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Innovative Leadership as a Catalyst for Competitive Advantage in Jordanian Higher Education

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Abstract

The study aimed to identify the degree of innovative leadership practice and its relationship with the achievement of competitive advantage at Jordanian Universities. The correlation descriptive approach was used with a study tool (questionnaire) and applied to a sample of (400) Academics (230), administrators (170) at Jordanian Universities in the northern region. The study reached the following conclusions: the degree of innovative leadership practice among leaders of higher education institutions was medium; the level of achievement of competitive advantage was medium; and the results showed a positive correlation between innovative leadership and the level of achievement of competitive advantage at Jordanian.

Keywords: *Innovative Leadership, Competitive Advantage, Jordanian Universities, Jordan.*

Introduction

Higher education institutions are one of the institutions that contribute to the progress of society, and like other institutions, their success depends on the leader and the availability of leadership capabilities and traits in him. The increasing interest in universities leadership came as a result of the growing role of the Universities, and the difference in the message in view of the quality of these people; the universities president is required to renew and innovate and stand side by side with the workers, and contribute to bringing the workers to a high degree of self-esteem and respect for their opinions and initiatives and work to encourage them and welcome their ideas. The view of innovation and innovative leadership has varied according to the nature of institutions and the view of the return achieved by innovation. Therefore, the definitions of innovative leadership have varied, although they share specific features. Khairallah (2009) believes that the innovative leader is the one who can discover the weaknesses in his institution and innovate methods to overcome them and realize the strengths and distinctions of employees and create means to activate and invest them. Innovative leaders are thinkers, independent, idealistic, inspiring, and guided by long-term goals and visions. They make real change and have a clear vision of what they want to achieve. Innovative leaders, regardless of their types, roles,

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and tasks, should be in one of three states, as stated in Qandil (2010): to be innovative in their ideas and methods, to have a stimulating administrative space in which those working with them can carry out the innovation process, and to continuously strive to attract innovative elements and fill the institution with them. The leader's task is no longer to wait for problems to occur and then intervene in an attempt to partially solve them or uproot their basic roots. Rather, the matter has gone far beyond that, such that one of the most important duties of an effective leader is to take the initiative, anticipate what might happen, and think and innovate in how to avoid problems instead of confronting them after they occur. Among the foundations that leadership adopts to encourage innovative performance, as mentioned by Hassan (2004), are: encouraging creative performance and supporting and adopting innovators and their ideas, getting rid of routine ideas that prevent ideas and creativity from taking off, putting the right person in the right place, working on the principle of renewal and innovation, working to create what is called an idea bank, and getting rid of complex routine procedures that prevent ideas and creativity from taking off.

The innovative leader diversifies the methods he uses to overcome the problems he encounters that hinder development in the institution and affect its education system. Among these methods, as mentioned by Abbas (2004): supporting and encouraging individuals to present their opinions and ideas and to ask various questions, even if they are strange, establishing an organizational structure that supports and encourages freedom of thought and democracy of work and developing a spirit of cooperation, participation, constructive criticism, and respect for creative ideas. This includes encouraging innovative thinking to find common values and goals between workers and the leader, recognizing individual differences in educational institutions, and the presence of conscious leadership that seeks to lead the institution to research, analysis, and the ability to adapt to economic, social, and political changes.

Saloner (2011) cited in Abbas (2004) believes that the leader of the twenty-first century must have the following capabilities: vision, innovative and creative thinking. Innovation cannot be learned through lessons and lectures, but rather through hard work and training to confront and solve problems, confront challenges and cooperate by harnessing teamwork, which is considered a driver of innovation, as the work team contains different specializations and diverse skills that help them in the innovation process and work towards a common goal. Leaders need several things to improve the innovation process, such as critical analytical thinking, innovative thinking and leadership traits. Khairallah (2009) indicated the elements of innovation:

1- Strategic planning: The process by which the future of the institution is envisioned, and the process of developing the necessary means and processes to achieve this future.

2- Strategic thinking: The innovation process requires leaders to develop adequate plans based on sound logical thinking. Planning should not be considered a waste of time, but rather a thoughtful and productive investment and intensification. 3- Building a culture of individuals and the institution according to high human standards: meaning focusing on integrating roles with feelings, so that the individual working within the group feels that he is an integral part of the whole and that the whole is an integral part of him. Although this type of education is extremely difficult, it is extremely important; it is based on focusing on the needs of workers.

In order for leaders to achieve innovation, it is necessary to create a climate that supports innovation, encourage innovators, adopt their ideas, and work to provide an opportunity for these innovations to be realized on the ground. Planning and strategic thinking are two interconnected elements that require an appropriate innovative environment in order to appear, and all of this

will not be achieved without the existence of an institutional culture to which individuals belong.

