

## Assessing the Impact of Sales Culture on the Quality of Bank Services in Jordan

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims at exploring and assessing the concepts of sales culture, the quality of service, and the relationship between them within the 23 commercial banks in Jordan, (13) of which are Jordanian banks, whereas the remained ones are non-Jordanian. For the purpose of this study, two samples were used. The first is the employees' sample and was used to measure the sales culture. The second is the customers' sample and was used to measure the quality of services provided by the commercial banks. The findings of the study indicate that the overall employees' sales culture in the surveyed banks is moderate. However, it should be noted that the employees of the non-Jordanian banks have higher levels of sales culture than those of the Jordanian banks. On the other hand, the quality of services provided by those banks was measured by applying the gap model (the difference between the customers' perceived, and expected quality). Accordingly, the results of the study indicate that this quality is low (unsatisfactory). Also, the findings of the study indicate a positive relationship between the employees' adoption of sales culture and the quality of service. This result assures that high levels of the quality of service can be reached when banks adopt sales culture. The management must understand that strong commitment to the quality of service and sales culture is an integrated component in the bank's culture, and that a positive attitude towards interpersonal relationships must be adopted by all of the bank's employees. If banks in Jordan like to enhance their competitiveness in the market, they have to integrate this vision into the strategic marketing planning.

**Keywords:** Jordan, Assessment, Banks, Sales Culture, Service Quality, Employees, Perception.

### INTRODUCTION

Commercial banks in Jordan play a vital role in the socio-economic development process. They are more influential in the whole economic system than other institutions are, and they positively contribute in all developmental efforts devoted by the government and have achieved high levels of growth and financial efficiency. In the past ten years, noticeable development in the banking sector occurred. Both the number of the banks and the size of their operations have increased. Moreover, the banks are intensively applying advanced information technologies in performing their operations.

There are (23) commercial banks operating in Jordan. These banks are divided into two broad categories: Jordanian ones, which are owned totally by Jordanian stockholders; the number of these banks is (13) banks; and non-Jordanian banks owned totally by non-Jordanian stockholders, and their total is (10). With this number of banks competing in a relatively limited, and almost saturated market, commercial banks have to build a strong sales culture among their employees and improve the quality of their services. These strategic objectives can be achieved through improving the selling effectiveness of bankers. Deregulations, intense competition, profit pressures, and a changing product line among other influences are the major challenges to this management. This recognition must be translated into effective action plans and programs. The researcher

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realized this from the long conversation he has had with bank executives over the past several months, concerning the problems they were experiencing in developing sales programs in their banks. And through the questions he has directed to employees attending sales workshops in some Jordanian banks. Marketing directors often complain that top management wants a selling program but that when things come to reality, management becomes unwilling to set the priorities and invest the amount required to get the job done. These complaints are sometimes justified. On other occasions, however, the real problem is not that top-level managers are unwilling to take the necessary steps, but rather, they are unsure of what they have to do.

Most of the customers' preference of the bank service is significantly related to the quality of service, and the latter is influenced by the cumulated sales culture adopted by the employees. On the other hand, the quality of service is considered a major determinant of the bank's competitiveness beside other factors. It represents a relative advantage which highly contributes to the success of the bank in the market. Competition in the Jordanian banking market is getting more intense especially with the increasing number of non-Jordanian banks entry to the market in the last (5) years.

Accordingly, local banks have to improve the quality of their services and to differentiate themselves from competitors in order to be able to compete in such market situation.

### **Problem Definition**

The data available at the commercial banks in Jordan, in addition to that, which have been collected through field surveys conducted randomly by the marketing research departments in those banks on the samples, selected from their customers, indicate that those customers have negative impressions and attitudes

towards the manner through which the services of those banks are delivered. Also, the results of the research (Mualla, 1998; Al-Atari, 2009) indicated that the quality of services provided by the banks in Jordan was low. These negative attitudes may partially be ascribed to the employees' lack of sales culture, (a set of values, and behavioural attitudes which should be expressed by the employees through their interaction with the customers during the selling situations). The same conclusion has been reached through few in-depth interviews conducted by the researcher with different groups of customers who were randomly selected. However, these conclusions require a sufficient scientific justification, and more supporting practical evidence by a sound and valid research. This study comes along with this research orientation.

On the other hand, the employees' adoption of sales culture is likely to have subsequent effects on the way customers perceive the service quality. Because the quality of service represents a very important relative advantage in service marketing, banks have to improve the quality of their services in order to enhance their competitiveness in the marketplace. Based on this line of thinking, this study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Do employees of the commercial banks in Jordan adopt sales culture?
2. How do Jordanian customers perceive the quality of services provided by the banks they deal with?
3. Does employees' adoption of sales culture have any effects on the customers' perceptions and expectations of the services quality provided by the banks?
4. Are there significant differences in the employees' adoption of sales culture due to the nationality of the bank?
5. Are significant differences in the customers'

perception of the employees' adoption of sales culture due to the nationality of the bank ?

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

Despite the lack of empirical research in the sales culture and its relationship with the service quality in banking sector, review of recent developments in service marketing highlighted the possible effects of sales culture on the service quality as an emerging area for future research. Therefore, this study comes with this research direction, and its importance stems from being the first attempt to explore and assess customers' recognitions and appreciation of sales culture in addition to usefulness of sales culture as a strategic orientation by which the management of commercial banks in Jordan can differentiate their services in the market. In addition, the present study is expected to contribute in establishing the database required for a better understanding by the management in these banks of the fact that the quality of service, sales culture, and the customer-oriented mentality are integral components in the total bank culture and that a positive attitude towards interpersonal relationships must be held by its employees. In general, the present study is important because it is considered the first extensive field research that establishes an overall measure of sales culture in the banking sector in Jordan and that enhances the cumulative knowledge about the concept of the service quality in the Arab library.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study was designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To provide an overall measure of sales culture in commercial banks in Jordan.
2. To measure the bank service quality as perceived by the customers of the commercial banks in Jordan.

3. To measure the service quality as expected by the customers of those banks.

4. To determine the differences between the customers' perceived service quality and their expected service quality (Customer Gap).

5. To determine the differences between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks regarding their employees' adoption of sales culture and their customer's perception of the service quality.

6. To examine the relationship between the banks employees' adoption of sales culture and the customers' perceived service quality in both Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks.

7. To provide the management of banks with a database that can help to understand the implications of the integration between service mentality and the quality of service.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **The Employees' Role in Bank Service Marketing**

One of the most important characteristics of bank services is the inseparability of their production and distribution. Within this context, the employees of service organization play a vital role in its success. The importance of employees in the marketing of service is captured in the people's component of marketing mix, which has been described as all the human actors who play a part in service delivery and thus influence the buyers' perceptions (Zeithaml et al., 2006). It should be understood that the primary image that a customer has of the organization is formed by the interactions the customer has with the employees of that organization. Achieving high service quality for customers usually require high quality of internal customers-employees.

Employees and customers must interact with each other in the service delivery process. These interactions bring both parties physically and psychologically close

and have a strong impact on the service performance (Luk, 1997). It could be concluded then that the quality of service is assumed to be a function of employee-customer interaction (Parasuraman, et al., 1988). This type of selling mannerism is incorporated in the sales culture.

However, exhorting employees to behave in specific ways that will enhance the effectiveness of their interactions with customers and, in turn, improve the bank's competitive posture which is likely to fail if employees do not have the necessary knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitudes towards customers. In banking services, the need for all this is not limited to operating personnel. It should be extended to help development and promote a sales culture from the bank top to its front-liners. The service delivery variations that reflect individual skills, talents, or other qualities of personnel provide a way to differentiate the bank's services and to create a competitive advantage (Keaveney, 1987).

