

Emotional Intelligence, Innovative Behavior and Innovation Culture: Case from Public sector of Jordan

Yarmouk University

Faculty of Business/ Department of Public Administration

Refat A. Alfaouri, Shaker A. Aladwan, Aman A. Al-Alalmeh

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to identify the impact of emotional intelligence in its four dimensions (Self-awareness, Self-management, Social awareness, and Relationship management) on innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector organizations, and the role of innovation culture as a mediating variable.

Methodology/ approach and Design: A descriptive analytical approach was adopted; a self-administered questionnaire was utilized to collect data. The study sample reached 385 employees, and the results showed a high level of innovative behavior, emotional intelligence, and innovation culture, respectively.

Findings: The study results found that emotional intelligence had a statistically significant positive impact on both innovative behavior and innovation culture. There was also a statistically significant positive impact of innovation culture on innovative behavior and accepted innovation culture as a mediator variable.

Value/ originality and implications: The study came out with several contributions, the most important are: raising awareness among employees about the role of emotional intelligence, alerting public sector officials to focus on social skills, creating a less bureaucratic innovation culture, developing an independent plan for innovation in all public organizations.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Innovative behavior, Innovation culture, Public sector, Jordan.

I. Introduction

Creating a culture of innovation, particularly within the public sector, is a response to several challenges, such as; the constant need to adapt to change, population growth, diverse expectations from governments, environmental pollution, and resource constraints, as well as emerging social issues (Demir, 2022). Governments are actively restructuring themselves to align with these changes, constantly seeking new solutions, and exploring

several methods to address social, political, and economic problems, ensuring flexibility to evolving societal needs.

When discussing innovation, it is essential to consider the key role that human resources play in the innovation process within organizations. Ultimately, the success or failure of organizations is determined by employee satisfaction. In the era of scientific management, human resources were viewed merely as productive elements, passive individuals motivated solely by material resources. Little attention was given to their emotional well-being or psychological needs. However, the birth of behaviorism, humanistic theories and human rights introduced new concepts in the field of administrative sciences. Terms such as internal motivation, empathy, and emotional intelligence emerged. According to (Altzelai et al., 2011), the intelligent utilization of emotions has a significant impact on cognitive functions, thereby fostering the innovation process. Emotional intelligence, which plays a vital role in this context defined as the ability to accurately perceive, evaluate, and express feelings, as well as understand and regulate emotions to facilitate growth (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

In the Jordanian public sector, like in other countries, numerous attempts have been observed to adopt a culture of innovation and raise the level of innovative behavior among employees. As far as the researcher knows, and from what has been observed from previous studies the Jordanian library lacks studies that focus on the relationship between these three variables. The problem of the study is summarized by, lack of knowledge regarding the level of emotional intelligence and innovative behavior among public sector employees, as well as trying to explore the impact of emotional intelligence on the innovative behavior of employees, and to which extent innovation culture plays a mediator role in this impact.

II. Theoretical Background

This section of paper can be divided into two main sections as follow:

Innovation Culture

The concept of innovation culture has been emphasized since the early days of the Industrial Revolution when organizations realized the importance of research, development, and the application of new ideas to maintain their sustainability and survive in the market (Cheon g et al., 2024). Innovation culture means a set of assumptions and beliefs that make the innovation process smooth for the organization's employees and very easy. A culture of innovation is a culture that supports new ideas and helps to implement them, its basis for innovative activity (Ahmad et al., 2022). It is also a specific formation that intuitively promotes creative thinking within organizations and stimulates any innovative action of employees at all levels (Taba et al., 2023). (Yun et al., 2020) define it as a multidisciplinary, open, and continuous culture that aims to integrate the desirable, the useful and the appropriate then transform them into something practical. (Pineda-Celaya et al., 2022) pointed out that the culture of innovation is part of the organization's strategies, which include shared values and practices among employees that lead to the development of new ideas and knowledge. Innovation culture is an asset of the organization that determines the success of innovation activities in an appropriate structure that supports free thinking, creativity, and employee independence with the help of innovation leaders who transform ideas into final facts (Okanga, 2023). The culture of innovation is not limited to the idea of research and development but extends to a major transformation, encouragement of risk-taking, and acceptance of failure (Olaoye and Potter, 2024). It is less bureaucratic and controlling, more tolerant of failure, and has long-term aspirations (Kamran and Ganjinia, 2017).

(Dobni, 2008) suggest four dimensions for innovation culture: Innovation intention, Innovation infrastructure, Innovation influence, and Innovation implementation. In a study conducted by (Johansson Alm et al., 2014) through reviewing the previous literature about innovation and organizational culture, they presented a concept of innovation culture and suggested five dimensions for the concept: readiness to innovate, motivation and relationships, creativity, leadership, and market orientation. In (Nguyen et al., 2019) study they focused on three dimensions of organizational culture; mission, adaptability, and well-being. Then

In a study conducted by (Garza and Lopez, 2020) attempting to reach a comprehensive measure of the culture of innovation, through a large review of previous research and literature, 28 different dimensions were reached. Here in this study, the innovation culture variable was treated as a one-dimensional variable; we focused on its intangible and soft aspects.

