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## **Common Threats to the Efficiency and Productivity among Public Sector Employees in Jordan**

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### **Abstract:**

The performance of employee's efficiency and productivity considered as significant indicators to determine competitiveness and productivity for institutions. The purpose of this study is to investigate the threats of efficiency and productivity among the employees in the Jordanian public institutions. The research method used is qualitative method by performing a semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions for (40) employees in the Jordanian public institutions. The results of the study show that threats of efficiency and productivity in public institutions employees are poor skill level, non-provision for rewards and appreciation, unawareness of latest project management techniques, prolonged purchase procedures, trade-off in cost and quality of equipment, rework and quality issues and distance between workplace and house. Formal, specialized and modified productivity improvement model recommended overcoming on these threats.

### **Keywords:**

Efficiency, Productivity, Public Sector, Employees

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### **Introduction**

Efficiency and productivity are the major indicators of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of any institution, analyzing of these indicators will help in conducting goal achievement plans to improve institution success (Alrowwad, et al., 2018; Vadrle & Katti, 2018, Dunleavy, 2017; Rožman, et al. 2017; Karajeh & Maqableh, 2014; Kuk & Masa'deh, 2007). Efficiency is considered achievement measurement in the public sector. Based on the traditional economic context, efficiency is defined as a term describes the implementation of a system in generating the maximum required output from a given amount of inputs with the available technology (Tarhini, et al., 2018; Aldmour & Obeidat, 2017; Yassien & Mufleh, 2017; Almajali & Al-Lozi, 2016; Aldmour, et al., 2015; Masa'deh, 2012,2013; Shannak, et al., 2010, 2012). Efficiency could be improved when additional output is produced without any change in the inputs or with fewer inputs (Birinci & Telatar, 2021; Djaghballou, et al. 2018; Masa'deh, et al., 2018; Obeidat, et al., 2017; Masa'deh, 2016). A strong assertion on efficiency of the employee in public institutions, could encourage employee for advanced ways to improve performance, which affected positively on the performance of the organization. On the other hand, Inter-organizational cooperation between leaders and employees might lead to improving efficiency's (Campbell, 2018; Zawaideh, et al., 2018; Obeidat, & Altheeb, 2018; Obeidat & Nofal, 2018; Masa'deh, et al., 2017; Masa'deh & Shannak, 2012).

Productivity might be defined by the relation between the total value of outputs produced (or sometimes activities undertaken) and the amount of inputs used in producing them, this equation supposes that the productivity of all public sector institutions is always {1}. (Drumea, 2020; Dunleavy, 2017; Al Azmi, et al., 2012). Productivity performance is an essential element to improve competitiveness and growth in the long run (Prasetyo & Dzaki, 2020; Jawabreh, et al., 2020; Obeidat, et al., 2019). There are many factors that effect on productivity in two dimensions, such as level of experiences and employee satisfaction which increase productivity. In addition, conflict management provides an important role in improving productivity (Rožman, et al. 2017), which affect positively one the institutional productivity. On the other hand, inefficient and unproductive employee performance will be adventure and could lead to the institutional collapse faster in the digital era and in the future (Prasetyo & Dzaki, 2020). The main problem encounter improving the institutional productivity relies on the efficiency and productivity levels of the employees. So improving the levels of efficiency and productivity for the employee plays an important role in the institutional productivity (Prasetyo & Dzaki, 2020). Development of the efficiency and productivity of the employee depends on the stimulating factors and

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threaten factors, this guide us to focus on these factors in relation to its reflection on the institutional productivity. This study focus on the threats of efficiency and productivity of the employees which lead to the threats of institutional productivity. The aim of this study was to explore the common threats of efficiency and productivity among the employees of Jordanian public sector.

### **Literature Review**

Different elements were considered for modulating the efficiency and productivity template, with negative and positive factors. Rožman, et al. (2017) study the impact of the human resources managements motivational activities for increasing satisfactions of the employees which have positive effect on their productivity. Furthermore, Wushe & Shenje, in 2019 revealed that there was a positive affect for technological modifications and the levels of efficiency and productivity in the public health sectors employees in Panama.

