# HOW JORDANIAN BANKS MEASURE LEARNING & GROWTH PILLAR OF THE STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE?

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | **Purpose:** This research analyzes Jordanian Banks' Learning & Growth strategic performance (SP). Strategic performance includes learning and growth in the Balanced Scorecard. It incorporates all organizational capital-leveling measures. Learning and growth start process, customer, and financial performance. Banks' strategic pillar evaluations?<br><br>**Design/Methodology/Approach:** This empirical research answers this question using qualitative data from 24 bank employees from all levels using structured interviews from 61.5% of Jordanian Non-Islamic banks. NVivo-12 evaluated data.<br><br>**Findings:** This research found that the key banks' Learning & Growth performance measures are Employee Incentives, Team Communication, Career Development, Employee Motivation, and Employee Satisfaction. Literature and source data match banks' Learning & Growth metrics. This study chose the top five measures from the vast literature.<br><br>**Practical implications:** Implement initiatives to increase employee engagement, including opportunities for career growth, regular feedback channels, and recognition programs. Create a friendly workplace where people feel empowered to share their ideas and opinions and openly communicate.<br><br>**Originality value:** This research's top five Learning and Growth measurements analyze the S.P.'s Learning & Growth pillar to inform bank managers' strategic planning.<br><br>Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i7.2873 |

## COMO OS BANCOS JORDANIANOS MEDEM O PILAR DE APRENDIZAGEM E CRESCIMENTO DO DESEMPENHO ESTRATÉGICO?

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** Esta pesquisa analisa o desempenho estratégico (SP) de aprendizado e crescimento de bancos jordanianos. O desempenho estratégico inclui aprendizado e crescimento no Balanced Scorecard. Ele incorpora todas as medidas organizacionais de nivelamento de capital. Processo inicial de aprendizado e crescimento, desempenho do cliente e financeiro. Avaliações dos pilares estratégicos dos bancos?

**Design/Metodologia/Abordagem:** Esta pesquisa empírica responde a esta pergunta usando dados qualitativos de 24 funcionários bancários de todos os níveis usando entrevistas estruturadas de 61,5% dos bancos jordanianos não-islâmicos. Dados avaliados pelo NVivo-12.

**Constatações:** Esta pesquisa descobriu que as principais medidas de desempenho dos bancos em Aprendizagem e Crescimento são Incentivos aos Funcionários, Comunicação em Equipe, Desenvolvimento de Carreira, Motivação dos Funcionários e Satisfação dos Funcionários. A literatura e os dados de origem correspondem às métricas de Aprendizado e Crescimento dos bancos. Este estudo escolheu as cinco principais medidas da vasta literatura.

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**Implicações práticas:** implemente iniciativas para aumentar o envolvimento dos funcionários, incluindo oportunidades de crescimento na carreira, canais regulares de feedback e programas de reconhecimento. Crie um local de trabalho amigável onde as pessoas se sintam capacitadas para compartilhar suas ideias e opiniões e se comunicar abertamente.

**Valor da originalidade:** As cinco principais medidas de Aprendizado e Crescimento desta pesquisa analisam o pilar Aprendizado e Crescimento da S.P. para informar o planejamento estratégico dos gerentes bancários.

**Palavras-chave:** Desempenho Estratégico, Balanced Scorecard, Aprendizagem, Desempenho de Crescimento.


**¿CÓMO MIDEN LOS BANCOS JORDANOS EL PILAR DEL APRENDIZAJE Y EL CRECIENTE DESEMPEÑO ESTRATÉGICO?**

**RESUMEN**
**Objetivo:** Este estudio analiza el desempeño estratégico del aprendizaje y el crecimiento de la Ribera Occidental. El desempeño estratégico incluye el aprendizaje y el crecimiento en Balanced Scorecard. Incorpora todas las medidas de nivelación de capital organizacional. Proceso inicial de aprendizaje y crecimiento, rendimiento de los clientes y finanzas. ¿Evaluaciones de los pilares estratégicos de los bancos?

**Diseño/Metodología/Enfoque:** Esta encuesta empírica responde a esta pregunta utilizando datos cualitativos de 24 empleados de bancos a todos los niveles mediante entrevistas estructuradas del 61,5% de los bancos jordanos no islámicos. Datos evaluados por NVivo-12.

