



Controlling Career Plateau in Jordanian Public Commissions: The Role of Corporate Governance

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the extent to which the application of corporate governance principles, represented by the rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation and fairness, have the power to control the three forms of career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers relied on the analytical descriptive approach as it is appropriate to the nature of the study, which helps to identify the characteristics of the phenomenon of career plateau and the main factors and variables causing it. The study population was made up of the employees working in the seven Jordanian public commissions that are reported to the Prime Minister, which counts (1429) employees (the Prime Minister's Office, 2023). The researchers selected a proportional stratified sample of (306) employees from the various occupational levels (top, middle, lower and functional) in the targeted commissions. This study revealed a statistically significant impact of the corporate governance variable in the career plateau, as the results showed that corporate governance explained (21.5%) of the variance in career plateau. Finally, the study recommended commissions to strengthen the principle of transparency in regard of the procedures for hiring and/or termination of managers and staff. In addition to finding new and innovative methods for completing work and reducing routine tasks by employing technology and artificial intelligence to accomplish routine tasks and freeing up employees for important activities, which increases their levels of challenge and encourages them for continual learning.

Keywords: Career Plateau, Principles of Corporate governance, Jordanian Public Commissions, Jordan.

Introduction

In the context of economic, social and political developments, many governments worldwide have recently moved towards strengthening administrative decentralization in an effort to increase citizen participation and empower society and achieve its requirements efficiently and effectively (Abdulrahman and Al-Nuaimat, 2022). This trend has enforced organizations, institutions and commissions toward adopting flatter organizational structures that allow employees at lower hierarchal levels to participate in decision-making processes and reduce the time required to transfer information between management and employees. However, this trend incorporated many implications that have been negatively reflected to employees. Perhaps the most prominent one is related to reducing the number of available vacancies as moving upward along with the functional hierarchy, increasing competition among employees and thus leading to what is known as the career plateau. The concept of career plateau refers to point in the career life, where employees remaining at the same position for a relatively long periods of time without any developments or promotion, which lead them to boredom, frustration, loss of enthusiasm, and thus psychological withdrawal from the job (Lin et al., 2018).

It is clearly important for institutions to adopt justice and transparency when allocating employees over different positions, and achieve balance in implementing remuneration policies in order to ensure granting rewards, incentives, and honors to employees based on their competences (Saleh and Mohammad, 2021). Hence, the researchers believed that one of the reasons that lead to the emergence of career plateau may lie behind the absence of some concepts such as justice, disclosure, and clarity in the organizational structure, as these factors lead employees to lose their opportunities in growth and career advancement.

Corporate governance plays an important role in enhancing such factors and others, it relies heavily on the employment of transparency, justice, clarity of the organizational structure, in addition to the effective

auditing, risk management, and compliance with legislation. Moreover, it relates with defining tasks and responsibilities, activating the foundations of accountability and creating a climate that enhances satisfaction and motivation among employees to dispel their concerns about development and progress in work. Adherence to the principles of corporate governance leads to the spread of justice and transparency in the organizational environment and thus clearly knowing responsibilities, accountability mechanisms, and the most prominent frameworks regulating the workflow.

The purpose of this study is thus to examine the impact of applying corporate governance principles in the reduction of career plateau in Jordanian public commissions.

Importance of the study:

This study is important in both, the scientific and practical terms. From the scientific standpoint, the present study is an extension of previous studies in the fields of corporate governance and career plateau. It also provides a conceptual framework for these variables in a way that contributes in understanding the contemporary managerial concepts, as it is the only study –according to the researchers’ best knowledge- that has dealt with these variables together in the study population, constituting a modern scientific material that serves as a reference for future studies, and therefore serves as a cornerstone for other researchers to start from and to expand the research in the field of its variables in different sectors.

On the other hand, this research stems its importance on the professional wise from the vitality of the population it studied, which consists of seven public commissions whose budget is relatively material. Additionally, it provides many recommendations that can be used by managers of these commissions to keep up with the acceleration of the public work worldwide.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to determine the impact of applying corporate governance principles in career plateau in Jordanian public commissions and thus achieve the following sub-goals:

- A. Identify the level of availability of corporate governance principles (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in Jordanian public commissions.
- B. Identify the level of availability of the career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions.
- C. Analyze the impact of applying corporate governance principles (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in reducing career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions.
- D. Reaching a set of conclusions on which recommendations supported by implementation mechanisms can be built.

Study problem

Many employees agree that one of the most annoying and frustrating career issues is being stuck in one job role for a long period of time, and the concept of career plateau captures this issue well (Yang et al., 2019). Whereas, with the rapid environmental, technological, scientific, structural and social changes that Jordanian public commissions face, and with the increasing intensity of competition among their employees, in addition to job slackness that increases job density, the phenomenon of job plateau has become a very tangible phenomenon in these institutions. Despite what Ference et al. (1977) said that stability in a specific job for a period of time is not a sufficient justification for a negative view of job plateau, many researchers have proven in their studies the negative impact of job plateau in many aspects, such as its effect in increasing employees’ intention to leave work (Xie et al., 2016), the increased rates of job burnout (Youssef and Askar, 2021, Qadid and Zarroukhi, 2021), and the decline in job engagement (Yuan et al., 2022). Studies have also revealed that job plateau has an inverse relationship with work life quality (Saleh and Mohamed, 2021) and with effective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (Tremblay, 2021). Moreover, Jing et al.’s (2022) study showed a positive correlation between job plateau and employees’ job silence behavior, which refers to the behavior of employees tending to hide their opinions related to any problems appear in the work environment. Therefore, it has become necessary for officials in these institutions to find solutions for this phenomenon.

