The Role of Climate for Innovation in Job Performance: Empirical Evidence from Commercial Banks in Jordan

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Abstract

This study aims to highlight the importance of the climate for innovation as one of the essential constructs within the organizational context by linking it directly to the job performance in commercial banks in Jordan. Three main determinants of climate for innovation were measured: organizational culture for innovation, leadership for innovation and team climate for innovation. A probability sample was chosen to collect the data from 5 commercial banks placed in Amman; the sample consists of 200 employees with more than three years' experience. Using field data collected via the questionnaire that was developed for this purpose, the researcher has analyzed the data by using several descriptive methods, such as means and standard deviations, and statistical methods, such as Multiple Regression. The main finding of the study indicated that the climate for innovation is perceived to be of a high level and is positively affecting job performance within commercial banks in Jordan. It was also found that all climate for innovation constructs (organizational culture for innovation, leadership for innovation and team climate for innovation) impacted job performance positively.

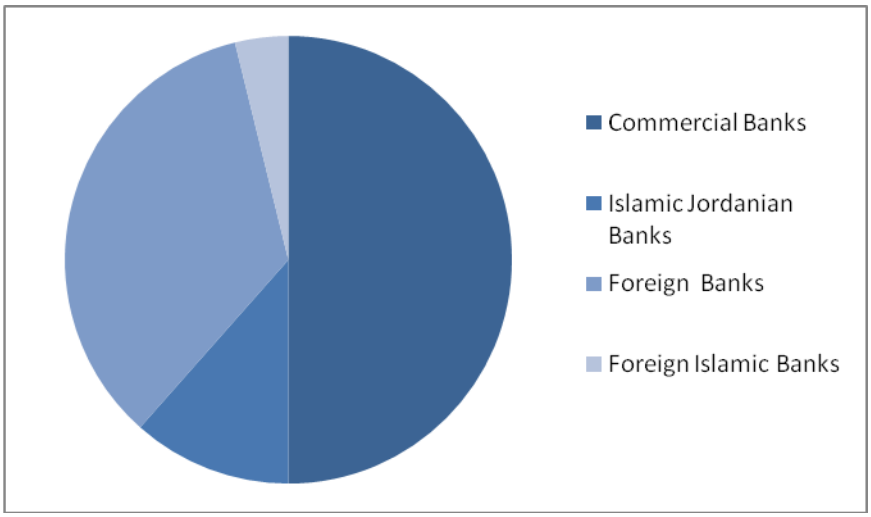
Key Words: Climate for Innovation, Job Performance.

Introduction

Climate for innovation plays a vital role in assisting organizations to differentiate themselves from their competitors within the organizational context, it also enhances the organizational capability to expand and grow (Panuwatwanich, 2007). Although innovation is primary derived from individuals' creativity, there are several studies that highlight the importance of the work environment in providing the chance for creative ideas to take place and to be implemented in a useful way (Crespell and Hanson, 2008). Reviewing the related studies indicated that providing a climate for innovation was found to have positive impact on many indicators related to the organizational performance; there is a wide notion indication that creativity is related to generating new ideas and expressing them, while innovation has more to do with implementing those ideas and coming up with useful new products or services from them (Isaksen & Treffinger, 2004).

By the end of the year 2011, the number of banks in Jordan reached 26; 13 of them are commercial banks, 3 are Islamic banks, 9 are foreign banks and 1 is an Islamic foreign bank.

Figure1: Domestic and Foreign Banks in Jordan (2011)



Source: Central Bank of Jordan http://statisticaldb.cbj.gov.jo/index?action=level4

The current challenging situation in the banking industry in Jordan and the region resulted from the Arab revolutions (Arab Spring) that started at the end of 2010 and had affected the financial situation of countries and organizations on both levels, Public and Private. That encouraged the conducting of this study to highlight the importance of climate for innovation as one of the essential constructs within the organizational context by linking it directly to the job performance in commercial banks in Jordan. This study is expected to contribute to the body of knowledge related to the climate for innovation in developing countries. The study hypotheses will be presented and tested, and accordingly the study results and recommendation will be provided for the searched organizations and for future researchers.

