

Impact of Employee Empowerment on Job Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of the Career Paths in Jordanian Commercial Banks



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ABSTRACT

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empowerment, job satisfaction, career path, work environment, delegation, autonomy, information sharing

In a banking environment, employees deal with a variety of tasks and stressors, and providing an empowering work environment can help reduce stress levels and increase job satisfaction. This study examined the impact of employee empowerment dimensions (autonomy, delegation, information sharing) on job satisfaction dimensions (work environment, colleague relationships, supervisor relationships) in Jordanian banks. Using structural equation modeling (SEM), the moderating role of career paths between these variables was also analyzed in this study. Electronic questionnaire was used to collect data from 354 bank employees. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction, which was enhanced by career path development. Additionally, employee empowerment was found to have a significant impact on the work environment, colleagues' relationships, and supervisor relationships. The study recommended the decision-makers in the Jordanian commercial banks should pay more attention and provide job empowerment to the employees by providing information to them, delegating authority to them, and allowing them a space of independence in performing their work. Recommendations for future research are also provided.

1. INTRODUCTION

Increased interest in employee empowerment in banks in recent years as a result of the great developments that reflected positively on the performance of employees, especially in the work environment. These rapid changes have clearly affected the work environment, which prompted banks to adopt modern management concepts to achieve competitive advantages in order to enhance levels and rates of satisfaction among employees. Job satisfaction is an important component of job-related achievements and increases employee efficiency in an organization [1].

There is an increasing interest in job satisfaction in the financial sector due to the rise in competition and the current technological changes. Job satisfaction has been considered an issue of importance to management in all sectors, as a decline in job satisfaction leads to an increase in absenteeism and an increase in employee turnover [2]. Therefore, the concepts and practices of employee empowerment have become the subject of interest, research, and study by researchers and administrative institutions, which emphasize the importance of establishing mutual trust between leadership and employees, motivating them, and participating in decision-making [3].

Additionally, empowerment improves the relationship between supervisors and subordinates, which directly contributes to the improvement and development of institutional performance and leads to the achievement of

organizational goals [4]. Kandampully et al. [5] indicated that empowerment leads to job satisfaction. In order to increase job satisfaction, the career path and career path planning are important in order to ensure the success of the employees in their mission and affiliation with their work and the organization, and thus increase job satisfaction [6].

Experiences in various countries have shown that employees who are satisfied with their work are more capable of carrying out continuous change and development [7], and it is necessary to focus on empowering employees to achieve job satisfaction [7]. On the other hand, the career path is an important factor in achieving employee satisfaction, as the study of Ashraf [8] and the study of Shujaat et al. [9] indicated that there is a positive relationship between career development and employee satisfaction in the banking sector. Aburumman et al. [10] focused on the same objective and reported the similar relationship between career development and employee satisfaction.

Based on the above discussion, and with increasing competition, Jordanian banks must focus on empowering employees and improving job satisfaction. This study aimed to examine the relationship between employee empowerment dimensions (autonomy, delegation, information sharing) and job satisfaction dimensions (work environment, colleague relationships, supervisor relationships) in Jordanian banks. Furthermore, the moderating role of career path development between these variables was analyzed. Examining this relationship can provide insights into how banks can leverage

career paths to strengthen the impact of empowerment initiatives. One of the reasons, that prompted the researcher to use the career path as a moderating variable, is the results of some previous studies, which found that human resource management practices negatively affect intention to leave work, and that satisfaction with the career path partially mediated the relationship between human resource management practices and intention to leave work, which reduced the negative impact of the relationship [10].

2. BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Job satisfaction

According to Chughati and Perveen [11], job satisfaction is correlated with how someone feels or is feeling about their employment as well as how positively they feel about their employer, coworkers, and job. Positive feelings are a sign of job satisfaction because they occur when an organization achieves job expectations for the employee [12]. Regarding feeling content with the nature of the employment, see job satisfaction. Any business that wants to flourish must continually monitor employee satisfaction. A contented worker is also a productive worker, thus happiness among employees directly correlates to their level of job satisfaction. Employees that are happier at their jobs tend to be more dedicated to the company and more driven to work hard for it [13]. According to Geue [13], one of the healthy connections at work is the one with coworkers, and this relationship raises job satisfaction.