(Hijazi, 2001; Al-Khalili, 2004; Al-Sakarna, 2010) indicated the characteristics of innovative leaders as follows: creative insight, great confidence in oneself and others, the ability to adapt, experiment and innovate, expressing opinions, suggestions, individual independence, the need for an organized life, innocence, aesthetic sensitivity and mental flexibility, social intelligence and keenness to build the group and its cohesion. The findings of Al-Shammari's study (2006) indicated, educational leaders in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia practice innovative leadership to an average degree. The study of Al-Anzi (2008) concluded that school principals in northern Saudi Arabia practice administrative creativity to a moderate degree.

Jabrini (2016), concluded innovative leadership from the dean's point of view in Palestinian Universities was high. While the study of Mudhib (2018) concluded organizational innovation at Tishreen University in Syria was low

Yukl (1981) pointed out that the opposing force plays an important role in improving administrative and technical practices among leaders and managers, and is a prominent factor that leads to innovation, creativity and excellence, and helps in meeting the needs of workers, raising their morale, enhancing their roles, belonging and loyalty to their profession, and solving their problems. Among the most important sources of subordinate authority are the leader's reliance on subordinates, the subordinates' evaluation of the leader, the union of subordinates, vital information, in addition to displaying special skills in dealing with serious problems in the institution, knowledge of the systems, laws and instructions of the institution, and expressing approval and loyalty. The twenty-first century of escalating competition that has expanded its scope, and included the public and private, and crossed borders to become global competition, and the race for the place of leadership, as the development that the world has known no longer recognizes except the pioneer, with no place for the follower, and in light of the intensification of competition, it is necessary to search and find a continuous competitive advantage emanating from an internal source In the institution, it gains ambiguity and difficulty of imitation, and this source is represented by the core competencies that it possesses, and it was named by this name because it is the basis of resources and functions, so that it is considered the axis that attracts the rest of the resources, and in its absence, the importance of other resources disappears, and the core competencies are represented by the human resource and its consideration as intellectual capital, capable of thinking and creativity, improvement and coordination between various other resources (Al- Muqaddamah, 2013). Competitive advantage represented by an element of superiority for the institution that is achieved when following certain strategies for competition, and it puts the institution in a better position compared to other institutions working in the same activity, and through it the institution enjoys ability to exploit external opportunities in a way that is difficult for its competitors to imitate.

Competitive is a real on academic and practical levels, as the academic no longer looks at administration problem or as a temporary confrontation with problems that are not of a strategic dimension, but looks at administration to address many internal and external problems; To achieve continuous superiority of institutions over other competitors with whom these institutions deal, and of course achieving this superiority will not be a temporary or short-term task, but rather a permanent attempt to maintain the balance of the institution towards other parties. (Mustafa, 2003). Pitts and Lei (1996) identified the sources of competitive advantage as follows: Internal sources, basic and may come from the administrative organization, motivation methods, returns on research, development and innovation, and knowledge.

External sources: These are many and varied and their change, that the organization can exploit and benefit from, such as the conditions of supply and demand for primary resources, finance, qualified human resources, and others.

Strategic options: build related to diversification, alliances, and relationships with others.

The sources of competitive advantage are represented by human resources: one contributed to increasing recognition of the importance of human resources administration, developing the competitive capacity of the institution. In the modern institution is evidenced by the fact that they are the real source for forming and enhancing competitive capacity. As domain of administration indicate, achieving excellence in the performance of the twenty-first century organization will not be based on merely possessing natural, financial or technological resources, but rather is based primarily on its ability to provide special types of human resources that have the ability to maximize the benefit from these resources. The world's transition from the age of machines to the age of information makes human resources the most important organizational asset, as human resources administration practices contribute to develop the competitive capacity of the institution in many ways, including: selecting employees who have the ability to innovate, develop and perform their job duties well, preparing employees for production, operations, developing loyalty to institution by improving institution's environment, increasing productivity by developing the ability to work And supporting the desire for it (Al-Mursi, 2003). (Ta'ima, 2006; Al-Qutb; 2012) pointed out the necessity of Universities possessing competitive advantages among themselves, and competitive advantage, it became clear that Universities that paid attention to competitive advantage and gave it special attention by proposing procedures and methods that raise its level, can enhance their position among other Universities, especially since maintaining and sustaining competitive advantage is extremely difficult in the era of the information and technology revolution if developing and growing this competitive advantage is through developing its employees. The emergence of the concept of international competition between Universities was closely linked to the emergence of international rankings of higher education institutions and Universities at the beginning of the twenty-first century. A distinguished University is one that is ranked among the best one hundred or two hundred Universities in the world in these periodic rankings. The Universities possess a set of characteristics of a globally distinguished level. It is the Universities that is able to attract the best elements of faculty members, students and employees. It is the Universities that does not depend on a single source of funding, but rather has multiple sources of funding, including government funding, funding through winning competitive tenders from private and government sources, tuition revenues, grants, donations and endowments. The Universities that does not depend on a single source of funding enjoys greater academic freedom without ideological or political restrictions, to be able to develop its own plans and practice training and research activities in a climate of intellectual property rights protection (Wachter & Neil 2010). The continuous increase in the role of Universities in the twenty-first century and their tireless pursuit of progress and keeping pace with development and growth has increased their responsibilities and interests, resulting in a comprehensive view that has formed new priorities for the next stage, especially with the major transformations sweeping the world that directly affect Universities and their strategic work path, such as globalization, technological developments and techniques, and the information knowledge revolution. All of this and more has created major challenges for Universities, and obligated them to keep pace with development and bring about effective change in their institutional work at all levels and achieve qualitative investment in developing human resources, which is the main pillar in the process of developing the institution as a whole

