

THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN THE JORDANIAN COMMERCIAL BANKS

Khaled Khalaf Alzureikat

Jordanian Israa University, Amman, Jordan.

Correspondence: khaled.zureikat@iu.edu.jo

ABSTRACT: *This study aimed to identify the impact of strategic leadership with its dimensions (behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, strategic abilities, and skills) on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks. The study used the analytical descriptive approach. The study sample consisted of Jordanian commercial banks, with a total of (13) banks, where (6) banks were selected as the study sample. The analysis unit included the executive managers in the middle and senior management (general manager, deputy general manager, department manager, branch manager) in the targeted commercial banks, who were selected by using the comprehensive survey method with a total of 320 individuals. (320) questionnaires were distributed to the sample individuals, whereas (312) questionnaires were returned and only (302) of them were valid for statistical analysis. The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS, and the following results were concluded: There is a high level of the strategic leadership dimensions among the sample individuals in the targeted Jordanian commercial banks, where the means of these dimensions ranged between medium and high. There is a high level of organizational performance development in the targeted Jordanian commercial banks, where the means of these dimensions ranged between medium and high. There is an impact of strategic leadership with its dimensions (behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, strategic abilities, and skills) on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks*

Keywords: Strategic Leadership, Organizational Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational Performance is considered one of the basic factors that determine the organization's ability to achieve success in the competitive work environments. In the banking sector, particularly in the Jordanian commercial banks, organizational performance is viewed as a vital starting point towards achieving the strategic objectives and increasing operational efficiency. Strategic leadership has a pivotal role in guiding organizations towards excellence and sustainable development, where it is viewed as the force that determines the direction of performance and enhances the effectiveness of work inside institutions.

Strategic leadership surpasses the borders of merely making decisions, as it encompasses determining the institution's future vision, setting strategic goals, and motivating human resources to achieve the targeted objectives. Carter [1] suggested that strategic leaders in commercial banks contribute to developing the capacity of their institutions in order to face challenges and enhance their economic and technological capacity which, in turn, contributes to their competitive advantage.

Onyango [2] suggested that strategic leaders don't only set objectives but also contribute to motivating employees and guiding them towards achieving the bank's vision, which, in turn, contributes positively to the bank's organizational performance. In this vein, the impact of strategic leadership is evident in the leaders' application of their leadership styles, which improve coordination among various administrative departments and foster knowledge exchange within the bank. [3] suggested that strategic leadership is based on implementing the criteria of good governance and commitment to ethical values, which, in turn, enhances trust between employees and clients. In light of this type of leadership, organizational performance becomes more flexible and effective in encountering the rapid changes in the banking environment. Indeed, Jordanian banks face several challenges in light of the changing economic environment, including severe competition and constant technological developments. In this context, banks should focus on

improving their organizational performance by adopting strategic leadership. [28, 4] confirmed the importance of human-resources investment in achieving sustainable success, where this makes strategic leadership a critical factor in improving resource customization and achieving excellence in banking performance.

Furthermore, strategic leadership in the Jordanian commercial banks has a basic role in facing organizational challenges, such as the lack of strategic efficiency or organizational slackness, by developing the organizational structures in accordance with the strategic objectives. Strategic leaders can improve coordination between departments and enhance the effectiveness of implementing projects. Therefore, strategic leadership can contribute to offering innovative strategic solutions to develop organizational performance and achieve the bank's common goals.

In short, we can see that strategic leadership in the Jordanian commercial banks is considered a critical factor in improving organizational performance by setting effective strategies, promoting effective participation among employees, and making thoughtful decisions. Indeed, banks can face current and future challenges and ensure their success in the competitive environment.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Strategic Leadership is considered a basic element in achieving success and excellence in organizational performance institutions, particularly in light of the complicated and continuous challenges characterizing contemporary work environments, such as economic uncertainty and the lack of resources. In this context, the importance of strategic leadership is represented by its ability to adapt to continuous environmental changes and its effective contribution to enhancing organizational performance, which, in turn, enhances the organization's ability to encounter challenges effectively. Theoretical and experimental studies in the domain of strategic leadership have revealed that leaders in higher positions can significantly influence organizational performance through

their leadership practices. This finding was advocated by several studies that confirmed the positive relationship between strategic leadership and achieving higher performance [5, 6].

However, some studies showed that the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance could be complicated, where some environmental factors or internal restrictions may impede the effectiveness of strategic leadership (Knies, et al., 2016). Accordingly, some researchers [7] suggested that the studies addressing the effects of strategic leadership are still limited, especially in the banking sector, where the previous studies lacked the integration of the various partial and comprehensive dimensions of organizational performance.

