American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences (ASRJETS)

ISSN (Print) 2313-4410, ISSN (Online) 2313-4402

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http://asrjetsjournal.org/

# Synthesis of Dimensions Strategic Orientation for Improving Financial Performance Through Organizational Commitment; Empirical Study in Agriculture Bank of Iraq

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# Abstract

The current study seeks to analyze the different impacts of alternatives strategic orientation ( customer orientation , competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) on financial performance of agricultural bank of Al-Qadissya governorate in Iraq , a survey of 80 respondents was used to collect data that were analyzed by SPSS , moreover , authors is to test whether the dimensions of strategic orientation have influence on organizational commitment and how to enhancing financial performance , and whether these three dimensions contribute to improve financial performance , the findings reveal that the dimensions of strategic orientation ( customer orientation , competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) have a significant influence on organizational commitment , but there is one dimension of strategic orientation ( customer orientation ) has a significant influence on financial performance if tested together with the rest dimensions and organizational commitment , moreover there is no significant influence between organizational commitment and financial performance , this study wants to increase of knowledge based a whole of previous studies so as to provides some insights and original value because this is the first attempt to study alternative strategic orientation and organizational commitment on financial performance in agricultural bank in Iraq , besides this study add some managerial implications for the board council of the agricultural bank.

Key words: customer orientation ; competitor orientation ; financial performance ; organizational commitment.

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#### 1. Introduction

Despite the strategic orientation has a great interesting in many times in literature review according to [1;2], but there are many application in many fields like strategic management and marketing researches and this term revived in recent years to enhancing performance depend the multi strategies that taking from many organizations, firstly to boost their position in the market, and secondly to satisfaction customers whether in the current and latent needs, therefore, the most literature of strategic management debate a diversity of strategic orientation that can influence on competitive advantage and performance depend on strategic orientation [3].

Therefore strategic orientation has a wide concept for using in the field of strategic management and marketing and is not for guiding a better performance directly ,but lead to a better understanding of behavior to enhance performance [4,5;6;2;7,8;9;10], likewise (11) the test of relationship between strategic orientation that enable of shapes of responses that facilitate organization to operating environment and this lead to gain competitive advantage to improve performance , and this strategic is changes according to the situations of environment to adapt to the environment [12] when indicated that competitor orientation is influence on market share ,whereas customer orientation was hurtful on return on assets for lower competitive environments . in this meaning refers [13] that mangers are capable to control internal factor of organization but this is mission is more difficult to external factors that surrounding the organization , most of scholars endorse that implementing of strategic orientation leads to improve better performance [3;14].

All of these studies contend that organizations could be increasing their performance by complementing the strategic orientation with other types of strategic orientation that suitable for their environment and organizational characteristics [6] according to the scholars in the strategic orientation debates two basically streams that control on the discussions, first, is related with business philosophy indicate for strategic or marketing management, second, strategic orientation is a set of behavior or cultural concepts that implemented many procedures to enhancing performance [15], Some scholar concluded that market and innovativeness were related and influence on performance ([16].

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the customer orientation or competitor orientation are most influence for performance of agricultural bank in Al-Qadissya governorate.

# 2. Literture Review

Although some studies have contain the influence of market orientation and other strategic orientation on performance [4], customer orientation and competitor orientation produced a multi types of information for various types of decisions and decisions makers [12].

# 2.1 Customer Orientation

For many years ,customer concentrate has been describes as a backbone of organization [17] ,therefore , customer orientation is basically related with the welfare of customers ,which means hear the voice of the customers and produced solutions depend on the better interest of needs and wants [18], likewise , [10] refers

the performance for organization place customers as a focal point in strategy.

organization include and utilize information from customers, and how to use different strategy that will match customer needs and achieve the responsive to customer needs, in the same fashion CO considered customer in high priority in organization to introduced needs and wants, and the debates by an organization with robust customer orientation may be beat its competitors according it best understands customer needs and following produced products and services and then forecasting demands from customers [19].

