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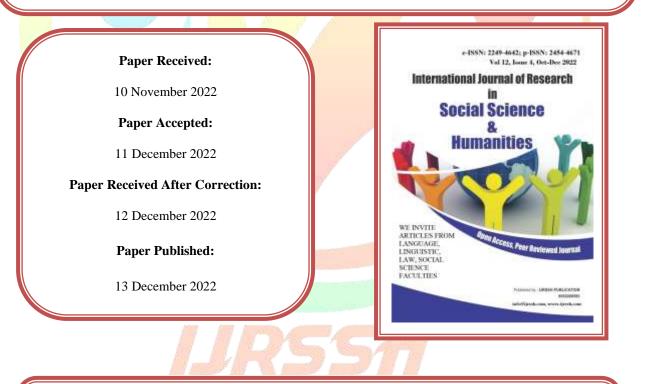
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## THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY AND LEADERSHIP IN ACHIEVING THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF BANKS

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to clarify the role of creativity and leadership in achieving competitive advantage in the banking business environment. As the presence of leadership in the business environment is a result of the presence of important precedents that contributed to its achievement, which is represented in innovation and creativity as a continuous chain that cannot be divided, which in turn is one of the most important ingredients in the path of success and development of organizations and their survival and achieving the banking competitive advantage as a strategic goal sought by most organizations at the present time . Since relying on the adaptive innovative tradition in Iraqi organizations is not sufficient at all to catch up with the developed economy in the countries of the world, and since the business environment is characterized by instability as an inherent characteristic of it, it is very important to adopt the entrepreneurial spirit that is represented in entrepreneurship to progress quickly and achieve qualitative leaps that contribute to distinguishing clearly differentiated from its competitors.

The conceptual framework of the current study was based on three main variables. Innovation and entrepreneurship as independent variables and achieving banking competitive advantage as a dependent variable. This study was applied in private banks affiliated to the banking sector in Iraq. A questionnaire will be developed to ensure the existence of a relationship between the main variables of the study as a tool for data collection in 10 private banks in Iraq for a sample of (213) working individuals and using a set of statistical tools available in programs (SPSS V.22 – AMOS V.22).

**Keywords:** Innovation, entrepreneurship and banking competitive advantage.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Since its inception, business organizations have increasingly sought to achieve competitive advantage and maintain their survival within the business environment, but these goals in the recent period are characterized by increasing complexity due to the complexity of the business environment and the large number of variables that directly affect the work of organizations and the rapid change of the landscape in the business environment in general (Maomao et al., 2022: 1). Organizations found their role in achieving these goals through innovation,

creativity, and leadership in the workplace, which are among the increasingly important determinants of organizational performance. success. and long-term survival. well as achieving as the advantage competitive of banking organizations (Bingbing et al., 2021:223). Since organizations seek to harness the ideas and suggestions of their employees, it is evident that the process of generating and implementing ideas becomes a source of distinct competitive advantage (Anderson et al., 2004: 147; West, 2002: 355; Zhou & Shalley, 2003: 165). However, creativity, innovation and leadership are complex phenomena, and in

particular innovation and creativity are multi-level phenomena, as they are two phenomena that appear over time, and their exploitation as an opportunity requires skilled leadership in order to maximize its benefits and exploit it in new ways of working and developing it. Over the past 30 to 40 years significant research built into four has been specific approaches to levels of analysisindividual, team, organizational, and multilevel approaches-across many disciplines within the management sciences (West, 2002: 355). In the recent period, there has been a tremendous growth in the number of published studies innovation creativity, and on entrepreneurship in general, which reflects the growing interest of researchers about these tools and their importance in the success of the organization in surviving in the competitive environment as well as achieving its competitive advantage.

