase (strategic management process)	Average ranks
Phase 1	
Strategy formulation and development	34.79
Phase 2	
Strategy implementation	19.73
Phase 3	
Strategy evaluation	18.59

According to Table 10, organizational storytelling is most used in the first phase of strategic management (i.e. the strategy formulation and adjustment phase) and least used in the third phase (i.e. strategy evaluation).

4.1 Case Study of the Use of Organizational Storytelling in Strategic Management Processes

This article section also examines and evaluates the extent of organizational storytelling in the Madiran Industrial Group. Considering the size of this organization and its various branches in different cities of Iran and the existence of various strategic programs in the fields of production, commerce, and services, 30 senior managers and the board of directors of this organization were selected as a sample in strategic decisions of the organization of which 25 people responded entirely to the second questionnaire designed to examine the extent of the use of organizational storytelling in the strategic management processes of this organization. Therefore, the return rate of the questionnaire in this study was more than 83%.

For reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used again, which in this case was 81%, indicating the reliability of this questionnaire. Again, a binomial test was used to examine the use and non-use of storytelling applications in the organization under study. It was also found that out of 20 cases of organizational storytelling applications in different phases of strategic management, only nine applications were approved in this organization, which are given in Table 11.

Table 11
Result of organizational storytelling factors

Application of storytelling	Sub-process
Understanding internal organizational factors	Strategy formulation and development
Identifying all opportunities and threats	Strategy formulation and development
Identifying all strengths and weaknesses	Strategy formulation and development
Precise understanding and specifying the importance of organizational goals	Strategy formulation and development
Selecting appropriate specific strategies	Strategy formulation and development
Determining suitable decision-making techniques	Strategy formulation and development
Facilitating the connection of strategies with operational budgets	Strategy implementation
Visualizing a systemic vision for managers and employees	Strategy implementation
Identifying existing risks	Strategy evaluation

According to the above table, the contribution of each phase of strategic management to this technique and its applications is given in the pie chart. Figure 1 demonstrates the distribution of importance in strategic management.
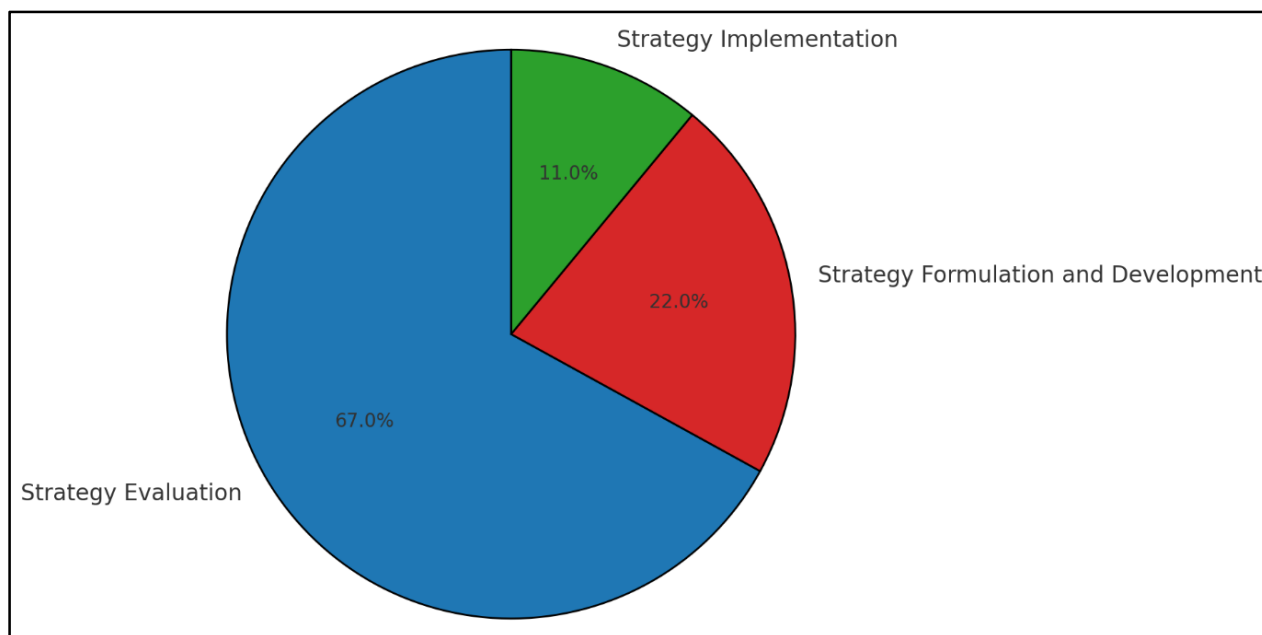
Fig. 1. Importance in strategic management

