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Strategic Flexibility and its Impact on Raising the Performance of Banks

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Abstract

Strategic issues are the core of the work of business organizations and occupy the main pillar of the work of commercial banks, whose fields of work and their competitive environment have developed. Strategic flexibility has become an urgent and binding issue for the commercial banking sector to keep pace with environmental changes and developments and raise the performance of banks to keep pace with environmental developments. The research aims to delve into two very important variables by doing The commercial banking sector, which is flexibility. The strategy and performance of the banks. Six commercial banks were chosen to be happy with the research (Baghdad, Iraqi investment, Gulf, investment development, Al-Mansour, Babylon). A member of bank managers, people's officials, and accountants in commercial banks. The data were subjected to statistical analysis by applying the statistical program (spss). The results demonstrated an impact on the overall level of the two variables. The study (strategic flexibility, bank performance) The findings revealed the existence of relationships between (banking service flexibility, competitive flexibility, investment flexibility, and human resource flexibility). And bank performance at the sub-dimension level (financial dimension, customer dimension, internal operations dimension, education and growth dimension).

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Introduction

Today's business environment is witnessing a great challenge represented by rapid changes in the competitive external environment, rapid technological developments, and unstable economic conditions. The commercial banking sector, which is about to achieve its goals, should develop its strategies to suit the accelerating and highly complex external environment in terms of Adaptability, correct ability, adjustability, hedging, and tolerance Shocks. Therefore, these banks need strategic flexibility to develop their strategies in changing environments. Changing work systems has become the basic rule in banking, and innovations and technologies have become more frequent and the fastest development in the performance of banking work, in terms of cost, quality, speed of achievement, and the ability to achieve an advantage. Competitiveness, achieving banks' objectives and keeping pace with developments in the external environment. This research will be prepared through four chapters. The first chapter includes the research methodology, while the second chapter consists of two chapters; the first chapter is the concept of strategic flexibility and its dimensions. Conclusions and recommendations.

Problem of the Research

The environment of the commercial banking sector is witnessing major developments and challenges in various economic, technological, regulatory, legal, and international fields...etc. While Iraqi commercial banks are still operating according to traditional mechanisms and means, and thus achieving keeping pace with changes has become a fundamental problem facing the work of banks.

To adapt the new developments in the environment, the commercial banking industry should have strategic flexibility. This is done in light of the philosophy of improving commercial bank performance through the financial dimension. And their financial ability in terms of deposits and loans through winning customers. This leads to an increase in deposit and the availability of large financial resources through internal changes in commercial banks, increasing development, etc. education and experience, and flexibility in its business approach through the bank's ability To recognize changes in the external environment, equip its resources with new aspirations to respond promptly to environmental changes, reclaim its market position, and revise any competitive plans that are no longer appropriate.

Importance of the Research

Research on banking sector issues is very important as it plays an important role in supporting the national economy. The live broadcast sent an intellectual and practical filter to develop the reality of the banking sector. The current broadcast is characterized by modernity in its presentation of an intellectual proposal to complement previous research that dealt with the impact of strategic flexibility on the performance of banks. The axis of strategic flexibility is the main pillar in which the banking sector operates worldwide. Highlighting the issue of strategic flexibility in the banking sector and its philosophy is a very important topic for the banking sector. In light of the rapid changes that the external environment is witnessing and their impact on the banking sector, the importance of the current broadcast lies in delving into the intellectual and applied frameworks that are the subject of banks' performance.

Objectives

The significance of the current research is exemplified, including; (1) Determine the conceptual and intellectual foundations for each of flexibility of the strategy independent variable and the performance of the banks the dependent variable. (2) To determining and measuring the level

of importance of the research variables (strategic flexibility, banking performance) in commercial banks, the same research. (3) Measure and determine the level of senior management thinking (a sample of research with strategic issues, building a hypothetical model to test the research hypotheses and determine the nature of the impact of the independent variable (strategic flexibility) on the dependent variable (banks performance)).