#### **Research problem**

The work in the establishment of private banks has become one of the mature projects with surplus capacity and high concentration, and at the present time these banks are spread widely with many of them adopting marketing strategies driven by fairly low prices, which makes the role of differentiation from competitors through innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship essential. increasingly (Morschett et al., 2006: 275; Tushar, 2022: 2). Close examination of trends in both service and industrial organizations indicates that there is a set of factors that affected the ability of those organizations to achieve competitive advantage, whether those factors are at the level of different industries or those related to the capabilities of the organization itself (Harris and Ogbonna, 2001: 159; William et al., 2022: 863). And since the business environment in general is characterized by rapid change, it is clear that this change is only a reflection of consumer requirements by providing a wide range of products and services without compromising the prices of those products and services as much as possible (Burt. and Sparks, 1994:/195; 2001: Harris and Ogbonna , 160; Elisabetta et al., 2021: 3). According to Porter (1985)banking competitive advantage can be achieved by appearing distinct and introducing new services/products. Due to the proliferation of financial institutions in Iraq, competition has become increasingly intense. This makes it difficult for banking institutions to easily achieve their goals of survival and competitive advantage without knowing the appropriate tools to achieve those goals and the ability to make

them part of the organization's culture (Harris and Ogbonna, 2001: 157; Maomao et al., 2022: 3). These tools are represented by innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, which enable institutions to achieve their goals by placing sufficient attention on the presence of these effective tools as part of the organization's performance. The problem of the current study can be summarized through the following main research question:

((What is the role of each of innovation and entrepreneurship in the ability of banks to achieve a competitive advantage?))

#### Study objectives

The main objective of the current study is to build a conceptual model that combines the variables of the study represented by (innovation and leadership) as two independent variables (achieving the banking competitive advantage) as an approved variable, and in order to provide conclusions commensurate with the actual reality in the current business environment, the study aimed to clarify the importance Creativity, and leadership in achieving the banking competitive advantage, which was and still is one of the most important goals of business organizations in the private banking sector, on the basis of which the study presented a set of recommendations

that enhance the achievement of the goals of those organizations in staying in the midst of the current competition and achieving competitive advantage in the future by clarifying and knowing the foundations And the criteria for the survival of organizations and their achievement of competitive advantage and the promotion of precedents for those goals that can be reached by testing the following relationship:

• Examining the direct impact relationship between (innovation and leadership) as two independent variables and (achieving banking competitive advantage) as an approved variable.

The importance of the study:

• In light of the modest review carried out by researchers in previous studies that dealt with the variables that were adopted in the current study, they found that previous studies had dealt with the relationship between innovation and achieving competitive advantage and between entrepreneurship and achieving competitive advantage separately (Duane & Justin, 2007; Paek & Lee, 2018; Gontur et al., 2022) and as far as the researchers informed, are there was no study combining the independent variables with achieving the banking competitive advantage in one model. Therefore, the current study relied on building this model as an attempt to bridge the gap between the variables shown by other studies and to develop the models that were put forward through the recommendations of previous studies.

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### **1**. Innovation: Innovation

To talk about innovation. an important issue must be clarified, which is that there is a great confusion between this concept and the concept of creativity, as both of them talk about change in a fundamental way, and it seems that creativity is a stage of innovation (Drucker, 2006:168)), and as there was what was called 4P)) in The state of creativity, innovation also requires 4Ps, namely: (1) product innovation, 2) process innovation, 3) position innovation, and finally innovation in terms of the dominant paradigm, which aims to re-characterize, or coordinate the predominantly approved model for a product. Or a process (Frances & Bessant, 2005:172).

Innovation is at the level of individuals, groups, and organizations, so it is referred to as finding an opportunity for change, and working to adopt that opportunity, using all available means and resources that can be provided, including making changes in the design of the organizational structure to make it commensurate with innovation and supportive of it (Simao et al) ., 2016:157), and from here it turns out that creativity is the tool that entrepreneurs use as a means of change through continuous thinking and investing in opportunities to provide different things that may be a good, a service, or a process (Drucker, 2014:23)), and at the organizational level it launches On innovation as а mechanism that organizations seek to apply to adapt and respond to modern technology and continuous environmental changes (Razavi & Attarnezhad, 2013:227). The importance of innovation is evident by observing the organizations' continuous pursuit for survival and growth (Damanpour, 1991:556)), and it can also be said that there are various ways in which innovation has an impact on the growth and prosperity of organizations, including: The first method is that innovation is the determining factor for the growth of organizations And its success by focusing on innovation-oriented business an strategy. The second method indicates that organizational innovation is a by-product of dynamic organizational development describes and prioritizing business conditions rather than focusing exclusively on managing innovation. As for the third

method, it is through which organizational innovation is adopted as a contributing factor, but it emphasizes the delicate balance between organizational innovation and other factors contributing to efficient business performance (Razavi & Attarnezhad, 2013:226). The importance of innovation is also crystallized as it leads to the creation of new businesses, which This in turn leads to economic growth. Whether these new organizations are new emerging organizations or whether they new businesses within existing are organizations, the latter has been described recently as internal entrepreneurship and all of these contribute to raising the level of the national and global economy (Shah et al, 2014:4)

Finally, to complete the talk about innovation, we must refer to what Peter Drucker called systematic innovation, which means specifically observing seven sources of innovative opportunities. The sources lie within first four the organization, whether it is a commercial organization, a public service organization, or within an industry or service sector. It is therefore primarily visible to people within that industry or service sector. These four sources are: (Drucker, 2014:42-43).