Climate for Innovation

"Climate for Innovation" is defined in the study of Sarros et al. (2008) to be:*" the degree of support and encouragement an organization provides its employees to take initiative and explore innovative approaches are predicted to influence the degree of actual innovation in that organization '.*

The study of Panuwatwanich et al. (2007) identified three sub-factors of organizational culture for innovation that was concluded from many related literature:

1) Creativity stimulation and encouragement: this factor is related directly to the motivation of developing creative ideas and being flexible enough to accept risk taking by having risk tolerance and accept losses related to creative efforts failure.
2) Freedom and autonomy: this factor indicates the freedom that the organization provides to the workers to run their own work using their own methods and the appropriate tools.
3) Resource allocation: resources are considered essential to communicate creative ideas. The availability of time, money, training resources and tools is considered important to enhance innovation process.

In this study, the climate of innovation is examined as an important factor that enhances organizational job performance. It was perceived by many researchers that supporting the employees to choose and explore different tools and methods to run their tasks, and to experience transferring their creative ideas into an innovative product, enhances the organizational innovation outcomes (Sarros et al., 2008). Previous studies indicated that the leadership practices are perceived to facilitate creating climate for innovation (Ubius and Vanhala, 201). Transformational leaders were also captured to enhance the climate for innovation through the main characteristics of transformational leadership (articulates vision, provides appropriate role model, fosters the acceptance of goals, sets high performance expectations, provides individual support and provides intellectual stimulation) (Sarros et al., 2008), also it was found by the study of Damanpour and Schneider (2006) that climate for innovation is directly affected by managers practices.

Climate for innovation is considered an important motive and determinant for innovative behavior within the organizational context. The climate was defined to be "a shared and enduring molar perception of the psychologically important aspects of the work environment" (Ashfort, 1985) as cited by (Panuwatwanich et al, 2007). The study of Panuwatwanich et al. (2008) concluded that most of the literature related to the climate for innovation distributed it to three main constructs: organizational culture for innovation, leadership for innovation and team climate for innovation and they detailed each construct as follows:

Leadership for Innovation

In many studies, leadership was perceived to play a vital role in enhancing the creative thinking capacity for individuals and innovative outcomes through the many practices that support innovative efforts and provide risk tolerance, so the individuals feel more confident to express and implement their innovative ideas. Transformational leadership was highlighted to enhance subordinates' innovative outcomes by stimulating them intellectually and motivate them to think "out of the box", and encourage them to exceed the expected performance by challenging their selves and prove that they can achieve more. Panuwatwanich et al. (2008) summarized the main leadership roles in enhancing the climate for innovation in the following:

1. Create, articulate the vision of the future and inspire followers toward achieving it.
2. Always seek new ideas, methods, approaches, and techniques to employ them in the work environment and for problem solving.
3. Motivate followers to use their own ideas, improve their capabilities and provide them with the resources to achieve that.
4. Monitoring the followers' progress and behaviors to know exactly where improvements should take place.
5. Creating a shared resources culture that makes it more acceptable for the individual to share his resources with others within the entire organization.
6. Enhancing employees' involvement in the decision making process.

Team Climate for Innovation

Working within a team is perceived to enhance the innovation performance, as shown in the study of Dionne et al., which indicated that innovation is one of the key indicators that determine the team effectiveness (Dionne, et al., 2004). Working within a team is also considered a key to enhance the creativity and innovation, the study of Mumford et al., (2008) indicated that diversity within the team consisting of different members with different education and experience will enhance the creativity level and improve the team's ability to come up with new ideas.