Hypothesis

The hypothetical diagram shows the relationships between the research variables and their flow. The research consists of two primary variables, the independent variable strategic flexibility in terms of its sub-dimensions (the flexibility of banking services, competitive human resource flexibility, and investment flexibility). All of them are variables of the measurement vector, strategic flexibility. As for the variable adopted for research, the performance of commercial banks in terms of its dimensions: the financial dimension, the customers dimension, the internal operations, the learning, and the growth dimension). There is a statistically significant relationship between strategic flexibility and banking performance in the studied commercial banks. There is a statistically significant relationship with strategic flexibility in raising the Performance of banks in the commercial banks studied.

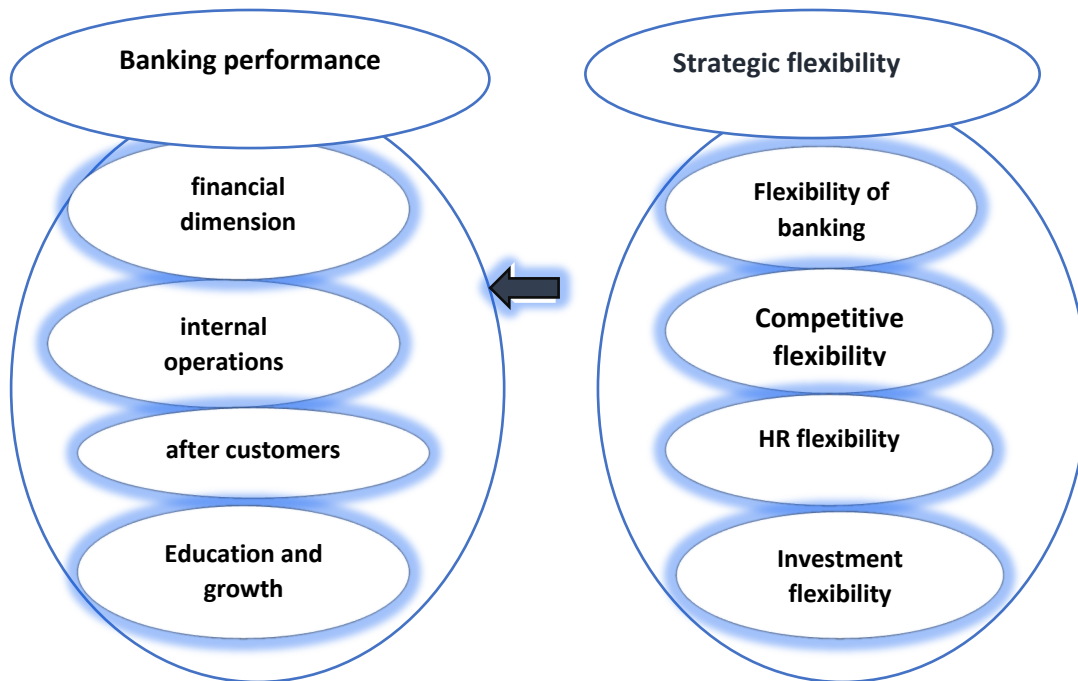


Figure No. (1) the hypothesis of the research

Source: Created by researcher

Samples of the Study

The Iraqi commercial banking sector in the south was chosen to be a community to test the model and hypotheses of the study, as it is one of the sectors that play an important role in developing the national economy through investing money, increasing deposits, and providing loans.

Table 1. the research sample banks

Bank name	headline	Year Founded	number of branches	Number of employees	Capital (billion Dinar)	Date of listing in the financial market
Baghdad Bank	red Baghdad	1995	26	764	250 billion	1983
Al-Mansour Bank	Baghdad/ Karrada	2005	9	243	250 billion	1997
Gulf Bank	Baghdad / سعدون	1999	20	297	300 billion	2004
Babel Bank	Baghdad/ Karrada	2005	9	198	264 billion	2007
Investment Development Bank	Baghdad/ Karrada	2011	8	274	250 billion	2017
investment bank Iraqi	Baghdad/ Alawiya	1993	16	247	250 billion	2004

Source: Prepared by researchers

Data collection

The source of the present study consists of several sources, including books, research, studies, theses, and university theses related to research variables. The World Wide Web (the Internet, as researchers, conducted a comprehensive survey of the intellectual contributions about research variables. Field visits and personal interviews were conducted by researchers with several managers of commercial banks in the research sample. And highly experienced workers to clarify some data and obtain some information about the nature of the work of commercial banks for the activities they practice. It was used in analyzing the performance variable of banks.