**Hallazgos:** Esta encuesta encontró que las medidas clave de desempeño de los bancos de Aprendizaje y Crecimiento son Incentivos para el Empleado, Comunicaciones del Personal, Desarrollo de la Carrera, Motivación de los Empleados y Satisfacción de los Empleados. La literatura y los datos de origen corresponden a las métricas de Aprendizaje y Crecimiento de los bancos. Este estudio seleccionó las cinco principales medidas de la vasta literatura.

**Consecuencias prácticas:** poner en práctica iniciativas para aumentar la participación de los empleados, incluidas las oportunidades de promoción de las perspectivas de carrera, los canales de retroalimentación periódicos y los programas de reconocimiento. Crear un lugar de trabajo amigable donde la gente se sienta facultada para compartir sus ideas y opiniones y comunicarse abiertamente.

**Valor de la originalidad:** Las cinco principales medidas de Aprendizaje y Crecimiento de esta encuesta analizan el pilar de Aprendizaje y Crecimiento de la S.P. para informar la planificación estratégica de los gestores bancarios.

**Palabras clave:** Rendimiento Estratégico, Cuadro de Mando Equilibrado, Aprendizaje, Rendimiento de Crecimiento.

## INTRODUCTION

The need for a performance management system is not limited to a certain type of organization; it's required in all sectors, either for profit, or non-for-profit. This was confirmed by Yang et al. (2015) who mentioned that measuring performance even in government-managed organization became trendy because of governance and media. Service organizations are still confused and lack the required consistency in measuring performance toward strategic objectives (Gomes et al., 2018), though measuring performance is one of the most important and major activities for the manager within their controlling role, which needed to support manager's decision making process (Ozturk et al., 2014). This confusion in measuring performance hinders the organizations' ability to evaluate its managers' decisions, competitiveness, adaptability to changes, and even the ability to translate the strategy plan (Chakravarthy, 1986; Ittner et al., 2003), where it includes examining the internal and external

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factors in order to decide on the needed responses to improve competitiveness,  and to cope with the business environment changes, which make it hard for banks to develop and maintain strategic plans, to keep the ability to achieve the strategic goals, which are the main element of the strategic plan due to its ability to push the organization to accomplish its vision (AlSartwai, 2017).  The dramatic changes in the global business environment were behind the development of many performance assessment systems frameworks and models, including (1)Strategic Measurement and Reporting Technique (SMART), (2) The Performance Matrix, (3) The Business Excellence Model,(4) The Performance Pyramid System, (5) The Balanced Scorecard (B.S.C.), (6) The Results and Determinants Framework, (7)The Cambridge Performance Measurement Systems Design Process, (8)The Macro Process Model, (9) The Integrated Performance Measurement Systems (IPMS), (10) The Performance Prism, (11)Six Sigma (Hussain et al., 2002; Lynch et al., 1991; Muhenje, 2013; Nelly et al., 2001; Norton et al., 1996; Owusu, A. 2017; Pesic et al., 2013; Yadav et al., 2013 ) where this list can be classified the into four categories; Traditional, Integrated, Modified B.S.C., and Context related, and Newly Developed (Yadav et al., 2013).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### The Balanced Scorecard as S.P Measurement Tool

The Balanced Scorecard, was developed by Norton and Kaplan in 1996 and started in the manufacturing sector in the beginning, and only in developed countries, before being a trend also in services organisations, including banks afterwards (Al-mawali et al., 2010; Al Sawalqa et al., 2011). B.S.C. was universally recognised by both researchers and practitioners who are interested in a credible Strategic Performance Assessment System (Dincer et al., 2016; Letza, 1996; Soe, 2019) due to its ability to ensure the balance in management thinking and helps in providing an integrated and completed information about the organisation performance (Turshan et al., 2020). The B.S.C. includes a four-perspective module to measure organizational Performance and considers the main strategic management system to its ability to shift the managers' focus on the future and to increase their accountability toward achieving the goals (Heavey et al., 2012).

The financial perspective is about the company's ability to achieve the business bottom-line targets, the Customer perspective is about the company's ability to attract and keep the targeted customers, Internal Process perspective is about the Performance of the internal activities needed to support achieving the customer, and financial objectives, and lastly

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Innovation / Learning & Growth perspective is about developing the employees, systems and improving products to achieve growth (Muhenje, 2013; Norton al., 1996). Based on the above, B.S.C. has many types of balance, the first one between current and future objectives, the second between tangible and non-tangible (Learning & Growth) (Rostami et al., 2015; Yang, 2015), and the third is between related organizational factors, and non-organizational related factors (Rostami et al., 2015). In addition, there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the four perspectives (Khatib, 2020), which makes it easier to use the B.S.C. to design effective and easy-to-use strategic maps (Agbanu et al., 2016), and it facilitates better collaboration between different teams in the same organisations (Bandawaty et al., 2020; Soe, 2019).