The literature revealed that strategic leadership requires several basic practices that contribute to improving organizational performance, such as determining the long-term objectives, exploring the basic capabilities of institutions, managing social and human resources, and enhancing sustainable organizational culture. Some studies [8, 6] confirmed the necessity of creating balanced leadership practices that encompass enhancing ethical values and developing control systems to ensure the stability of the institution in the long run. Therefore, researchers should determine the leadership practices that lead to achieving distinctive and sustainable organizational performance. Despite the existence of many studies that addressed the topic of leadership, most of them didn't address particularly the effect of strategic leadership in the banking sector. Some studies revealed that strategic leaders with a clear vision are capable of directing work teams properly and achieving exceptional results in organizational performance [9]. Other studies [10, 29] revealed that institutions that lack strategic leadership may face a morale crisis and a lack of trust between employees, which, in turn, reduces productivity and increases worries between shareholders and clients.

Despite the variation in interpreting the effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance, strategic leadership is considered a critical factor in achieving distinctive and sustainable performance. Therefore, future studies should extend the range of their investigation to include the impact of strategic leadership on organizational performance in the banking sector, particularly the Jordanian commercial banks. Indeed, this has the potential of providing more understanding of the role of leadership in improving organizational performance which, in turn, contributes to achieving the strategic objectives of banks in a constantly changing work environment.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the current study is to assess the effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks. The following sub-objectives are derived from this main objective:

- 1- Identifying the impact of strategic leadership practices, according to the dimension of behavioural characteristics, on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks.

- 2- Identifying the impact of strategic leadership practices, according to the dimension of vision and entrepreneurial thinking, on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks.
- 3- Identifying the impact of strategic leadership, according to the dimension of strategic capabilities and skills, on organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks.
- 4- Providing work mechanisms and recommendations that will enhance the role of strategic leadership in developing organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks.

3. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H1: There is no statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for strategic leadership with its dimensions (behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, strategic abilities and skills) on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks.

The following sub-hypotheses are derived from this main hypothesis:

Ho1: There is no statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for strategic leadership according to the dimension of behavioural characteristics on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks.

Ho2: There is no statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for strategic leadership according to the dimension of vision and entrepreneurial thinking on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks.

Ho3: There is no statistically significant impact at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for strategic leadership according to the dimension of strategic abilities and skills on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The strategic leadership theory is attributed to the upper-echelon's theory, which states that the institution is a reflection of the values of managers in senior management. According to this theory, the knowledge, experiences, values, and preferences held by managers affect the way through which they evaluate their surrounding environment and make strategic decisions [11]. Hence, the concept of strategic leadership has been closely related to the concept of strategic management, where the basic role of the strategic leader is to set and implement the strategy.

Strategic leadership: It refers to the ability to affect others to enable them to make thoughtful decisions to improve the stability of the institution in the long term and simultaneously maintain its stability in the short term [12]. According to this definition, three main elements can be noticed: first, the strategic leader affects others; second, the strategic leader has a future vision; and third, the strategic leader faces challenges in achieving a balance between the long-term objectives and short-term objectives.

The study of strategic leadership focuses on a limited number of executive managers, such as chief executive officers, senior management teams, and boards of directors, who bear the general strategic responsibility for organizations [13]. Despite the importance of strategic leadership in enhancing organizational performance, researchers and practitioners in

this domain haven't reached a unified and comprehensive definition of this concept [14].

Despite the diverse terms and structures used in the previous studies about strategic leadership, [15] defined strategic leadership as a set of chief executive officers who make the main strategic decisions related to acquiring and integrating resources for the interest of the organization [16]. Suggested that strategic leadership is a set of distinctive abilities that include anticipation, realization, resilience, and strategic thinking, in addition to empowering employees to generate innovative ideas and improve performance, which, in turn, enhances the organizations' ability to adapt to changes and take advantage of the possible opportunities.

In a similar vein, [17] suggested that strategic leadership is an activity that aims to convey common values and a clear vision to employees while confirming the leader's ability to make decisions in the light of the least organizational controls.

The above-mentioned definitions revealed that strategic leadership constitutes a set of activities and abilities that aim to affect the organizational decisions at all levels while focusing on the future and managing the balance between the short-term objectives and long-term objectives—this is considered a vital issue to achieve a high organizational performance and a sustainable competitive ability.