Culture has a major role in stimulating innovation if it allows for active participation, initiatives, and exchange of knowledge, or a deterrent role by control and dominance that hinders any new ideas (Katimertzopoulos et al., 2023). The role of culture lies in its ability to enhance the process of employee learning, development and encourage them to try new ideas, which affects the achievement of the organization's goals and its overall performance (Sharma et al., 2024). The set of shared values and beliefs in the organization's culture can control the thinking and behavior of employees toward each other or work. The unwritten (informal) rules in organizational culture greatly influence the innovation process and performance (Davies et al., 2022). A work environment that encourages innovation is characterized by respect the diversity and tolerance of failure, which leads to increased productivity and continuous improvement (Zhang, 2024). The basic condition for creating an environment full of encouragement and incentives for innovation activities and making it a daily practice is to motivate employees to follow the best approaches to improve performance and reach higher levels of quality of services provided to the customer (Okanga, 2023). That not only helps develop new products and services but also fosters a sense of ownership and engagement among employees as well as a commitment to social responsibility (Cheong et al., 2024).

Transforming organizational cultures into innovation cultures may take a long time and effort, extending from several months to years, but still necessary to enhance innovative behavior among employees, which ensures its long-term survival (Bendak et al., 2020). Building an innovation culture is the role of all employees in the organization, regardless of their work or level (Sena et al., 2024). Promoting a culture of innovation is a continuous, dynamic process that requires supportive leadership and commitment to deal with challenges that face the organization during its work, such as resistance to change, organizational rigidity, inflexibility, and risk aversion, these challenges can be addressed by building effective

communication channels and training (Olaoye and Potter, 2024).

(Davis et al., 2022) assume that creating an innovation culture begins with educating employees in organizations about the importance of innovation and its requirements, which are the decisive factors for carrying out innovative work and implementing the innovation strategy perfectly. One of the most important ways to develop a culture of innovation is to give priority to employees, empower them, and focus on their well-being. With flexible regulations and rules (Zhang, 2024), That means teamwork, communication, high standards and values, incentives, risk-taking, leadership, adaptation, openness, empowerment, flexibility, and participation in decision-making (Aboramadan et al., 2020). The personality of the leader and his/her practices in developing a culture of innovation is the core of the innovation process, as it requires leaders to focus on long-term goals and not quick gains, as is the case in most organizations today (Taba et al., 2023).

Innovation in the public sector

Studies on innovation in the public sector began almost in the 1960s (Kattel et al., 2013), because of the expansion of the country's size and increasing the government's role in addition to its intervention in all sectors. This requires the government to reduce its costs, work faster and smarter, and communicate more with the public, to address climate change, crime rates, economic and educational problems, unemployment rates, and debt (Aladwan and Alrababah, 2024). Creating a culture of innovation is one of the most important priorities of the public sector at present due to its major role in promoting economic growth, addressing problems, raising productivity, and public welfare in line with market instability and fluctuating consumer demands, that ultimately leading to effective organization and respond to the demands of the people (Vanny et al., 2024).

Although it is not easy to define the concept of innovation in the public sector, because of its nature and the complexities of its tasks, It can be defined as providing new services in new ways in response to societal needs at the organizational, local, and international levels and in various sectors of health, education, social care, and others (Demir, 2022). There are many types of innovation in the public sector according to available studies such as Process Innovation: which focuses on the quality of internal and external processes, strategy, and internal organizational structures. Goods and Services Innovation: that focuses on providing a

now goods or services to citizens or developing existing goods and services, Many studies have indicated other types and patterns of innovation in the public sector, such as communication innovation, policy innovation, Governance Innovation, Conceptual Innovation, In addition to prioritizing technological advancements in internal administrative processes (Aladwan and Alrababah, 2024; Aladwan and Alshami, 2021).

The public sector works to create a culture of innovation to become more responsive, meeting the growing desires of society to improve the goods and services provided (Sena et al., 2024). Given the importance of the culture of innovation in the public sector, it is necessary to support the experimentation of new ideas, accepting change, developing training programs, enhancing communication channels (Vanny et al., 2024), in addition to several supports such as performance indicators, effective leadership, and a collaborative environment (Sena et al., 2024). Having the right people in the innovation process also is more important than selecting a model for the innovation process itself (Palm et al., 2024). The innovation process is not related to available resources as much as it is related to the level of employee satisfaction at work and governance indicators in the public sector help to promote a culture of innovation (Sena et al., 2024).

It is important to understand the factors that influence innovation in the public sector, Bureaucracy and routine are the biggest obstacles to innovation in the public sector, in addition to limited resources, rigidity of organization and hierarchical structures, strict regulations, and employees' fear of change and resistance to it (Vanny et al., 2024). (Sena et al., 2024) Confirmed that among the biggest obstacles to building an innovation culture in the public sector are attempts to change the mentality of employees, scarcity of resources, technological obstacles, in addition to rigidity of laws and bureaucracy, As well as the difficulty of financing innovations.