However, different organizations have difficulties as a result of the realities of the workplace, therefore creating a better working environment is also a top priority for organizations to keep a steady workforce for their operations [14]. According to Lane et al. [15], factors influencing job satisfaction include pay, working hours, employee autonomy, and management-employee communication. According to Chandrasekar [16], in order to boost employee productivity and raise organizational revenues, the company must focus on building a work environment that supports this ability.

Furthermore, Srouji et al. [17] indicated that job satisfaction consists of two dimensions (the relationship with the boss and the relationship with colleagues). Al-dalahmeh et al. [18] indicated that job satisfaction can be measured through the work environment. In this study, job satisfaction was defined as "an expression through which employees' feelings about their work are described, and these feelings depend on perception; the first perception is related to the workers' perception of what their current work allows them; the second perception is related to the workers' aspiration to what their jobs will achieve for them and what they should achieve for them; and satisfaction is achieved to the extent that these two perceptions are identical or different".

2.2 Employee empowerment

Employee empowerment is an effective strategy for human resource management since empowered individuals are expected to perform better than those who are part of the organization's traditional cultures. As a result of the employees' increased self-assurance and dedication to their employers, the quality of service increases, which in turn

raises customer satisfaction levels [19]. Employee behavior and actions are substantially influenced by empowerment, which lowers stress at work and boosts job satisfaction. Employee empowerment can help employees become more flexible in their behavior by giving them more freedom and latitude to adjust their actions to the needs of the workplace [20].

According to Dobre [21], empowerment is the process of giving employees some autonomy and decision-making authority over their specific organizational tasks, allowing decision-making at lower levels of the organization. According to Murrel and Meredith [22], empowerment is the process of enabling someone to take on more responsibility and authority through instruction, confidence, and emotional support. Additionally, it is the method managers use to assist staff in acquiring the knowledge and authority necessary to make choices that have an impact on both themselves and their work [23].

On the other hand, Ukil [24] indicated that employee empowerment can be measured through autonomy and delegation of authority, and it can be measured through autonomy and owning the information, as indicated by Al-hayali [25]. In this research, employee empowerment was defined as "the process of giving employees the authority to practices and take responsibility for applying their capabilities by motivating them to participate in decision-making" [26].

2.3 Career path

Even though an individual may have a variety of professional options at any given time in their career, contextual and personal changes may manifest themselves differently throughout various career pathways, leading to various career outcomes. So, route selection is both a starting point and a result of career path counselling, and both the path and the end result of such a process must be able to meet the social and financial needs of the individual.

By making the best use of their skills and resources, each person can achieve their ultimate professional goal thanks to the end path and aim [27]. According to the theory of the person's suitability for the job, when a person's personal characteristics match the requirements of the position, productivity for the employer improves and job satisfaction for the incumbent increases [28]. The career path was defined in the current study as a model of fundamental beliefs and behavior that depicts a series of positions that an individual hold throughout the course of his or her career, either vertically through promotion or horizontally through job transfer [29].

2.4 Link between employee empowerment and job satisfaction

According to Aldaihani [30], management empowerment (delegation of authority, incentives, participation in decision-making, and cooperation) had an effect on job satisfaction, and employees in Algerian banks reported an average level of job satisfaction. Additionally, Al-hayali [25] discovered that job satisfaction among employees of the Algerian plastic injection and blowing institution was positively impacted by employees' empowerment, including its dimensions (autonomy, owning the information). In Jordan's five-star hotels, Al-Ababneh [31] noted that both structural and psychological empowerment have strong individual effects on job satisfaction, but they are even more important when combined. Ukil [24] also stated

that an organization can raise employee satisfaction levels, which in turn enhance service quality, by empowering people through autonomy and authority. AlKahtani et al. [32] discovered that employee empowerment, including its aspects of autonomy and knowledge ownership, had a favorable impact on job happiness. The findings of Giorgadze's [33] study, which sought to examine the connection between employee empowerment and job satisfaction in the setting of a higher education institution, revealed that these two concepts are positively correlated. Based on the above, the study hypothesized that:

H1: Employee empowerment with its dimensions (autonomy, delegation, information sharing) has a positive impact on job satisfaction with its dimensions (work environment, colleague relationships, supervisor relationships)

The following sub hypotheses also developed:

H1.1: Employee empowerment has a positive impact on the supervisor relationships

H1.2: Employee empowerment has a positive impact on the colleague relationships

H1.3: Employee empowerment has a positive impact on the work environment

2.5 Career path as moderator

A study by Ekmeckioglu et al. [34] examined how job reinforcement techniques affected the link between professional success and job commitment. The findings showed that job commitment significantly and favorably influenced one's ability to succeed in their profession. Additionally, employees with high levels of both self-nomination and communication had a higher favorable association between workplace dedication and subjective career success. In the context of the American hotel business, McGinley et al. [35] study sought to explore the influence of career development on both job change and turnover. According to the study, career advancement can moderate the relationship between work-life conflict and the decision to leave one's job and change careers. The study recommended that career advancement be taken into consideration by both practitioners and scholars to better understand what causes people to leave both organizations and industries due to the distinct characteristics of career advancement and the high base rate of company turnover. Therefore, the study hypothesized that:

H2: Career path moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction

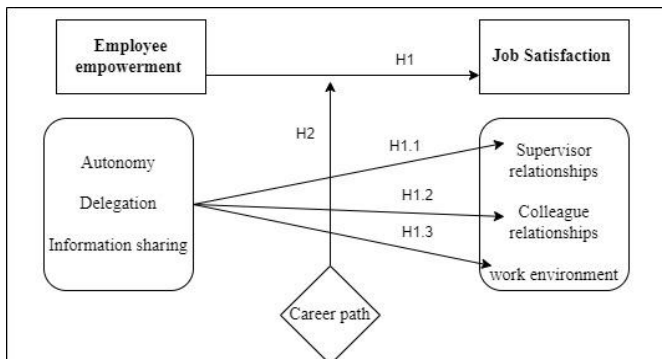


Figure 1. Research framework

In addition, Figure 1 above shows the theoretical model proposed along with the hypotheses to be tested.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study sampling

The population of the current study consists of 16417 employees working in 13 Jordanian commercial banks listed in Association of Banks in Jordan, and the sample size is 377 based on Sekaran & Bougie [36]. Stratified sample were applied to distribute the questionnaire for each bank based on the number of employees. The researcher designs a Google Form questionnaire, agrees with the human resources manager in each bank, and sends the link to them in order to distribute the link to the employees. Out of 362 questionnaires retrieved, 354 were found valid for analysis.

3.2 Measurement

The current study measures employee empowerment with three dimensions (the delegation of authority, owning the information, and autonomy) in three, four, and five items, respectively, adapted from Matthews et al. [37] and Al-Khawaldah [38]. The current study defines delegation of authority as "the assignment of specific tasks or duties by the leader to some employees with an explanation of the limits granted to them to accomplish the duties and specific tasks and the results required of them to achieve them, provided that the assignment and appointment are sufficient and the employee is willing to assume responsibility" [39]. Autonomy is defined as "the confidence given to employees by providing them with the information they need to complete their work-related work and giving them a greater opportunity and space to practice their tasks, which includes self-monitoring of their work" [39], and owning the information is defined as "the information necessary for making the decisions that managers obtain and do not share with employees because they do not trust them" [39]. Also, the current study measures job performance in three dimensions (the relationship with colleagues, the relationship with the boss, and the work environment) in four, five, and four items, respectively, adapted from Albloush et al. [40]. The relationship with the boss is defined as "the positive feeling of the employees and their relationship with their boss at work" [41]. The relationship with colleagues is defined as "a positive relationship in the work environment" [13]. Work environment is defined as "incentives, rewards, and overall conditions within the scope of work, and it is also the place where participation in the implementation of decisions and instructions takes place" [42]. Moreover, this study defines career path as "one of the basic assumptions and behaviors that shows a set of successive positions that an individual occupies during his/her career, either vertically through promotion or horizontally through job transfer", and measured in six items adapted from Hendri [43]. The current study uses the pervious measurement, because it is achieving a high level of reliability (more than 0.70). The instrument of this study was based on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. A 5-point Likert scale was use because it is ease of use, it is coming with a few pre-set options, which makes it easy to understand and respond to by individuals. Therefore, it is easy to understandable from different categories of respondents in this study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Sampling profile and descriptive statistics