### **Sales Culture for Banks**

The term culture refers to a multi-facet concept which is derived from many social and environmental origins (White, 2008). Through culture, individuals can communicate their experiences, solutions of problems, lifestyles to one another and to the next generation, and they can add continuously to their heritage of skills and knowledge (Argyle, 2003).

Smircich (1983) defined culture as a set of unwritten decrees, rituals, and a pattern of shared values and norms which permeate a group of people. It binds individuals and functional units more closely. In banks, sales culture refers to what is written, formally decreed, and how employees actually behave in a selling context. It can help them understand their selling roles better, by responding to customers requests from a selling and marketing view, and it may finally allow them to adjust

their behaviour to meet customers' specific needs effectively (Keiser, 1988). On the other hand, sales culture facilitates the organizational learning process (Robbins and Coulter, 2005). It is viewed as an integral part of the intellectual capital which becomes the main source for achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Harrim, 2010). Sales culture also enhances the shared vision among the individuals which is a critical factor in organization success (Garvin, 2008).

Sales skills and knowledge are important integral parts of sales culture. Researchers examined several demographic and socio-psychological characteristics of good salespeople. Johnston and Marshall (2003) indicated that the performance of salesperson is a function of both personal traits and organizational factors. Within this contextual framework, culture includes the following components:

1. Common shared understanding.
2. Shared way of perceiving and thinking.
3. Agreed patterns of nonverbal communication and social interaction which make cooperation possible.
4. Rules and conventions about what should be done in different situations.
5. Agreed morale and other values in addition to the system of allied beliefs.
6. Homogeneous attitudes towards events and public issues.
7. Level of know-how and applied skills.
8. Level of applied technology.

It should be assured that the bank employees' behaviour throughout their interaction with customers is a function of their sales culture and the socialization process occurring in selling situations. David (2001) explored some sales culture variables within the banking industry. The author examined variables such as sales training, rewarding employees, practicing relationship activities, and the management's commitment on the

organization's sales culture. The study indicated that banks which are high in sales culture report that their employees receive more hours of sales training than those reported by low sales culture banks. High sales culture banks were likely to use the performance-based pay. Importantly, high sales culture helps a bank to develop a deeper relationship with its customers.

In another study conducted by Shemwell and Yavas (1998), seven practices for creating sales culture were presented: high visibility for the sales function, organizational devotion, leadership involvement, customer orientation, quick feedback from external and internal customers, never ending commitment to improving performance, work processes which incorporate systems approaches, and finally cross-functional teams. Berry (1971) examined the relationship between individuals development career environmental factors. He states that the conventional stimulus impinging on the individual as well as the culturally unmediated expectancies based on previous interactions with the environment. It also implies that the potential transformation that individuals make on their physical environment either through the conventional response or through group activity such as technology. Thus, it could be inferred that bank employees' sales culture and their socialization processes with customers are vital factors in shaping their adaptive behaviour.

On the other hand, motivated, empowered, and skilled employees can create economic value to their organizations. This represents a competitive advantage and a strategic component in the network of management activities that must be performed (Kaplan and Johnson, 2006). This pattern of integration will allow employees to have a bank-wide view and help them to build their own roadmaps to the knowledge and expertise they need to establish a better relationship with customers. Also, this knowledge will make it easier for

employees to be totally objective about their performance and as a result create the sense of teamwork based on their sharing professional sales knowledge. This helps opening new horizons for their sales culture which can be intercepted with the total bank culture.

The key individual determinants of a salesperson are aptitude personal characteristics, role perceptions, and motivation. Sengupta et al., (2000) emphasized that strategic ability and entrepreneurial ability are significant determinants of salesperson's effectiveness. The influence of these two factors was mediated by two relationship-process variables: communication quality and customers' trust. Strategic ability refers to the cognitive capacity of salesperson to analyse customer, organizational problems, and focus on their long-term interests. Entrepreneurial ability is a key salesperson's ability to locate personal or other resources within the firm and deploy them to assist the customers and to operate for their best interests.

In addition, adaptation and communication apprehension (Pitt et al., 2000), interpersonal listening skills (Castleberry et al., 1999), and cultural values were found to affect the salesperson performance.

In his extensive research, Berry (1985) defined sales culture in terms of the following dimensions: Customer-focus, attitude towards selling, the feelings of teamwork, the institutional pride, the management commitment to selling, and finally, the trust in the employees' selling abilities. A study conducted by Jarmillo and Marshall (2004) found that top sales performers in the Ecuadorian banking industry were those who:

1. Engage in organizing and participating in public seminars direct at potential prospects.
2. Approach the prospect by opening with a statement about themselves, the name of the firm.
3. Talk the prospect's language, using short and non-technical terms in their sales presentations.

4. Check periodically with the customers to ensure that they continue to be satisfied with the service.

The employees' understanding of the sales culture must be extended to consider the future consequences of their action courses. Selling through long-term adaptation of the sales culture (Goolsby et al., 1992) and personality traits (Dion et al., 1995) represent basic qualities that have been associated with the employees' selling performance. It could be indicated that there is a wide acknowledgment of the fact that a key factor to organization's performance is being able to maintain an effective customer relationship (Anderson and Oliver, 1987). Schultz and Good (2000) suggested that salespeople often are deployed in one of two diverse situations, The first results where salespeople are primarily directed by selling concerns and associated activities, and the second is often deployed in one of two diverse situations, the first results where salespeople are primarily directed by selling concerns and associated activities and the second occurs when salespeople primarily take a customer-oriented perspective. Following the first, salesperson is trying to satisfy his selling needs, while he tries to satisfy the customer's needs, if he follows the second. Due to the nature of these conditions, selling orientation appears directed initially to satisfy the salesperson's (employee) needs. In contrast, customer orientation focuses on the customer's needs which, in turn, suggests willingness to work with clients over extended period. Thus, the orientation adopted by the salesperson influences the selling processes, techniques, and strategies (Saxe and Weitz, 1982).

The assumed relationship between the customer-oriented selling and the salesperson performance is based on the belief that customer's bonds with the organization are strengthening over time. Salespersons always tend to satisfy customers' needs, and therefore

they must be willing to devote considerable time to understand customer's basic needs and then satisfy them through the sustainable relationship with customers.

A number of studies have related customer-oriented selling to successful marketing organizations (Deshpande et al., 1993 ; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Brown et al., 1991). This relationship was extensively examined by Schultz and Good (2000). The findings of their research indicated that both the selling and customer orientations were positively related to the long-term relationship. The researchers concluded that sales people with a greater consideration for future sales consequences, including compensation, were more likely to have a successful relationship with customers.

Churchill et al. (1985) have concluded that developing an organizational culture that truly values its customers is essential to create high quality of services and ultimately to satisfied customers. Narver and Slater (1990) termed such organizational culture a "market orientation". A hallmark of the market orientation is the belief that all the employees in the organization are responsible for selling, understanding customers and providing them with value (Webster, 1988; Parasuraman, 1987). It should be noted that market orientation is a major component in the organization's sales culture.

Maloney and Boulay (2009) indicated that sales culture bank is an integrated behavioural process. Many banks have adopted traditional orientation on their own-teller training, customer service, supervisory training, and strategic planning. Some of them have implemented total quality or re-engineering initiatives. Yet, many find results are not consistently providing the optimal. The reality in most these initiatives is that they fall short of the management optimism. Not because the process does not work but to make them work, management must first understand what has to be changed in its culture.

Developing such culture requires a change in thinking behaviour, communicating and learning. Changing to a sales culture is essential for bringing in more customers and realizing improvements. Management has to change the entire culture of doing business to create a sales culture. The way of thinking, behaving, communicating and learning must be changed.