Four essential factors where conceptual to form "team climate for innovation" were originally proposed by West (1990) as cited by Panuwatwanich et al. (2008):

1. Vision: creating a shared vision and objectives that will assist team members to unify their efforts toward achieving the same goals and objective and getting inspired with the same future vision.
2. Participative safety: this factor reflects the extent to which team members are allowed to be involved in the decision making process without any fear of being punished or criticized.
3. Task orientation: team members within an innovative climate are high quality oriented, also as they perceive a shared vision, their objectives and goal is obviously reflected in the tasks, processes and strategies that they perform.
4. Support for innovation: reflects the extent to which team members are expected and motivated to introduce new ideas related to their tasks.
   Organizational Culture for Innovation

Many scholars combined both organizational culture and innovation while considering the climate for innovation. Eisenbeiss et al. (2008) found that the support for innovation and climate for excellence are key factors to enhance teams innovation, while Sarros et al., (2008) argued that both organizational culture and climate are inter-related, where the culture concerns behaviors and beliefs, while the climate is focused about perceived impact of people of performance and the organization's openness to change and its provision of resources to be innovative.

Based on the literature review, the main characteristics of organizational culture for innovation are as follows Panuwatwanich et al. (2008):

1) Organizational culture for innovation is perceived to have high freedom and autonomy.
2) Organizational culture for innovation is also characterized by being more flexible and risk tolerant.
3) Within the innovative culture new ideas and creative efforts are recognized, appreciated and rewarded.
4) Resources availability: the innovative culture provides individuals with the necessary resources to enhance their creative thinking ability and provide them with the required tools to implement their ideas when applicable.

Job Performance

The literature review of the job performance indicated that it depends on perception, values and attitudes (Pushpakumari, 2008). Many studies highlight different organizational determinants and examined their impact on Job performance, such as job satisfaction, rewards, training, wages growth, employees stress, and motivation and so on.

Job performance is a core interest for any organization as it reflects the organizational productivity by reflecting the employees' ability to attain the goals as planned. In the study of Cook (2008), the researcher argued that the definition of the job performance should focus on the behavior not the outcomes, because if the outcomes is the determinant of the job performance the employee may adopt the easiest way to get the job done regardless the quality of the methods and tools, on the other hand considering the job related behaviors will enhance the organizational ability to underline weaknesses and mistakes more effectively and accurately. The study indicated that job performance is not a consequence of behavior, it is a behavior itself. Borman, and Schmit (1997) defined job performance as behaviors with an evaluative aspect, cited by Cook, (2008), this definition indicated that job performance should be able to be measured in order to deliver the desired outcomes. Job performance was also defined as "*a function of individual ability and skill and effort in a given situation (Porter and Lawler, 1974)*" as cited by Pushpakumari, (2008).

In this study, the researcher will employ the performance measures used by Pushpakumari (2008) in the study that linked job satisfaction with rewards and job performance. The following are the main performance indicators:

1) Effort extended to the job
2) Time effort
3) Knowledge effort
4) Responsibility
5) Performance targets
6) Punctuality
7) Absenteeism
8) Relationship with others
9) Loyalty
10) Submitting new ideas
11) Initiatively
12) Dependability
13) Obedience
14) Reliability and accuracy

Research Problem and Questions

The main problem of the study stems from the key role of innovation in enhancing organizational growth. Organizations in Jordan are very new at innovative approaches; for that the researcher found it essential to measure the availability of climate for innovation within the commercial banks in Jordan, as they are considered leaders in adopting the new technological and innovative approaches to cope with international financial institutions. This study is also aiming to link between climate for innovation and job performance of Jordanian laborers in order to provide the decision makers in different organizations (especially in commercial banks) with the feedback about the impact of providing a high climate for innovation on job performance.

Also this study will indicate the availability of main factors related to the climate for innovation such as leader for innovation, team climate for innovation and organizational culture for innovation.

Theoretically, the main question of the study is:

- Does the climate for innovation within Jordanian Commercial Banks affect the employees' job performance as perceived from the employees?

The above question is divided into 4 sub-questions that will be answered in this study

1. Does the leadership for innovation within Jordanian Commercial Banks affect the employees' job performance as perceived from the employees?
2. Does the team climate for innovation within Jordanian Commercial Banks affect the employees' job performance as perceived from the employees?
3. Does the organizational culture for innovation within Jordanian Commercial Banks affects the employees' job performance as perceived from the employees?
4. What is the level of the climate for innovation provided by commercial banks in Jordan?
5. Does The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents Impact the Relationship between Climate for Innovation and Job Performance within Jordanian commercial banks?