Table 1. Respondents’ demographic profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	207	58
	female	147	42
Age	Less than 25	40	11
	25 to less than 45	241	68
	More than 45	73	21
Experience	Less than 5	13	3.6
	5 to less than 10	99	28
	10 to less than 15	230	65
	More than 15	12	3.4
Qualifications	Diploma and less	18	5
	Bachelor	268	76
	Postgraduate	68	19
Position	Employee	202	57
	Section head	98	28
	Manager	54	15

The results in Table 1 above show that 58% of respondents were male and 42% were female. In addition, 68% of respondents were aged 25 years and less than 45 years, 21% were older than 45 years, and the rest were younger than 25 years. In terms of experience, 65% of participants possessed

from 10 to less than 15 years, 28% from 5 to less than 10 years, 3.6% less than 5 years, and the rest more than 15 years. In terms of qualifications, 76% of participants hold a bachelor’s degree, 19% hold a postgraduate degree, and the rest hold a diploma or less. Moreover, 57% of participants are employees, 28% are section heads, and 15% are managers.

Table 2 shows that all variables means are range between high to low. The results show that the mean of employee empowerment, job satisfaction, and career path are 3.75, 3.74, and 3.92 respectively, which mean that the perspective of employee these variables are high.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	STDEV	Level
Employee empowerment	3.75	0.92	High
Job satisfaction	3.74	0.91	High
Career path	3.92	0.96	High

Low (1 – 1.33); Moderate (2.34 – 3.67); High (3.68 – 5)

4.2 Measurement model results

The data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4. PLS is capable of testing both measurements and structural models. The researcher identified the convergent validity through loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR), with cut-off values of ≥ 0.5 for AVE, ≥ 0.6 for CR, and ≥ 0.5 for factor loading [44]. Table 3 and Figure 2 demonstrate that all the values of loading, AVE, and CR were achieved.

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Variable	Factor Loading ≥ 0.50	CR ≥ 0.60	AVE $\geq .050$
Autonomy (ATO)	0.826	0.88	0.67
	0.805		
	0.823		
	0.847		
	0.806		
Delegation of authority (DA)	0.842	0.60	0.54
	0.82		
	0.50		
	0.752		
	0.743		
Owing the information (OI)	0.875	0.78	0.60
	0.741		
	0.832		
	0.753		
	0.808		
Work environment (WE)	0.517	0.71	0.54
	0.801		
	0.70		
	0.593		
	0.766		
Relationship with colleagues (RC)	0.831	0.68	0.51
	0.766		
	0.738		
	0.779		
	0.732		
Relationship with boss (RB)	0.781	0.82	0.59
	0.794		
	0.794		
	0.812		
	0.751		
Career path (CP)	0.78	0.87	0.61