in order to achieve efficiency, effectiveness, speed in performance and achievement and reach the required quality to achieve competitive advantage within the framework of the changing global context. Consequently, the trend towards achieving quality and excellence in Universities has become a must, as Universities around the world face a state of intense competition, and what complicates matters is that people live in a changing and volatile world on all political, economic, cultural, technological and other levels, which has prompted academic institutions to think about strategies that enhance their competitive capabilities and ensure their continued excellence (Al-Farra and Sahmoud, 2015). Abu Ghaben (2012) confirmed that e-learning plays a role in enhancing distinguished efficiency as one of the areas of competitive advantage; and opens up great horizons for students or academic professors in Palestinian Universities in the Gaza Strip to innovate and contribute to inventing new methods in the educational process. Thus, e-learning plays a role in enhancing creativity and innovation as one of the areas of competitive advantage in Universities. Al- Saleh (2012) confirmed that the domains of scientific research, technical education, and knowledge production are among the most important areas for building competitive advantage in Saudi Government Universities. Al-Shammari's study (2014) concluded that there is a relationship between the degree of availability of intellectual capital in the areas of human capital, customer capital, and operational capital and the degree of achieving competitive advantage in Kuwaiti Private Universities, and that the degree of achieving competitive advantage in Kuwaiti Private Universities from the point of view of faculty members was average. Al-Badawi's study (2017) indicated that the dimensions of competitive advantage are represented by the quality of educational programs, the quality of scientific research, human resources administration, knowledge administration and its economy, and the application of technology at the Universities. The reality of the role of academic leaders in achieving competitive advantage at King Khalid Universities on these dimensions was average from the point of view of faculty members. Al-Salahat's study (2017) confirmed the existence of a relationship between administrative empowerment and competitive advantage among academic leaders from the point of view of faculty members at the Middle East Universities, in Jordan leadership has received significant attention in educational studies due to its role in the success of the educational process. The leader of the educational institution is considered responsible for directing efforts to achieve educational goals.

Study Goal & Problem Statement

Jordan is one of the first Arab countries to take the initiative to develop and renew the educational system. Successive educational conferences in Jordan have also emphasized the need to focus on creativity and administrative innovation. With the aim of enhancing leadership skills among leaders of higher education institutions, and the Ministry’s implementation of many activities and programs included in the “Institutional Efficiency Raising Project. Despite the increasing interest in educational leadership and developing practice methods that would be reflected on employees, the institution, and the goals that are sought to be achieved, there are traditional leadership practices that cannot create a creative climate for the institution that would create innovations and thus raise the level of appreciation for the distinguished performance of employees and achieve a competitive advantage with these traditional leaderships; This is what the results of the study of Tuwaiqat (2008) reached, that the degree of availability of creative leadership characteristics for deans of colleges and heads of departments at Jordanian Universities in light of reality and contemporary administrative trends is average. The results of the study of Arabi (2009) showed that Jordanian Universities in the northern region achieve an average competitive advantage. The study of Al-Fayoumi (2010) concluded that there is an

effect of comprehensive quality administration standards in achieving competitive advantage in public and private Universities in Jordan. The study of Al-Wadi and Al-Zaabi (2011) showed the existence of positive correlations between senior administration support and competitive advantage, as the more senior administration supports the achievement of administration Total quality and its application whenever it enables the achievement and enhancement of competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities.

The results of the study by Baz dough and Al-Nazer (2017) confirmed that the level of achievement of competitive advantage by heads of academic departments at the Universities of Jordan and Petra

Universities from the point of view of faculty members was average. The results of the study by Al-Brizat (2018) concluded that the level of competitive advantage at Al-Balqa Applied Universities was average.

Through the researcher's work at Jordanian Universities as a faculty member and academic leader, he noticed that there are traditional practices by some academic decision-makers, which makes the competitive advantage of Universities at a modest level. Hence, this study came to reveal the degree of practicing innovative leadership and its relationship to achieving competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities.