To be successful, management must consider changing its attitude to look at sales from a different perspective. A bank needs new customers and must retain existing customers. Therefore, the sales challenge is: how to get every employee in the bank focused on getting customers and keeping them. For the bank to prosper, employees should be convinced that their initiatives are necessary to the sale. So, it seems logical that sales culture concerns making all employees as a part of the sales process.

Narver and Slater (1990) demonstrated that a market-orientation can have a substantial positive effect on the organization's profitability. In their three basic components model: customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination. Customer orientation means that employees should be able to create superior value for customers continuously, while competitor orientation was defined as understanding the short-term strengths and weaknesses as well as long-term capabilities, inter-functional coordination measures the utilization of organization resources in creating superior value for customers.

It should be stated that the bank's distinctive, embedded competence, and employees' sales culture determine the form of the bank's tacit knowledge, and it would be very difficult for competitors to imitate its offerings (Berry, 1971).

Thus, it could be concluded that the bank employees' sales culture contributes in shaping the employees' professional behaviour at all levels and can strongly

affect the bank's ability to shift its strategic direction. This culture should not only empower the bank's employees and enhance their positive attitudes towards their jobs roles but it should also create a basis for a superior competitive position of the bank in the marketplace (Schmalense, 2003).

### **Service Quality**

The term quality has been defined from different perspectives. It means different views to people according to the context. Cravens (2004) identified five perspectives of quality: (1) the transcendent view of quality-which is synonymous with innate excellence, (2) the product-based quality, which refers to some attributes existing in the product. (3) customer-based quality, which is equated with customer's maximum satisfaction. (4) the manufacturing-based quality which refers to the conformance to internally-developed specifications, popularly known, the technical quality, and (5) value-based quality, which refers to the culture of the customer's perceptual cost-benefit analysis (trade-off between possible values and costs). Cravens (2004) also developed eight components of quality, which are: (1) performance, (2) conformance, (3) reliability, (4) durability, (5) serviceability (speed, courtesy), (6) competence, (7) aesthetics (how a product appeals to the customer's senses and feelings), and finally (8) the quality.

The above classifications can be generalized for services. However, the intangibility which is involved in the service text led many researchers into the field to insist that the quality of service should be measured by a distinctive approach. Services researchers Brady and Cronin (2003); Rust and Oliver (2006) have suggested that customers evaluate the quality of service based on their perceptions of the technical outcomes provided, the process by which outcomes were delivered, and the

quality of the physical environment where the service is delivered, and customers do not perceive the quality in a one-dimensional way but rather, evaluate the quality based on multiple factors relevant to the context, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, Berry (1988) identified five criteria used by customers in evaluating service quality, which are:

1. Reliability: which refers to the ability of the firm to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Responsiveness, which refers to the willingness to help customers and to provide them with prompt service.

2. Assurance: which refers to the employees' knowledge and courtesy and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.

3. Empathy: which means caring individualized attention given to customers.

4. Tangibles: which implies the appearance of physical environment elements, equipment, personnel, and communication materials (reports, billing statements).

Gronroos (2007) suggests that the quality of service as perceived by customers is the result of an evaluation process in which they compare their perspective of service outcome against what they expected. This is referred to as the service gap and what is going to be applied in measuring the quality of bank service within the context of the present study.

On the other hand, quality means zero defection. It has been described as keeping every customer the bank can profitably serve. When customers have a long-term relationship with the bank, their use of the service can be tracked on an individual account basis. It should be noted that both customer and employee retention can be built if loyalty is recognized by the top management in the banks as a systematic challenge, not just as tactical courses of action. It should be seen as standing at the

core of sustained competitive success (Lovelock, 1994).

Cohen (2005) pointed out that service quality has three distinct components: customer quality criteria service, company facets, and the relationship among these components. Al-Haddad (2008) defined the quality as the difference between the actual performance of service with the customer's expectations about it. This difference indicates the level of service quality.

In a previous study conducted by Mualla (1998), the findings indicated that the customer's evaluation of the quality of services provided by the Jordanian commercial banks was negative (-2), and the service quality expected by those customers' was higher than what they have delivered. The study recommended that the management in those banks should adopt effective programs to improve the quality of services provided and the necessity for more research on the customers' satisfaction.

In a recent study conducted by Al-Atari (2009) on the quality of services provided by the commercial banks in Jordan, the findings indicated that the customer's evaluations about the quality of services were low.

Despite this array of research on the quality of service, there is a lack of empirical studies on the relationship between the employees' perceived sales culture and customers' perceptions of the service quality in the banking sector in Jordan.

### **The Relationship between Sales Culture and Service Quality.**

Swartz et al. (1993) who reviewed the recent developments in service marketing have which raised the possibility of a casual relationship between marketing culture and service quality as an emerging field for research. Customers perceptions of service quality will be influenced by the customer-oriented behaviours (Brady and Cronin, 2001). All of the five

dimensions of service quality (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles) can be influenced directly by employees. It is difficult to imagine how an organization would deliver caring and personalized attention to customers independently away from its employees. Despite the huge bulk of research into both sales culture and perceived service quality, there is a lack of empirical research into the relationship between sales culture and service quality, and the quality of bank service was viewed as an outcome of the interaction between customers and the banks' employees. Lovelock (2009) defined service quality through two dimensions: (1) the material quality as it is represented in the physical environment (tangible) of the bank including the facilities and equipment, and (2) the interactive relationship between customers and the bank's employees. It could be inferred then that employees' sales culture is a basic input in shaping the customers' perception and expectations of the service.

The inseparability characteristic of the bank service production and distribution implies the absence of the direct role of independent intermediaries in the bank service marketing system. In turn, the delivery of this service occurred through a direct interactional context between the bank employee and the customer; the outcome of this interaction would be a function of all physical situational and physiological process, including all the perceptions, courses of actions and reactions, between the two parties. Because people have differential perceptions of all what they are exposed to, it could be concluded then, that variation in their perceptions is going to be reflected in the outcome expected from those interactions processes.

Because the concept of the service quality inherited in the customer's perceptions (Mualla, 2007), it is assumed that there will be a unique employee-customer interaction situation with all its subsequent effects on the

way that the situation is going to be evaluated (Mualla, 2007). The ability of the employee contact personally with the customer is considered an important ingredient differentially in bank services. However, it requires from the employee the skills needed to customize the service according to the needs and preference of each bank, which can differentiate its service in a unique manner will determine its competitive edge over its rivals (Keaveney, 1987).

The bank's employee plays a vital role in forming the customers' perceptions and in turn their evaluations of the service quality; this perspective presents a constructive approach to understand the importance of the bank's employees' adoption of sales culture. The spirit of the culture has significant implications regarding the sales culture which is appropriate for bank service and can help the employees to understand the selling function better and realize their roles in a professional way. This, in turn, allows them to adjust their interactional behaviour in a manner through which they can contribute effectively to the satisfaction of the specific needs of the customers.

Keiser (1988) has suggested that promoting a marketing mentality throughout an organization is an important strategy to enhance service quality. Schmalense (1985) indicated that developing service-minded employees who believe in the fact that every thing should be done to deliver high quality service to customers. He added that keeping customers satisfied is the best approach to improve the quality of service interactions.

Berry et al. (1989) found a positive linkage between marketing culture and successful marketing of services. This relationship suggests that cultivating and sustaining a service culture is the new challenge to service marketners whom the author urged to promote and implant service culture among the employees. However,

this kind of culture is the outcome of well – planning and involves intensive training programs in this direction. The prerequisite for such an effective training is a good understanding of the concept of marketing culture.

Sales culture must be based on the belief that long-term success can only be assured through developing and maintaining relationships that create value for existing and new customers. A successful application of the customer value creation requires, first and foremost, understanding of what really constitutes customer value, secondly, understanding how the Bank's employees who are knowledgeable about customers' value expectation can deliver that value, and thirdly their commitment towards it which in turn is the core of sales culture. The employees should have to think about customer and personalize their relationship with them before returning on investment and margins. (Mitchell 2003; Bonis et al., 2003).