Hypotheses development

Emotional intelligence and Innovative behavior

In (Norena-Chavez and Thalassinis, 2022) study the results confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship between innovative behavior and emotional intelligence. Employees with high levels of emotional intelligence direct their emotional energies to generate new ideas by participating effectively with other members of the organization, thus enhancing their innovative behavior (Malik, 2022). In a paper aimed to

investigate the impact of both empowerment and emotional intelligence on innovation among civil service employees, it was found that emotional intelligence has the greatest positive impact on innovation because it enhances the ability to harness emotions and use them in various cognitive functions, such as data processing, thinking, and problem-solving (Suryo et al., 2023). Emotional intelligence of employees increasing employee satisfaction and their ability to deal with customers and clients, communicate better, exchanging ideas and experiences, and forming social capital, successful relationships to support innovations (Ratasuk, 2023). In another study based on a systematic review of the various literature conducted by (Dasgupta, 2023), to know the role of emotional intelligence and its skills in driving the innovation process, it was concluded that innovation depend primarily on the emotional skills of employees, the ability to adapt environment changing that leads them to evaluate and solve complex problems in addition to being sensitive to of colleagues and customer's needs. (Sharma et al., 2023) also assumed that people with high emotional intelligence are more able to innovate at work.

High emotional intelligence of employees motivates them to have greater freedom to express themselves, and more involved in innovative behavior at work, which requires finding training and development opportunities to create a supportive environment (Rafique et al., 2024). In a study to reveal the relationship between emotional abilities, innovation, and creative tendencies in light of the emotional stress, the results showed that emotional intelligence is directly positively related to the innovation process and the individual's creative tendencies, and thus the readiness to express new ideas, openness to experiences and identifying opportunities (Winton and Sabol, 2024). In several Jordanian institutions, the emotional growth of employees increases the ability to create a bold source of inspiration them, which creates an encouraging environment for entrepreneurship and opens up space for the development of innovation (Alwaely et al., 2024).

Employees' emotional intelligence increases the rate of dissemination of new innovative ideas and their implementation in a greater and more correct way, especially the two self-dimensions; Self-management, which had the greatest effect that helps increase feelings of confidence, which confirms its importance in innovative work behavior and Self-awareness dimension that enables us to understand the feeling and its cause, thus increasing

our ability to control our interactions with others. As for the two dimensions of social awareness and relationship management, the impact was not strong, but still play an important role as well (Abdullah et al., 2021). In an experimental study on a number of managers and executives, the results confirmed the positive direct impact of emotional intelligence on innovation, as emotional independence and the use of emotions had the greatest impact because they provide sufficient motivation for managers to understand what they feel, control it, and obtain the best results, the two dimensions emotional awareness and emotional regulation had the least impact (Puerta and González, 2019).

In the opposite direction, some studies found that the effect of emotional intelligence on innovative behavior is small or there is no effect. A study by (Dincer and Orhan, 2012) assumed that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and the innovative behavior of employees in the banking service sector, but it is not strong. The results of a study by (Khan et al., 2021) showed that there is no statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and innovative work behavior. The effect of emotional intelligence on innovative capabilities is not significant for executives in Spanish organizations (Blázquez Puerta et al., 2022).

Based upon the literature above;

H_{1a}: There is statistically significant effect of self-awareness on the innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

H_{1b}: There is statistically significant effect of self-management on the innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

H_{1c}: There is statistically significant effect of social awareness on the innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

H_{1d}: There is statistically significant effect of relationship management on the innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

Emotional intelligence and Innovation culture

In an attempt to find out whether emotional intelligence is able to create a culture of innovation based on the accumulated experience of employees, It turned out that human resources is the main element in building a culture of innovation, not material resources. Innovation is as present as humanity. Since ancient times, people's desire to try new ideas and methods is innate (Suryo et al., 2023). Emotional intelligence enhances behaviors such as open communication, cooperation between employees, empathy skills, and emotion

management, which creates an innovative culture full of appreciation, encourages teamwork, and motivates employees to express their new ideas without fear. Individuals with high emotional intelligence, in addition to understanding their feelings, are also able to absorb the feelings and experiences of others and create strong relationships in organizations, which lead to mutual respect, support, and cooperation in dealing with uncertainty, accepting failure, improves team performance and increases trust.

Administrators can create an innovation culture with their own hands, knowing that it does not depend on scientific knowledge only, but rather requires a deep understanding of people, modeling individuals on certain behaviors such as creativity, curiosity, and managing emotions, setting the necessary standards above the traditional, providing the necessary materials and not forgetting to recognize effort, and provide rewards. Problem solving, creativity, learning from failure and the ability to adapt are all easy things with the presence of emotional intelligence, making them an essential element that leads the organizational culture to be a culture of innovation.

Based upon the literature above;

H_{2a}: There is statistically significant effect of self-awareness on the innovation culture in the Jordanian public sector

H_{2b}: There is statistically significant effect of self-management on the innovation culture in the Jordanian public sector.

H_{2c}: There is statistically significant effect of social awareness on the innovation culture in the Jordanian public sector.