On the other hand, Vadrale &Katti (2018) reporting a negative effect of working workload in the employee's productivity of public sector banks comparing with employee productivity of private sector banks. Such like an assumption with proved by Prasetyo & Dzaki, on 2020 which focus on the negative effect of the energy costs and raw material management on the level of productive and efficiency for the employees in the public industrial sector. Another study, which conducted by Drumea (2020) in aim of studying the effect of telecommuting during COVID-19 epidemic on the employee's productivity, and the results of the study reporting deterioration on the employee's productivity and efficiency with telecommuting use.

### **Methodology**

The study was accomplished qualitatively to investigate the threats for efficiency and productivity in public sector employees in Jordan. The data which related to the threats of the efficiency and productivity were collected by using qualitative method by performing semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. After the approval of the participants, a total of forty respondents who were included supervisors and employees from different public institutions in Jordan were interviewed with open-ended questions. For promoting of the study purpose, the researcher focus on those who have experience more than two years in Jordanian public sector. The selected respondents were serving in different Jordanian public organizations.

To assure external reliability, qualitative interviewing was conducted using interview guide including of 10 items derived from literature review. Duration of interviews was from (20 to 30) minutes that focus on the threats for efficiency and productivity in Jordanian public institutions. Most of the interviews were

conducted face-to-face with few exceptions via telephone calls. The data which collected qualitatively evaluated by using qualitative content analysis. Focus of analysis relay on content and meaning rather than terms or structure of text. Finally, data were classified methodologically in an ordered sequence to address the aims of this study.

**Results**

Based on the interviewer’s data, statistical analysis performed for socio-demographical data of the participants, which summarized in table (1).

Table 1. Description of socio-demo-graphical data of the participated employees (N = 40)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender		
Male	22	55%
Female	18	45%
Age		
< 30 years	18	45 %
31-39 years	13	32.5 %
≥ 40 years	9	22.5 %
Marital status		
Single	14	35%
Married	23	57.5%
Others	3	7.5%
Educational level		
Secondary education	2	5%
Diploma certificate	12	30%
BSC	15	37.5%
Higher educations	11	27.5%
Years of experience		
< 5 years	11	27.5%
5-10 years	23	57.5%
> 11 years	6	15%
Living state		
In the same state of work	33	82.5 %
From another state	7	17.5 %
Monthly Salary		
≤ 500 JD.	5	12.5%
< 500 JD - >1000 JD	27	67.5%
≥ 1000 JD	8	20 %

Interviewers’ responses for inquiring about threats of efficiency and productivity were collected. Then, data were screened and organized in a sequential manner to extract relevant information and distinguish threats for efficiency and

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productivity in these institutions. The results mainly attributed to particular, special characteristics and specific working environment of public sector employees. Significant number of respondents has highlighted similar threats for efficiency and productivity. The results have been arranged properly indicating to threats for efficiency and productivity alongside number of respondents as shown in (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of qualitative survey.

No.	Threats of efficiency and productivity	Respondent No.
	Poor Skill level	33
	Specific expertise trainings	28
	Non-provision for rewards & appreciation	36
	Lack of technical & human resource	29
	Imbalance of technical & human resource	26
	Limited technological use	31
	Outdated equipment	25
	Unsafe working environment	32
	Unawareness of latest project management techniques	33
	Prolonged purchase procedures	35
	Trade-off in cost & quality of equipment	34
	Rework & quality issues	33
	Multiplicity and variety of work tasks	27
	Insufficiency of accountability and bureaucracy culture	32
	Improper design of work center	31
	Non-flexibility of the managers	32
	Absence of time & movement studies	24
	Absence of performance assessment	32
	Working hours	26
	Distance between workplace and house	33
	Country rules and economic situation	31
	Lack of cooperation among employees	28
	Customer feedback anomalies	28
	Don't uses of productivity measurement & improvement cycle	29
	Absence of productivity professional/ expert	32

These are some of the problem areas which are highly specific to public sector institutions. These potentials characteristics could help to highlight on the possible threats of efficiency and productivity between these institutions.