The study by Saleh and Muhammad (2021), which showed the inverse relationship between the dimensions of job plateau and the dimensions of the quality of work life, recommended the need for organizations to follow methods of justice and transparency when distributing positions among employees, and the need to achieve balance when allocation rewards, incentives, and honors among employees based on their skills and experiences. Hence, the researchers believed that one of the reasons that lead to the emergence of a career plateau may lie behind the absence of some concepts such as justice, disclosure, and clarity in the organizational structure, as these factors lead employees to lose opportunities for growth and advancement. Corporate governance plays an important role in enhancing such factors and others, as adherence to its principles leads to the spread of justice and transparency in the organizational environments and the subsequent awareness of responsibilities, accountability mechanisms, and the most prominent frameworks regulating the workflow. However, until now, the literature has not explicitly examined the role played by corporate governance principles in reducing career plateaus, which constitutes a gap worth investigating.

The current study sought to examine the role of applying corporate governance in reducing the phenomenon of job plateau in Jordanian public commissions by answering the following main question:

What is the impact of applying corporate governance principles (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in reducing career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions?

The following sub-questions fall under this question:

- A. What is the level of respondents' perceptions about the application of corporate governance principles (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in Jordanian public commissions?
- B. What is the level of respondents' perceptions of career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions?

Theoretical framework and building hypotheses

Corporate Governance:

The concept of corporate governance has been developed and matured with the evolvement of crises that have recently struck and threatened the economies of countries, as local and international institutions have set specific standards for its application in a way that contributes to achieve the goals for which it was set (Al-Hanaifat and Al-Hawamdeh, 2016). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined corporate governance as the system through which business enterprises are directed, and that controls the distribution of rights and responsibilities among the various actors in the enterprise, as this system includes a set of important elements for success in the various stages of work (Wajeih and Muneeza, 2012). While the World Bank (2016) defined governance as the system through which companies are directed and controlled by increasing the efficiency and transparency of owners and managers and making them more accountable, which in turn builds trust. Companies with good governance bear less financial and non-financial risks and generate higher returns for shareholders. On the other hand, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (2015) defined corporate governance as the set of relationships between the company's management, its board of directors, its shareholders, and all other stakeholders of the company, which constitute the structure upon which the company's objectives, strategies for achieving them, and performance oversight mechanisms are relied, as governance helps in determining mechanisms for distributing powers and responsibilities and making decisions at the company level as a whole.

Daneshmandnia (2019) stated a definition of governance as the framework that includes the sum of structures, legal relationships, patterns of authority, rights, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. Abu Qaud (2011) also defined it as the outcome of interactions, rules and procedures regulating the network of relationships within the framework of the government, the private sector and civil society institutions in order to achieve development and advance society. Hasanudin et al (2022) referred to good governance as a set of regulations that regulate the relationships between shareholders, managers, creditors, government, employees, as well as other internal and external stakeholders with regard to their rights and obligations, or in other words it is the system that governs and controls the institution or company.

Al-Bassam (2016) defined governance in the public sector as one of the organizational and administrative methods that helps governments achieve their development goals by involving citizens, civil society organizations, and business institutions in formulating and preparing public policies, making and implementing decisions, and applying the principles of the rule of law, accounting, and accountability. In this context, the Ministry of Public Sector Development issued a guide for evaluating and improving governance practices in the public sector (2017), according to which it defined corporate governance as "the set of legislation, policies, organizational structures, procedures and controls that direct and manage the governmental departments to achieve their goals in a professional and ethical manner with all integrity." Transparency in accordance with follow-up and evaluation mechanisms and a strict accountability system to ensure efficient and effective performance on the one hand, and the fair provision of government services on the other hand."

For the purposes of this study, the definition of corporate governance will be adopted from the perspective appropriate to Jordanian public commissions, and based on the definition provided by the Ministry of Public Sector Development in its guide, the researchers have defined governance as the general framework that includes the legislation regulating the work of institutions, the procedures that direct the conduct of its work, and the clear organizational structures that defines the tasks, responsibilities and powers assigned to each position within the institution, so that this framework is characterized by clarity and transparency, contributes in achieving justice and fairness among stakeholders, and ensures their effective participation and accountability in the event that they violate legislations.

Principles of corporate governance:

There are many principles on which governance in various public institutions is based, which were mentioned by the Ministry of Public Sector Development in the guide it issued to evaluate and improve governance practices in the public sector (2017), and we mention below the most prominent principles that it adopted in this guide to achieve corporate governance in the Jordanian public sector institutions, including Jordanian public commissions:

- A. The rule of law: this principle refers to the existence of a clear and sound legislative basis that includes all the mechanisms through which the institution exercises its authority and tasks. This basis is considered as a reference that clearly regulates the work. The rule of law is achieved through the compliance of institutions and their employees to the regulating legislation when carrying out any of the administrative, financial and technical procedures or decisions, and working to apply them consistently and uniformly to everyone in a fair manner and without arbitrariness or exception. The institution's legal framework must be consistent with the texts of all international agreements in a way that ensures the efficient and effective application of legal and general provisions and principles (Obaid and Rabaya, 2020). The rule of law at the macro level requires implementing the law in a comprehensive and true manner that guarantees access to political rights and civil liberties and the application of accountability mechanisms, which in turn affirms the political equality of all citizens and limits potential violations of government authority (Al-Adwan and Al-Shami, 2022).
- B. Transparency: This principle refers to the availability of all necessary information related to the institution's work, including information about the legislation that governs its work, its strategy, and its organizational structure, in addition to internal systems and procedures, administrative and financial operations, decisions related to its public services, financial resources, and human resources and explaining the rights and duties of citizens related to its work accurately, clearly, in an up-to-date and easy manner. Transparency gives stakeholders the right to obtain knowledge about what is happening by publishing sufficient information about the performance of government employees and public sector institutions and the decisions made by the state and their justifications (Fatna and Ahmed, 2018). Transparency also helps decision makers to obtain needed information to make appropriate decisions, discover problems, and work to solve them (Obaid and Rabaya, 2020). Moreover, transparency is an essential factor in increasing citizens' ability to participate in decision-making and enhancing the capacity of relevant agencies to hold accountable (Mahamid, 2021).
- C. Accountability: This means that the institution, its leaders, and employees are subject to accountability for their actions and decisions, procedures are put in place to ensure that accountability processes are carried out, penalties are imposed on actions that violate the regulatory legislation, and that the necessary powers are determined in order to ensure that oversight and accountability processes are carried out. Accountability is also a major requirement for achieving governance by setting the necessary standards to measure the performance of government employees and officials, in addition to using the necessary mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the economic and financial performance of the public sector, the effectiveness of policy formulation and implementation, and verifying the effectiveness in using resources and efficiency in controlling expenditures and reviewing internal and external accounts (Mahamid, 2021). Accountability is achieved by holding individuals accountable when they make mistakes and by having clear principles governing the accountability procedures and penalties imposed in the events of violence (Obaid and Rabaya, 2020).
- D. Participation: the principle of participation refers to granting all stakeholders inside and outside the organization the right to play an active role in the decision-making process, by participating in all stages of preparing, developing, and evaluating organizational policies, legislation, strategies, procedures, and service offering. It refers to the activation of institutional channels that enable members of society to express their opinions freely (Obaid and Rabaya, 2020). In the context of competition for public jobs, participation helps enable citizens to choose their representatives at various levels of government, which enhances confidence and increases acceptance of political decisions by citizens (Mahamid, 2021).
- E. Fairness: the principle of fairness depends on the efforts of institutions in organizing and providing its public services to all target groups of stakeholders, including citizens, employees, and suppliers, in a way that leads in achieving the goals set in accordance with social justice, equality, and equal opportunities, and so that everyone is given equal opportunities to obtain public services as well as public jobs. Fairness also refers to the extent to which employees in the organization feel fair and equal when their supervisors deal with them, which reinforces the principle of equal opportunities for everyone and contributes in eliminating corruption, greed, and other negative practices that may appear in the work environment as a result of bias and lack of justice in the distribution of opportunities, such as cheating, fraud, sabotage, and the acceptance of bribery, and nepotism (Al-Adwan and Al-Shami, 2022).

Governance in Jordanian public commissions:

Jordanian public commissions are considered an integral part of the Jordanian executive apparatus, and were created to perform some tasks with a supervisory or executive nature more effectively than the traditional government. The goal of establishing these commissions was to accelerate the process of economic development, regulate the work of a number of vital sectors, protect and monitor their interests, in addition to improving the quality of services provided by them (Center for Strategic Studies, 2018).

These commissions alike other public sector institutions, in which the decision number (2076/2018) of Council of Ministers was issued, including the necessity of identifying gaps related to corporate governance, its policies, procedures, and internal control tools in the various state departments and institutions within the first package of decisions related to administrative reform and developing institutional performance. Emphasizing the need

for these commissions and other institutions to work to apply the principles of corporate governance in their daily operations so that they can achieve their goals and serve their society, as governance is considered an effective system for directing and controlling the institution, by defining responsibilities, rights, and the nature of relationships between all concerned groups (including managers, employees and citizens), clarifying the necessary procedures for making decisions fairly and transparently, and enhancing accountability that increases citizens' confidence in the institution and enhances its credibility (Amer and Al-Santil, 2020).

Career plateau:

Many studies have investigated the reasons that lead employees to leave their work in many fields. Some of those studies have indicated that the so-called career plateau is linked to many negative variables associated with employees' behavior, including their intention to leave work (Omar et al., 2014). Many researchers have justified undesirable work outcomes for employees, including low job satisfaction, high pressure, poor performance, and the desire to leave work, by referring to the job plateau, which causes employees to feel uncomfortable as a result of the absence of promotion opportunities and career advancement, and the subsequent absence of benefits accompanying the transition to higher positions along with the organizational hierarchy (Ongori and Agolla, 2009).

Ference et al. (1977) defined plateau as the career stage in which the chances of hierarchical promotion decrease significantly. Job stability at this stage is a natural result of the way organizations are formed due to the decrease in the number of positions as moving upward on the organizational structure. In their definition of the career plateau, they focused on the factor of vertical advancement in the job (hierarchical promotion), but Feldman and Weitz (1988) replaced this factor in defining the career plateau with the increase in responsibility, as they defined career plateau as the stage at which opportunities for an increase in responsibilities assigned to the employee are stopped, in light of the fact that the increase in responsibilities may not coincide with hierarchical promotion (Arnold, 1997).

Relying on Ference et al.'s (1977) definition of career plateau, some researchers developed a set of criteria that determine reaching the career plateau point, such as age and job experience, but this understanding was soon reshaped by Georgia Chao in (1990), who assumed that a person enters the career plateau stage when he/she reaches complete conviction that the possibility of future promotion is low regardless of the criteria proposed by previous researchers, such as the job level or the length of time the employee has spent in the job (Yang et al., 2019). A career plateau may occur when an individual reaches the stage in which his job role is established without any difference or renewal after having gone through a period of continuous progress in the same organization or between several organizations (Appelbaum and Santiago, 1997). On the other hand, Lin and Chen (2021) believe that a career plateau is unwanted job experience, which occurs when an individual continues to work for a certain period in a stable environment and performs fixed tasks.