#### 2.1.1 The level of Individual of Customer Orientation

This customer orientation pertain the interpersonal connect between employees and customers which related from the ability of sales people to assistance their customer and the goodness of the customers – and showing sales persons relationship [20], therefore customer orientation related to willingness to assistance customers to evaluate assess their needs and help to take a right decisions of purchase that are satisfy customer needs and wants. Reference [21] refers to the customer has preferences both in current and potential, the preferences (or wants) were felt and were clear to articulated ,while, potential or preferences (or needs) is very difficult to determination or articulated, therefore its very essential part of salespersons function to help their customers to take purchase that will enable to satisfy customer preferences , and in this case for customer orientation two aspects:

The needs: which represented the employees beliefs around their ability to persuade customer needs

The enjoyment: which concerned the level to which employees are capable to make pleasure by interaction with and serving customers, this two dimensions permit to provide customer orientation by employees for catering to customer needs and draw pleasure for serving customers.

# 2.1.2 Organizational level for Customer Orientation

Which concentrate of the concept of customer orientation which a component of market orientation [22,1] put the strategic information that gather and uses in business functions, whereas [2] represented to improve performance and create effective and efficiency for superior value for customer, likewise [23;24] the group of beliefs that give customer orientation interest in the beginning without excluding all the other stakeholders such as shareholders, managers, and employees to enhance a long term profitable organization.

Therefore organization need to achieve their objectives by satisfying their customers with larger efficiency and effectiveness compared with other competitors [22], whether [25] clarify the strategic orientation as understanding of exist customers and robust developing the skills of resources for the organization and retention the customer by making superior value .

Reference [24] indicated that link between customer orientation and services for suppliers is one of the major characteristics to produce a superior customer value , besides [26] indicate customer oriented organization confirm information uses and learning and encompasses wants and that's leading to innovativeness through new

ways to deal with customer or new products or services

Reference [27] refers is a major concentrated for any organization's relationship to its market, which represented as pivotal component of market orientation in the same time is essential guide for organization performance, if improve customer orientation but increasing the focus for customer needs may be to forget recently emerging customer needs,

For this view focus on customer orientation is rely on environmental conditions, therefore in the low demand uncertainty the customer orientation is not true to improve innovation performance, while to attain this objective the organization should follow contingent illustration which depend that focus on recent role of business strategy and organization environment that around with its works. Reference [27], and this term involves customer's preferences conceptions and the satisfaction of customer for these needs or understand and reduced suppose loses [28], therefore nearness trustiness to give the right information about the customers and having fitness to transactions with them to appear the effort organization to connection and to meet all needs, so organization try to keep current and bring potential customers.

Reference [29] refer to this orientation as adequate understanding of organization's goal for customers so as to create superb value, in the same fashion, customer orientation develops organization capabilities to hear the sounds of its customers and then translate their needs of products or services and thereby attain profit in long term [30], therefore, customer preferences most of the time are changes, so other competitors also make essential changes and introducing competitive advantages from new products and services, and at this moment organization need to understanding the customer is not adequate, but to stay in the same races in the market the organization must understanding what competitors are doing for matching customers' needs.

Reference [31] indicated that customer orientation begin with a test of customer needs by identify ,analyze and understand of preferences and wants , besides to take in its decisions the external that surrounding of organization and this differ from the degree of competitive , therefore , in the case of robust competition all the function in the organization should monitor and respond to customers that occur in changing of needs and wants to retention in its dealing compared with other competitors, in contrast , in weak competition and reduce of demand , customer are ready to pay high price for services or products , so, organization must be understanding this tune and directly responses to customer needs.

Reference [13] indicated for this orientation to deals with customers and how to organization to collect all information from market intelligence and analyse and responses for customer needs and wants and this lead to satisfaction of customer and then enhancing better performance for organization , likewise , Reference [6] indicate to competitor orientation to focus in real assessment for a set of competitors and in this time all departments in the organization must concentrate on competitor's goals , strategies ,available resources and capabilities that having , besides the information that disseminated and gathered from market intelligence .

Reference [6] the robust understanding of customers is enable to getting the best appropriate to satisfy their needs, and this get their a best value, therefore, Reference [23] indicated that customer orientation has impact

on performance.

#### 2.2 Competitor Orientation

Reference [32] concluded competitor orientation has a few influence on performance, in any case of pressing of organization customers, the basic understanding for competitors through short term by knowing strengths and weakness, and investigating about the capabilities and strategies in long term [25], in the same case, Reference [26] refers to organization ability to determine ,analysis and take responsive for all competitors actions, likewise [29] which refers to reflect strengths and weaknesses besides the capabilities and strategies for current and potential rivals in long term. Reference [28] refers that this oriented go to reflect ability of managers about views of major competitor and new entrants in the same field and looking for strategies that are used to retention with their customers.