The study answered the following questions:

1- What is the degree of practicing innovative leadership among leaders at Jordanian Universities from employees point of view?

2- What is the level of achieving competitive advantage at Jordanian Universities from employees point of view?

3- Was there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level (≤ 0.05) between the degree of practicing innovative leadership among Jordanian Universities leaders and the level of achieving competitive advantage?

Study objectives of the study:

1- Identify the degree of practicing innovative leadership among Jordanian Universities leaders from their employees point of view.

2- Identify level of achieving competitive advantage at Jordanian Universities from their employees point of view.

3- Identify the correlation between innovative leadership among Jordanian Universities leaders and the level of achieving competitive advantage.

Research Significance:

The importance of the study lies in the importance of the study topic, the degree of practicing innovative leadership and its relationship to the level of achieving competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities. The importance of the study lies in the following matters:

- From a theoretical point of view, the results of the study can add new knowledge to educational thought in the domain of education.

- From a practical point of view, the study can help in the educational domain and educational decision- makers to develop training programs.

- Highlighting the importance of innovative leadership in the progress of educational institutions, as innovative leadership contributes to creating a cohesive educational environment that is characterized by love and cooperation among its members.

- Innovative leadership contributes to revealing the capabilities, talents and energies of employees so that they can be invested in the best way.

- Innovative leadership affects the workflow in a way that satisfies all employees; because it guarantees everyone equal opportunities and appropriate reinforcement, which leads to stimulating the motivation of employees and thus high self-esteem and achieving clear results and prosperity in an educational environment.

- It contributes to adding new knowledge that benefits all parties to the educational process and stakeholders from educational leaders, employees and researchers.

- It contributes to developing the performance of leaders in higher education institutions, and developing appropriate training programs after identifying the shortcomings and shortcomings in their administration and working to overcome them and strengthen their leadership capabilities, as well as providing appropriate support to employees to advance them, which leads to improving their performance.

Methodology and Procedures

This section describes the study methodology, community and sample, a questionnaire was used, and the procedures necessary to verify the validity and reliability of a tool.

Study Methodology:

It followed a descriptive correlational approach for its suitability to the nature of the study, using a tool to collect data.

Study Community:

It consisted of all employees in the official Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, numbering (6616), including (2493) academics and (4123) administrators (https://www.mohe.gov.jo/Ar/List).

Study Sample:

A samle of (400) selected from (academics and administrative employees) in the official Universities of Jordan. For the academic year 2022/2023, at a rate of (17%) of the study community, according to the required sample size table at the statistical significance level of Crecy and Morgan (1970).

Study instrument: A tool was developed to measure the study variables. The tool consisted of two axes: the first: the innovative leadership questionnaire, which consisted of (20) paragraphs distributed over three areas: (leadership innovation, cognitive innovation, and innovation in the work environment). The second axis: the competitive advantage questionnaire, which consisted of (20) paragraphs distributed over four areas: (quality, outstanding performance, flexibility, and human resource investment).

Validity of the Study Instrument:

The study tool was verified using the content validity method, by presenting it to a number of arbitrators, totaling (10) professors of educational administration, measurement and evaluation,

and public administration, from Jordanian Universities professors. The arbitrators were asked to refine and review the questionnaire in terms of the degree of clarity of paragraphs, the quality of the linguistic formulation, and the degree of its belonging to the domain it measures, and to modify or delete any paragraph that they see as not achieving the objective of the questionnaire. The data was collected from the arbitrators and then reformulated according to what (80%) of the arbitrators agreed upon.

The validity of a tool was also verified by applying it to a survey sample consisting of (30) individuals, who were excluded from the study sample, and calculating the correlation coefficients (Pearson) relationship of the paragraphs to their domains, the total score of the tool, and the corrected item-total correlation coefficients for the relationship of the paragraphs to the tool as a whole.

Item number	**Correlation coefficient range(1)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***	**Item number**	**Correlation coefficient range(2)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***	**Item number**	**Correlation coefficient range(3)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***
1	.52	.53	6	.66	.64	10	.52	.53
2	.58	.55	7	.60	.57	11	.58	.55
3	.68	.59	8	.69	.58	12	.68	.59
4	.63	.56	9	.61	.56	13	.63	.56
5	.61	.57				14	.61	.57
						15	.61	.56
						16	.60	.50
						17	.62	.52

Correlation coefficients between the paragraph and the domain to which it belongs and the total score of the competitive advantage scale

Item number	**Correlation coefficient range(1)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***	**Item number**	**Correlation coefficient range(2)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***	**Item number**	**Correlation coefficient range(3)***	**Correlation coefficient with the tool***
1	.61	.52	6	.70	.61	11	.61	.52
2	.64	.57	7	.70	.62	12	.64	.57
3	.59	.52	8	.66	.60	13	.59	.52
4	.65	.61	9	.61	.52	14	.65	.61
5	.44	.40	10	.66	.57	15	.44	.40
						16	.58	.54