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

Based on the previous literature review of the sales culture and service quality and the possible relationship between them, it could be concluded that every employee who interacts with customers in any way must have the appropriate skills, knowledge, and a set of professional selling cultural values (sales culture) in order to respond efficiently and effectively to customers' needs. This seems especially true in commercial banks as all employees are expected to sell. On the other hand, quality of service has emerged as one of the most important determinants of customer retention. The literature review indicated that high levels of profitability from current customers and few lost customers are strategic goals which should be achieved by the bank management. Delivering high quality of service appears to be valued by customers and, therefore,

would be an imperative for a bank with a sales culture.

Hence, the following hypotheses investigate several aspects of the two constructs and the relationships between them:

HO<sub>1</sub>: The overall employees' adoption of the sales culture in the commercial banks in Jordan is low.

From this major hypothesis, the following two sub-hypotheses can be derived:

HO<sub>1/a</sub>: There are no significant differences in the employees' adoption of sales culture attributed to the nationality of the banks (Jordanian / non-Jordanian).

HO<sub>1/b</sub>: There are no significant differences in the employees' adoption of sales culture between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks on all sales culture dimensions.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There are no significant differences between the employees' perceptions of the sales culture and those of the customers'.

HO<sub>3</sub>: The overall Service Quality (SERVQUAL) provided by the commercial banks is low.

From this major hypothesis the following four sub-hypotheses can be derived:

HO<sub>3/a</sub>: There are no significant differences between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks regarding the overall service quality (SERVQUAL) provided.

HO<sub>3/b</sub>: There are no significant differences between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks regarding the customers' perceived Service Quality (SERVQUAL).

HO<sub>3/c</sub>: There are no significant differences between Jordanian and non- Jordanian banks regarding the customers expected Service Quality (SERVQUAL).

HO<sub>3/d</sub>: There are no significant differences between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks regarding the Service Quality (SERVQUAL) on all its dimensions.

HO<sub>4</sub>: The banks' employees' sales culture as perceived by customers' has no significant effects on the customers' overall perception of the Service Quality (SERVQUAL).

HO<sub>5</sub>: The overall employees' adoption of sales culture in commercial banks is not influenced by their demographic factors (gender, age, position in the bank, and the length of work experience)

### The Study Framework and Sampling Procedure

The present study has been conducted within the commercial banks working in Jordan. A total of (23) commercial banks, (13) of which were Jordanian and

totally owned by Jordanian stockholders, and (10) banks were non-Jordanian and totally owned by non-Jordanian stockholders, and most of them were branches of either Arab or foreign countries. All those banks were used as a framework for the sampling procedure of this study. Table (1) displays a list of the commercial banks and the number of employees in each in addition to the size of their deposits:

**Table (1)**  
**Commercial Banks Operating in Jordan**

No.	Name of Bank	No. of Employees	% of the total	Deposits (000)m.	% of the total
1.	Arab Bank	2856	20	4832.01	27.8
2.	Housing Bank for Commerce and Finance	1701	12	2699.64	15.6
3.	Jordanian Islamic Bank	1498	10	424.66	2.5
4.	Jordanian National Bank	1266	8.9	1121.77	6.6
5.	Bank of Jordan	1210	8.5	1076.43	6.3
6.	Cairo-Amman Bank	1182	8	807.58	4.7
7.	Jordan Kuwait Bank	726	5	1183.87	6.8
8.	Jordanian Commercial Bank	442	3	424.21	2.4
9.	Arab Banking Institution	377	2.6	379.33	2.2
10.	Union Bank for Savings and Investments	349	2.4	715.18	4.2
11.	Jordanian Arab Bank for Investment	347	2.4	372.46	2.2
12.	HSBC (Middle East)	344	2.4	506.12	3.0
13.	Capital Bank	290	2	543.99	3.4
14.	International Islamic Arabic Bank	286	2	211.55	1.3
15.	Standard Chartered Bank	265	1.8	412.79	2.5
16.	Egyptian Arab Land Bank	238	1.6	192.89	1.2
17.	Jordanian Bank for Investment and Finance	234	1.6	501.70	2.9
18.	Society General Bank	214	1.5	128.39	0.7
19.	Audi Bank	129	0.9	295.50	1.7
20.	BLOM Bank	80	0.7	117.11	0.7
21.	City Bank	68	0.5	190.92	1.1

No.	Name of Bank	No. of Employees	% of the total	Deposits (000)m.	% of the total
22.	Kuwait National Bank	32	0.2	171.82	0.9
23.	Al-Rafedain Bank	31	0.2	48.77	0.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14165</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17358.69</b>	<b>100</b>

**The Sampling Procedure:**

The data required for this study have been collected from two different samples. The first is the employees' sample, which has been randomly selected from the employees of all commercial banks operating in Jordan (23) banks. The total number of those was (14165). A considerable percentage of senior managers were included in the employees' sample for two reasons: (a) senior managers tend to be essential elements in the successful establishment of sales culture. b) by virtue of their positions, senior managers have the opportunity to observe all elements of the bank's overall strategy and operations (Schein, 1985; Sheridan 1998; Vincent 1999). The second sample is the customers' sample, which has also been randomly selected from the customers of all those banks. For the secrecy and privacy reasons claimed, the management of the banks was unwilling to provide the researcher with the exact number of the customers. So, this number has been considered as infinite

Initially, the size of each sample was statistically determined according to the following equations:

**Employees' Sample.**

The size of this sample was statistically reached as follows:

$$\eta_o = \frac{N}{[N * E^2] + 1}$$

Where;

$\eta_o$  = refers to the sample of employees

N = refers to the total of the employees (14165)

E = refers to the allowed error (0.04)

Applying this equation, the following sample size was reached:

$$\eta_o = \frac{N}{[N * E^2] + 1}$$

$$\eta_o = \frac{14165}{[14165 * 0.04^2] + 1}$$

$$\eta_o = \frac{14165}{22.664 + 1}$$

$$\eta_o \approx 600$$

**Customers' Sample:**

Because the total number of the banks' customers was unable to be known for some privacy and secrecy reasons claimed by the management in these banks, the following statistical law was applied:

$$\eta_c = \left( Z_{\alpha/2} * \sigma / E \right)^2$$

Where:

$\eta_c$  = refers to the customer' sample size

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  = refers to the value on the standardized normal distribution at 95% degrees of confidence, this value was (1.96) with probability of 0.975

( $\sigma$ ) = refers to the standard deviation of the population which is  $\sqrt{2}$

E= refers to the allowed error which is 10%.

Applying this previous equation, the customers' size

was reached as follows:

$$\eta_c = \left( Z_{\alpha/2} * \sigma / E \right)^2$$

$$\eta_c = 753$$

$$\eta_c = \left( 1.96 * \sqrt{2} / 0.10 \right)^2$$

$$\eta_c = \left( 1.96 * 1.4 / 0.10 \right)^2 \quad \eta_c = (1.96 * 14)^2$$

In order to increase the external validity of the study, the sample size for each of the employees and customers samples was a mixture of the two samples. Table (2) shows the statistical design of the sampling procedure: raised to 1000 500 from each category.

**Table (2)**  
**Statistical Design of the Sampling Procedure**

Commercial Banks Operating in Jordan			
Employees Sample (1000)		Customers Sample (1000)	
Jordanian banks (500)	Non-Jordanian banks (500)	Jordanian banks (500)	Non-Jordanian banks (500)

To reach this sample size, at least (75) percent rate of response was found necessary. So, about (1330) questionnaires were distributed on each of the two samples (1000/0.75). On the other hand, the rational which has been followed in selecting the subsamples from the banks was as follows:

**a. For the employees' sample:**

(The number of employees in each bank / total employees of all banks) x1330

**b. For the customers' sample,**

(The deposits of each bank / total deposits of all banks) x 1330.