Based on the above, this study defined career plateau as a stage in an employee's career, at which opportunities for career advancement decrease or become almost non-existent, and which may appear in several forms, such as decrease in opportunities for hierarchical promotion, decline in the level of challenge or learning at work, or lack in the employees' willingness to advance in their work despite possessing the skills and competencies necessary for advancement. These various forms of career plateau lead employees to remain in their jobs without progress for long periods.

Dimensions of the career plateau:

In their study, Ference et al. (1977) mentioned two types of career plateau, namely organizational and personal plateau, while Jing et al. (2022) adopted three dimensions of the career plateau, the first of which is the structural plateau, the second is the content plateau, and the third is the central plateau. On the other hand, Lee (2003) went behind the career plateau by focusing on what is called the professional plateau, which he defined as the employee's feeling of his inability to continue raising the level of his professional skills due to the lack of job security in his current job, which may negatively affect work outcomes and job satisfaction.

Subsequent to the above, Saleh and Muhammad (2021) adopted four main dimensions to measure job plateau, which are: the structural plateau, the job content plateau, and the professional plateau, in addition to the personal plateau, which indicates the unwillingness of workers to obtain a higher job level due to their lack of needed professional and technical skills or because of their unwillingness to move to higher job levels despite having the necessary skills and abilities. For their part, Youssef and Askar (2021) and Qadid and Zarroukhi (2021) identified the dimensions of career plateau in three main dimensions, namely: the structural plateau, the content plateau, and the personal plateau.

Based on the opinions of the previously mentioned researchers and the opinions of many other researchers such as (Lin et al., 2018; Salami, 2010; Yuan et al., 2022; Omar et al., 2014; Lin and Chen, 2021; Shabeer et al., 2021), the researchers adopted three dimensions of the career plateau in this study, as follows:

1. **Hierarchical Plateau:** This type of career plateau arises when an employee is unable to perform jobs at the highest job level despite possessing the needed skills or because management believes that he/she lacks these skills, or when the employee has reached the highest level in the organization.
2. **Content Plateau:** This occurs when an employee experiences a significant decrease in the level of challenge, meaning, learning, or interest at work. It also occurs when an employee has great experience in

performing job and reaches the stage after which there becomes no room for further development. It is possible that the structural plateau is one of the reasons leading to the content plateau as an employee remain in the same job for a long period.

3. **Personal Plateau:** This type of plateau occurs when an employee loses the desire to obtain a higher job level despite having the needed skills to do it, or when he/she loses the desire to obtain the skills necessary to obtain the job at the higher level. This type is considered one of the most dangerous types of career plateau, because the employee lacks motivation and enthusiasm in work activities as a result of some factors that reduce his ability to withstand the greater work pressure accompanying higher levels or due to some family obligations.

The Theoretical Framing of the Relationship Between the study Variables and Building the study Hypothesis

With the increasing global interest in the concept of corporate governance and its major role in organizing the work of companies and institutions with different objectives and sizes, including public and governmental institutions, and with reference to experimental research that has proven the positive link between governance and the various dimensions of corporate performance (Stuebs and Sun, 2015), there have been many research efforts in the past few years towards studying this concept and identifying the levels of its application in different institutions, as a number of these studies showed that the general level of respondents' perceptions about the concept of corporate governance is applied in different institutions in a moderate to high degree (Al-Adwan and Al-Shami, 2022; Al-Aqra' (2017; Al-Hanaifat and Al-Hawamdeh, 2016), and several studies have addressed the impact that corporate governance has on many phenomena and variables. In addition, researchers have relied on applying various dimensions of corporate governance that are appropriate to the organizational environments of different institutions and to ensure that they help them achieve their goals.

Focusing on studies targeting the public sector, researchers addressed the concept of corporate governance from multiple aspects in order to identify the scope of its impact on many trends related to human resources. Al-Deek and Abu Hammour (2021) measured the impact of applying corporate governance standards (transparency, accountability, participation, equality) in developing human resources. The study concluded with the positive impact of corporate governance in developing human resources, in addition to focusing on the importance of applying the principle of participation through enhancing employee participation and integrating them into the decision-making process. Al-Aqra' (2017) study also aimed to examine the impact of applying governance standards in human resources development, and concluded that there is a positive impact of applying governance standards in human resources development.

On the other hand, some researchers have moved towards studying the impact of corporate governance on some administrative phenomena and issues. The study of Al-Arajneh and Al-Abdallat (2018) concluded the positive impact of public sector governance in reducing levels of administrative corruption in public sector institutions, and the study of Abu Qaud (2011) which found that governance dimensions have a positive impact in supporting institutional reform processes. Mulyadi et al.'s (2012) study also included an examination of the impact of corporate governance in determining the quality of service provided, which concluded with the positive role that corporate governance plays in increasing the quality of service provided.

In the context of career plateau, many studies have addressed research into this concept since the efforts of Ference et al. (1977) succeeded in framing it. However, the majority of these studies examined the implications of the phenomenon of career plateau. The studies of Youssef and Askar (2021) and Qadid and Zarukhi had sought to (2021) examined the effect of job plateau on job burnout, and the two studies concluded by demonstrating the positive effect of job plateau on job burnout among employees. The study of Saleh and Muhammad (2021) also aimed to examine the effect of job plateau on the quality of work life, as the study demonstrated the negative effect of career plateau in the quality of work life, in addition to many other studies that adopted the career plateau as an influencer.

The researchers found that only few studies have examined the variables that have an impact on career plateau, as Shabeer et al. (2021) shed light on the role of the proactive personality in reducing career plateau through enjoyable work design, career adaptation, and the ability to balance work and life. The study found that employees who have a proactive personality increase their ability to create an enjoyable work environment and balance between personal life and work. The study also showed the negative impact of balancing personal-work life on career plateau.