• All that is unexpected and includes (unexpected success, unexpected failure, and unexpected external event)

• Contradiction - between reality as it actually is, and reality as it is supposed or as it ought to be.

• Innovation based on practical need.

• Changes in industry structure or market structure that take everyone by surprise.

The second group of sources for innovative opportunities, a group of three sources, includes changes outside the organization or industry:

• Demographics (population changes).

• Changes in perception, mood and meaning.

• New knowledge, whether scientific or non-scientific.

#### 2. Entrepreneurship

About the year (1800) there was a well-known saying by the French economist J.P. Say)), that the entrepreneur is the person who transfers economic resources from an area of low productivity to an area of higher productivity and greater return, although only say)) through this The definition did not tell us who is confusion the entrepreneur, and the

continued defining in who is the entrepreneur explicitly (Drucker, 2014:25)), as the entrances through which to judge what is entrepreneurship or not are varied, in fact, the branches of literature defined Different are organizational criteria are different as they constitute entrepreneurship, so sometimes what exactly constitutes entrepreneurship depends on organizational criteria such as the size of the organization (small or medium-sized organization), its age, whether it is owned by an individual (selfemployed, start-up, or family ownership), whether they have legal status or (Audretsech, 2012:756). However, this is not acceptable on an ongoing basis, as entrepreneurship is a form of economic activity, such as relying on exports, for example, entrepreneurship but is characterized by accepting creative ideas, taking risks, and constantly thinking about the future (Ratten, 2022:1), this means that entrepreneurs are motivated profit, and they strive to achieve growth and profits in the business world, they are always creative and try to get bigger shares in the market, they are the individuals who create project after project and innovation after innovation (Kuratko, 2016:8).

It is necessary to review some definitions for different periods of time about entrepreneurship, as it was defined as a purposeful activity to start, maintain and develop profit-oriented businesses (Cole, 1968:65)), while it was defined as a set of behaviors that initiate and manage the reallocation of economic resources and their purpose. It is the creation of value (Herron & Robinson, 1993: 283)), and in the year (2000) a definition appeared that appeared to be more comprehensive to define the concept of entrepreneurship, which is that entrepreneurship is a process that includes discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities to introduce products, services, processes, or methods. New organization or new markets (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000:219) In the year ((2011) Gries & Naude presented a definition that entrepreneurship is the resource, the process and the situation that individuals go through and take advantage of the positive opportunities in the market through establishment the and development of business organizations (Gries & Naude, 2011: 217). Therefore, entrepreneurship is a creative human process, a process that mobilizes resources from one productive level to another higher and better level. It means the individual's will to assume responsibilities and the mental ability to transform the task from idea to implementation. Another of component entrepreneurship is identifying opportunities where others find nothing but chaos, contradictions, or confusion (Toma et al., 2014:438).

Entrepreneurship is often considered economic wealth, as wealth is not created except by actors in the arena who are contaminated with dirt, dust, blood and sweat (Frese & Gielnik, 2014:421). These are the producers who go out on their own, who know the highs and lows, the great loyalties, who do their best for worthwhile causes, the supermen, who keep thinking and seek to learn new ways of working (Ratten & Usmanij, 2021:2). Without exception, they fail more than they succeed and appreciate this reality even before they venture out on their own. But when these wealth producers fail, they at least fail in style, and their intuition soon catches that failure is only a place to rest, not a place to spend their lives. Their place will never be with those nameless souls who know neither victory nor defeat, who receive weekly pay checks regardless of the week's performance, who respond to opportunities they see as others do not, and seize opportunities for profit (Kirzner, 2015:47). No matter their lot at any given moment, they will take no place alongside the recipients, for their place is unique, their own, under the sun. They are entrepreneurs! Howard, 2:2021)), so they are tireless and may initiate what might be called a new entry, which refers to: (1)

introducing new product to a an established or new market, (2) introducing an established product to a new market, or (3) create a new organization (regardless of whether the product or market is new to competitors or customers (Hisrich et al., 2017:58), Shah al., 2014:185) et Entrepreneurship as a process, consisting identifying of six steps:-(1) the opportunity, (2) defining the business concept, (3) assessing required resources, (4) obtaining resources, (5) implementing and managing the business concept, and (6) Harvesting business results.