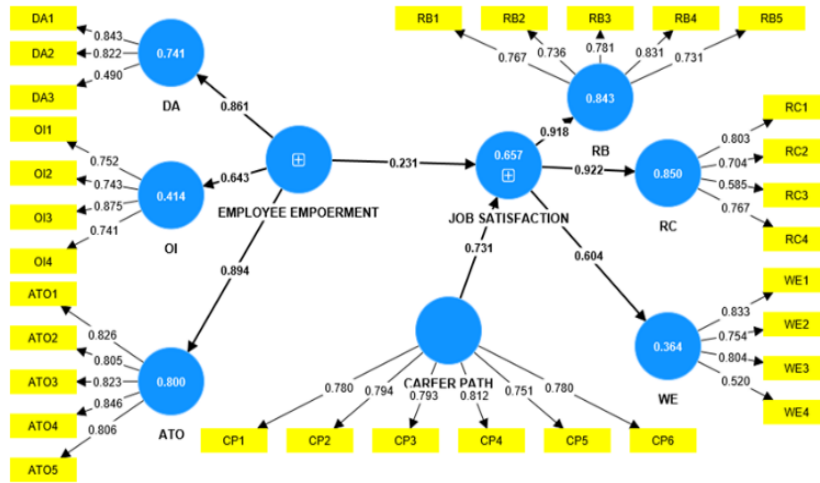


Figure 2. Measurement model

Table 4. Discriminant validity

	ATO	JS	RB	RC	CP	OI	WE	DA	EE
ATO	0.822								
JS	0.16	0.613							
RB	0.083	0.73	0.77						
RC	0.096	0.719	0.798	0.918					
CP	0.069	0.772	0.779	0.698	0.785				
OI	0.288	0.648	0.392	0.596	0.393	0.78			
WI	0.256	0.626	0.313	0.445	0.362	0.704	0.738		
DA	0.728	0.271	0.113	0.193	0.071	0.405	0.376	0.736	
EE	0.639	0.411	0.226	0.331	0.206	0.648	0.515	0.86	0.891

(ATO: Autonomy; JS: Job satisfaction; RB: Relationship with boss; RC: Relationship with colleagues; CP: Career path; OI: Owing information; WE: Work environment; DA: Delegation of authority; EE: Employee empowerment)

Also, the study tested another type of validity, which is called the discriminant validity of the study variables, through the use of Fornell and Larcke [45]. Table 4 above shows the discriminant validity by calculating the square root of (AVE) for the variables of the study, which should be greater than the correlations between the variables of the study.

4.3 Structural model results

Prior to verifying the hypotheses, the current study tests the structural model using the Q^2 , F^2 , and R^2 . By examining the ability of the independent variables to predict the dependent variable, the predictive relevance test (Q^2) enables the study to evaluate the quality of the structural model [46]. According to Hair et al. [47], ($Q^2 > 0$), and Table 5 outcome demonstrates that the independent variable correctly predicted that the dependent variable would be greater than zero, or Q^2 .

Table 5. Q^2 result

DV	Q^2	Result
Job satisfaction	0.722	IV has predictive significance over the DV

Also, the study tested (F^2) the size of the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, and in this context Cohen [48] indicated that the effect size is considered large if it is more than 0.35, medium if it is at the level of 0.15, and weak at the level of 0.02. The results in Table 6 show that the F^2 of employee empowerment and career path on job satisfaction was large, 0.499 and 1.18, respectively.

Table 6. F^2 result

DV (Job Satisfaction)	Variable	F^2	Result
	Employee empowerment	0.499	large
	Career path	1.18	large

Moreover, the result in Figure 3 indicate that R^2 is 0.740, which mean that employee empowerment and career path explain 74% of the variance of job satisfaction.

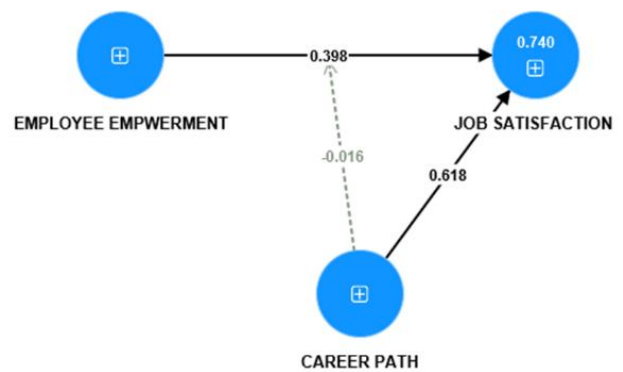


Figure 3. R^2 result

Furthermore, the study tests the hypotheses by applying PLS4. Hair et al. [47] pointed out to use Bootstrapping to test the hypotheses. Table 7, Figure 4, and Figure 5 show the hypotheses results.