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses will be tested:

1. H01: There is no significant positive impact for Climate for Innovation on Job Performance.
   - H011: There is no significant positive impact for Leadership for Innovation on Job Performance.
   - H012: There is no significant positive impact for Team Climate for Innovation on Job Performance.
   - H013: There is no significant positive impact for Organizational Culture for Innovation on Job Performance.
2. H02: The demographic characteristics of respondents don't impact the relationship between Climate for Innovation and Job Performance.

Research Importance

This study is important due its field of study, the researcher scanned most of the literature written related to job performance in Jordanian organizations and this study was the only one that linked climate for innovation to job performance. Only a few studies linked innovation and climate for innovation with the job performance, which makes this study a real contribution to the body of knowledge in the researched topic.

The significance of this study to leaders and decision makers in the banking sector in Jordan is that it addresses the importance of climate for innovation within commercial banks. The study findings will provide more validation and examination to the previous studies and it will provide insights that may direct future researchers and educational entities.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Analyzing the impact of organizational climate for innovation on job performance within Jordanian Commercial Banks
2. Identifying the level of the climate for innovation including the main constructs (leader for innovation, team climate for innovation and organizational culture for innovation) in the researched organizations.
3. Pointing out the main challenges that will be perceived when providing a climate for innovation within Jordanian Commercial Banks.
4. The study will conclude a number of findings and results that will lead researchers for future insights.
5. Provide the field of study banks with recommendations based on the study results.

Research Methodology

Population of the study

The population of the study is consisted of all the commercial banks in Jordan which counts to be (13) as reported by the Central Bank of Jordan.

Study Sample

For the purpose of answering the research questions and analyzing the research problem, a probability sample consisting of 5 banks (Commercial Bank, Bank of Jordan, Capital Bank, ABC Bank and Bank Al Etihad) were selected to conduct this study. A total of 200 employees with more than 3 years of experience in Jordanian Commercial Banks were chosen randomly to participate in the study.

Participants were invited formally thorough the official channels to participate in the study. The purpose of the study was explained and the participant allowed to decline if he/she did not want to participate. It was assured for the participants that the data that will be provided by them will be completely anonymous and no names will be collected on any of the instruments.

Data Collection:

To enhance the reliability and validity of the study findings, the researcher collected both primary and secondary data as follows:

- **Primary Data:** The researcher developed a questionnaire to be employed as the main data collection tool. The questionnaire was distributed among the study participants. The questionnaire contained 2 parts:

  1. Demographics and personal characteristic information of the sample.
  2. Questionnaire questions.

- **Secondary Data:** this data was collected from the libraries and databases, and include the following sources: the Federal Government, general business publications, magazine and newspaper articles, annual reports, academic publications, library sources, and computerized bibliographies.

Measures:

There are a variety of measures for climate for innovation, but the researcher adopted the one suggested by the study of Panuwatwanich et al. (2008) that divided the climate for innovation into three main constructs: leadership for innovation (7 items), team climate for innovation (8 items), and organizational culture for innovation (5 items). Each of the 20 items were rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
Job Performance was measured using the tool suggested by Pushpakumari (2008), 14 items were articulated to measure job performance in terms of effort extended to the job, time effort, knowledge effort, responsibility, performance targets, punctuality, absenteeism, relationship with others, loyalty, submitting new ideas, initiatively, dependability, obedience, reliability and accuracy. The study participants were asked to rate their level of performance using a five point Lickert scale ranging from 5 (great extend) to 1 (very little).

To measure the level of both climate for innovation and job performance based on the average of the perceived score, Table 1 is provided to indicate the scale:

Table 1: interpretation of study variables level

Scale	Classification
0-1.7	Low
1.8-3.4	Medium Level
3.5-5	High Level

Data Analysis and findings

The researcher analyzed the collected primary data by using several descriptive and statistical methods such as :

a. Descriptive statistics: frequencies, mean and standard deviations.
b. Linear Regression: to test the first hypotheses of the study.
c. Multiple Regressions: to test the second hypotheses of the study.