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006) pointed out the reasons that lead to the deepening of the phenomenon of career plateau among employees, which is their feeling of frustration and pressure as a result of their inability to move to higher job levels or the negative evaluation with which the organization characterizes these employees, which may be based on incorrect evaluation foundations. On the other hand, they pointed out that one of the reasons for employees reaching the plateau is the decrease in the number of available jobs with the move to the top of the career hierarchy, and thus the increased competition for these jobs. Therefore, with reference to what is included in the principles of governance according to the Guide for Evaluating and Improving Governance Practices in the Public Sector (2017), institutions must determine fair and clear foundations for evaluating employees, appointing them to higher levels, promoting them, and holding those responsible for decision-making regarding their affairs accountable for their decisions, in addition to the clarity

of the organizational structure and description. The career level of the various jobs at the level of this structure, and the skills necessary to perform the tasks and responsibilities assigned to these jobs may reduce the employee's access to the career plateau stage.

Based on the above, and in light of the scarcity of experimental studies that attempted to shed light on the variables that reduce the negative effects of career plateau and the lack of experimental studies –according to the best of the researchers' knowledge- that directly examined the impact of corporate governance in reducing career plateau, a research gap that deserves investigating was formed. Therefore, the researchers in the current study sought to examine the impact of corporate governance on career plateau, in an effort to bridge this gap.

From the above, the researchers formulated the study hypothesis as follows:

Ho: There is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the respondents' perceptions about the principles of corporate governance (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in reducing the career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in the Jordanian public commissions.

Methodology, design and procedures

The study adopted the descriptive analytical approach to achieve its objectives by providing an accurate description of its variables and the demographic and functional characteristics of the respondents in the study sample based on the data and information collected from the sample using the study tool (the questionnaire), then processing this data and information and analyzing it statistically to test the proposed hypotheses and reach results that contribute in achieving the objectives of the study.

Study population and sample

The study population consists of all employees of (7) Jordanian public commissions report to the Prime Minister, namely: Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission, Media Commission, Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission, Jordanian Atomic Energy Commission, Jordan Securities Commission, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission, and the Hashemite Committee for Disabled Soldiers, where the number of community members reached (1,429) employees (Prime Minister, 2023). The researchers selected a proportional stratified sample of (306) employees from the various occupational levels (top, middle, lower and functional) in the targeted commissions, and the number of elements in the sample representative of the study population reached (306) elements.

Study tool

The researchers designed the study tool (the questionnaire) based on previous studies related to this study (Al-Adwan and Al-Shami, 2022; Jing et al., 2022; Al-Adwan and Al-Ghoul, 2022; Qadid and Zarukhi, 2021; Saleh and Muhammad, 2021; Youssef and Askar, 2021; Trivedi. and Varkkey, 2020; Guide for Implementing Corporate Governance Principles in the Public Sector, 2017; Al-Hanaifat and Al-Hawamdeh, 2016; Ference et al., 1977).

Study procedures

The researchers distributed the questionnaire electronically through the official e-mail of each of these commissions and using social networking sites after obtaining the necessary approvals, and on paper through field visits to the commissions' sites (with the exception of Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission, which allows response using the electronic questionnaire exclusively), where the researchers were able to collect (259) questionnaires, including (250) questionnaires that could be entered for analysis. (9) Questionnaires were excluded either because the answers were not completed or because the respondents answered the questionnaire paragraphs in a clearly random manner. By checking the outliers in the questionnaires that were received, through the Mahalanobis Distance test, it was found that there were (82) questionnaires that were not suitable for analysis as outliers - which would certainly affect the results of the analysis. Accordingly, the two researchers excluded these questionnaires, so that the final number of questionnaires became (168), valid questionnaires for analysis and safe from problems of extreme values. Table No. (1) shows the results of the (Mahalanobis Distance) test, where the (Chi^2) table was relied upon to determine the optimal value. To test (Mahalanobis Distance) at (6) degrees of freedom and a confidence level (95%), the optimal value of (Mahalanobis Distance) is (12.592), and therefore any value higher than the optimal value is considered an extreme value.

Table (1): Mahalanobis Distance test results

Residuals Statistics					
Mahalanobis Distance	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
	0.183	207.316	7.244	12.621	250

When referring to the study data and arranging them from highest value to lowest value according to the value of (Mahalanobis Distance), it was found that (82) questionnaires had a value higher than the standard value of

the (Mahalanobis Distance) test. After excluding these questionnaires, it was found that there remained (168) questionnaires valid for analysis.

Reliability and validity of the study tool

The researchers made sure that the questionnaire was valid to measure what it was prepared for before starting the analysis process. They verified that it included all the elements necessary to measure the variables of the study, and that its paragraphs were clear and understandable, through the following tests:

1. Stability of the study tool

The stability of the study tool was verified by conducting a reliability coefficient test (Cronbach's Alpha) on the study sample, which examines the extent of internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The value of the reliability coefficient ranges between (0-1), and the test results are considered statistically acceptable if the value of the reliability factor is not less than (60%). Table No. (2) Shows the results of the analysis of the reliability coefficient test (Cronbach's Alpha) for each dimension of the study, as follows:

Table (2): Internal consistency coefficient values (α) for the variables and dimensions of the study

Paragraphs	The variable and its dimensions	Number of paragraphs	value (α)
1-25	Corporate governance	25	0.894
1-5	Rule of law	5	0.903
6-10	Transparency	5	0.846
11-15	Participation	5	0.911
16-20	Accountability	5	0.899
20-25	Fairness	5	0.912
26-40	Career plateau	15	0.803
26-30	Structural plateau	5	0.806
31-35	Content plateau	5	0.822
36-40	Personal plateau	5	0.781

Sekaran and Bougie (2016) indicated that if the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is less than (0.6), it is considered a weak coefficient, but if it is around (0.7), it is considered acceptable, while it is good if it reaches (0.8), and the closer it is to correct one, the better it is. As the researchers showed in Table No. (2), the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values for the dimensions of the study ranged between (0.781) for personal plateau and (0.912) for fairness, all of which are greater than (0.7), which indicates that the degree of internal consistency of the study variables ranges between acceptable and good, and the study tool has a high degree of reliability.