Both indicators can be considered as sufficient to reflect the relative importance of each bank in the total samples of both the employees and customers.

Tables (3) and (4) present the procedure used in selecting each of the two samples.

**Table (3)**  
**The Total Employees' Sample of the Commercial Banks in Jordan**

No.	Name of Bank	No. of Employees	Distributed Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
1.	Arab Bank	2856	155	116
2.	Housing Bank for Commerce and Finance	1701	91	68
3.	Jordanian Islamic Bank	1498	80	60
4.	Jordanian National Bank	1266	68	51
5.	Bank of Jordan	1210	65	49
6.	Cairo-Amman Bank	1182	63	47

No.	Name of Bank	No. of Employees	Distributed Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
7.	Jordan Kuwait Bank	726	39	29
8.	Jordanian Commercial Bank	442	24	18
9.	Arab Banking Institution	377	140	106
10.	Union Bank for Savings and Investments	349	18	14
11.	Jordanian Arab Bank for Investment	347	19	14
12.	HSBC (Middle East)	344	128	97
13.	Capital Bank	290	15	12
14.	International Islamic Arabic Bank	286	15	12
15.	Standard Chartered Bank	265	99	75
16.	Egyptian Arab Land Bank	238	89	67
17.	Jordanian Bank for Investment and Finance	234	13	10
18.	Society General Bank	214	83	60
19.	Audi Bank	129	49	37
20.	BLOM Bank	80	30	23
21.	City Bank	68	25	19
22.	Kuwait National Bank	32	12	9
23.	Al-Rafedain Bank	31	10	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>14165</b>	<b>1330</b>	<b>1000</b>

Table (4 )

The Total Customers' Sample of the Commercial Banks

No.	Name of Bank	Deposits (000)m.	Distributed Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
1.	Arab Bank	4832.01	215	162
2.	Housing Bank for Commerce and Finance	2699.64	120	90
3.	Jordanian Islamic Bank	424.66	19	14
4.	Jordanian National Bank	1121.77	50	38
5.	Bank of Jordan	1076.43	48	36
6.	Cairo-Amman Bank	807.58	36	27
7.	Jordan Kuwait Bank	1183.87	53	40
8.	Jordanian Commercial Bank	424.21	19	14

No.	Name of Bank	Deposits (000)m.	Distributed Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire
9.	Arab Banking Institution	379.33	103	78
10.	Union Bank for Savings and Investments	715.18	32	24
11.	Jordanian Arab Bank for Investment	732.46	17	13
12.	HSBC (Middle East)	506.12	138	104
13.	Capital Bank	543.99	24	18
14.	International Islamic Arabic Bank	211.55	9	7
15.	Standard Chartered Bank	412.79	112	84
16.	Egyptian Arab Land Bank	192.89	52	39
17.	Jordanian Bank for Investment and Finance	501.70	23	17
18.	Society General Bank	128.39	35	26
19.	Audi Bank	295.50	80	60
20.	BLOM Bank	117.11	32	24
21.	City Bank	190.92	52	39
22.	Kuwait National Bank	171.82	47	36
23.	Al-Rafedain Bank	48.77	14	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17358.69</b>	<b>1330</b>	<b>1000</b>

### Operational Definitions of Study Variables

#### Sales Culture

Despite many scholars (Berry, 1985; Narver and Slater, 1990; Lovelock, 1993, Zeithaml et al., (2000) attempted to conceptualize sales culture in the banking sector, there is no specific psychometrically sound measure that can be considered as a common shared definition of the sales culture. Those researchers adopted ideas and principles from general services and relationship marketing literature. This study is actually an expansion of all the conceptualizations offered by those scholars. The researcher has developed what is considered as a comprehensive operational definition of sales culture which focuses on broad selling issues such as creative approaches to selling, pursuing new accounts,

building the relationship with customers, and creating values. Sales culture is defined as a set of values, norms, attitudes, beliefs, rituals, agreed upon patterns of verbal and nonverbal communication, and all other skills and talents, in addition to a level of selling knowledge and applied technology which are commonly shared by the bank's employees while they are in selling situations. Within this context, sales culture extends to include more than some basic selling principles; it includes a kind of behavioural doctrine which is acknowledged by personnel working in selling activities. From the review of the previous relevant literature and along with the above operational definition of sales culture, the following six dimensions were reached:

1. Customer-focus. i.e., the employees of the

banks must be highly customers oriented and within this context, sales culture was viewed as a way to satisfy, help, and serve customers.

2. Attitude towards selling. The employees of the bank should have the attitude that selling is both legitimate and important reaches. They should believe the fact that selling has a professional doctrine that must be followed.

3. Sense of team. i.e., employees should regularly hold sales meetings; a teamwork is the work formula in most decision-making situations where information can be shared. Customers' objectives and complaints are regularly discussed in those meetings. In conclusion, to have a sales culture, employees shouldn't feel alone in the bank, the family feeling replaces the individual attitudes toward customer.

4. Institutional pride. The employees of the bank must believe in their bank. They must always be committed to the theme of being "best bank". They are proud and have high job loyalty, unlikely to switch for other banks. Within this context, all employees have deeply-rooted concern for achieving excellence. A part of the institutional pride is the peer group pressure on employees to perform, they should be aware of keeping up their peers. Being proud of the bank implies that the employees' sales performance benchmarking are professional self-conscious feeling they are expected to do their best. In the banks where the sales culture is high, the psychology of achievement within employees gets a kind of normative behaviour.

5. The management's commitment to selling. In the banks where a true sales culture is prevailing, there should be a real and visible commitment to selling by the top-level managers. They set a sales actual model through their behaviour sharing the employees in sales calls and assisting them in approaching some customers as an example of the management's committed attitude

toward selling. In the sales oriented banks, senior managers spend their time in residing over the meeting, their existence has a telling impact on sales culture development in the bank. Clearly, adopting sales culture means that actions speak louder than words and slogans. In banks, if the sales culture is largely practical and widely strong convictions about the need for the importance of selling when employees acknowledge that their senior managers are best sellers, and they are really fulfilling a leadership role, all this reflects a pretty example of the managements' commitment to the selling.

6. Trust and faith in employees. Employees play a vital role in the bank service marketing system. Considering the inseparability between the service production and distribution and where the role of intermediaries is deleted, top management should have a deep faith and trust in the abilities and willingness of the employees to sell if given the required means and tools to do this. Management's faith in the employees is extended to the extent of improvement and encouragement given. Without this, managers are not expected to support establishing the proper climate for sales culture development.

Taken together, the researcher has incorporated these dimensions of a sales culture in a comprehensive measure called Sales Culture Index (SCI). The index consists of (80) statements covering the following six dimensions:

1. Customer-focus measured through statements (1-30).
2. Attitudes toward selling measured through statements (31-40).
3. Sense of team measured through statements (41-50)
4. Institutional pride measured through statements (51-65).
5. Top management commitment to selling

measured through statements (66-70).

6. Trust and faith in employees' capabilities measured through statements (71-80).

The index was presented as a part of a questionnaire designed for the purpose of this study. see Appendix 1). The statements were written in Arabic to facilitate the employees' understanding of responding task they were assigned to. The (SCI) measure was presented to a panel of five professors selected from five large Arab universities and who are considered as authorities in the field of marketing. The SCI (80) index has shown consistent reliability and validity properties. It has a scale composite reliability of (0.94).