5.1 The Previous Studies

A study, [18] aimed to identify the level of strategic leadership and strategic performance at the level of each dimension, and test the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic performance. The results revealed that there is a relationship between the practices of strategic leadership and the enhancement of strategic performance at the University of Diyala. The study recommended the necessity of investing in the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic performance in the process of strategic planning for the university to achieve its objectives.

In their study, [19] aimed to identify the role of balancing between the strategy and the organizational structure of the Algerian banks. The results revealed that adjustment between the strategy and the organizational structure contributes to achieving a good strategic performance for the Algerian Banks, where such an adjustment can be attributed to the effects of the company's resources and the factors related to the work environment. This doesn't apply to the general work environment factors that do not affect strategic performance. The results revealed that the demographic variables have no relationship with the considerable differences in adjustment between the strategy and the organizational structure.

A study entitled "The Strategic Leadership and its Effect on Developing the Capabilities of Organizational Learning: A Field Study at Um Al-Qura University", [20] aimed to identify the extent of practising strategic leadership with its dimensions (administrative, transformational, political, ethical) at Um Al-Qura University, identify the existence of the capabilities of organizational learning with its two types: explorative and exploitative in the University, and analyze the impact of strategic leadership dimensions on developing organizational learning capabilities. The results revealed that the practices of strategic leadership are highly practised and

that the capabilities of explorative organizational learning are practised to a medium degree, but more often as compared with the capabilities of exploitative organizational learning. The results revealed that there is a positive relationship for the impact of strategic leadership dimensions on developing organizational learning capabilities. Also, the transformational dimension was the most influential as compared to the other practices of strategic leadership. The study recommended the necessity of adopting the study model while focusing on the transformational dimension.

In a similar vein, [21] aimed to investigate the impact of the practices of strategic leadership on organizational reputation in some centrally-financed departments in the Ministry of Housing. The study used the analytical descriptive approach. The results revealed that there is a high relationship and effect for the practices of strategic leadership on organizational reputation. The study recommended the necessity of developing programs for information and feedback, in addition to paying more attention to public relationships.

A study entitled "The Relationship between Strategic Management and Leadership: A Critical Literature Review", [22] suggested that organizations need good strategic management and skilful leaders to achieve their objectives. Strategic leadership and strategic management are two different terms with different meanings. In this vein, the skilful leader follows his own rules; however, strategic leadership is always concerned with the institution's level and its policy. Therefore, the study aimed to investigate strategic management and leadership, while focusing on the relationship between them. The study included an introduction, a review of the definition and functions of management and strategic management, followed by a discussion of leadership in terms of definition, meaning, theories, and patterns. Then, the relationship between strategic leadership and leadership was demonstrated, followed by the conclusion.

In their study, [23] aimed to confirm that the design of organizations should be scientific-based and forward-looking. Indeed, this results in challenges concerning designing organizations in new contexts and situations. The results revealed that experimentation of new things is the basis for exploring and examining the good science of organizational design, where experimentation allows examining the nature of organizational designs that are not well-understood or not existent yet. Examples of that include collaborative communities, new ventures, and temporary organizations. The researchers suggested that experimentation allows exploring the organizational design problems and performing experiments to understand the relationship between the structure, the mechanisms of coordinating information, communication styles, decisions, trust, and incentives, which are viewed as the basis for the multi-contingency theory related to organizational design. Therefore, organizational design should determine the relationship between the structure of dividing tasks in the organization and its coordination, and how to make these tasks more compatible to work environment. To design good organizations, there should be empirical evidence about reality and expectations; to do so, we need a theoretical basis to be able to generalize

our knowledge. To demonstrate that, the study investigated two experiments about the classic M-form hypothesis, based on a computer simulation to explore coordination, organizational structure, and interdependency. The results revealed that M-form is viewed as a good organizational design, but with contingent conditions.

In another vein, [24] aimed to demonstrate the manifestations of inefficiency in the Nigerian public sector and develop the public sector in this country, and thus deal with the weakness in the progress of economic development. The results revealed that there is a weakness in the role of strategic leadership due to the lack of trust in the role of strategic leadership in solving problems and enhancing cooperation and efficiency. The study recommended the necessity of using the method of strategic management in solving problems, developing the efficiency of human resources and improving economic development.

Another study entitled "The Relationship between the Organizations' Innovation and Its Selected Determinants, such as Strategy, Corporate Culture, structure and the Operational Processes" [25] aimed to evaluate the relationship between the dimensions of corporate work and innovation degree based on two scales: Pearson correlation coefficient and Chi-square. It was assumed that the most innovative companies have structures that are similar to organic ones, with a slight effect on the elements of mechanistic structures. This assumption was also confirmed concerning the features of organizations that are viewed as important for innovation.