According to the chart above, storytelling is used 67% of the time in the first phase of strategic management and 22% and 11% in the second and third phases, respectively. This is broadly consistent with the expert's opinion in the previous section regarding the use of storytelling in different stages of strategic management.

The Friedman test was also used to determine the priority of storytelling applications in the company under study. The ranking of the nine applications used is as follows and is shown in Table 12.

Table 12
Ranking of the storytelling applications

Rank	Application of storytelling	Sub-process	Average rank
1	Understanding internal organizational factors	Strategy formulation and development	67.21
2	Identifying all opportunities and threats	Strategy formulation and development	60.55
3	Identifying all strengths and weaknesses	Strategy formulation and development	60.44
4	Identifying existing risks	Strategy formulation and development	55.6
5	Precise understanding and specifying the importance of long-term organizational goals	Strategy formulation and development	46.31
6	Determining suitable decision-making techniques	Strategy implementation	35.12
7	Facilitating the connection of strategies with operational budgets	Strategy formulation and development	33.1
8	Visualizing a systemic vision for managers and employees	Strategy evaluation	20.1
9	Selecting appropriate specific strategies	Strategy formulation and development	11.87

According to Table 12, organizational storytelling is most helpful in recognizing the organization's internal factors in Madiran Company and least helpful in choosing the right strategies.

5. Conclusion and Managerial Implementation

In this article, a conceptual framework was designed to apply a new management tool, namely organizational storytelling, which has received much attention in the last two decades for strategic management and its basic phases. In this regard, a conceptual model with 20 organizational storytelling applications in the existing strategic management sub-processes was proposed. According to the experts, organizational storytelling is most effective in the first phase of strategic management and positively affects other phases. This proposed framework was examined using experts' questionnaires. It was evaluated regarding validity and reliability with appropriate statistical tests, and the results confirmed its validity and reliability. The results of the rankings of these applications also showed that the most significant application of organizational storytelling is in identifying all the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, according to experts, and the least considerable application of organizational storytelling is in determining the performance evaluation framework. In the continuation of this research, a case study of Madiran Industrial Organization, one of the largest leading companies in the IT industry, was used, and another questionnaire was used for this issue, the validity and reliability of which were also evaluated and confirmed. The results of this questionnaire indicated that out of the 20 organizational storytelling applications proposed in this research, only nine applications were used in this organization. In this organization, the most significant application recognized the internal factors of the organization, and the least significant application was choosing the right strategies in this organization. This organization also used the highest organizational storytelling, with 67% in the first phase of strategic management, which involved formulating and adjusting strategies. The second and third phases of strategic management assigned themselves the second and third ranks of storytelling application in this organization, with 22% and 11% percentages.

In this organization, in the section on the precise definition of organizational missions, which is one of the most widely used uses of organizational storytelling in this case from the experts' point of view, it has not been used at all. This indicates a lack of attention to the use of organizational storytelling in this case. Therefore, considering that this company has paid no attention to more than half of the uses of organizational storytelling, it is suggested that a review be carried out in this regard.

Finally, the suggestions for future research are:

i. Study the use of storytelling in various other organizations to compare and examine the performance of the proposed framework.
ii. Holding various courses and conferences on organizational storytelling in different companies to familiarize managers and employees with this powerful technique.
iii. Use of digital organizational storytelling techniques in the organization under study.

Conflicts of Interest
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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