Practical Side

This deals with presenting the data that included the questionnaire and the resulting data through the (Likert Five) scale to measure trends. Which is graded to five degrees, each of which represents a specific case of trend or agreement regarding the paragraphs of the questionnaire and loading the responses using statistical analyzes. Such as frequency distributions, percentages, standard deviations, and means Arithmetic for each of the main study variables represented in the dimensions of strategic flexibility as an (independent) variable and the performance of banks with descriptors of a (dependent) variable using the (SPSS) program. The tables also indicate the direction of the highest measure among the frequencies of the envoys' responses by comparing the distribution rates of the responses of the study community individuals for each paragraph of the table. Private commercial banks were selected in Basra Governorate, and (100) forms were distributed to a random sample of workers in the mentioned quantity.

Results and Discussion

Personal Data

It is clear from a table (2) that the majority of the respondents are females, and their number is (55) personally, with a percentage of (55%), and the number of males is (45) people, and they constitute (45%)

Table 2. Gender

Gender	the number	percentage
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Male	45	%45
female	55	%55
Total	100	%100

Source: Created by researchers

The data in the table (3) refer to the age group of the research sample, as we note from the table that the age group that ranges between (31-40) years of the respondents came in the first rank with a percentage of (35%), and in the second rank The age group ranging from (20-30) years came at a rate of (28%), while the age group that ranged between (41-50) years (50 years and over) decreased by (22%) and (15%) for both categories. straight uncl

Table 3. Age group

Years	the number	percentage
From 20-30years old	28	%28
From31-40years old	35	%35
From41-50years old	22	%22
From 50 years and over	15	%15
Total	100	%100

Source: Created by researchers

The data in the table refer to the scientific qualification of the research sample, as the majority of the people included in the research sample were holders of a bachelor's degree, with a percentage (%35) and in second place are those who hold a diploma certificate (29%).

At the same time, the third-place comes with a very low percentage of those who hold a diploma certificate, with a percentage of (23%). In the fourth rank are those who hold a preparatory certificate and below, with a percentage of (13%).

Table 4. Academic Qualification

Academic qualification	the number	Percentage%
Prep or less	13	%13
diploma	29	%29
Bachelor of	35	%35
Master's Degree	23	%23
Total	100	%100

Source: Created by researchers

The data in the table (5) refer to the years of work service for the research sample, as we note from the table that those who spent years of service between (6-10) years make up (34%) of the research sample and came in the first place, and in the second place Those who died came (more than 15 years) with a percentage of (27%), while those who spent years of service (5 years and less) came in the third rank with a percentage of (22%), And the fourth rank came those who spent (11-15) years of service by (17%) Table No. (5) Distribution of the interviewees according to years' service.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to years of service

Academic qualification	the number	Percentage%
years or less 5	22	%22
Years 10-6	34	%34
From11-15 years	17	%17
more than 15 years	27	%27
Total	100	%100

Source: Created by researchers

Descriptive analysis of the flexibility dimension of banking services

Table 6. Respondents opinions

variable	sequence	Ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative importance %
Flexible Banking Services	X1	The bank is interested in modifying the characteristics of the services provided to suit the requirements of customers	3.5	.12	70.21
	X2	The bank is working on developing and improving renewable services	3.7	.14	74.3
	X3	The lack of material and technological capabilities of the bank contributed to the decline in the system of manufacturing various services	4.2	.09	83
	X4	When we discover that customers are not satisfied with the quality of the service provided, the bank takes corrective measures immediately	4	1.28	.795
	The overall average of the banking services flexibility dimension		3.85	1.17	77.015

Source: Created by researchers

The data of table (6) would indicate the positive opinions of the respondents regarding the flexibility dimension of banking services if the general average showed that the severity of the response of the sample members at the level of agreement reached (77%) compared to (23%) their opinions was not in agreement. The arithmetic supports this mean value (3.85) and standard deviation (1.17) and that the rice of the paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension is (x4). Which states (when we discover that customers are not satisfied with the quality of the service provided. The bank takes corrective measures immediately) with an agreement (84 %), with arithmetic, mean (4), a standard deviation (1.28), and relative importance (79.5). while the lowest percentage achieved was for paragraph (x3). (The lack of material and technological capabilities of the bank contributed to the decline in the system of manufacturing various services.) The severity of the answer reached (70.22%) with a mean (4.2), standard deviation (0.9), and relative importance (83%).