2. Face Validity

The researchers presented the study tool (the questionnaire) to ten arbitrators and specialists in the subject of the current study and statistics, and their comments and opinions were responded to, in addition to deleting and amending the necessary things that were approved by the opinions of the majority of arbitrators, and thus the study tool was reached in its final form.

Present the results and discuss the recommendations

Characteristics of the study sample

Table (3) shows an analysis of the demographic characteristics of the study sample members and their distribution into categories related to gender, age, educational qualification, job level, and number of years of experience.

Table (3): Demographic characteristics of the sample members

Variable	Category	Repetition	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	94	55.8
	Female	74	44.2
	The total	168	100
Career Level	Top management	2	0.9
	Middle management	10	5.8
	Lower level management	27	15.7
	Employees	129	77.6
	The total	168	100
Years of Experience	Less than 10 years	36	21.5
	From 10 - 20 years	96	57.3
	More than 20 years	36	21.2
	The total	168	100

The results showed a slight discrepancy between the genders in favor of females, as the number of male members of the sample reached (94) people, with a percentage of about (55.8%), compared to (74) female members, with a percentage of about (44.2%).

In terms of job level, the researchers adopted a proportional stratified sampling method to obtain responses from the study population according to the percentage of workers at different job levels. The results showed that the vast majority of participants, with a percentage of about (77.6%), were employees, followed by about (21.5%) of members of middle and lower level management, and about (0.9%) of members of senior management.

Finally, with regard to the number of years of experience for respondents to the study's questions, the results showed a diverse distribution as well, as the number of people with less than (10) years of experience reached (36) people, accounting for about (21.5%) of the sample's members, while (96) had) people, who constituted the largest percentage of the sample members, approximately (57.3%), had years of experience that ranged between (10-20) years, while the remaining percentage, amounting to approximately (21.2%), had more than (20) years of experience.

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables (Answering the Study Questions)

This part includes answering the study questions by determining the level of availability for each of the study variables represented by the principles of corporate governance and career plateau and the importance of these variables from the perspective of the respondents, as well as determining the level of the respondents' perceptions about the importance and availability of each dimension of these variables, where the arithmetic means and deviations were extracted. Standardization and level of importance for each dimension, and the results were as shown in the tables below.

Descriptive Statistics for the Independent Variable (Principles of Corporate Governance)

The first question: What is the level of respondents' perceptions about the application of corporate governance principles (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in Jordanian public commissions?

To answer this question, the researchers measured the independent variable (principles of corporate governance) through five dimensions: (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness). Descriptive statistics tests were conducted for these dimensions, which include arithmetic averages and standard deviations. Table (4) shows the results of the descriptive statistics tests for the dimensions of the independent variable.

Table (4) Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Dimensions of (Principles of Corporate Governance)

Rank	NO.	The Dimension	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Importance
1	1	Rule of law	4.63	0.61	high
2	2	Transparency	4.23	0.72	high
3	3	Accountability	4.19	0.74	high
4	4	Participation	3.97	0.80	high
5	5	Fairness	3.90	0.80	high
Principles of corporate governance			4.184	0.730	high

The table above shows the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, and the relative importance of the dimensions of the independent variable, which is (principles of corporate governance), where the general arithmetic mean for all dimensions reached (4.184) with a standard deviation of (0.730) and a high degree of agreement. The first dimension, "Rule of Law," ranked first in terms of arithmetic mean of (4.63) and a standard deviation of (0.61), while the fifth dimension, "Fairness," ranked last, with a mean of (3.90) and a standard deviation of (0.80).

Descriptive statistics for the dependent variable (career plateau)

The second question: What is the level of respondents' perceptions of the career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions?

To answer this question, the researchers measured the dependent variable (career plateau) through three dimensions (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau). Descriptive statistics tests were conducted for these dimensions, which include arithmetic averages and standard deviations. Table (5) shows the results of the descriptive statistics tests for the dimensions of the dependent variable.