### **Service Quality (SERVQUAL)**

For the purpose of this study, the operational definition of Service Quality (SERVQUAL) presented by Zeithaml and her colleagues (1988) has been adopted. Therefore, Service Quality (SERVQUAL) was operationally defined through five broad consolidated dimensions, which are the following were:

- (1) Tangibles, which reflects the appearance of physical elements.
- (2) Reliability, which reflects the dependability and accurate performance of the service.
- (3) Responsiveness, which reflects promptness and helpfulness.
- (4) Assurance, which is represented in competence, courtesy, credibility, and security.
- (5) Empathy; which means the easiness of access, good communications, and customer understanding.

Based on the above operational definition, Service Quality (SERVQUAL) was measured by using the SERVQUAL scales which consist of (22) characteristics of the service provided by the banks. The (22) characteristics represent the major (5) dimensions of the service quality as

proposed by Parasuraman et al., (1988) who applied the gap model in their measurement of service quality. According to this model, the service quality was defined as the difference between the service actual performance (p) and the customers' expected service quality (E). When perceived performance (P) scores are lower than the expectations (E) scores, this indicates a poor (low) quality; the contrary is a sign of good quality. Adopting this rational, the researcher assures the concept of service quality from the customer's perspective because he believes that the evaluations of the quality are inherited in the customers' minds.

The (22) statements through which the quality of service was measured has been reached after some modifications were made in the original SERVQUAL so as to better capture the expectations and perceptions of the Jordanian customers of the commercial banks. Modifying the SERVQUAL scale was to improve the validity and reliability of the scale as an instrument of measurement of the quality of bank services in Jordan.

The modification of the original scale of SERVQUAL was made after it has been presented through in-depth interviews with focus groups consisting of senior managers who have been randomly selected from the surveyed banks (Jordanian and non-Jordanian). In addition to a pilot study conducted on a small representative sample selected from the original sample used for this study.

The modified scale contained (22) statements that are distributed throughout the five service quality dimensions as follows:

- 1) Reliability, measured throughout the statements from (1-5).
- 2) Responsiveness, measured throughout the statements from (6-9).
- 3) Assurance, measured throughout the statements from (10-13).

4) Empathy, measured throughout the statements from (14-18).

5) Tangibles, measured throughout the statements from (19-22).

The scale also contained expectation statements (the same 22 but in the future tense). The (22) statements were attached to a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). The scale was presented as a part of a questionnaire designed for the purpose of this study.

It should be indicated that the SERVQUAL was presented to the respondents in two forms, one measures the service quality as it is perceived by customers. Subsequently, they were asked to record their expectations regarding (22) characteristics, the gap between the two measurements represents the measure of the service quality. The scales used in measuring SERVQUAL are presented in the customers' questionnaires (see Appendix 2).

#### DATA COLLECTION

Data required for this study were collected from the two samples (the employees and customers) which were randomly selected from their populations. For each sample, a structured questionnaire was designed as follows:

**a. The employees questionnaire.** This questionnaire was designed to collect two types of data: the first are demographic including gender, age, education, marital status, position, and work experience. The second type of data deal with the employees' adoption of sales culture. The data concerning this were collected by the Sales Culture Index (SCI) 80 statements. A total of (1330) questionnaire was distributed on the (23) surveyed banks based on the rational developed earlier in this study. Accordingly a total of (1000) questionnaires have been returned with a

(75%) rate of response as it has been determined. The (80) statements were attached with a 7-point scale on which the employees were asked to place their scores.

**b. The customers' questionnaire.** This questionnaire was designed to collect data on customers' perceptions of the employees' adoption of sales culture, their perception of service quality (SERVQUAL) and their expectations about it. The questionnaire consists of three parts: the first deals with some demographic factors (such as, gender, age, education, marital status, and income). The second part consists of the (SCI) scale through which customers' perceptions of the employees' adoption of sales culture were measured. Finally, the customers' perceptions and expectations of SERVQUAL provided by their banks were also measured. Customers' perceptions about the employees' adoption of sales culture were rated on the same (80) statements of the Sales Culture Index (SCI) after they had been reformalized to fit the customers perspective. Customers' perceived and expected SERVQUAL were measured by the SERVQUAL scales, as developed by Parasuraman et al., (1988). Initially, their perceptions of their banks' performance on (22) characteristics of the SERVQUAL provided by their banks were rated. Subsequently, they were asked to express their expectations on the same (22) characteristics after some modifications were made in the original SERVQUAL. The modifications in the scale were made by presenting the statements through in-depth interviews with the focus groups consisting of customers randomly selected from the surveyed banks (Jordanian and non-Jordanian). In addition, a pilot study was conducted on a small representative sample, which is also randomly selected from the bank's customers. The modified (22) statements were attached to a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7).

### **Reliability and Validity Test**

The reliability test was applied to examine the internal consistency of the dimensions of both, the sales culture, and SERVQUAL variables in the two questionnaires. For both, the customers' and employees' questionnaires show that the value of Cronbach coefficient Alpha was (0.91, 0.94), respectively. This indicates that there is a good internal consistency among items within each of the dimensions of the two variables (i.e., sales culture, and SERVQUAL), these results enhanced both the internal and external validity of the study and reinforced the generalization of the results.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Characteristics of the Samples:**

#### **a. The Employees' Sample**

A total of (1000) employees representing the employees' sample designed for the purpose of this study and covering the (23) surveyed banks with their branches in Jordan have responded on the distributed questionnaires, (9%) of those were branches' managers, (17.2%) were executive managers, and (20.3%) have departments' officers. (92.9%) of them were between 20 to 43 years old. Almost (73.4%) were males and (26.6%) females. The majority of the respondents (98.7%) have a college degree or higher. About (88%) of them have more than (5) years experience in banking work.

#### **b. The Customers' Sample**

A total of (1000) completed a self-administrated questionnaire. The respondents of this sample consist of a variety of customers representing the same (23) banks with their branches in Jordan. Their demographic distributions were as follows: (68.9%) males and (31.1%) females. The age of the majority (92.8%) was between 20 to 43 years old, (76%) of them have monthly incomes less than (1000 J.D). In terms of their marital status, (45.3%) of them were singles while (44.7%) were

married. Regarding their dealing period with banks (36.4%) five years or less, (17.7%) between (6) and (10) years, (45.8%) between (11) and (20) years of dealing period. The majority of the respondents (88.8%) have a college degree or higher.

### **Sales Culture Perception:**

Basically, the perception of sales culture was measured through the two perspectives, the employees have recalled their perceptions of sales culture and in the two bank categories; subsequently customers were also asked to express their experiences on the same sales culture scale. The findings of the analysis in this regard are reported as follows.

### **Employees' Perceived Sales Culture:**

Respondents of all (23) commercial banks rated their scores on a five – point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) attached to (80) statements of Sale Culture Index (SCI). The higher the score is, the more sales culture the employees have. The overall employees' perception of sales culture was determined by the grand mean score which has been computed by dividing the sum of the mean scores of the employees' scores on the (SCI) statements.

Each employee's perceived sales culture score was computed by totaling his/her ratings of the (80) individuals (SCI) statements. Adopting the American Bank Marketing Association ratings regarding the sales culture. A perfect score would be (100) based upon a rating of "strongly agree" (5 points) on each of the (80) statements. It could be concluded that each point of the scale has (20) scores as follows:

1 = 20 points

2 = 40 points

3 = 60 points

4 = 80 points

5 = 100 points

Thus, three evaluative rating levels of sales culture are considered:

1. High (strong) sales culture, if the mean scores are more than (4) and above (80).
2. Moderate sales culture, if the mean scores are between (3-4), (60-80).
3. Low (weak) sales culture, if the mean scores are below (3). i. e., below (60).

Within this context, the findings of the study indicated that the mean score of the overall employees' adoption of sales culture was (3.73) for the whole employees' sample (1000), when this mean score was adjusted to the previously mentioned evaluative rating, it was equal to (74) out of (100); this means that the overall employees' adoption of sales culture was moderate which means that the first main hypothesis (**HO1**), which states that the employees' adoption of sales culture is low (weak) and it was rejected. This suggests that all commercial banks in Jordan have made some progress in building the sales culture among their employees but still have much efforts to be devoted in this regard.