Item number	**Correlation**	**Correlation**

	coefficient range(3)*	coefficient with the tool*	
17	.63	.54	
18	.69	.64	
19	.67	.63	
20	.61	.57	

Table (1): Correlation Coefficients Between the Paragraph, Domain to Which It Belongs and the Total Score of the Innovative Leadership Scale and the Competitive Advantage Scale

Reliability of the Study Tool

To ensure the stability of the tool, internal consistency reliability coefficients were calculated using the Cronbach Alpha method, and Table (2) as follows:

tool	domains	Cronbach's coefficient alpha
Innovative Leadership	Leadership Innovation	0.89
	Cognitive Innovation	0.87
	Innovation in the Work Environment	0.89
Competitive Advantage	Flexibility	0.88
	Outstanding Performance	0.85
	Quality	0.89
	Human Resources Investment	0.88

Table (2) Reliability Coefficient of a Tool Using the (Cronbach Alpha) Method

Table (2) shows that the reliability coefficients for the domains ranged between (0.85 - 0.89), and these values are considered acceptable for the purposes of this research.

Results and Discussion

This part dealt with a presentation of the results of the study according to the sequence of its questions, as follows:

The first Question results and its discussion: What is the degree of practice of innovative leadership among leaders at Jordanian Universities from the point of view of the employees there? To answer this question, the arithmetic means, standard deviations, and grade were extracted, and Table (3) shows that.

No	Domains	M	S. D	R	Degree
2	Cognitive innovation	2.28	0.78	1	Medium

1	Leadership innovation	2.26	0.69	2	Medium
3	Innovation in the work environment	2.25	0.84	3	Medium
Total degree		2.26	0.58	-----	Medium

Table (3) Means and Standard Deviations of Practicing Innovative Leadership Among Leaders at Jordanian Universities from the Point of View of Their Employees, Ranked in Descending Order.

Table (3) shows that the degree of practicing innovative leadership among leaders at Jordanian Universities from the point of view of their employees was average, with an arithmetic mean of (2.26)). The averages ranged, and the arithmetic means for the domains ranged between (2.25-2.28). The domain of knowledge innovation came in first place with the highest arithmetic average of (2.28), and a moderate degree. It was followed in the second rank by the domain of leadership innovation with a arithmetic average of (2.26), with a standard deviation of (.69), a moderate degree. Medium, followed in third place by the domain of innovation in the work environment, with a mean of (2.25), and a standard deviation of (.84), with a moderate degree. This result may be attributed to the perceptions of employees in higher education institutions (Universities) regarding the leadership behavior of their superiors and direct officials. Their behavior is still traditional in terms of the leadership style practiced, and they do not have anything new and innovative that is reflected on those working with them. This may be due to the fact that the selection of leaders does not It is still affected by multiple factors, including social factors such as nepotism and nepotism, apart from the availability of creative competencies that are supposed to be achieved. The results of this study agreed with the results of the study of Al-Shammari (2006); Al-Anazi (2008); Tuwaiqat (2008); Their results reached a moderate degree for practicing innovative leadership; While the results of this study differed from the results of the study of Gebrini (2016); The results of which reached a high degree of practicing innovative leadership. It differed from the results of the Mudhib study (2018), whose results reached a low degree for practicing innovative leadership.

The arithmetic averages and standard deviations of the study sample members' estimates for the items in each domain were calculated separately, and were presented according to the results, which were as follows:

The second domain: Cognitive innovation

To show the estimates of the study sample members for the items in the domain of cognitive innovation, means and standard deviations were used, and Table (4) shows this.

Rank	**No**	**Items**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Practicing degree**
1	8	Leaders are interested in the success of new ideas and methods of work.	2.31	.83	Medium

2	7	Leaders have the ability to make important and vital decisions.	2.29	.85	Medium
3	9	Leaders provide workers with the information necessary to perform the job consistently	2.27	.83	Medium
4	6	Leaders offer new suggestions and methods that help get the job done	2.25	.89	Medium
		Cognitive innovation	2.28	0.78	Medium

Table (4) Means and Standard Deviations for the Items Related to the Domain of Knowledge Innovation, Arranged in Descending Order

Table (4) shows the degree of practicing the domain of cognitive innovation in public Universities in the northern region of Jordan from the point of outlets of its workers came moderate with the average account (2.28) and all paragraphs came in moderate and computational averages ranged Between (2.25- 2.31), where paragraph (8), which states that leaders are interested in the success of new ideas and methods at work 'in the first order and with an average of my account (2.31), while paragraph No. (6) came and its text' is the leaders offered suggestions and methods New helps to perform work 'with the last rank and with an average of my account (2.25).