Reference [33] concluded that only competitor orientation was influence on new product performance, and this agree with [13] the organization must improve enduring system that fixed to enhancing and update the quality of products and services, and this case lead to competitive advantage compared with other competitors, likewise, Reference [12] refers that competitor orientation is produced robust ground of intelligence pertaining to current and probable competitors, which means competitor orientation presenting products or services that are close for substitutes to offering the same customer need.

Reference [34] indicate that manager with competitor orientation wants to defeat other competitors without seen the profitability ,but the concentrate of defeat other competitors often times is not pleasant , therefore a manger may increasing profit in the same sense beating other competitors .

#### 2.3 Interfunctional Coordination

Reference [26] interfunctional coordination include and coordinated all resources in the organization to composition and disseminated of market intelligence, and this include all business units for working together for produced superior value [2], and this construct reflect interdepartmental and antecedents of organization [14], and this not agree with [35] when indicated difficult to evaluate and measure interfunctional coordination because it depend on top management surveys and this may be occur to false extent of the coordination because of potential power for manger and this be lead to bias of answering without dysfunctional interdepartmental of coordination and this may be indictment for those managers for their skills.

Whereas [26:31] refers including all the applications that uses of resources for synthesis and disseminating of market intelligence, likewise, [36] interfunctional coordination has a serve inside concentrate and correlate to internal effective and efficiency which bring from culture of resources that share and desire for work among functions in the organization.

#### 4. Organizational Commitment

Reference [37] refers for this term that a members who having the desires to work ethically in respect of

organization, and this desires is non overcomes the organization objectives, furthermore, Reference [15] refers that organizational commitment is the loyalty or commitment from employees with organization as the result to compelled to remain in the organization and continue to work in the future times, likewise, Reference [38] was defined organizational commitment as perspective for behaviors and its occur from intense desire to stay the employees in the same organization all his life, or the organizational commitment as a set of beliefs, values and goals of the organization [39] refers for three dimensions model of organizational commitment to facilitate the term of organizational commitment called as follow :

#### 4.1 Normative Commitment

which deals with social experiences of employees, according to [40] which refer for normative commitment according to realize that remain in organization due to the fact of despair on comeback organizational investment as a result of socialization culture, furthermore, Reference [41] refers that employees with a top levels of normative organizational commitment remaining in the organization so as to feel they ought to, and the desires, trust, and needs to stay with current career.

### 4.2 Continuance Commitment

This deals with self sacrifices if the employee is resign, according to according to [40] is basically correlated with turnover and its depend on supposition of financial exchange between the employees and the organization, [41] is indicated as a comparison assessment between the costs of departure of organization and the costs of remain.

#### 4.3 Affective Commitment

This dimensions with emotional engagement with organization [15], according to [40] this commitment is depend on emotional relations grow by employees that related from work experiences, therefore, this affective commitment is essential for employees to continue with an organization because they want to do so, Reference [42] concluded that there was a differences between manager and employee according to affective organizational commitment, for a manager affective organizational commitment was correlation with a job security, in contrast, for employee, affective organizational commitment was correlated to communicated and transparency because a manager was a more a sensitive for a job security and equity than employee, furthermore, Reference [41] affective organizational commitment is emotional attachments, identification with contribution an organization, therefore a strong affective commitment for employees is considered as a stay with organization because of might feel for employees to indicating might feel to strong related with organization and trust to remain, whereas, Reference [40] conclude that most of individuals choose to remain in employment sort of unemployment so that they not to able independent and ready to participation for society.

Therefore, Organizational commitment concept turn into widespread because the importance for effectiveness and efficiency to the organization [43].