Cross-classifying (SCI) scores among various breakdowns of the surveyed banks reveal several

statistically significant results. Employees of the non-Jordanian banks had higher mean (SCI) scores of sales culture adoption than did employees of the Jordanian banks did (79, 65, respectively). It could be concluded that sub hypothesis (**HO1<sub>a</sub>**) which states that there are no significant differences in the employees' adoption of sales culture according to the nationality of their bank was rejected. The result suggests that there are differences between the surveyed banks according to their nationalities. Non-Jordanian banks have made a substantial progress in building sales culture among their employees, as compared with what has been done by the Jordanian banks.

On the other hand, the overall employees' adoption of sales culture was analyzed according to its basic six dimensions for both banks' categories (Jordanian / non-Jordanian). Data presented in table (10) shows the mean scores and standard deviations of these dimensions for the two banks' categories. Employees of the non-Jordanian banks had higher levels of the sales culture adoption than those of the Jordanian banks did on all dimensions of sales culture according to the rational developed by American Bank Marketing Association (ABMA).

Table (10)

## Mean Scores of the Six Dimensions of Employees' Adoption of Sales Culture in Commercial Banks

Dimension of sales culture Nationality of the banks	Customer focus	Attitude toward selling	Sense of team	Institutional pride	Top management commitment	Trust and faith in employees	Overall sales culture
Jordanian Banks	2.9)	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2
Strength*	(58)	(68)	(68)	(70)	(70)	(68)	(65)
Non-Jordanian	3.5	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.0
Strength*	(70)	(85)	(82)	(82)	(83)	(84)	(79)
Overall	3.2	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7
Strength*	(64)	(67)	(76)	(76)	(76)	(76)	(74)

\* Strength refers to the American Bank Marketing Association ratings of sales culture (see page 8):

80 and above: strong.

60-80: moderate.

Below 60: weak.

These results imply that hypothesis (**H01<sub>b</sub>**) which states that there are no significant differences in the employees' adoption of sales culture according to the nationality of the bank (Jordanian/non-Jordanian) was supported. Significant variations were detected in the employees' adoption of the sales culture dimensions between Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks. For instance, Jordanian banks scored low (below 60 percent) on the dimension of customer-focus, while non-Jordanian banks scored moderate level of adoption on the same dimension. Despite the employees, Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks had moderate level of sales culture adoption on the remaining sales culture dimensions; the employees of the non-Jordanian banks showed higher levels of sales adoption on the same dimensions.

Thus, it seems that all the surveyed gave varied priority to fostering the customer-focus dimension of the sales culture. Non-Jordanian banks appeared to recognize the importance of the customer-orientation and interpersonal relationships in service delivery and, as perceived by their employees, had actually devoted noticeable efforts to cultivate this type of sales culture within the banks.

#### Customers' Perception of the Employees' Sales Culture:

For the purpose of the comparative analysis between the customers' and the employees' perception of sales culture. This was based on the assumption that the employees' sales culture must be reflected in the customers evaluations of the SERVQUAL delivered by those banks. Because the customer-focus is a major component of the sales culture, it would be logical to

identify customers' perspective on the issue of sales culture. The gap between the two perspectives indicates the extent to which the sales culture, in the commercial

banks in Jordan, has been built on the base of customer-orientation. Table (11) summarizes these results:

**Table (11)**  
**Mean Scores of the Employees' and Customers' Perceptions of Sales Culture**

<b>Perceptions of sales culture</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Customers</b>	<b>Overall gap</b>
<b>Nationality of bank</b>			
Jordanian	3.3	3.2	0.1
Non-Jordanian	3.9	3.8	0.1
Overall	3.6	3.5	0.1

The data shown in table (11) indicate that there are no significant differences in the sales culture as it is perceived by each of the banks' employees and customers. This means that the second hypothesis was supported.

**3. The Overall Customers' Perceived Service Quality (SERVQUAL):**

In measuring the customers' perceived Service Quality (SERVQUAL), the gap model of service quality developed by Parasuraman et al., (1988) was applied. It indicated the customer's gap which represents the difference between the overall customers' perceived and expected SERVQUAL. The importance of this measure comes from the fact that customers' expectations are the standards of service performance (or reference point's performance) against that customers' experiences are compared to.

Respondents rated their scores of the perceived SERVQUAL on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (7). The overall mean scores of perceived SERVQUAL were computed (1000)

on the (22) individual SERVQUAL statements, and then dividing the total sum of the mean scores by the total number of customers sample (1000). The higher the mean score, the more positive evaluations about the quality of services provided by the commercial banks the customers have made. Accordingly, the overall mean score of customers' perceived SERVQUAL was (3.5).

**The Overall Customers' Expected SERVQUAL:**

Respondents completed SERVQUAL scales which measured their expectations of (22) characteristics (statements). Again, the overall mean scores of expected SERVQUAL were computed by totalling the rating of all customers (1000) on the (22) individual SERVQUAL statements and dividing the total sum of mean scores by the total number of customer (1000). The higher the mean score, the higher the expectations about the quality of service provided by the banks the customers have made. Accordingly, the overall mean score of the customers' expected SERVQUAL was (5.7)

Applying the gap model of service quality, the gap between the two measurements of customers' service

quality represents the level of SERVQUAL of the commercial banks. Therefore, overall SERVQUAL (gap) = customers' perceived SERVQUAL (P)– customers' expected SERVQUAL (E).

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Gap} &= P - E \\ &= 3.5 - 5.7 \\ &= -2.2\end{aligned}$$

According to the SERVQUAL decision rule, the SERVQUAL is considered as unsatisfactory (low) if the perceived SERVQUAL (P) mean score is lower than the expected (E). So, it could be concluded that the customers' SERVQUAL provided by commercial banks was low (unsatisfactory); thus, the third main hypothesis (**HO3**) was accepted.

In order to test the differences between banks with higher and lower levels of SERVQUAL, it was found similar (-2.2), which means that there are no significant differences in the customers' evaluations of SERVQUAL according to the nationality of their banks (Jordanian/non-Jordanian), therefore, the sub hypothesis (**HO3<sub>a</sub>**) was supported. Similar results regarding the quality of bank services provided by commercial banks in Jordan was reached in a previous study conducted by the researcher (Mualla, 1998). It then, could be concluded that after (10) years, the quality of services provided by those banks has not been changed; therefore, intensive efforts are still to be devoted by the

management of these banks to improve the quality of their services in order to enhance their competitive position in the market.

Significant variations were detected between non-Jordanian and Jordanian banks regarding each of the overall perceived and expected SERVQUAL provided by them. Customers of non-Jordanian banks appeared to have higher scores of both there overall perceived and the expected SERVQUAL than those of Jordanian banks do; this means that each of the two sub-hypotheses (**HO3<sub>b</sub>**, **HO3<sub>c</sub>**) was supported.

Assessing which dimension of SERVQUAL has been scored higher by the customers of both, Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks would generate valuable strategic insights for the management of quality of bank services. Apparently, customers of non-Jordanian banks had higher scores of SERVQUAL than those of Jordanian banks on all SERVQUAL dimensions. However, both categories of banks scored almost similarly regarding the gap on each of the SERVQUAL dimension; this means that the sub-hypothesis (**HO3<sub>d</sub>**) was supported. Table (12) summarizes the aggregate means of the overall SERVQUAL, the individual dimensions for both Jordanian and non-Jordanian banks. Also, the major gaps (SERVQUAL) on all dimensions are shown in table (13).