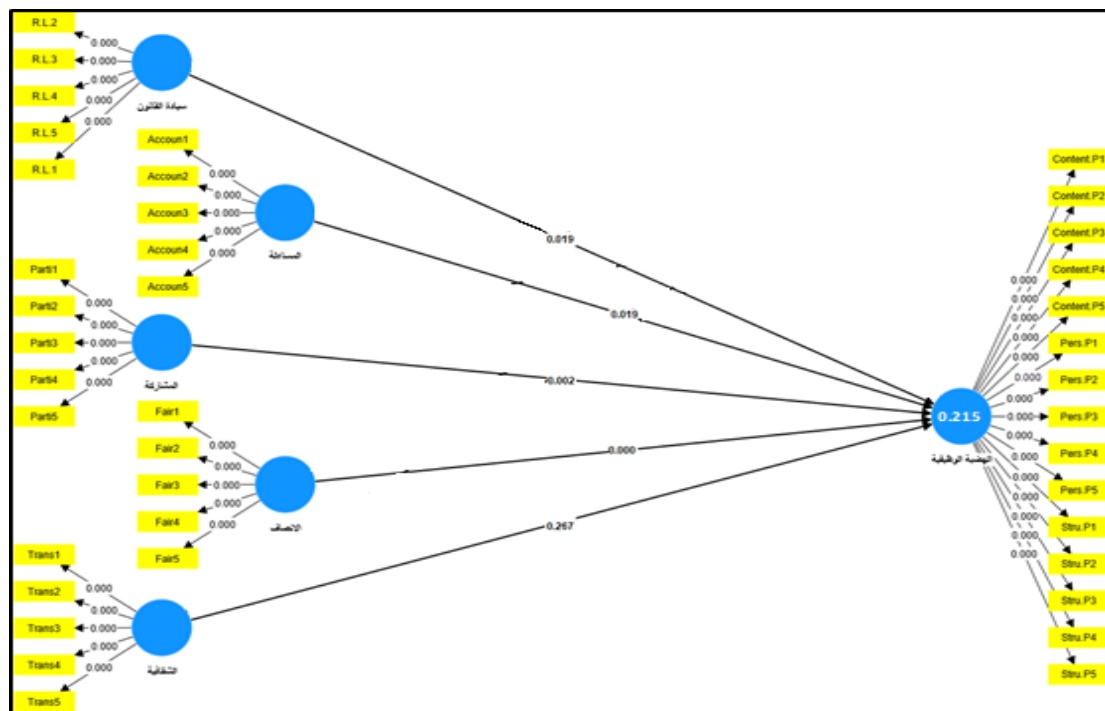
Table (5) Arithmetic means and standard deviations for the dimensions of (Career plateau)

Rank	NO.	The Dimension	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Importance
1	1	Structural Plateau	3.11	0.84	Middle
2	2	Content Plateau	3.03	0.84	Middle
3	3	Personal Plateau	2.71	0.75	Middle
Career plateau			2.951	0.810	Middle

The table above shows the arithmetic mean, the standard deviation, and the relative importance of the dimensions of the dependent variable, represented by (career plateau), where the general arithmetic mean for all dimensions reached (2.951) with a standard deviation of (0.810) and a moderate degree of agreement. The first dimension, "structural plateau," ranked first in terms of the arithmetic mean, which reached (3.11) and a standard deviation of (0.84), while the third dimension, "personal plateau," ranked last, with a mean of (2.71) and a standard deviation of (0.75).

Evaluating the Structural Model (Hypothesis Testing)

This part includes examining the structural model of the study to measure the impact of applying the principles of corporate governance on the career plateau in Jordanian public commissions. In order to test the study hypotheses, the bootstrapping technique was used within the (SmartPLS-4) software. Figure (1) shows the bootstrapping model for testing the study hypotheses, which shows the paths between the dimensions and variables that were tested, as the two researchers analyzed the study hypotheses that were tested, as listed below.

**Figure (1): Bootstrapping Model to test the Study Hypotheses**

Main hypothesis (H₀): There is no statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the respondents' perceptions of the principles of corporate governance (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) in reducing the career plateau (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions.

Table (6) Bootstrapping test Results for the Effect of Corporate Governance on Career plateau

Track	Path Parameter	T-Statistics	P-Values
Principles of corporate governance -> plateau function	0.628	2.885	0.004***

Results of testing the main hypothesis (H₀): Table (6) shows the results of testing the main hypothesis, which relates to the impact of corporate governance on the career plateau in Jordanian public commissions. The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was proven. Therefore, there is a direct impact of applying the principles of corporate governance on the career plateau, as the path coefficient reached (0.628),

the T value (2.885) and the significance value (0.004). As shown in Figure (1), the value of R^2 is equal to (0.215), which means that the principles of corporate governance contribute to explaining (21.5%) of the variation in career plateau in Jordanian public commissions.

Discuss the results

The current study aims to identify the impact of applying the principles of corporate governance on the career plateau in Jordanian public commissions. The study raised a set of questions and presented a set of hypotheses related to the impact among its variables. The study reached several results that contributed to answering its questions and hypotheses.

First: Results related to the level of application of corporate governance principles in Jordanian public commissions:

After collecting the respondents' responses to the questionnaire items, the researchers analyzed these responses, and the results of the analysis revealed that employees in Jordanian public commissions showed high levels of agreement with all the principles of corporate governance that were measured in this study, as the principle of the rule of law came in first place, followed by the principles of transparency, accountability, participation and fairness, respectively.

By analyzing the items used to measure corporate governance, the researchers identified the items that achieved the highest degrees of approval from the point of view of employees in the target commissions, and those that achieved the lowest levels of approval.

By examining the items that obtained the highest arithmetic mean among the items that measure corporate governance variable, it was found that they are related to the presence of a clear legislative framework that is consistent with the legislation in force in the Kingdom and helps authority achieve the goal for which it was established. While the analysis of the paragraphs that received the lowest degrees of approval from the paragraphs that measure corporate governance, it became clear that these paragraphs are concerned with measuring the extent to which authority applies the principles of justice and fairness when selecting the best among applicants for vacant positions and clarity in decisions related to employees' work affairs and equal opportunities in dealing with them. The authority possesses mechanisms that enhance the principles of consultation with employees and enhances their participation in decision-making processes, in addition to the authority's possession of methods of accountability and scrutiny of the decision-maker's decisions, which may explain the positive trend that emerged when testing the impact between corporate governance and career plateaus in Jordanian public commissions.