Reference [44] indicate in his findings study by using Allen and Meyer's three dimensional models there was

appositive correlation between organizational commitment and organizational performance , Whereas [45] indicated that organizational commitment had no positive significant towards turnover

# 5. Financial Performance

The process of quantifying procedures, and this measurement guide to best way for procedures to improve quantifying and process [22], OP refers for the range to which organization is capable to matching of its stakeholders and its own needs for growth and survival [25]. Recent literature review divides business performance measures into financial performance that component from factors like revenue, profit, or stock price and non-financial performance measures including reputation ,loyalty, or customer satisfaction [24]. When customer getting services that are designed for special needs, they should be ready to spend a price premium, which later improve the financial performance of organization, in the same time adding customer value should also improve performance like loyalty and reputation [24;46]. Performance require to play pivotal role for determining perspective of customers, therefore, many of scholars argue that three components of strategic orientation ( customer orientation ,competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) of [2] on organization performance [47,48] clarify that each strategic orientation has different influences on growth and profitability, the strong relationships were exist among growth sales, NPD, market share and increasing of profit. Business performance is a wide concept including both financial and non-financial performance, in this point the financial performance including some indexes to explain the position of organization to the stakeholders such as profit, return on investment, return on assets and return on stocks, therefore financial indicators is not adequate so some non-economic indexes such as market share, development of product or services and efficiency and effectiveness of business performance are be used to give mega picture for the performance of organization [15;9]. Reference [49] debate the better approach for performance, first the variant from financial and non-financial performance, secondly the variance of debate take essential of how investigated approaches of measurement whether, self-reported which is called (subjective) or objective measures, and most of scholar return to subjective measure because the difficult of obtain the objective measures, the financial measures used were profit, market share and return on investment. However, respondents were asked to assess their financial performance over the last three years, relative to their competitors

#### 6. Development Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between strategic orientation and financial performance based upon the literature review. The hypotheses were proposed based on groups of relationship between variables under to test:

H 1 there is a relationship between strategic orientation in its dimensions (customer orientation ,competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) and organizational commitment .

H2 there is a relationship between strategic orientation in its dimensions ( customer orientation ,competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) and financial performance .

H3 there is a relationship between organizational commitment and financial performance

H4 there is a relationship between strategic orientation in its dimensions ( customer orientation , competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) and organizational commitment and financial performance .

# 7. Research Methodology

# 7.1 Population and Data Collection

To achieve the objective of this study we are used questionnaire survey by distributing forms for the agriculture bank in Al-Qadissya governorate, firstly we offered these forms for professionals in the banking industry to secure the content of validity, relevance and representativeness, the second step was done by using pre-testing for 25 pilot interviews who has knowledge about questionnaire that used for academic purpose, therefore T-test on the was pass these groups, in the result there was no significant bias for this study, furthermore, all the variables translated into Arabic language to secure there was no wrong in translation and this procedure to confirm these still in the same meaning. The author distributed 90 forms in agriculture bank and just 80 questionnaire forms were returned because we are found 10 about responses were missing so that these 10 forms were isolated, so that the rest from the total questionnaire forms were adequate for conducting SPSS analysis, beside that procedures the author developed framework of this study to illustrate the relationship were tested as showing in figure 1

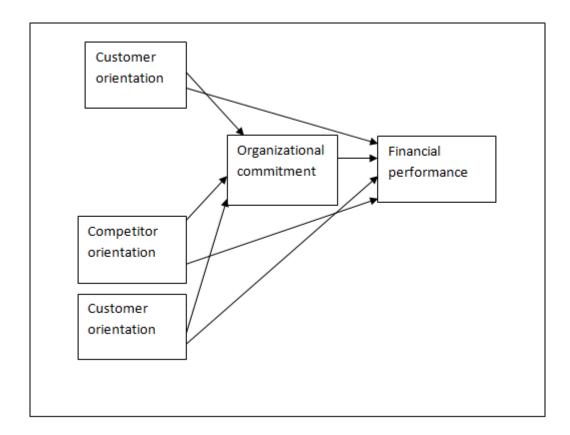


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The model of hypotheses is shown above in Figure 1. The data were attain from developing a questionnaire with variety dimensions of the strategic orientation from [50] organizational commitment from [38], financial

performance from [51], to determined the scale of dimensions above the author used likert scale which including five points ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) for 5 (strongly agree), the data was collected from these questionnaire forms were analyzed by using SPSS (statistical package for social sciences), the items divided into five groups, 5 items for customer orientation,4 items for competitor orientation, 3 items for interfunctional coordination, 8 items for organizational commitment and 3 items for financial performance.

Table 1 under below clarify the various of all items for dimensions in this study and Cronbach's alpha for these items.