Descriptive analysis of the competitive flexibility dimension

Table 7. Positive Agreement

sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
X5	The bank diagnoses the changes that occur in the environments of the markets in which it operates	4.1	.09	.821
X6	The bank changes the prices of its services according to	4.13	.067	.828

	the requirements of the markets in which it operates			
X7	The bank changes the prices of its services according to the requirements of the markets in which it operates	3.7	.098	.743
X8	The bank changes the prices of its services according to the requirements of the markets operating in it	3.8	.060	.752
Overall average of the competitive elasticity dimension		3.93	0.79	78.55

Source: Created by researchers

The results of table (7) indicate a positive agreement regarding the dimension of competitive flexibility, as the general average showed that the severity of the response of the sample members at the level of agreement reached (78.55) compared to (21.45) whose opinions were of no agreement. This is supported by the value of arithmetic mean (3.93), And the standard deviation (0.79), the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are x6)), which states (the bank changes the prices of its services according to the requirements of the markets operating in it) by agreement (82.7%) with an arithmetic mean of 4.13)). Standard deviation (0.67) and relative importance (82.8%), while the lowest percentage achieved for the paragraph (x5) (the bank works to diagnose changes that occur in the environments of the markets in which it operates), as the severity of the answer reached (74%) with an arithmetic mean of 4.1)) Standard deviation (0.9) and relative significance (82.1%).

Descriptive analysis of a dimension of human resource flexibility

Table 8. agreement on the dimension of the flexibility

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
Flexibility of human material	X9	The bank adjusts the human resource diversity system according to the change in the competitive environment	3.5	.08	70.66
	X10	The bank can change the habits and behaviors of employees in response to changes in the competitive environment	3.4	1.02	69.77
	X11	The bank can handle employees for different jobs as needed and without obstacles	3.6	1.13	71.57
	X12	The bank works to change the tasks and duties assigned to its employees in different ways	3.7	1.06	.741
	The overall average for the human resource flexibility dimension		3.55	1.03	71.55

Source: Created by researchers

From Table (8), it is clear that (71.6) of the respondents are in agreement on the dimension of the flexibility of human subjects, as the general average showed that the severity of the response

of the sample members at the level of agreement reached (71.6), in contrast (28.4) their opinions were of disagreement. The arithmetic mean (3.55) and the standard deviation (1.03) and that the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (x11), which states (The bank can handle employees for different jobs as needed and without obstacles.) By agreement (74%) with arithmetic mean (3.6), a standard deviation of (1.13) and relative importance (71.57%), while the lowest percentage achieved was for the paragraph (x9) (the bank adjusts the human resources diversity system according to the change in the competitive environment), as the answer intensity reached (69.78%) with arithmetic mean (3.5) and a standard deviation (0.8) and relative importance (70.66%).

Descriptive analysis of the investment flexibility dimension

Table 9. Positive Opinions on investment dimension

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
investment flexibility	X13	The bank works on a variety of scenarios (areas) of investment opportunities	4.22	0.82	.843
	X14	The bank possesses financial capabilities and human resources that enable it to enter into successful and diversified investment opportunities	3.96	0.85	87.2
	X15	The bank has human resources that enable it to enter into successful and diversified investment opportunities	3.5	1.06	70.6
	X16	The management of banks is working on a continuous analysis of the external environment to seize the available investment opportunities	3.7	1.01	74.8
	Overall average of the investment elasticity dimension		3.84	0.94	77.23

Source: Created by researchers

The results of table (9) indicate the positive opinions of the respondents regarding the investment dimension, as the general average showed that the relative importance of the sample members at the level of agreement reached (77.23%) compared to (22.77%). Their opinions were in disagreement. The value of the arithmetic mean supports this. (3.85) and the standard deviation (0.94) and that the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (x13), which states (the bank works on multiple scenarios (areas) of investment opportunities) with an agreement (84.4%) with arithmetic mean (4.22) and a standard deviation (0.81) and relative importance (84.3%), while the lowest achieved percentage was for paragraph (15x) (the bank has human resources that enable it to enter into successful and

diversified investment opportunities.), The answer intensity was (70.7%) with an arithmetic mean (3.5), a standard deviation (1.07), and the importance Relative (70.6%).