**Table (12)**

**Summary of the aggregate means of the overall SERVQUAL and its five dimensions**

Dimensions Nationality of the bank	Reliability		Responsiveness		Assurance		Empathy		Tangibles (physical evidence)		Overall SERVQUAL means scores	
	Perceived SERVQUAL (P)	Expected SERVQUAL (E)	Perceived SERVQUAL (P)	Expected SERVQUAL (E)	Perceived SERVQUAL (P)	Expected SERVQUAL (E)						
Jordanian Banks (500)	3.4	5.2	3.2	5.4	3.2	5.5	3.2	5.5	3.1	5.5	3.2	5.4
Non-Jordanian Banks (500)	3.6	5.9	3.7	5.9	3.7	6.0	3.7	6.0	3.7	6.0	3.7	5.9
Overall (1000)	3.5	5.6	3.5	5.6	3.5	5.7	3.5	5.7	3.4	5.7	3.5	5.7
Individual dimension gap	P-E (-2.1)		P-E (-2.1)		P-E (-2.2)		P-E (-2.2)		P-E (-2.3)		P-E (-2.2)	

**Table (13)**

**The Major Gaps in the Structural Dimensions of SERVQUAL in Commercial Banks**

Nationality of the banks SERVQUAL Dimensions	Jordanian banks	Non-Jordanian banks	Overall gap
Reliability	P-E (-2.2)	P-E (-2.3)	(-2.1)
Responsiveness	P-E (-2.2)	P-E (-2.2)	(-2.1)
Assurance	P-E (-2.3)	P-E (-2.3)	(-2.2)
Empathy	P-E (-2.3)	P-E (-2.3)	(-2.2)
Tangibles	P-E (-2.4)	P-E (-2.3)	(-2.2)
Overall SERVQUAL (gap)	(-2.2)	(-2.2)	(-2.2)

**The effects employees' sales culture as perceived by the customers on their perception of the service quality:**

One of the major areas of this study was the examination of the relationship between the employees' sales culture as perceived by customers and their

perception of service quality provided by commercial banks in Jordan. To test this relationship, regression analysis was conducted, and the results of this analysis are presented in table (14).

**Table (14)****The effects of employees' sales culture as perceived by customers on their perception of service quality**

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig.
Regression	23.138	1	23.138	125.631	0.112	0.000
Residual	183.805	998	0.184			
Total	206.942	999				

As the data shows, the value of calculated (**F**) is (125.631) with (1,998) degrees of freedom and (0.000) level of significance. Critical value of (**F**) was found to be (1.59), with the same degrees of freedom, and at level of significance. When the two values of (**F**) have been compared, calculated (**F**) was greater than critical value, which means that hypothesis (**HO4**) which states that the employees' sales culture as perceived by customers has no significant effects on their perceived service quality was rejected. Which means that the opposite is right. Such a positive relationship confirms that customers' perceptions of service quality is a function of their perceptions of the employees' sales culture.

**The Effects of Demographic Factors on the Employees' Sales Culture:**

Another major hypothesis of this study was relevant to the possible significant difference in the employees' adoption of sales culture according to some demographic factors, such as gender, age, position in the bank, and the length of work experience in banking area. To test this hypothesis, analysis of variance was conducted, and the results of this analysis indicated that except the age and the length of work experience, no demographic factors have any effects on the employees' adoption of sales culture. Which means that the fifth main hypothesis was partially accepted; table (14), shows these results.

**Table (15)****The Results of (ANOVA) Regarding the Effects of Employees' Age on their Adoption of Sales Culture**

Source of variance	Sum squares	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	22.230	5	4.445	7.613	0.001
Within groups	1036.550	994	1.042		
Total variance	1058.780	999			

The findings shown in table (15) indicate that calculated (**F**) is (7.613) with (5,994) degrees of freedom and (0.000) level of significance. When this value of (**F**) compared with its critical (tabulated) value which was (1.67) with the same degrees of freedom and level of significance, calculated (**F**) is found to be greater than

the critical.

On the other hand, table (15) presents the results of the effects of work experience on the employees' adoption of sales culture as follows.

**Table (16)**

**The Results of (ANOVA) Regarding the Effects of Work Experience on Employees' Adoption of Sales Culture**

Source of variance	Sum squares	Degrees of freedom (df)	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	27.50	4	6.874	11.728	0.006
Within groups	1031.28	995	1.036		
Total variance	1058.78	999			

As it is shown in the table (16), the value of calculated (**F**) is (11.728) with (4, 995) degrees of freedom and (0.006) level of significance. When this value was compared with the critical value of (**F**) which was (1.67) with the same degrees of freedom and level of significance, calculated (**F**) is found to be greater than critical (**F**). It could be concluded that fifth main hypothesis (**HO5**), which states that the employees' adoption of sales culture is not influenced by their demographic factors was also supported.

Both findings are logical in light of the cumulative nature of the sales culture construct. The older the employees are and the longer work experience they have are supposed to have cumulative effects on their sales culture.

**Practical Implications**

In deregulated financial markets, many banks are realizing the necessity of having a competitive edge over their competitors. They should develop more proactive marketing strategies to find and keep customers. A part of this strategic option is that the management must devote more intensive efforts towards building a sales culture. The findings of this study do lead to some potential ideas regarding a well-managed quality assurance and sales culture

The findings of this study indicate that sales culture among the employees of the surveyed banks was moderate. It was found that higher levels of quality service can be

delivered when banks adopt the customer orientation and reinforce the sales culture. The overall implication to these findings is consistent with the importance of being adaptable with the employee's sales culture which is necessary for successful relationship selling. Along with this line of thinking, managers in the commercial banks in Jordan can more effectively align the interest of the employees and customers. Accordingly, employees without a strong customer-orientation and sales culture are inappropriate to be assigned with customers accounts needing long-term relationship. The management's commitment to sales culture and service quality should be extended to strengthen the internal relationship. The results of this study should enable the management in the commercial banks to design internal marketing programs which aim at building a strong service-minded sales culture. This requires more attention to employees' feelings, recognition of employees as invaluable assets to the bank, and frequent interaction between employees and management. All these values create a favourable internal environment that helps the employees' empowerment.

Finally, the findings of this study should help the managers of development and training departments in commercial banks in Jordan to reconsider many of the traditional selling training programs which aim at building and fostering the service – minded sales culture.

**Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

As it is the case in any study, some limitations relevant to this study cannot be abandoned; for instance, the findings

of this study are based on self-report perceptions of both, the employees and customers. Data collected by this approach may or may not be accurate to the extent which reflects the respondents' real feelings. Another additional limitation is that the participants of this study were bank executive managers (46.5%) and frontline employees (53.5%). By virtue of their positions, those people have different insights about what happens within the banks. For instance, executives are able to observe the bank as a whole and should have strategic insight of the bank that may not be available to lower level employees. Thus, the insights reached from this study may be just as enlightening as more replicating research is to be conducted. Further, the next suggested research should identify expected antecedents and outcomes of sales culture and to develop what can be considered as a psychometric sound sales culture scale. If this study was applied to other service organizations, this would expand our understanding of the adoption of sales culture to those organizations. This in turn suggests that with more validation the conclusion derived from this study could prove to augment many of the managerial activities such as recruitment, selection, and training.

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## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to explore both the sales culture and service quality in the commercial banks in Jordan and to examine the relationship among them. The findings of this study have shown that sales culture as it has been perceived by the employees of the commercial banks in Jordan was moderate. However, it was higher in the non-Jordanian banks than that of the Jordanian banks. The findings of this study have also indicated that the quality of service, as it has been perceived by the customers of all commercial banks, was low.

The implications of this study suggest that commercial banks can more productively assign relational customers to employees, based on their inclination to consider the long-term relationship with customers. This study also emphasises the importance of establishing a sustainable relationship with customers and the necessity of having the effective management involved this relationship.

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