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha
Customer Orientation (custo)	5	0.764
Competitor Orientation (compo)	4	0.872
Interfunctional Coordination (interf)	3	0.708
Organizational Commitment (comit)	8	0.719
Financial Performance (fina)	3	0.760

# Table 1: Results of Reliability of Cronbach's Alpha for each items

Source: prepared by authors

According to [52] which refers to measure the internal consistency for scales ,the Cronbach's alpha values must exceeded 0.70, therefore, the all most variables scales of Cronbach's alpha were pass the percentage of this measure which means the reliability coefficient were acceptable.

### 7.2 Analysis

For tested hypotheses to reach the relationships among variables of this study, this study were used a pearson correlation analysis to found there relations, and attain this goals the authors used all variables of this study ( customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination, organizational commitment and financial performance)

In a final step, we used regression analysis to determine all the effects among the variables . firstly to determined the effect strategic orientation (customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination) and organizational commitment , Secondly for determining the relationship between strategic orientation (customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination) and financial performance . Thirdly it was determined the relationship between organizational commitment and financial performance , finally this study need to the effects among the dimensions of strategic orientation (customer orientation and interfunctional coordination) furthermore, organizational commitment and financial performance

# 7.3 Findings and Discussions

Table 2 shows the results of correlations analysis and descriptive statistics among variables of this study

Construct	Mean	S.D	Custo	compo	interf	comit	fina
Custo	3.375	.740	1				
Compo	3.690	.888	.665**	1			
Interf	3.220	.751	.607**	.654**	1		
comit	3.714	.497	.015	.046	.525**	1	
Fina	3.341	.715	.832**	.573**	.519**	.199	1

Table 2: Results of correlations analysis and descriptive statistics

\*\* correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

# Source: prepared by authors

In the above of the table we can see the customer orientation is significantly correlated with competitor orientation (r = 0.665; p > 0.01), and significantly correlated with interfunctional coordination (r=0.607, p < 0.01). whereas , there is no significant correlation with organizational commitment (r= 0.015/ NS), as well as , there is significant correlation with financial performance (r=0.832; p < 0.01), furthermore There is a significant correlation between competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination (r= 0.654 .p < 0.01), whereas , there is no significant correlated between competitor orientation and organizational commitment (r= 0.046 /NS), in contrast there is a significant correlation between competitor orientation and organizational commitment (r= 0.046 /NS), in contrast there is a significant correlation between competitor orientation and financial performance (r=0.573, p < 0.01), in the same way we were determine the correlation between interfunctional coordination and organizational commitment and it's appear there is a significant correlation between interfunctional coordination and financial performance (r=0.519 ,p < 0.01), finally we determine the correlation organizational commitment and financial performance and it's appear there is no significant between these variables (r=0.199 /NS) , all these correlations are shown in Table 2. After pearson correlation analysis, the authors used a linear regression analysis to found any interactions among variables, as can be seen in Table 3,4,5, 6, to test all hypotheses gradually , therefore each of these tables represented the hypotheses that adopting in this study .

# Table 3: Regression Findings

Regression model	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Standard Beta	Sig.	Adjusted R2	F value	Sig
1-	Custo	Organizational	219	.006	.464	23.799	.000
	Compo	commitment	206	.003			
	Interf		.638	.000			

### Source: prepared by author

The first regression model tested the effect of strategic orientation in its dimensions ( customer orientation

.competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) on organizational commitment as the revealed in model (1). A linear regression revealed that there was significant effects among between the previous variables ( p=0.000) and AR2= .464 and the value of F=23.799 at p=.000) for the basic model , furthermore , the variables in this model were significant effect on organizational commitment as following (customer orientation has significant effect on organizational commitment( $\beta$ =-.219; p=.001) in the same fashion the rest variables ( competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination(  $\beta$ =-.206 ;p=.001:  $\beta$ =.638 ;p=.000) therefore , This supported H1 and the findings were consistent with previous studies , [38,53,54;55].