Dimensions of banking performance

Financial Perspective

Table 10. Frequency distribution

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
<i>Financial Perspective</i>	Y1	The bank seeks to increase the total growth in annual returns	3.3	1.3	70.21
	Y2	The bank seeks to increase its total assets	3.6	1.3	.743
	Y3	The bank adopts a cost-reduction strategy in launching its products	4.3	0.8	82
	Y4	The bank seeks to increase its market share growth	4.1	1.27	.795
		The overall average of the flexibility dimension of the financial Perspective		3.82	1.17

Source: Created by researchers

The data of table (10) shows the frequency distributions, mean values, and standard deviation of the technical dimension, as the general average showed that the severity of the response of the sample members at the level of agreement reached (81%) compared to (19%) whose opinions were of disagreement. The arithmetic supports this mean value (4.04). In contrast, the standard deviation value (0.89) showed that the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (X1). which states (The bank seeks to increase the total growth in annual returns.) by agreement (83.6%) with arithmetic mean (3.3), standard deviation (1.3), and relative importance (70.21%). while the lowest achieved percentage was for the paragraph (x4) (the bank seeks to increase growth in its market share.) The severity of the answer for this paragraph was (74.2%) with arithmetic mean (4.1). Standard deviation (1.27) and relative significance (79.5%).

Customers Perspective

Table 11. Dimensions of efficiency and organization

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
<i>Customer perspective</i>	Y5	The bank has information perceptions about the degree of customer satisfaction with its products	4.2	0.8	.823
	Y6	The bank makes clear to its customers the services it wishes to provide in advance	4.12	0.76	.826
	Y7	The bank is constantly developing its services and innovating new ones	3.6	0.94	.741

	Y8	The bank seeks to gain customer satisfaction by building a positive and aware image of the bank, its services, and its employees	3.9	0.67	.752
	Overall average customer perspective flexibility dimension		3.95	0.79	78.55

Source: Created by researchers

From Table (11), it is clear that (79%) of respondents are in agreement with the dimension of efficiency and organization, while it reached (21%) of those who do not agree with the dimension. The arithmetic supports this mean value (3.97), while the standard deviation value (0.92) showed that the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (x8), which states (the bank seeks to gain customer satisfaction by building a positive and perceived image of the bank, its services, and its employees) In agreement (87%), with arithmetic mean (3.9), a standard deviation (0.67), and relative importance (75.2%), while the lowest percentage achieved was for paragraph (x5) (the bank has perceptions and information about the degree of customer satisfaction with its products.) If the severity of the answer to this paragraph reached (74.2%) with a mean (4.2), standard deviation (0.8), and relative importance (82.3%)

Internal Operations Perspective

Table 12. Positive agreement for financial dimension

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
<i>Internal Operations Perspective</i>	Y9	The level of quality of the available products is proportional to the amount of cost	3.6	0.9	70.66
	Y10	New services are made available on time	3.5	1.03	69.77
	Y11	The bank uses the latest technology in a way that outperforms its competitors	3.7	1.11	71.57
	Y12	The bank's products constitute a satisfactory percentage of the total services offered in the market	3.8	1.08	.743
	For the overall average of the internal operations perspective flexibility dimension		.365	1.03	71.525

Source: Created by researchers

The results of table (12) indicate a positive agreement for financial dimension, which is from the agreement of (81%) of the respondents who agree with the financial dimension. In comparison, it amounted to (19%) for those who disagree with the dimension. This is supported by the arithmetic mean (4) value, While the deviation value was shown. (0.91) and that the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (x11), which states (The bank uses the latest technologies in a distinct way outweighing the competitors.) by agreement (85.3%) with arithmetic mean (3.7). A standard deviation (1.11) and relative importance (71.57%), while the lowest percentage achieved was for the paragraph (x10) (new services are provided on time.) If the severity of the answers for this paragraph reached (75%) with arithmetic mean (3.5), standard deviation (1.03) and relative importance (69.77%).