Similarly, [26] aimed to identify the perceived effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance in tourism government agencies. The general objective of the study was to determine the perceived influence of strategic leadership on organizational performance in tourism government agencies. The study also aimed to determine the perceived effect of strategic direction on the organization's performance, assess the perceived effect of organizational culture on organizational performance, investigate the perceived effect of an organization's resource portfolio on organizational performance, and assess the perceived moderating effect of organizational external environment on the organizational performance. The results revealed that strategic direction and resource portfolio have a positive significance on organizational performance. The results showed that organizational culture hurts organizational performance. Also, the environmental conditions have a perceived significant moderating effect on organizational performance, whereas the political environment and negative travel advisories resulting from insecurity have the strongest effect.

In their study, [27] aimed to identify the relationship between strategic leadership and service delivery of County Governments in Kenya. The relevant reviewed theories included the new public management theoretical perspective, upper-echelon theory, institutional theory, and principal-agent theory. The study revealed that strategic leadership has a prominent role in affecting service delivery among the Kenyan county governments. Finally, [28] revealed that organizations can be established in many ways to achieve the targeted objectives, where the amount and scale of the

business affect the structure of an organization, particularly while establishing a part of the organization. Also, the relationship between the project members has a prominent role in achieving the targeted objectives. The researcher applied three types of organizational structures to the project individuals working in the concrete-production sector. The obstacles related to the applicability of each type for concrete producers were analyzed. The results revealed that the functional model was the most appropriate applicable organizational structure for the sector of concrete production.

6. METHODOLOGY

The study used the analytical descriptive approach, where the study investigated the impact of a set of independent variables with the dimensions of behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, strategic abilities and skills, in addition to the dependent variable (organizational performance). A questionnaire was developed to collect data, which was distributed to the sample individuals, and then data were analyzed to achieve the study objectives and test its hypotheses.

6.1 The Study Population and Sample:

The study population consisted of the Jordanian commercial banks working in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, with a total of 13 banks, and 6 banks were selected as the study sample. The analysis unit included the executive managers in the middle and senior management (general manager, deputy general manager, department manager, branch manager) in the targeted commercial banks, who were selected by using the comprehensive survey method with a total of 320 individuals. (320) questionnaires were distributed to the sample, where (312) questionnaires were returned, and only (302) of them were valid for statistical analysis.

6.2 The Resources of Data:

The study used two types of resources: the secondary resources (books and studies published in Arabic and foreign arbitrated journals, and the main resources represented by the study instrument (questionnaire), which was developed based on several relevant studies.

6.3 The Validity and Reliability of the Study Instrument:

Face validity was determined to verify the suitability of the items to the study variables and practices, where the questionnaire was introduced to several specialized facility members. Also, the convergent validity and the discriminant validity of the study instrument were verified. Alpha Cronbach was calculated to assess the reliability of the questionnaire, where its value was (0.897). The coefficient values of practices ranged between (0.83-0.925), which are acceptable, as they are more than (0.70).

7. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS:

7.1 The means for the dimensions of strategic leadership

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of the sample individuals concerning strategic leadership. They are illustrated in table [1].

Table 1: Means and Standard deviations for the responses of the sample individuals concerning strategic leadership

No	Practices	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
1	Behavioural characteristics of leadership	3.89	.86	1	High
2	Vision and entrepreneurial thinking	3.78	.98	3	High
3	Strategic abilities and skills	3.74	.94	4	High
Strategic leadership practices as a whole		3.80		High	

The results in Table (1) revealed that the means for the responses of the sample individuals ranged between (3.74 - 3.89), where the rating ranged between medium and high for all the dimensions of strategic leadership. Practising the behavioural characteristics of leadership was in first place with a mean of (3.89), vision and entrepreneurial thinking were in second place with a mean of (3.78), while strategic abilities and skills dimension were in the third place with a mean of (3.74). Means and standard deviations were calculated for the responses of the sample individuals concerning organizational performance, where the mean value was high at a value of (3.92).

8. HYPOTHESES TESTING

The first main hypothesis implied that there is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks. The results revealed that the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance was positive (Beta), where the regression coefficient was (0.448), which is statistically significant at ($P < 0.001$). The results showed that the value of the determinant coefficient (R^2) for the

relationship between the dimensions of strategic leadership and organizational performance was (0.510), indicating that (51%) of the changes in organizational performance can be explained based on the independent variable (strategic leadership). The dimensions of strategic leadership are represented by behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, and strategic abilities and skills). The results confirmed the acceptance of the main hypothesis (f), which suggested that there is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks. This finding agrees with the previous studies used in this study.