**Discussion**

Results accomplished via qualitative analysis explicitly indicate the possible threats of efficiency and productivity among public sector employees. The effect of mentioned factors as threats for efficiency and productivity in these institutions cannot be overemphasized. Delphi method (Smarandache, et al., 2020) was used by the research to debrief suitable variables along with ranking based on mentioned threats for efficiency and productivity. A Delphi panel of fifteen productivity experts was shortlisted based on minimum ten years of experience in public sector. Anonymity for the experts was ensured. Common threats of efficiency and productivity were classified for sub categories as their implementation and effect Delphi panel, and the most critical threats were highlighted (Table 3). These variables were also proved through literature review.

Table 3. Ranking for threats of efficiency and productivity

No.	Threatening factor
<b>Human Resource Management (HRM)</b>	
	<i>Poor Skill level</i>
	Specific expertise trainings
	<i>Non-provision for rewards &amp; appreciation</i>
	Lack of technical & human resource
	Imbalance of technical & human resource
<b>Technology Management (TM)</b>	
	Limited technological use
	Outdated equipment
	Unsafe working environment
	<i>Unawareness of latest project management techniques</i>
<b>Quality Management (QM)</b>	
	<i>Prolonged purchase procedures</i>
	<i>Trade-off in cost &amp; quality of equipment</i>
	<i>Rework &amp; quality issues</i>
<b>Public Sector Institutions Dynamics</b>	
	Multiplicity and variety of work tasks
	Insufficiency of accountability and bureaucracy culture
	Improper design of work center
	Non-flexibility of the managers
	Absence of time & movement studies
	Absence of performance assessment
	Working hours
	<i>Distance between workplace and house</i>
	Country rules and economic situation
	<i>Lack of cooperation among employees</i>
<b>Productivity Management (PM)</b>	

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- Customer feedback anomalies
  - Don't uses of productivity measurement & improvement cycle
  - ***Absence of productivity professional/ expert***
- 

Based on the mentioned results, some of the threats of the efficiency and productivity among public sector employees are serious, and lead to strong impact on efficiency and productivity in point of views displayed by respondents. Furthermore, application of Pareto Principle (80%-20% rules) is an appropriate option to resolve this issue (Harvey & Sotardi, 2018). According to the rule, about 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. Therefore, Pareto rules were used to the previously mentioned threats on efficiency and productivity. 20% of the threats form the basic and are recommended to having considered by public sector institutions in the primary phase. These include poor skill level, non-provision for rewards and appreciation, unawareness of latest project management techniques, prolonged purchase procedures, trade-off in cost and quality of equipment, rework and quality issues and distance between workplace and house. Therefore, public sector institutions are desired initially to deal with these 20% root threats of efficiency and productivity which will lead to partially fix 80% of the remaining threats.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Efficiency and Productivity of public sector institutions is intrinsically low as compared to private institutions. Relay on results of qualitative analysis carried out in this study, public sector institutions have particular distinguished characteristics and special environment which leads to low efficiency and productivity. Root threats of efficiency and productivity in these institutions need to be highlighted. Employment of technologically qualified professionals in these institutions, ensuring suitable accountability and optimized use of latest project management techniques are obviously desired to improve the efficiency and productivity of public sector institutions. Re-evaluations of the rules which regulated the purchase procedures and developing of the quality of equipment is essentially required to overcome the threats of efficiency and productivity. Improvement of quality assurance system is crucial for development of the productivity of the employees. Furthermore, geographical privacy of the employees should be considered in the employment process for any employee. Finally, it can be concluded that public sector institutions basically need a formal, specialized and modified productivity improvement model.

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