**Learning and Growth Performance**

This perspective of performance helps the organizations to evaluate the readiness for the future through the effort to develop intangible assets (Rostami et al., 2015; Tuan, 2020) and provide the enablers needed to achieve the three other perspectives' objectives, by preparing the environment needed to achieve the strategic objectives (Singh, 2018; Basha et al., 2023). Learning & Growth perspective measures are not easy to be chosen (Al-mawali et al., 2010), due to the wide range of available measures and the fact that most of them is intangible, especially the people side (Abofaied, 2017) in addition to the human capital, information & data management systems, and working procedures and working environment measures (Al Sawalqa et al., 2011; Kerazan, 2019; Khaled et al., 2019). A wide range of measures that related to the learning and growth perspective performance in general and banking industry in specific were found in the literature and summarized below: (1) Training Budget; (2) Employee Satisfaction; (3) Employee Turn-over; (4) Employee Motivation; (5) Information system accessibility; (6) Information system accuracy; (7) Information system capability; (8) Time needed to get information; (9) Number of employees improvements suggestion; (10) Number of employees implemented suggestions, (11) Number of employees who promoted after developing skills or gaining higher education; (12) Number of Strategy communication sessions; (13) Capabilities and qualifications ; (14) Spending on technology ; (15) Time to market regarding introducing new products ; (16) Number of training courses attended by each employee ; (17) Decline in negative attitude issues ; (17) Team communication ; (18) Career development ; (19) Employees self-service; (20) Employees incentives; (21) Infrastructure spending (Abofaied, 2017; Agyeman et al., 2017; Al-mawali et al., 2010; AlSartawi, 2017; Al

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Sawalqa et al., 2011; Bandawaty et al., 2020; Dincer et al., 2016; Heavey et al., 2012; Kerazan, 2019; Khaled et al., 2019; Rostami et al., 2015; Singh, 2018 ; Tuan, 2020; Turshan et al., 2020)

Viewing the above list of Learning & Growth banks performance measures shows that they are revolving around enhancing all the internal environment factors that support better process, customer, and financial performance.

**METHODOLOGY**

Most of the Jordanian commercial banks were included in this case-study research, where data was collected from 24 Jordanian banks employees across three levels (Headquarter, Branch Manager, and Branch Employee), representing 8 different Jordanian origin commercial banks through in-depth Structured interviews. The empirical qualitative data was analyzed through text analysis in general, and Content Analysis in specific, using NVivo-12 software to facilitate the analysis process. The data collection tool that guided the structured interviews depended on a closed-ended question. This was done to get correct and valid data, because the respondents could not recall the measures, or couldn't name define it correctly. That's why the researcher decided that it is better to let them select within a list, taking into consideration the thorough list of available measures. The answers choices are the measure collected after triangulating the measures from the literature review process, the measures that resulted from the pilot, and the measures that the researcher got after applying thematic analysis on the annual report of the best-performing bank in Jordan. This process resulted in listing a total of 22 for Learning & Growth Performance Measure. Most of the respondents selected the minimum required number of measures (5 measures), and a minor number selected 6-7 measures. At the beginning of the analysis stage, the selected choices were coded using the same name as the choice itself. For example, the Employee Turn-Over measure to measure Employees Satisfaction was coded 'Employees Satisfaction'. This allowed us to use NVivo-12 Software to count the number of employees who selected each of the Learning & Growth S.P. measures to get a list of Top-5 measures that related to this perspective of the S.P, which is the recommended number of measures per perspective. The Top-5 list per perspective was identified through the number of files in the nodes tree, which the researcher considered to perceive the importance of the measures for the bankers more than the number of references. The number of files in NVivo stands for the number of respondents who select a specific measure, while the number of references counts the repetition, which might come from one employee only. If the number of files equals 5, this means that the code was repeated a cross five different respondents, while

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if the number of references is 5, it means that the code was repeated on five occasions which might be by one respondent or more, which does not present the relative importance of the measure, while more employees are selecting a measure does (Malahim et al., 2023).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

During the 24 interviews, 23 sub-nodes presenting Learning & Growth performance measures were selected by the bank's employees within this list of measures that were developed by the researcher based on literature review, piloting interview, and the strategy map that the researcher developed based on the text analysis for the larger bank in Jordan when it comes to assets, deposits, the total number of internal & external and profit. As shown in the below figure, which was extracted from this research NVivo nodes tree, the Jordanian banks within the sample used a combination of all the listed Learning & Growth performance measures, except the Time to Market Regarding Introducing New Products. The rest of the measures are commonly used with various levels, which vary from low to high.