H_{2d}: There is statistically significant effect of relationship management on the innovation culture in the Jordanian public sector

Innovation culture and Innovative behavior

Innovative behavior is influenced by the organizational climate and the way individuals communicate with each other (Contreras et al., 2020), it is not possible to carry out innovation practices without an innovative culture that encourages this. Through this culture, employees can exchange experiences, which increase the level of generating new ideas and breaking traditional rules (Hanifah et al., 2020). Organizational culture has a significant positive impact on innovation (Elgedawy, 2024). In particular, organizational culture has a vital role in shaping innovative behavior (Kholifah et al., 2024; Gemasari et al., 2024). A positive climate that creates kind of

innovative culture in which experiences and knowledge are shared, problems are solved collaboratively, helps raise the level of innovative behavior and adopt new ideas (Chamongrit and Aujirapongpan, 2024).

(Hilmansson et al., 2014) said that there is a strong relationship between innovation performance and innovation culture when talking about generating ideas, but there is a weaker link when talking about the ability to implement ideas efficiently, so a flexible innovation culture must be built to be able to support creativity and focuses on implementation at the same time. One of the most important roles of managers is to provide a positive innovative climate that encourages innovative behavior by presenting new ideas, opening the door to discussion, even conflict, and evaluation (Shanker et al., 2017). Organizational culture increases the level of innovative behavior by helping employees understand their competencies and skills better and obtain the necessary organizational support (Ekmekcioglu and Öner, 2024). Organizations must also transform their cultures into an innovation culture that increases the level of innovative behavior by working on the internal and external design, trying to identify the most important potential risks, motivating creative employees, and holding the necessary training courses for this (Ekmekcioglu and Öner, 2024).

Based upon the literature above;

H₃: There is statistically significant effect of Innovation Culture on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

Innovation culture mediates the Relationship between Emotional intelligence and Innovative behavior.

Given the clear impact of emotional intelligence on innovative behavior, more studies are still needed in the future to identify the different mediating or moderating variables between them (Andrabi and Rainayee, 2020). In light of the positive effect between emotional intelligence and the innovative behavior of employees, it is necessary to pay attention to the innovation culture in the organization (Sharma et al., 2023).

In a study to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence variables, diversity in the workplace, and organizational culture, in addition to the ability to innovate in the public sector of the United States. The results showed that there is an effect of emotional intelligence on the organizational climate, and a relationship between

service innovation capabilities and emotional intelligence and diverse innovative business culture, The researcher interpreted this as emotional intelligence is the origin of diversity in public sector organizations, where individuals can perceive and manage their emotions and develop social competencies, which provide the opportunity to innovate by enhancing the personal and professional growth of employees. The role of the culture of innovation is related to encouraging creative thinking, sharing ideas freely, and taking risks (Paruchuri and Asadullah, 2018).

Another study that close to our study examines the role of emotional intelligence, which includes emotional management and the use of emotional dimensions, on service innovation capabilities, and explores the mediating role of climate diversity and the moderating role of innovation culture in the United Arab Emirates

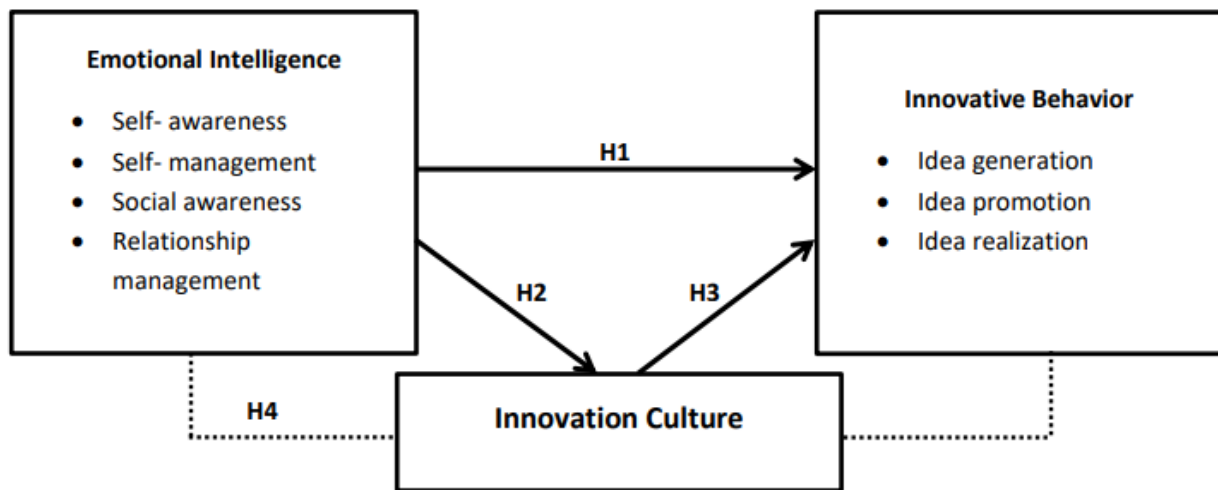
public sector, the results showed that emotional intelligence has a positive impact on innovation capabilities and innovation culture, in addition to the impact of innovation culture on innovation capabilities in public sector institutions (Jegerson et al., 2024).