## Research the similarities between innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship

With the development of these three areas of research, four major parallel themes have emerged. First, the importance of the new idea lies in the centrality of each of the three areas. Second, the process of coming up with ideas is central to every field. Third, the type of person involved in being creative/innovative/entrepreneur is discussed a lot. Finally, the general context is also important for each domain. Each of these topics is discussed in more detail here because the three areas can benefit from discussing common research interests and findings that can inform each other.

With regard to developing or defining a new idea, creativity involves generating new and useful ideas (Amabile, 1996: 21; Shalley et al., 2004: 933). As such, creativity is a precursor to both innovation and entrepreneurship. Specifically, innovation includes the implementation of ideas and creativity (Zhou & Shalley, 2011: 275). Although we usually refer to creativity as the generation of ideas and to innovation as the implementation of ideas, in reality creativity and innovation are not as clearly independent of each other as they seem. If we think of entrepreneurship as a more specific form of innovation, or a form related to the development of New projects, there are similarities too. Since entrepreneurship refers to the application of ideas and creativity in new business ventures, which can include the creation of new markets, new products and services, and new companies, researchers usually make mistake studying when a entrepreneurship, as researchers examine opportunities identifying instead of focusing on generating creativity (Eckhardt & Shane, 2003: 333). In innovation studies, researchers discuss the importance of obtaining support for new ideas in order to be able to implement them, while in entrepreneurship studies this is called exploiting the opportunity to

create a new project (Amabile, 1996: 22; Shalley et al., 2004: 934).

Some researchers have suggested that creativity can be either incremental (for example, modifications to existing processes) or radical (i.e. significant discoveries), emphasizing that radical creativity occurs much less often than incremental and parallels the distinction between gradual and radical in In creativity studies, concepts of the exploitation and exploration are found in innovation studies as well (Gilson & Madjar, 2011: 21; Madjar et al., 2011: 730). Specifically, exploration refers to a firm's behavior that is characterized by research, discovery, experimentation, risktaking, and innovation, while exploitation includes behaviors such as refinement, implementation, efficiency, production, and selection (He & Wong, 2004: 481; 1991: 72). March, Many real entrepreneurial activities, many business ventures that are new in nature, a more radical kind of idea, creativity or more exploratory innovative behavior However, this notion runs counter to the argument that entrepreneurs, due to institutional and bureaucratic barriers. often develop products or services or new markets that are gradual rather than radical (Gupta et al., 2006: 693).

#### **3**. Banking Competitive Advantage

The banking competitive advantage is what distinguishes the bank from other banks competing with it, or operating in the same field of work, or that participate with it and compete with it in negotiation in order to obtain scarce resources (Kay, 1993:14)), for example, exploiting changes and technological developments that play An active role in changing the rules of competition (Porter, 1985:60; Dagnino et al., 2021:101)), however, obtaining a competitive advantage is not easy at all, and strategic managers and researchers have always been interested in understanding the sources of competitive advantage (Bilgihan et al., 2011:139) The main focus was on what is called a SWOT analysis)) by pointing out that gain organizations their competitive advantage if they succeed in exploiting opportunities and neutralizing environmental threats, while exploiting avoiding strengths and internal weaknesses, which makes them more likely to gain competitive advantages against Other types of organizations (Barney, 1995: 49)), and in general, competitive advantage is referred to as creating value. However, there is no great agreement on the value of a specific thing at a particular time (Romelt, 2003: 1).