The results of the current study as shown in Table 7 and Table 8 demonstrate that employee empowerment and it is

dimensions has a positive impact on job satisfaction, also career path moderate and enhance the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. The findings of H1 demonstrated that employee empowerment and its components have a statistically significant impact on job satisfaction in Jordanian commercial banks. Employees will be more satisfied with their work if empowerment is implemented successfully in Jordanian commercial banks, where they feel that they have the autonomy and authority to act independently and control their work. This will in turn increase the employee's level of job satisfaction. The outcome of the present investigation is consistent with that of Fernandez and Moldogaziev [49].

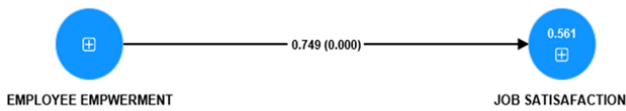


Figure 4. H1 path coefficient

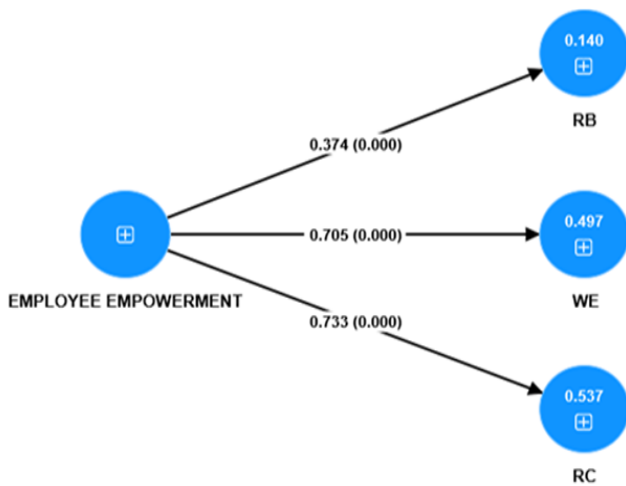


Figure 5. Sub hypotheses path coefficient

Furthermore, the results of H1.1 showed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between employees' empowerment and their relationship with their boss in Jordanian commercial banks. This is because these institutions allow for understanding, the free exchange of ideas, and a good working relationship between the boss and subordinates, all of which contribute to the development of a friendly and understanding work environment and job satisfaction among Jordanians. According to H1.2, there is a statistically significant link between coworker relationships and employee empowerment. The fact that the employees of the Jordanian commercial banks have positive working relationships marked by mutual respect and friendliness suggests that they are friendly with one another and are eager to assist one another, share workloads, and exchange information. This finding is consistent with those of Giorgadze [33]. Additionally, H1.3 results indicate a

statistically significant beneficial association between the work environment and employee empowerment. This shows that the Jordanian commercial banks provide employees with a favorable work environment in terms of workload, working conditions, extra tasks, official vacations, offices, and a comfortable workplace, which raises employee job satisfaction. The outcome is consistent with ALI [41] findings.

In contrast, the study examined the career path as a moderator of employee empowerment and job satisfaction using bootstrapping in the PLS4. The moderating variable must satisfy two requirements: first, its effect must be significant and important, and second, it must strengthen the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. According to Table 8, Figure 6, and Figure 7, a career path enhances the connection between job satisfaction and employee empowerment. This result shows that Jordanian commercial banks are making a concerted effort to improve the career paths of employees with new responsibilities in order to break the monotony of the workplace, enhance their experiences, develop their skills, give them a place to practice their various tasks by utilizing their abilities, and improve their experiences and capabilities, which improves and increases their job satisfaction. The findings of the present study were in agreement with those of McGinley et al. [35].