The results of another study in the markets of Middle East and Saudi Arabia confirmed that innovation culture acts as a powerful mediator to enhance the relationship between employee innovative performance and emotional intelligence because of its role in creating the ideal environment that encourages experimentation, teamwork, and risk-taking (Yousaf et al., 2024).

Based upon the literature above;

H4: Innovation Culture mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and Innovative Behavior.

Figure 1: Theoretical Proposed Model



III. Research Methodology

Study Population and the Sample

The study population consists of employees from ten ministries and government organizations in the Jordanian public sector. Convenience sample was selected on a scientific basis. The questionnaire was distributed electronically to ensure that it reached the largest possible number of employees, and to obtain as accurate data as possible. The study population included all employees from different levels in the following ten organizations; (Development and Employment Fund, National Agricultural Research Center, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Institute of Public

Administration, Social Security Corporation, Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation, Department of Lands and Survey, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Telecommunications regulatory commission, and Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply), Which includes approximately 6,000 employees, When calculating the sample size, it must be at least (362) employee at a 95% confidence level from various entities. The researcher ended up obtaining (385) correct, complete, and analyzable responses.

Questionnaire development

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher as the primary tool to collect the necessary data from employees, it divided into four main sections. The first section is personal information: gender, age, Academic qualification, and years of experience. The second section is emotional intelligence, which contains four dimensions (Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) according to (Goleman, 2001). The third section is innovative behavior, which consists of three dimensions (Idea generation, Idea promotion, and idea realization “idea application”) according to (Scott and Bruce, 1994; Grobbsen, 2022). Finally, the mediating variable section, represented by the culture of innovation, was adopted as one dimension

according to the study’s needs and was measured in reliance on (Jin et al., 2019; Sena et al., 2024). The five-point Likert scale was adopted (always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never). The questionnaire was also subjected to several tests, such as Face validity; to evaluate the content of the questionnaire questions and measure their suitability and comprehensiveness in covering the targeted topic. Cronbach's alpha test; used to check the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

This test verifies the reliability and validity of the measurement tool by measuring the consistency of respondents' answers to all paragraphs of the questionnaire.

Table (1): The results of Cronbach’s Alpha test

Dimensions	Items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Self-awareness	5	82.8%
Self-management	6	84.5%
Social awareness	5	80.0%
Relationship management	6	89.0%
Emotional Intelligence	22	93.9%
Generating Ideas	4	81.7%
Promoting Ideas	5	86.4%
Implementing Ideas	3	83.1%
Innovative Behavior	12	92.7%
Innovation Culture	6	91.6%
Total	40	96.5%

It is clear from the table above that Cronbach's alpha coefficient for measuring the reliability of the entire questionnaire is 96.5%, in addition, it was high and acceptable for all items, as they all exceeded 80%.

IV. Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive analysis

To interpret the arithmetic mean of the research variables, the study identified three levels (low, medium and high), the scores were distributed as follows:

from 1 to less than 2.333 indicates (low), from 2.333 to less than 3.666 indicates (medium), from 3.666 to 5 indicates (high).

Table (2): Means and Standard Deviation for the study variables

No.	variables	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Emotional Intelligence	4.130	0.544	High
2	Innovative Behavior	4.208	0.589	High
3	Innovation Culture	4.014	0.778	High

The above table shows the mean and standard deviation for study variables, represented in (Emotional Intelligence) of employees in the Jordanian public sector where the mean reached (4.130) with a standard deviation (0.544) and a high degree of approval, followed by the second variable (Innovative Behavior) with an arithmetic mean

(4.208) and a standard deviation (0.589), while the third variable (Innovation Culture) ranked last with mean (0.778) and a standard deviation (0.778), The results of the levels will be explained in the discussion section.

In light of the study results, it was found that emotional intelligence among employees in the

Jordanian public sector is at a high level in all four dimensions. The researcher explains this result as being due to the greater interest of Jordanian public institutions in human resources and emotional capabilities in recent years, the results also showed that innovative behavior is available at a high level among public sector employees attributed to the attempts of the public sector and its major role in enhancing the level of innovative behavior among employees, in an attempt to achieve multiple goals of raising the level and quality of government services, uncovering innovative opportunities and exploiting them in the best ways.