8.1 Testing the Sub-Hypotheses:

The results in Table (2) revealed that all the dimensions of the independent variable which is strategic leadership affect significantly on improving the organizational performance of employees in the Jordanian commercial banks, where the regression coefficients (B) values were positive with (0.448, 0.379, 0.387, 0.213), respectively, where all these values were statistically significant at ($P < 0.001$).

Table (2) Regression analysis for the impact of strategic leadership on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks

No	Hypotheses statements as above	R^2	β	t-value	p-Value	F-value	Conclusions
H1	Strategic leadership with its dimensions (behavioural characteristics, vision and entrepreneurial thinking, strategic abilities and skills).	0.510	0.448	7.031	*0.000	49.419	Accepted
Ho1	Behavioural characteristics of leadership in organizational performance	0.143	0.379	5.369	*0.000	32.850	Accepted
Ho2	Vision and Entrepreneurial thinking in Organizational Performance	0.152	0.387	5.928	*0.000	35.101	Accepted
Ho3	Strategic abilities and skills in organizational performance	0.412	0.213	3.084	*0.000	40.833	Accepted

The results in table (2) also revealed that the calculated f value, which are considered as an indicator for the extent of the model's effect in assessing the total effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance in the Jordanian commercial banks, were respectively as follows: (32.850, 35.101, 40.833).

8.2 Discussing the Results

The results revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance in Jordanian commercial banks. The results showed that 51% of the changes in organizational performance can be explained based on strategic leadership, indicating the considerable effect of strategic leadership on performance.

8.3 Agreement with the previous studies

The results of this study agree with [17], revealing that the practices of strategic leadership have a positive effect on strategic performance at

Diyala University. The findings also agree with [18], which confirmed the importance of adjustment between the strategy and the organizational structure and their effect on improving strategic performance. The results of this study agree with [19], which confirmed the effect of strategic leadership on developing the abilities of organizational learning, whereas the results of this study also confirmed the effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance in the banking sector. The results of this study agree with [20], which suggested that strategic leadership affects improving organizational reputation in the Ministry of Housing, indicating the significant relationship between leadership and performance. Finally, the findings agree with [21], which confirms the significant relationship between strategic management and leadership and suggests that strategic leadership is necessary for improving organizational performance.

However, the current study disagrees with some studies. For example, [23] addressed the low efficiency of strategic leadership in the public sector and its slight effect on performance due to the lack of trust in the bureaucratic system adopted by the managerial staff, whereas the current study showed a positive effect of strategic leadership on performance. Here, the difference lies in the type of sector (public sector and private sector) and the organizational culture that may affect the effectiveness of leadership. [24] suggested that innovation depends on a flexible organizational structure and innovative team members, while the current study addressed the impact of strategic leadership on organizational performance in banks, where the relationship between leadership and innovation is less concentrated than suggested by [24].

8.4 Adjustment with the main hypothesis

The results of this study confirm the main hypothesis, implying that there is a statistically significant relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance, where this result has been concluded by several studies. Even though some studies [23] revealed a decline in the effectiveness of strategic leadership in some settings and contexts, the current study highlights the positive effect of strategic leadership on improving performance in certain contexts, such as the Jordanian commercial banks. Based on the results, we can see that some previous studies advocate the idea that strategic leadership has a critical role in improving organizational performance. However, some studies differ in terms of the context or the type of the investigated sector (public, private). Generally, the general direction agrees with the results of the current study, which confirm that strategic leadership contributes positively to improving organizational performance in various sectors, including the banking sector in Jordan.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the results, the study recommended the following:

- 1- Enhancing the practices of strategic leadership: the commercial Banks should focus on developing strategic leadership among the executive managers and middle management staff. This includes enhancing their capabilities in strategic planning, entrepreneurial thinking, and adaptation to environmental changes which, in turn, contributes to improving organizational performance.
- 2- Achieving a balance between leadership and organizational structure: Banks and other sectors should ensure adjustment between leadership strategies and organizational structures to achieve high performance. It just meant that a balance between strategic leadership and organizational structure enhances internal consistency and contributes to enhancing the efficiency of processes and decision-making.
- 3- Motivating innovation and organizational learning: Enhancing strategic leadership may promote the ability to innovate and learn inside the organization. Different sectors, including the banking sector, support a culture of sustainable learning and innovation in work

environments, which, in turn, enhances adaptation and sustainable development.

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