1) Characteristics of Respondents: the following table (Table 2) indicates the profile of respondents in terms of (gender, age, educational level, experience).

Table 2: Profile of Respondents

Demographics and Personnel Variables	Categories	No. of Items	Percent
Gender	Female	86	**%43**
	Male	114	**%57**
	Total	**2**00	**% 100**
	Categories	No. of Items	Percent
Age	Under **30** years	30	**%**15
	From 31- 40 years	97	% 48.5
	From 41- 50 years	53	%26.5
	Over 50 years	20	% 10
	Total	**200**	**% 100**
	Categories	No. of Items	Percent
Educational Level	Diploma	19	**%**9.5
	Bachelor	133	% 66.5
	Master Degree	39	%19.5
	Ph. D Degree	9	% 4.5
	Total	**20**0	**% 100**
	Categories	No. of Items	Percent
Experience	From 3-5 years	**2**0	**%10**
	5-10 Years	**95**	% 47.5
	11 years and more	**84**	% 42.5

2) Discussion of results : the means, standard deviations and the level according to table 1 for the independent variable (Climate for innovation) and dependant variable (Job Performance) is summarised in the following table (table 3).

Table 3: means, standard deviation, level of study variables (Climate for innovation, Job Performance

Study Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
Independent Variable: Climate for Innovation	3.63	0.626	High
1. Leadership for innovation	3.80	0.798	High
2. Team Climate for innovation	3.50	0.735	High
3. Organizational Culture for innovation	3.60	0.923	High
Dependent Variable: Job Performance	3.66	o.630	High

The table above indicates the following finding:

- The respondents perceived that the climate for innovation within the commercial banks in Jordan as high.
- The study participants' results indicated that leadership for innovation was rated to be the highest within the climate for innovation compared to both team climate for innovation and organizational culture for innovation, considering that all three of them were perceived to be high.
- Team climate for innovation was perceived to be the lowest among climate for innovation indicators, more evidence is needed to highlight the importance of providing innovative climate among teams in Jordanian Commercial Banks.
- Job performance level as self evaluated by the employees was also perceived to be high and that indicates that employees in commercial banks are satisfied about their own performance and productivity.

Testing Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant positive impact for climate for innovation on job performance.
Ha1: There is a significant positive impact for climate for innovation on job performance.

Table 4: Results of one sample T test on H01

β	T	R	R^2	F	Sig	Result of H01
0.552	7.43	0.552	0.305	86.86	0.000	Rejected

The researcher used One –Sample Test to examine H01 hypothesis and the results indicated that: R^2 =0.305. That means that the climate for innovation explains 30% of the change in the job performance, the results also indicated that (β=0.552, T= 7.43, F=86.86, Sig=0.000) so as the value of Sig is lower than (0.05), the null hypotheses will be rejected (H01) and we accept (Ha1) which says that there is a significant positive impact for climate for innovation on job performance.

H011: There is no significant positive impact for leadership for innovation on job performance
Ha11: There is a significant positive impact for leadership for innovation on job performance.

Table 5: Results of one sample T test on H011

β	T	R	R^2	F	Sig	Result of H01
0.547	4.49	0.547	0.300	84.72	0.000	Rejected

The researcher used One –Sample Test to examine H011 hypothesis and the results indicated that: R^2 =0.300. That means that the leadership for innovation explains 30% of the change in the job performance, the results also indicated that (β=0.547, T= 4.49, F=84.74, Sig=0.000) so as the value of Sig is lower than (0.05), the null hypotheses will be rejected (H011) and we accept (Ha11), which says that there is a significant positive impact for leadership for innovation on job performance.

H012: There is no significant positive impact for team climate for innovation on job performance.
Ha12: There is a significant positive impact for team climate for innovation on job performance.