The first domain: leadership innovation

To explain the estimates of the study sample of the domain of leadership, table (5) have indicated this.

Rank	**No**	**Items**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Practicing degree**
1	5	Leaders encourage employees to plan to confront problems that are expected to occur	2.30	.85	Medium
2	3	Leaders make employees feel confident in their abilities.	2.29	.83	Medium
3	2	Leaders encourage employees to do their work in a renewed manner	2.25	.88	Medium
4	4	Leaders are interested in employees' innovative ideas	2.23	.81	Medium
5	1	Leaders welcome new ideas and developed.	2.22	.78	Medium
		Total	2.26	0.69	Medium

Table (5) The Domain of Leadership Innovation

Table (5) shows the degree of practicing leadership innovation among leaders in public Universities in the northern region of Jordan, from employees point of view, was average, mean

(2.26) All items came in at a moderate degree, and the averages ranged The arithmetic range is between (2.22-2.30), where item (5), which states, "Leaders encourage workers to plan to confront problems expected to occur," came in first place, with a mean of (2.30), while paragraph (1), which states, "Leaders reduce oversight." "Directly affecting workers while they are performing their work" ranked last, with an average of (2.22).

Third domain: Work environment domain

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	degree
1	10	employees in defining Universities goals	2.30	.83	Medium
2	12	Leaders involve employees in defining Universities goals	2.29	.85	Medium
3	14	Leaders involve employees in formulating a clear vision	2.28	.88	Medium
4	13	Leaders encourage human relations with employees	2.25	.78	Medium
5	16	Leaders provide an atmosphere of fun and entertainment among employees to provide an atmosphere that encourages creativity	2.24	.86	Medium
6	15	Leaders support employees' efforts	2.23	.85	Medium
7	17	Leaders delegate tasks to employees	2.22	.89	Medium
8	11	Leaders provide employees A system for evaluating his performance	2.20	.86	Medium
Total			2.25	0.84	Medium

Table (6) Means and Standard Deviations for the Items Related to the Domain of Work Environment, Arranged in Descending Order

Table (6) shows that the degree of practice in the domain of work environment among leaders in public Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from the point of view of the employees there, was average, with an arithmetic mean (2.25) and a standard deviation (.84). All items came in at a moderate degree, and the arithmetic means ranged Between (2.20-2.30), where Paragraph (10), which states, "Leaders involve employees in determining the Universities' goals," came in first place, with a mean of (2.30), while Paragraph (20), which states, "Leaders link employees' incentives to evaluating "His performance" in the latest ranking, with an arithmetic average of (2.20).

Results of the second question and its discussion: What is the level of achieving competitive advantage at Jordanian Universities from the point of view of their employees? To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted, and Table (7) shows that.

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Practicing degree
1	3	Flexibility	2.25	0.76	Medium
2	2	Outstanding Performance	2.23	0.72	Medium
3	1	Quality	2.22	0.79	Medium
4	4	Human Resources Investment	2.21	0.74	Medium
		Total Score	2.23	0.62	Medium

Table (7) Means, Standard Deviations, Level, and Rank for the Areas of Competitive Advantage at Jordanian Universities Are Arranged in Descending Order

Table (7) shows that the level of achieving competitive advantage at Jordanian Universities from the employees their point of view was average, with mean of (2.23) and a standard deviation of (0.62). The arithmetic averages for the domains ranged between (2.21-2.25), as all domains came at a level (Average), and the domain of "flexibility" came in first place with the highest arithmetic mean of (2.25) and a standard deviation of (0.76), while the domain of "outstanding performance" came in second rank with a arithmetic average of (2.23) and a standard deviation of (0.72), in While the domain of "quality" came in the third rank with a mean of (2.22) and a standard deviation of (0.79), the domain of "investment in human resources" came in the fourth and last rank with a mean of (2.21) and a standard deviation of (0.74). This result is explained by the fact that the point of view of employees in Jordanian Universities, represented by the Universities, is still modest in their perceptions of their Universities in terms of the level of competitive advantage, and this is through the reports issued annually on the level of Universities classification, as well as the requirements for accreditation and raising the level of classification due to the material and human requirements it requires. In addition, there is a gap between reality and expectations. Whether this is at the level of educational programs or at the level of requirements necessary to implement the programs, and with regard to flexibility, there is flexibility in waiving some of the complexities that existed previously, an example of which is flexibility in accepting numbers of students and exceeding the approved standards for the absorptive capacity of Universities. The results of this study agreed with the results of the study of Al-Fayoumi (2010); Abu Ghaben (2012); Al-Shammari (2014); Al-Badawi (2017); Salahat (2017); Al-Brayzat (2018); Bazadough and Al-Nazer (2017), in which these studies reached an average degree of estimates of competitive advantage. Whether this is at the level of educational programs or at the level of requirements necessary to implement the programs, and with regard to flexibility, there is flexibility in waiving some of the complexities that existed previously, an example of which is flexibility in accepting numbers of students and exceeding the approved standards for the absorptive capacity of Universities. The results of this study agreed with the results of the study of Al-Fayoumi (2010); Abu Ghaben (2012); Al-Shammari (2014); Al-Badawi (2017); Salahat (2017); Al-Brayzat (2018); Bazadough and Al-Nazer (2017), in which these studies reached an average degree of estimates of competitive advantage.