Table 4:	Regression	Findings

Regression	Independent	Dependent	Standard	Sig.	Adjusted	F value	Sig
model	variable	variable	Beta		R2		
2-	Custo	Financial	.805	.000	.681	57.154	.000
		performance					
	Compo		.031	.745			
	Interf		.010	.907			

Source: prepared by authors

The second regression mode 2 tested the effect of strategic orientation in its dimensions (customer orientation .competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination) on financial performance as the revealed in model (2). A linear regression revealed that there was significant effects among between the previous variables (p=0.000) and AR2= .681 and the value of F=57.154 at p=.000) for the basic model , furthermore , the customer orientation has a significant effect on financial performance in this model. In contrast there was no effect between competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination on financial performance , therefore and the findings were consistent with previous studies [9,2,56,57]. , the basic model was accepted and this supported H2 , but the partial of this hypothesis which considered with competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination were refused (NS).

Table 5:	Regression	Finding
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Regression	Independent	Dependent	Standard	Sig.	Adjusted	F value	Sig
model	variable	variable	Beta		R2		
3-	Comit	Financial performance	.199	.076	.027	3.233	.076

Source: prepared by authors

The third regression model tested the effect of organizational commitment on financial performance , the findings of this hypothesis revealed there was no significant between organizational commitment and financial performance ( $\beta = .199$ ; p= 076) and in this case refused this hypothesis number 3 (NS) and the findings are not consistent with previous studies [15;38].

Regression	Independent	Dependent	Standard	Sig.	Adjusted	F value	Sig
model	variable	variable	Beta		R2		
4-	Custo	Financial	.920	.000	.743	58.177	.000
		performance					
	Compo		.160	.077			
	Interf		328	.004			
	Comit		.351	.000			

## Table 6: Regression Findings

Source: prepared by authors

The fourth regression model tested the effect of strategic orientation in its dimensions ( customer orientation .competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination and organizational commitment ) on financial performance as the revealed in model (4). A linear regression revealed that there was significant effects among the customer orientation , interfunctional coordination and organizational commitment as following , there was a significant effect between customer orientation and financial performance ( $\beta$ =0.920; p=0.000), and there was a significant effect between interfunctional coordination and financial performance ( $\beta$ =.328; p=.004) besides there was a significant between organizational commitment and financial performance ( $\beta$ =.351 ; p=.000) but there was no significant between competitor orientation and financial performance(NS) , furthermore , AR2= .743 and the value of F=58.177 at p=.000) for the basic model. This supported H4 ,therefore these findings were consistent with [58].

### 8. Conclusion

This study was highlights the effect of strategic orientation ( customer orientation , competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination ) thoroughly organizational commitment on financial performance as well as to determine the role and effect the organizational commitment on financial performance , the results revealed a low of organizational commitment from employees towards strategies that adopting from the bank, in the other side in spite of effect of dimensions for competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination on the financial performance but there is limited on the effect of customer orientation on the financial performance and this is unchanged of significant of the model, the results also revealed that no significant between organizational commitment and financial performance in one model but this relationship are change to significant when take all the dimensions of strategic orientation and organizational commitment .

#### 9. Recommendations

Develop new programs to increase job satisfaction and this guide to retention of employees, furthermore, there was dropping of competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination to improvement on financial performance, furthermore, the levels of competitor orientation was very limited to watching competitors and to understanding the new strategies that be taken from rivals or new entrants, however, the authors, presented some managerial implications to develop financial performance that related with a whole strategies that be adopting from the banks together to improve organizational commitment and financial performance, firstly, diversity of compensations whether money or moral incentives for employees to create loyalty to bank, thus the bank can be build a new relation with their employees that achieve bank goal's besides create a satisfaction of employees, secondly, the bank must take a new strategies to deal with their competitors such as reactive the role of intelligence of market and determine the strengths and weakness of competitors in order to put a real strategy that appropriate with the task that balance between the cost and benefits , thirdly , the role basic of any organization was to create a new coordination among departments and this matter was solve by recognize the problems among departments and involvement with basic decisions that impact on all departments and this done by sharing all departments with profit and make common interest, , the managers of agricultural bank can be used these strategies which could be useful to enhance financial performance, encouraged to develop a more effective to possess the employees in an organization by understanding perceptions of employees about the nature of work and thus reduce the turnover rates in the organization .

## 10. Limitation

Despite of these findings of this study which more useful if the bank adopted in carefully and available some resources to attain and improvement work according to the situation that surrounded of the bank , and of course this is determine the role of modern research to develop works in any organization , but like a most of research there is some limitation should mention here , we cannot generalize these results for various sectors because may be not valid and the variables that be taken in this study are different according to the nature of work of the organization and the environment that work in it .

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