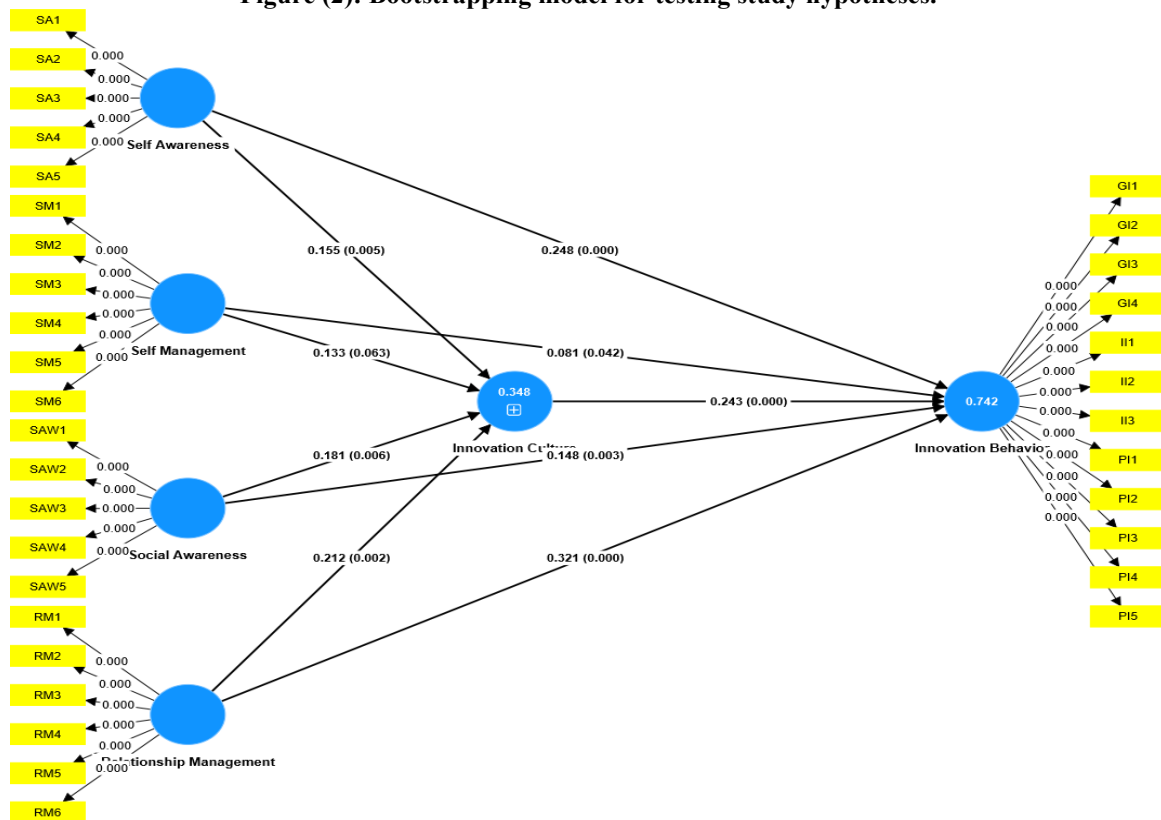
Innovation culture is present at a high level in Jordanian public sector, which confirms its

significant role in controlling employee behavior, increasing their ability to use different methods to solve the problems they face in their work, providing opportunities for employees to present new ideas, and expanding the extent of acceptance of their implementation.

Hypotheses testing

As shown in Figure (2), the structural model to measure the impact of emotional intelligence on innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector: innovation culture as a mediating variable, to test the hypotheses of the study, the bootstrapping technique was used.

Figure (2): Bootstrapping model for testing study hypotheses.



The study model indicates that the four dimensions of the independent variable explain (34.8%) of the mediate variable (innovation culture) and the total direct and indirect impact (total impact) on innovative behavior has reached (74.2%), which means that the dimensions of emotional intelligence and partial mediation through the culture of innovation in the model explain (74.2%) of the impact on innovative behavior. The result of the hypothesis test shows the independent variable ->mediate variable ->dependent variable in Table (3) as follows:

Table (3): Study hypothesis test results (path analysis)

Path	Original sample (B)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Self-Awareness -> Innovation Culture	0.155	2.838	0.005***
Self-Management -> Innovation Culture	0.133	1.857	0.063*

Social Awareness -> Innovation Culture	0.181	2.745	0.006***
Relationship Management -> Innovation Culture	0.212	3.169	0.002***
Self-Awareness ->Innovative behavior	0.248	5.962	0.000***
Self-Management ->Innovative behavior	0.081	2.038	0.042**
Social Awareness ->Innovative behavior	0.148	3.007	0.003***
Relationship Management ->Innovative behavior	0.321	6.084	0.000***
Innovation Culture ->Innovative behavior	0.243	5.290	0.000***

H1a: There is statistically significant effect for self-awareness on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of self-awareness on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (5.962), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.000), as the value of (B) (0.248), which indicates a positive impact for self-awareness on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H1b: There is statistically significant effect for Self-management on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of Self-management on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (2.038), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.042), as the value of (B) (0.081), which indicates a positive impact for Self-management on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H1c: There is statistically significant effect for Social awareness on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of Social Awareness on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (3.007), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.003), as the value of (B) (0.148), which indicates a positive impact for Social Awareness on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H1d: There is statistically significant effect for Relationship management on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of Relationship Management on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (6.084), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.000), as the value of (B) (0.321), which indicates a positive impact for Relationship Management on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H2a: There is statistically significant effect for self-awareness on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of self-awareness on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (2.838), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.005), as the value of (B) (0.155), which indicates a positive impact for self-awareness on culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H2b: There is statistically significant effect for Self-management on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is no impact of self-management on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (1.857), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.063), as the value of (B) (0.133), which indicates that there is no impact for self-management on culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, **so reject the hypothesis that there is statistically significant positive effect for Self-management on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, and accept the null hypothesis, that there is no effect.**

H2c: There is statistically significant effect for Social awareness on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of Social Awareness on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (2.745), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.006), as the value of (B) (0.181), which indicates a positive impact for Social Awareness on culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H2d: There is statistically significant effect for Relationship management on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector.