Means and standard deviations of the estimates of the members of the study sample were calculated on the items of each domain separately, and they were presented according to the results, which were as follows:

The first domain: Flexibility

To indicate the degree of appreciation of the sample members on the items in the flexibility

domain, the arithmetic means, standard deviations, level, and ranking were used, and Table (8) shows this:

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Practicing degree
1	3	The Universities has high flexibility in the alternatives offered in dealing with the surrounding circumstances.	2.29	0.82	Medium
2	1	The Universities has high flexibility in the amount of response to changes in the needs of the labor market.	2.27	0.89	Medium
3	5	The Universities keeps pace with the developments that occur in society.	2.26	0.84	Medium
4	2	The Universities provides all the needs required for the programs it offers.	2.23	0.85	Medium
5	4	The Universities has flexibility in activating administrative processes.	2.21	0.78	Medium
		Total Score	2.25	0.76	Medium

Table (8) Means, Standard Deviations, Level, And Ranking of the Items in the Flexibility Domain, Arranged in Descending Order

Table (8) shows that the level of achieving competitive advantage in public Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan from the point of view of those working there in the domain of flexibility was average, with an arithmetic mean of (2.25), and a standard deviation of (.76), and all items in the domain came at a score of Medium. The arithmetic averages for the paragraphs in the domain of "flexibility" ranged between (2.21-2.29), where paragraph (3), which states "The Universities has high flexibility in the alternatives proposed in dealing with the surrounding circumstances," came in first place and at an average level, with an arithmetic average of (2.29), while paragraph (4) came in last place: "The Universities has flexibility in activating administrative processes" at an average level, with an arithmetic average of (2.21).

The Second Domain: Outstanding Performance

To indicate the degree of appreciation of the study sample members on the items in the domain of outstanding performance, arithmetic means, standard deviations, level, and ranking were used, and Table (9) shows this:

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Practicing degree
1	7	The Universities provides appropriate incentives to attract experts.	2.30	0.85	Medium
2	9	The Universities adopts strategies concerned with providing human outcomes capable of long-term planning.	2.29	0.82	Medium
3	8	The Universities provides opportunities to provide appropriate administrative competencies.	2.28	0.79	Medium
4	6	The Universities maintains human resources with distinguished competence.	2.24	0.87	Medium
5	10	The Universities adopts modern methods in developing the requirements of its competitive programs in the market Work.	2.22	0.84	Medium
		Total	2.23	0.72	Medium

Table (9) The Arithmetic Means, Standard Deviations, Level, And Rank of the Items in the Domain of Outstanding Performance Are Arranged in Descending Order

Table (9) shows that the level of achieving competitive advantage in public Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from the point of view of its employees in the domain of outstanding performance, came to a moderate degree, with an arithmetic mean of (2.23), and a standard deviation of (0.72), and all items in the domain came at a level Average. The arithmetic averages for the paragraphs in the domain of "distinguished performance" ranged between (2.22-2.30), where paragraph (7), which states that "the Universities provides appropriate incentives to attract experts," came in first place and at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.30) and a deviation My standard reached (0.85), while paragraph (5), which reads, "The Universities adopts modern methods in developing the requirements of its competitive programs in the labor market," came in last place, at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.23) and a standard deviation of (.72). The third domain: Quality

To indicate the degree of appreciation of the sample members on the quality items, the arithmetic means, standard deviations, level, and ranking were used, and Table (10) shows this:

Rank	No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Practicing degree
1	13	The Universities' programs, plans and curricula are compatible with market requirements Work.	2.26	.85	Medium

2	12	The Universities is committed to academic quality standards in providing services.	2.23	.80	Medium
3	14	The Universities' programs, plans and curricula are compatible with market requirements Work.	2.22	.81	Medium
4	16	The Universities is committed to academic quality standards in providing services.	2.21	.85	Medium
5	15	The Universities' programs, plans and curricula are compatible with market requirements Work.	2.20	.88	Medium
6	11	The Universities is committed to academic quality standards in providing services.	2.19	.80	Medium
		Total Score	2.22	79.	Medium

Table (10) Means, Standard Deviations, Level, And Rank for the Quality Domain Items, Arranged in Descending Order

Table (10) shows that the level of achieving competitive advantage in public Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from the point of view of those working there in the domain of quality, was at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.22), and a standard deviation of (.79), and all items came at (.79) level. Average, and the arithmetic averages for the paragraphs in the domain of "quality" ranged between (2.19-2.26), where paragraph (13), which states, "The Universities administration is interested in the quality of services provided to the local community and works to

develop them continuously," came in first place, at an average level, with an arithmetic average of (2.26) and a standard deviation of (.85), while paragraph (11), which reads, "The Universities adheres to academic quality standards in providing services," came in last place, at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.19) and a standard deviation of (.80).