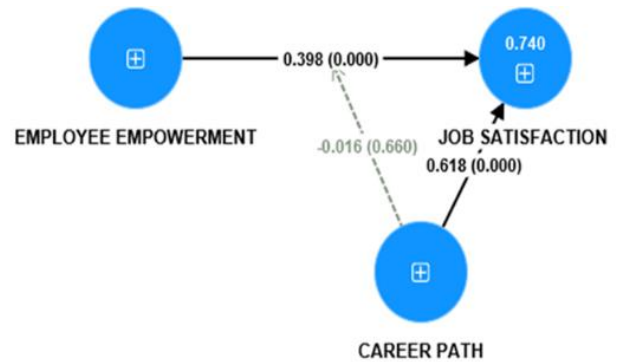


Figure 6. Moderating path coefficient

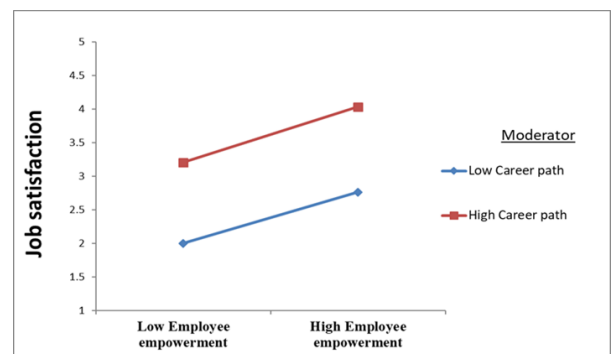


Figure 7. Moderating role result

Table 7. Hypotheses results

Hypotheses	Path	β	ST.DEV	T-value	P-value	Result
H01	EE->JS	0.749	0.016	45.8	0.000	Supported
H01.1	EE->RB	0.374	0.055	6.81	0.000	Supported
H01.2	EE->RC	0.733	0.019	38.4	0.000	Supported
H01.3	EE->WE	0.705	0.033	21.6	0.000	Supported

(JS: Job satisfaction; RB: Relationship with boss; RC: Relationship with colleagues; WE: Work environment; EE: Employee empowerment)

Table 8. Moderating role hypotheses

Hypotheses	Path	β	ST.DEV	T-value	P-value	Result
H02	CP->JS	0.618	0.042	14.66	0.000	Supported

(JS: Job satisfaction; CP: Career path)

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The main aim of the current study is to explore the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction and to determine the moderating role of the career path in this relationship. The study found that there is a positive relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. Also, career paths moderate and strengthen the positive relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. Based on the study results, the following recommendations are provided: First, the decision-makers in the Jordanian commercial banks should pay more attention and provide job empowerment to the employees by providing information to them, delegating authority to them, and allowing them a space of independence in performing their work. Second, increasing interest in procedures and practices that will increase and improve job satisfaction for commercial bank employees by providing them with a suitable work environment and improving relations between employees and subordinates and among the employees themselves. Third, focusing on and paying attention to the career path, which has a role in strengthening the relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. Developing and enhancing the employee's professional and personal skills through continuous learning and training on new skills to improve professional opportunities. Also, continuing to develop the employee's knowledge and skills through training courses, workshops, and reading. Moreover, to enhance the career path is participation in volunteer activities and projects related to the employee's fields of work, which may give them the opportunity to build a strong professional record. Four: reducing direct supervision of workers, which gives them a kind of independence in performing their work; providing a kind of confidence in the capabilities of employees, which gives them a kind of delegation of authority in order to carry out the tasks assigned to them; and providing an appropriate work environment by organizing working hours and not exhausting employees with many additional working hours. Moreover, the current study recommended future research on studying other new variables that explain the reasons for job satisfaction and conducting studies by applying the study framework in other sectors, such as the government and industrial sectors, or others. In addition, the opportunity is open for future research to increase the study sample to get accurate results. Also, the current study apply questionnaire to collect data, and due to the shortage time, future studies may apply longitudinal studies, qualitative research, to collect data. As well as, the opportunities are open for future researches to replicate the study model in other industries and countries. The relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction may be affected by other variables. The current study recommends future studies use other mediating or moderating variables, such as organizational justice or organizational culture.

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