It is clear from Table (3) that there is an impact of Relationship Management on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (3.169), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.002), as the value of (B) (0.212),

which indicates a positive impact for Relationship Management on culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

H₃: There is statistically significant effect for Innovation Culture on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

From the previous Table (3) there is an impact of Innovation Culture on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, where the value of (T) (5.290), which is statistically significant at the level of (0.000), as the value of (B) (0.243), which indicates a positive impact for Innovation Culture on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, **so the hypothesis is accepted.**

Table (4): Testing the study hypotheses for the mediate variable

Path	Original sample	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Self-Awareness -> Innovation Culture -> Innovation Behavior	0.038	2.442	0.015**
Self-Management -> Innovation Culture -> Innovation Behavior	0.032	1.926	0.054*
Social Awareness -> Innovation Culture -> Innovation Behavior	0.044	2.553	0.011**
Relationship Management -> Innovation Culture -> Innovation Behavior	0.051	2.597	0.009***

The value of ($\beta = 0.038, p \leq 0.05$) Self-awareness -> culture of innovation -> innovative behavior, which means that a culture of innovation can mediate the relationship between self-awareness and innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

The value of ($\beta = 0.032, p \geq 0.05$) Self-management -> culture of innovation -> innovative behavior, However, we partially accept the effect because p value does not exceed 5% by much, which means that a culture of innovation can mediate the relationship between self-management and innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

The value of ($\beta = 0.044, p \leq 0.05$) was social awareness -> innovation culture -> innovative behavior, which means that a culture of innovation can mediate the relationship between social awareness and innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.

The value of ($\beta = 0.051, p \leq 0.05$) Relationship Management -> Culture of Innovation -> Innovative Behavior, which means that a culture of innovation can mediate the relationship between relationship management and innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector, based on the values above, **we accept the hypothesis that states Innovation Culture mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and Innovative Behavior.**

The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that the independent variable can explain (how well the data fit the regression model), and the (F^2) value measures the effect size.

Table (5): Goodness of fit indices

	R-square	R-square adjusted	Interpretive power
Innovation Behavior	0.742	0.739	High
Innovation Culture	0.348	0.341	Medium
f-square			
Self-Awareness -> Innovation Behavior	0.12		low
Self-Management -> Innovation Behavior	0.01		very low
Social Awareness -> Innovation Behavior	0.03		low
Relationship Management -> Innovation Behavior	0.16		Medium
Self-Awareness -> Innovation Culture	0.02		low
Self-Management -> Innovation Culture	0.01		very low

Social Awareness -> Innovation Culture	0.02	low
Relationship Management -> Innovation Culture	0.03	Medium
Innovation Culture -> Innovation Behavior	0.15	Medium

The results indicate that the model has a high explanatory capacity for innovative behavior and a medium for innovation culture. Based on the table (5) it is clear that the direct effect of emotional intelligence and the indirect effect of the culture of innovation explains 74.2% of the variance in innovative behavior; the rest is due to other variables, which is a high value; R² values of 0.70, 0.50, and 0.25 are large, medium, and weak respectively. Also, the direct effect of the dimensions of emotional intelligence explains 34.8% of the variance in the culture of innovation, which is an acceptable and average percentage. F² value results help to understand the relative importance of each independent variable in interpreting the dependent variables in the model.

Hypotheses results Discussion

- **There is statistically significant effect for emotional intelligence on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.**

Four hypotheses were developed and analyzed to test these hypotheses, and it was found that there is a statistically significant positive effect for Relationship management, self-awareness, Social awareness, and Self-management on the Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector respectively.

Most previous studies have found a direct positive impact of emotional intelligence on the innovative behavior of employees; on the contrary, very few of them denied the existence of the impact. (Winton and Sabol, 2024; Rafique et al., 2024; Dasgupta, 2023; Suryo et al., 2023; Sharma et al., 2023; Malik, 2022; Norena-Chavez and Thalassinou, 2022) assumed that emotional intelligence push employees to identify opportunities, be open to experiences, understand causes and results, evaluate the environment, appreciate others, generate new ideas and different methods in what is known as innovative behavior.

The two most influential dimensions are relationship management and self-awareness, the researcher explains, that self-awareness increases employees' ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses, knowing what they feel and the motives behind their emotions, and self-confidence makes them more stable and understanding of emotion, which leads them to use it for cognitive functions such as data

processing and thinking, increases the opportunity to engage in more free ideas and innovative work. As well as relationship management and its role in creating a suitable environment that inspires others encourages effective communication, accepts differences, and manages intellectual capital, opening up a larger space for innovation.

- **There is statistically significant effect for Emotional intelligence on the Innovation culture in the Jordanian public sector.**

To test this main hypothesis, four hypotheses were developed; it was found that, there is a statistically significant positive effect for Relationship management, self-awareness, and Social awareness on the culture of innovation in the Jordanian public sector respectively. Self-management dimension does not affect the culture of innovation, or has a very small effect, and could be neglected.