Fourth Domain: Investing Resources Humanity

To indicate the degree of appreciation of the sample members on the items of investment in human resources, the arithmetic means, standard deviations, level, and ranking were used, and Table (11) shows this:

Rank	**No**	**Items**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**	**Practicing degree**
1	17	The Universities sets a clear strategy for investing in its resources (material and human).	2.23	.79	Medium

2	18	The Universities allocates financial resources to develop the capabilities of its employees.	2.22	.84	Medium
3	19	The Universities allocates financial resources to develop performance delivery systems.	2.20	.87	Medium
4	20	The Universities invests technology in developing scientific research.	2.19	.89	Medium
		Total Score	2.21	.74	Medium

Table (11) Means, Standard Deviations, Degree, and Rank for the Items in the Domain of Human Resources Investment, Arranged in Descending Order

Table (11) shows that the level of achieving competitive advantage in public Universities in the northern region of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, from the point of view of those working there in the domain of human resources investment, was at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.21), and a standard deviation of (.74). All paragraphs are at an average level, and the arithmetic averages for the paragraphs in the domain of "investment in human resources" ranged between (2.23-2.19), where paragraph (17), which states that "the Universities sets a clear strategy for investing in its resources

(material and human)" came in first place and at a level Average, with an arithmetic mean of (2.23) and a standard deviation of (.79), while paragraph (20), which reads "The Universities invests in technology in the domain of developing scientific research," came in last place, at an average level, with an arithmetic mean of (2.19) and a standard deviation of (.89), respectively. Results and discussion of the third question: Is there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level (≤ 0.05) between the degree of practicing innovative leadership and the level of achieving competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities? To answer this question, the Pearson correlation coefficient was extracted for the relationship between the degree of practicing innovative leadership and the level of achieving competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities, and Table (12) shows this

The relationship between variables		**quality**	**outstanding performance**	**flexibility**	**human resources investment**	**total**
Leadership innovation	correlation coefficient	**.515	**.571	**.556	**.581	**.612
cognitive innovation	correlation coefficient	**.545	**.561	**.556	**.589	**.665
innovation in the work environment	cognitive innovation	**.535	**.534	**.544	**.569	**.649
Total	correlation coefficient	**.665	**.642	**.634	**.689	**.687

Table (12) Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the Relationship Between the Degree of Practicing Innovative Leadership and the Level of Achieving Competitive Advantage in Jordanian Universities

It is clear from Table (12) that there is a positive, positive correlation with statistical significance at the level of (0.01) between the areas of innovative leadership and the areas of achieving competitive advantage in Jordanian Universities. This result is explained by the fact that the more innovative leadership is practiced by academic and administrative leaders in Universities and colleges, the higher the level of achieving competitive advantage because excellence is represented by what is reflected through knowledge and its applications to other domains. This result is due to the interest in practicing innovative leadership, which is linked to the degree of awareness of the importance of this leadership behavior among leaders in Jordanian Universities, is still modest. The greater the degree of awareness of aministration of the environment that incubates creativity and the provision of an appropriate work environment, the higher the level of competitive advantage, and thus this impact is reflected in the outputs of those institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

Universities administration should adopt clear and explicit policies that limit errors occurring in the completion of administrative processes for employees.

Working to attract competencies to achieve a competitive advantage for higher education institutions.

Emphasizing quality assurance standards and their applications to achieve excellence and competition between Universities at the Arab and international levels.

The necessity of paying attention to practicing innovative leadership as an administrative strategy pursued by the Universities administration to reach sound decisions.

Spreading awareness of the importance of innovative leadership for academic leaders as a source of academic authority. Adopting competitive advantage strategies that will enable advanced institutions to enter the world of competitiveness through excellence in performance.

Working to educate workers at Jordanian Universities on the importance of the competitive advantage of Universities and working to make more efforts to raise the level of competitiveness among Universities at the regional and international levels.

Developing training programs to prepare those who hold leadership positions or their representatives in innovative leadership, strategic thinking and planning, and dealing with situations similar to reality.

Working on investing in human resources and managing human talent through the active participation of work teams within Universities.

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