Figure 1 Nodes & Codes representing Learning & Growth Performance Measures Used by Jordanian Banks.

| Name | Files | References |
|---|---|---|
| Learning & Growth Performance Measures | 0 | 0 |
| Capabilities and Qualifications | 2 | 4 |
| Career Development | 15 | 15 |
| Decline in Negative Attitude Issues | 2 | 2 |
| Employee Motivation | 11 | 12 |
| Employee Satisfaction | 10 | 15 |
| Employee Turn-Over | 8 | 8 |
| Employees Incentive | 16 | 16 |
| Employees' Self Service | 1 | 1 |
| Information System Accessability | 6 | 6 |
| Information System Accuracy | 7 | 8 |
| Information System Capabilities | 3 | 3 |
| Infrastructure Spending | 1 | 1 |
| Number of Employees impelemnted suggestions | 5 | 5 |
| Number of employees who promoted after developing skills or | 7 | 7 |
| Number of Strategy communication sessions | 2 | 3 |
| Number of training courses attended by each employee | 9 | 9 |
| Numberof employees improvments suggestions | 3 | 3 |
| Spending on Technology | 4 | 4 |
| Team Communication | 15 | 17 |
| Team Development | 1 | 3 |
| Time Needed to Get Information | 9 | 9 |
| Time to market regarding introducing new products | 0 | 0 |
| Training Budget | 10 | 11 |

Source: Research work based on primary data analysis using Nvivo-12

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**The Top Five Learning & Growth Performance Measure**

Here the top five Learning & Growth performance measures that the Jordanian banks employees selected were reported. The most common measure was the Employee Incentives, which were selected by 16 respondents out of 24 (around 66.7 % from the sample). The branch employee in bank 6 highlighted the importance of incentives; *B6E3: "Incentive is significant."*

The effect of incentives on the employee's motivation was discussed by this branch employee when she said; B3E3 *"The employee became more motivated because they know that if they work harder and better, they will get more incentive, which gives them more motivation because it shows that they are a great worker."*

The second measure bankers in Jordan use to measure Learning & Growth Performance is Team Communication, which was referenced 17 times in 15 interviews out of 24 (62.5 %) of the sample size. The communication between the team should be smooth; B4E2: *"We need easy communication. I need to be in front of the relationship manager to communicate and supervise and for better accessibility."*

The third measure is Career Development, which, according to 15 bank employees out of 24 (62.5 % of the sample), is one of the significant Learning & Growth performance measures. Career development is associated with promotions; B4E3: "*What might satisfy the employees and make things calmer is the probability of being promoted.*"

Moreover, a clear career path supports higher employee satisfaction.; B6E1: "*Clear career path in the bank, to know where I would stand next year if I stayed.*"

Employee Motivation ranked number four, which was mentioned in 11 interviews out of 24 (45.8 %) as a primary Learning & Growth performance indicator. The employees focused more on the financial type of motivation, as noticed in this lady's answer who is working as a customer service employee in one of Bank 7 branches. B7E3: "*Having more salaries for the newcomers from banks than the current employees' salaries.*"

Following the motivation, Employee Satisfaction gained the support of 10 bank employees out of 24 (41.7 %), ranked as the fifth Learning & Growth performance measure adopted by a Jordanian bank. The importance of this measure is not debatable at all; B1E2: *"Employee satisfaction is essential."*

Learning & Growth performance cares about the people side (Abofaied, 2017) and combines human capital, information Capital, and working procedures and environment (Al Sawalqa et al., 2011; Kerazan, 2019; Khaled et al., 2019). Those aspects mentioned by the previous researchers validate what was listed in the Top-5 list of learning & growth

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performance measures, resulted from this research which includes; (1) Employee Incentives, (2) Team Communication, (3) Career Development, (4) Employee Motivation, and (5) Employee Satisfaction. The main aspects of Learning and Growth performance according to the previous research works are; Human Capital and People side, which are related to Employee Incentive, Career Development, Employee Motivation and Satisfaction (Measures# 1,3,4,5 from the Top-5 List) and the three aspects of information capital and working procedures, and working environment are linked with Team Communication (Measure# 2 from the Top-5 List). Based on the alignment between the Learning & Growth Performance Measures and the Measures resulted from the primary data analysis, the Top 5 Learning & Growth performance measures mentioned above that were considered as a priority for the banks' employees have to be transformed into a Learning & Growth Performance Objectives that support banks Strategic Performance.