Perspective of learning and growth

Table 13. Positive agreement for financial dimension

variable	sequence	ferries	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Relative %importance
<i>Learning and growth perspective</i>	Y13	The Arab English Bank offers free programs	4.21	0.82	.843
	Y14	The number of employees who leave the bank and move on to other jobs is reduced	3.97	0.85	.792
	Y15	The percentage of workers whose presence in the bank constitutes an added value increases	.34	1.06	.706
	Y16	The bank encourages innovative ideas and provides rewards to employees for new, successful ideas	.36	1.01	.745
	The overall average for the flexibility dimension of the learning and growth perspective		.379	0.94	77.23

Source: Created by researchers

The results of table (13) indicate a positive agreement for financial dimension, which is from the agreement of (81%) of respondents who agree with financial dimension. In comparison, it amounted to (19%) for those who disagree with the dimension. The arithmetic supports this mean value (4), while value of the deviation was shown (0.91). And the most prominent paragraphs that contributed to enriching this dimension are (x16). which states (the bank encourages innovative ideas and provides rewards to workers for successful new ideas.) with an agreement (85.3%) with arithmetic mean (3.7) and a standard deviation (1.01) and relative importance (74.5%). In comparison, the lowest percentage achieved for paragraph (x14) (the number of employees who leave work in the bank decreases and move to other jobs.) If the severity of the answers for this paragraph reached (75%) with arithmetic mean (3.97), a standard deviation (0.85) and importance Relative (79.1%).

Conclusion

Performance evaluation in commercial banks leads to knowing the reality of the bank's condition, especially the level of performance that the bank reaches and the profits it achieves. Commercial banks are financial institutions whose main task is to accept deposits of all kinds from savers and provide loans to individuals and businesses. They aim to achieve the maximum profit possible with sufficient liquidity to fulfill their obligations safely. The statistical analysis of the main and sub-variables of the research proved a significant effect relationship between the strategic flexibility and the performance of commercial banks at the macro level. Through the quantitative analysis of the research, it was found that the commercial banks in the research sample lacked a clear approach to improving the performance of banks based on radical changes in work. Rather, the changes varied from year to year and varied from one dimension to another. There is a gap between the methods of banking work for commercial banks, the research sample, the banking services provided, and the rapidly changing external environment. Weakness of the bank's ability to change the behaviour and attitudes of the bank's

employees in line with the environmental changes. The researched commercial banks could not change the amounts allocated for investment in line with the changes in the investment environment. The lack of the studied commercial banks in the creative capabilities and capabilities that keep pace with the dynamic environment and work to improve the performance of the banks. Continuous improvements in work, and the introduction of advanced technological means, i.e. achieving strategic flexibility, positively reflect banks' performance operations. The work and practices of the banks in the research sample are the characterized by routine and rigidity.

Recommendations

Directing commercial banks to use modern and advanced methods in performing their business to reach better performance in line with developments in the financial markets. Finding out the reason for the weak performance of commercial banks and how to improve performance by keeping pace with recent developments and benefiting from the methods used by this bank to improve its performance. Doing a more extensive study using other performance indicators to stand on the performance of commercial banks, evaluating their performance, and identifying the causes of their deterioration and weakness, especially commercial banks. Working on designing organizational structures that are compatible with the developments of the external environment, through the creation of sections and divisions and the reduction of some sections, as well as attracting efficient human resources, and developing the skills and capabilities of the current employees through providing them with developmental courses. The management of commercial banks in the research sample should increase their human, financial and technological capabilities and capabilities to help achieve banking performance and provide high-quality banking service. The management of banks must constantly examine the external and internal environment to achieve banking performance and bridge the gap between the methods, procedures, and tools of work and the rapid developments in the external environment. Commercial banks in kind should have financial flexibility that provides access to money at the appropriate time and size. The management of commercial banks in the research sample must form a flexible organizational structure that allows the transfer of knowledge and information between the administrative levels.

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