That scarce and valuable resources at the same time can create a competitive advantage, and if these resources are also difficult to replicate, replace and difficult to provide, then they can maintain the advantage and highly skilled workers are among the most important sources of competitive advantage (Kumar & Pansari, 2016: 511). Competitive advantage also occurs when an organization acquires or develops a feature or set of features that allow it to outperform its competitors. These features may include access to natural resources, such as high-quality raw materials or inexpensive energy, or access to highly trained human resources. et al., 2011:100)), and innovation in our current time is one of the most important sources of competitive advantage, by introducing new or improved products to the market before other competitors, and thus increasing the organization's share in the market, or providing high-quality products at a lower price and service Better and faster (Distanont & Khongmali, 2020:18).

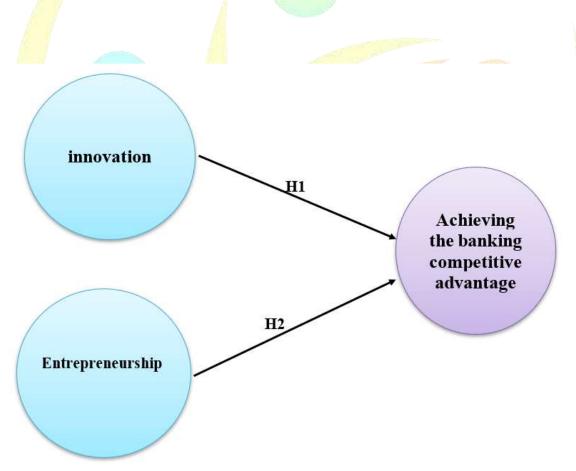
## Study plan and building and developing hypotheses

The hypothesis diagram of the study clarifies the main variables of the study that were adopted and relied upon in formulating the problem of the current study, and clearly shows the relationships

that link the variables on which the researchers relied in formulating the hypotheses of the study, as shown in Figure (1). The study was based on the construction of the hypothesis scheme on the existence of a set of hypotheses, as follows: 1- The presence of innovation enhances the possibility of the organization achieving the banking competitive advantage.

2- The presence of entrepreneurship enhances the possibility of the organization achieving the banking competitive advantage.





#### PRACTICAL SIDE

## First: the statistical validity of the research measures

The statistical validity of the study scale was verified as described in the steps listed below:

# 1. The apparent validity of the research scale:

For the purpose of verifying that the paragraphs of the scale were formulated in a way that achieves its main objective, which is to correctly represent the dimensions of the scale, the study scale was presented to a group of (7) arbitrators with specialization in the field of business administration, so some paragraphs were rephrased based on their proposals to become more clear and accurate to the respondents.

#### 2. Stability of the search scale:

Table (1) shows the internal consistency of each paragraph of the scale, as the stability of the research scale was verified by using the Crow-Nabach alpha coefficient

Table (1) Measuring the reliability of the research tool.

Cronbach's alpha	search variables
0.895	Innovation
0.887	Entrepreneurship
0.879	Achieving the banking competitive advantage
0.900	The overall stability of the research scale

Descriptive analysis of research variables

<b>Table 2: Descriptive</b>	statistical an	alvsis of the	independent	research variables
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		1.00		
relative importance	coefficient of difference	St.d	mean	Dimensions
76.74%	17.59%	0.675	3.837	innovation
73.12%	18.24%	0.677	3.656	Entrepreneurship

It is clear from Table (2) above that the innovation variable obtained the highest arithmetic mean of (3.837) and a standard deviation of (0.675). Develop new things and contribute to the implementation of new ideas, and work teams

enjoy the freedom to make decisions in the workplace.

As for the entrepreneurship variable, it got the least arithmetic mean of (3.656) and a standard deviation of (0.677). New to improve ergonomics.

#### Descriptive analysis of dependent variables

#### Table 3: Descriptive statistical analysis of the dependent variables

relative importance	coefficient of difference	St.d	mean	Dimensions
				Achieving the
		0.680	3.746	banking
		0.000	5.740	competitive
74.92%	18.15%			advantage

It is clear from Table (3) above that the variable of achieving the banking competitive advantage has obtained the highest arithmetic mean of (3.746) and a standard deviation of (0.680). New ideas to outperform competitors, in addition to that, measuring performance in the workplace in the researched organization is related to the initiative of individuals in solving problems.

#### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

## 1. The correlation between the search variables

The correlation coefficient represents one of the methods or methods of inferential statistics, as it is used to know the nature, direction, and degree of the relationship, its strength, and its significance for the linear relationship between two variables. In addition, inferential statistics refer to the statistics that enable us to obtain conclusions from the sample data, and generalize them to the study community Zikmund et al., 2010 : 413)). If the correlation value is confined between (0) to (+0.2), this indicates that there is no correlation between the variables, and a weak positive correlation when it is (+0.2 to +0.35). While the positive correlation is medium when it is (+0.35) to +0.6), and a strong positive correlation when it is (+0.6) to (+0.8), and a very strong positive correlation when it is (+0.8 to +1), but if the correlation coefficient is (+1) This indicates a perfect positive correlation, so if the value of the correlation is confined between (0) to (-0.2), this indicates that there is no correlation between the variables, and a weak negative correlation when it is (-0.2) to (-0.35). While the negative correlation is medium when it is (-0.35 to -0.6), and a strong negative correlation when it is (-(0.6) to (-0.8), and a very strong negative correlation when it is (-0.8 to -1), (-1) indicates a negative correlation Tam, (Saunders, et al., 2016: 545) and Table (5) shows the correlations between the variables of the research hypothesis scheme.

Table (4) Correlations of the variables of the hypothetical scheme of the research

Correlations			
Achieving the banking competitive advantage	entrepreneurship	innovation	Research variables
		1	innovation
	1	0.694**	entrepreneurship
1	0.675**	0.572**	Achieving the banking competitive advantage

## 2. Testing hypotheses of influence between research variables

This test was conducted using the path analysis (Path Analyze) by the statistical

analysis program AMOS, V.20 for the purpose of verifying the effect relationship between the main variables of the research, and the results shown in the table were reached as follows:

#### Table (5) the effect relationship of the independent variables on the dependent variables

Results	Р	C.R.	S.E.	Estimate	Path
H1is accepted	***	5.000	0.047	<b>0.471</b>	innovation> Achieving banking competitive advantage H1
H2is a <mark>ccepte</mark> d	***	4.728	0.047	0.420	Entrepreneurship> achieving banking competitive advantage H2

Based on what was mentioned in the aforementioned table and figure, we reach the acceptance of the first hypothesis, which states that the presence of innovation enhances the possibility of the organization achieving competitive advantage. The effect value reached (0.471), which leads to the acceptance of the first hypothesis. Entrepreneurship enhances the organization's ability to achieve competitive advantage, as the impact value was 0.420 (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2001: 687).

#### CONCLUSIONS

1- The presence of innovation and leadership is necessary and important for each of the

organizations mentioned in the sample in Iraq to achieve the first goal, which is the goal of the survival of the organization within the current business environment, but at the same time the presence of creativity, innovation and leadership is not sufficient or effective to achieve competitive advantage in The private banking sector and in any other sector or organizations unless those organizations depend on the proactive method in their way of thinking and producing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship alike, and this means having the initiative to change, creating change in the business environment and not just exploiting tools (creativity, innovation those and

leadership) In order to adapt to changes in the business environment.

2- The results of the study showed that there is a direct relationship with a positive effect between each of innovation and entrepreneurship in the possibility of these organizations achieving competitive advantage, and this is consistent with many studies (Duane & Justin, 2007; Paek & Lee, 2018; Gontur et al., 2022), as these positive effects appear through the ability of these variables to achieve the profits necessary for the smooth functioning of private banking operations.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1- The study recommended the need to pay attention to creativity, innovation and leadership in current work practices. It is worth noting that the survival and prosperity of other private banks despite not having the independent variables that have been referred to does not mean that the presence or absence of these variables does not make a difference, but rather results in this matter. From a situation that the researchers believe is temporary and resulting from an increase in demand over supply, which paralyzes the logic of commercial operations, and as the researchers believe that in the near future, when private banks increase and the law of supply and demand approaches balance, there will be collapses in the private banking system and it cannot survive as well as not Its ability to achieve competitive advantage only if it focuses

most of its attention on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

2- The current study also recommends serious interest in reviewing performance periodically and knowing when some practices exceed expected performance. Here exactly is the key and opportunity for real innovation if it is exploited. The same is the case when performance declines, as unexpected failure is no less important than successful operations. Because there are opportunities for creativity within it, and finally it is very important to make these tools an integral part of the organizational culture through organizational support and enabling the voices of workers to express their ideas and respect those opinions regardless of their quality, provided that it is understood from that saying that respect for expressing and appreciating opinions does not mean necessarily apply them all.

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907

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