The role of the human element in influencing organizational culture cannot be denied. Increasing the level of emotional intelligence, open communication, cooperation, teamwork, and acceptance of differences creates a culture that is tolerant of failure and a climate that full of respects and supports innovation. The role of managers in integrating such behaviors with orientations of organizational culture while providing material and moral support also must not be forgotten. This is specifically what is being focused on in Jordanian public sector institutions, as the trends are now directed towards generating innovation culture in all institutions, whether through strategic plans, participation in innovation awards, creating special platforms to present new ideas and ways to implement them, in addition to having a special department for development, creativity, promoting innovation in each government agency.

- **There is statistically significant effect for innovation culture on innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector.**

When the data of this study was analyzed, it was found that there is a statistically significant positive effect of Innovation Culture on Innovative behavior in the Jordanian public sector. This result is consistent with all previous studies without exception (Chamnongrit and Aujirapongpan, 2024;

Ekmekcioglu and Öner, 2024; Hanifah et al., 2020; Hilmarsson et al., 2014).

The presence of individuals in a certain culture and work in it greatly affects their orientations and behaviors. Moreover; employees cannot perform a certain behavior without a culture that encourages it. This is precisely the role that a culture of innovation plays in directing the minds of employees towards changes, risks, and exchanging the experiences, by focusing on both soft and hard dimensions. Mostly, a culture of innovation can encourage innovative behavior in two dimensions: generating and promoting ideas, but in implementing, there are obstacles regarding the approval of senior management and obtaining financial support, this is consistent with the assumption of (Hilmarsson et al., 2014) in previous studies.

• **To what extent the innovation culture mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and innovative behavior?**

By testing the study hypotheses for the mediate variable, we accept the hypothesis that states Innovation Culture mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and Innovative Behavior. Emotional intelligence, with its four dimensions, as an independent variable, refers to individuals' knowledge of their feelings on the one hand and the feelings and orientations of others on the other hand, in addition to the ability to manage them in a positive way, which helps to build strong relationships, deal with work pressures and challenges, and increases innovative behaviors with a willingness to participate in new ideas and actions. The culture of innovation, in turn, as a Mediating Variable, supports this process by acting as a link between the two variables, and playing a vital and decisive role in enhancing the impact, as many previous studies have assumed (Sharma et al., 2023; Jegerson et al., 2024).

From the researcher's point of view, this is done in several ways, the most important of which are: First, by creating a work environment that encourages and accepts innovative ideas, in which employees feel that they are heard and trusted, which motivates them to participate and express themselves. Second, by providing moral support for employees to try these different ideas without fear, through management support, flexibility, and tolerance for failure, empowering employees and giving them space for freedom of action. Third, by providing material support such as technology, training courses, and workshops that helps to transform ideas into realistic projects.

Recommendations and future research

Based on the results reached, the study recommends the following:

1. Raise awareness among employees about the role of emotional intelligence and the ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and its impact on their innovative behavior.
2. Raise awareness among public sector officials about the importance of focusing on social skills, interaction, communication, and building links between employees for their major role in enhancing innovative behavior
3. Raise awareness among public sector officials about the importance of creating an innovation culture, less bureaucracy, and encourages individuals to express their ideas, exchange of knowledge, tolerance of failure, with a focus on the material dimension by providing the necessary resources for implementation.
4. Develop an independent plan for innovation in all public organizations to enhance innovative behavior and monitor it continuously throughout the year.
5. Conduct other studies with different mediating and moderating variables that affect the relationship between emotional intelligence and innovative behavior.
6. Conduct other studies with the same variables in other countries and institutions not included in the sample, such as hospitals and schools, etc.

V. Implications of the study

Theoretical implications

This study contributes to clarifying the concepts of innovation culture, innovation in the public sector, helped as much as possible to cover the research gap represented by the lack of knowledge of the impact of employees' emotional intelligence on innovative behavior in Jordanian public institutions and the role of innovation culture as a mediating variable, by addressing a number of previous similar studies, in different times and places, in addition to developing several hypotheses, obtaining data, analyzing and discussing them. It finally concluded that there is a positive, statistically significant effect of emotional intelligence on both innovative behavior and innovation culture, a positive effect of innovation culture on innovative behavior, and the possibility of the innovation culture variable playing a mediating role in this relationship. The results of this study are valuable to the literature as they suggest a number of future researches on different dimensions and aspects.

Practical implications

This study contributes to alerting public sector institutions to the need to focus on human resources, their emotions, orientations, and needs. The results of the study and its information help officials and decision-makers to identify the various factors related to the level of innovative behavior of employees and how to encourage it. In addition to using the study results in determining training needs when holding programs and workshops, addressing the role of both emotional intelligence and the culture of innovation in developing solutions to problems, exploring obstacles in the way of innovation, and identifying opportunities. In the end, providing a number of useful recommendations to enhance the individual's innovative performance even if it is on a small scale, and thus improving the performance of the institution as a whole.

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