Table 6: Results of one sample T test on H012

β	T	R	R^2	F	Sig	Result of H012
0.507	5.05	0.507	0.257	68.36	0.000	Rejected

The researcher used One –Sample Test to examine H012 hypothesis and the results indicated that: R^2 =0.257. That means that team climate for innovation explains 25.7% of the change in the job performance, the results also indicated that (β=0.507, T= 5.05, F=68.36, Sig=0.000) so as the value of Sig is lower than (0.05), the null hypotheses will be rejected (H012), and we accept (Ha12) which says that there is a significant positive impact for team climate for innovation on job performance.

H013: There is no significant positive impact for organizational culture for innovation on job performance.

Ha13: There is a significant positive impact for organizational culture for innovation on job performance.

Table 7: Results of one sample T test on H013

β	T	R	R^2	F	Sig	Result of H013
0.246	6.07	0.246	0.061	12.77	0.000	Rejected

The researcher used One –Sample Test to examine H013 hypothesis and the results indicated that: R^2 =0.246. That means that organizational culture for innovation explains 6.1% of the change in the job performance, the results also indicated that (β=0.246, T= 6.07, F=12.77, Sig=0.000) so as the value of Sig is lower than (0.05), the null hypotheses will be rejected (H013), and we accept (Ha13) which says that there is a significant positive impact for organizational culture for innovation on job performance.

H02: The demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, education, experience) don't impact the relationship between climate for innovation and job performance.

Ha2: The demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, education, experience) impact the relationship between climate for innovation and job performance.

Table 8: Results of one sample T test on H02

β	T	R	R^2	F	Sig	Result of H02
-0.131	14.37	0.131	0.017	0.846	0.498	accepted

The researcher used One –Sample Test to examine H02 hypothesis and the results indicated that: R^2 =0.017. That means that demographic characteristics of the respondents explains 1.7 % of the change in relation between climate for innovation and job performance, the results also indicated that (β=-0.131, T= 14.37, F=0.846, Sig=0.498) so as the value of Sig is more than (0.05), the null hypotheses will be accepted (H02). The demographic characteristic of respondents (gender, age, education, experience) doesn't impact the relationship between climate for innovation and job performance.

Study Conclusions

Based on the study finding, the main conclusions of the study are as follows:

3. The climate for innovation has a positive impact on job performance in Jordanian commercial banks as perceived from the employees; these results indicate that the commercial banks in Jordan are aware of the climate for innovation in enhancing organizational performance.
4. The leadership for innovation has a positive impact on job performance in Jordanian commercial banks as perceived from the employees; based on this result, the leadership within the commercial banks is playing a key role in enhancing performance.
5. The team climate for innovation has a positive impact on job performance in Jordanian commercial banks as perceived from the employees.
6. The organizational culture for innovation has a positive impact on job performance in Jordanian commercial banks as perceived from the employees.
7. Employees working in the commercial banks in Jordan perceived a high level of climate for innovation within their work environment.
8. The leadership for innovation is relatively high compared to both organizational culture for innovation and team climate for innovation.
9. Job performance as self evaluated from the employees working in the commercial banks in Jordan was perceived to be in a high level which indicates that the employees among Jordanian banks are satisfied and convinced about their performance.
10. There was no significant effect for the demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, education, experience) on the relationship between climate for innovation and job performance.

Study Limitations

1. Lack of cooperation from many commercial banks was one of the main limitations, part of them promised to cooperate and after a long waiting period they then refused to be part of the study.
2. A limitation of the literature: Few related studies were found to be relevant. Because of that, the main sources of data were the primary data collected through the distrusted questionnaire.

Study Recommendations

Based on the study finding the main conclusion of the study are as follows:

1. Using leadership as an effective tool to provide climate for innovation and impact job performance.
2. Decision makers in Jordanian commercial banks must be aware that providing a climate for innovation is an important determinant of job performance.
3. More effective team climate for innovation is highly needed to enhance job performance within commercial banks in Jordan.
4. More future research is highly needed to provide more supporting evidences on the study findings. At the same time, future research is recommended to take place in other Jordanian sectors (e.g., the telecommunication sector).

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