By linking the findings of this study with previous studies, it has been shown that the high degree of agreement expressed by workers in Jordanian public commissions regarding the availability of corporate governance is consistent with the findings of the study of Al-Hanaifat and Al-Hawamdeh (2016) and the study of Al-Adwan and Al-Shami (2022), and it differs to some extent with the findings of Al-Aqraa's study (2017), which showed that corporate governance is available to a moderate degree in the major local authorities in Qalqilya Governorate.

Second: Results related to the level of respondents' awareness of the career plateau in Jordanian public commissions:

The level of perceptions of employees in Jordanian public commissions regarding the career plateau in its three dimensions reached a moderate degree of approval, as the structural plateau came in first place, followed by the content plateau and the personal plateau, respectively.

By analyzing the career plateau paragraphs, the researchers identified the paragraphs that achieved the highest degrees of approval from the point of view of employees in the targeted commissions, and those that achieved the lowest degrees of approval. The researchers concluded that workers in the targeted agencies believe that most of what makes them realize the career plateau is related to external factors related to the agency. Such as limited opportunities for advancement to higher levels, reduced favoritism and opportunities for fair competition, and unequal rewards with the responsibilities and tasks assigned to jobs at higher levels, in addition to low challenge and the jobs' lack of new responsibilities that push workers toward learning.

This study agrees, in terms of the average degree of agreement expressed by workers in the targeted agencies, towards the level of career plateau with the findings of the study of Qadid and Zarukhi (2021), while it differs relatively from the findings of the study of Youssef and Askar (2021), which showed the availability of career plateau to a low degree among the respondents in the General Education Directorate of Nineveh.

Third: Results of testing the study hypothesis related to the impact of corporate governance principles on career plateau

The results of the study indicated a statistically significant impact of corporate governance with its dimensions (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, and fairness) on the career plateau with its dimensions (structural plateau, content plateau, and personal plateau) in Jordanian public commissions. The study also

showed an effect of the rule of law, accountability, participation, and fairness on the career plateau, while it showed that there was no effect of transparency on the career plateau in Jordanian public commissions.

However, the study found that this effect has a positive trend, which indicates that the application of corporate governance in its dimensions (rule of law, transparency, accountability, participation, fairness) and in the currently applied concept of corporate governance (based on the guide for evaluating and improving governance practices in the public sector), contributes to increase career plateau in the targeted commissions, which contradicts the findings of many previous studies that the researchers relied on in building their hypothesis, which had indicated the role that corporate governance plays in reducing many negative phenomena, such as the study of Al-Arajneh and Al-Abdullat. (2018), which found the positive impact of public sector governance in reducing levels of administrative corruption in public sector institutions, in addition to studies that found the role of corporate governance in enhancing many trends related to human resources, such as the study of Al-Deek and Abu Hammour (2021), which confirmed On the impact of applying corporate governance standards in developing human resources, in addition to focusing on the importance of applying the principle of participation by enhancing employee participation and integrating them into the decision-making process, and the study of Al-Aqra' (2017), which examined the impact of applying governance standards in human resources development and concluded that there is a positive impact of applying governance standards on human resources development. In addition to the study of Abu Qaud (2011), which concluded that governance dimensions have a positive impact in strengthening institutional reform processes, and the study of Mulyadi et al. (2012), which concluded the positive role played by corporate governance in increasing the quality of service provided.

The researchers believe that the reason for the positive trend in the impact of corporate governance on the career plateau may be due to the novelty of the concept and the lack of awareness by all members of the sample in the manner intended in this study, which prevented all questions from being answered correctly. Moreover, the researchers found that the paragraphs concerned with measuring the extent to which the authority applies the principles of justice and fairness when selecting the best among applicants for vacant positions, clarity in decisions related to employees' work affairs, equal opportunities among them, and the authority's possession of mechanisms that enhance the principles of consultation with employees Their participation in decision-making processes is enhanced, in addition to the authority's possession of methods of accountability and scrutiny of the decision-maker's decisions. It received less approval from the sample members, which may indicate that the aspects of governance that were most influential in the plateau were available to a lesser degree, which confirms the necessity of establishing commissions activate the legislation and principles that govern personnel affairs to enhance employees' confidence in the institutions in which they work and limit their reaching the plateau stage.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the current study which aimed to investigate the impact of corporate governance principles in career plateau, the researchers presented a set of recommendations at the professional level that may help decision makers in Jordanian public commissions to enhance the desired results from applying the principles of corporate governance and striving to reduce the negative effects of career plateau, in addition to some recommendations on the theoretical level, which contribute to direct future research.

First: Recommendations on the professional side

- Increase transparency regarding the procedures of appointing managers and employees and/or terminating their services by providing the needed justifications related to choosing one applicant over another.
- Enhance the application of equal opportunity principle when dealing with employees and find the necessary ways to reduce their feelings of unfairness when promoting and appointing to positions at higher levels.
- Finding new and innovative methods for completing work and reducing routine tasks, which can be achieved by employing technology and artificial intelligence to complete routine tasks and free up employees for important activities, which increases their levels of challenge and encourages for continual learning.
- Activate job rotation in order to diversify employees' experiences and introduce training programs that allow highly experienced employees to transfer their tacit knowledge to their co-workers, which will benefit new employees and increase the sense of satisfaction and self-realization among highly experienced employees, especially in light of the limited opportunities for vertical advancement in public commissions.

Second: Recommendations on the theoretical side

- Conduct more studies and experimental scientific research in various sectors to determine the factors that may contribute in reducing the negative effects of the phenomenon of career plateau, such as studying the effect of transformational training in reducing career plateau and the effect of nepotism in increasing it, or such as studying the effect of cognitive competencies on career plateau.

- Conduct more field studies related to the factors that contribute in enhancing corporate governance in the public sector, such as examining the impact of public policies in strengthening corporate governance.

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