## CONCLUSION

This empirical research provided a list of the most important measures that Jordanian banks adopt to assess the Learning and Growth perspective of the S.P. The list is shown in the below figure, where the larger the area the most important that measures for banks. Based on the output of this research, The Top-5 list of the Learning & Growth measures that Jordanian banks adopted, arranged from the most important to the less, are; (1) Employee Incentives, (2) Team Communication, (3) Career Development, (4) Employee Motivation, and (5) Employee Satisfaction.

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Figure 2 Hierarchy Chart of the Jordanian Banks' Learning & Growth Performance Measures
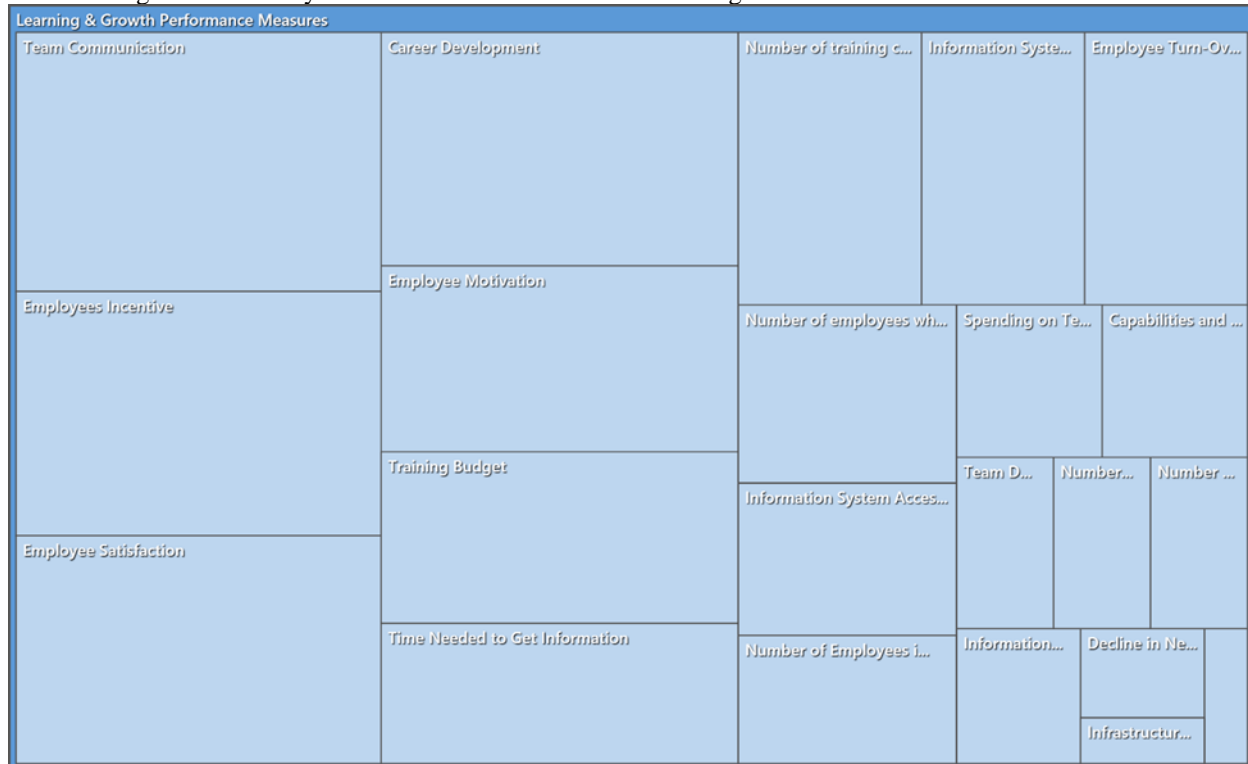


Source: Research work based on primary data analysis using Nvivo-12

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