

## Adaptation of the Japanese theory (Z) in the Iraqi organizations

Mstfa Rasool Fakhir

Address: Amarah, Missan, Iraq

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56293/IJMSSSR.2025.5754>

IJMSSSR 2025

VOLUME 7

ISSUE 4 JULY - AUGUST

ISSN: 2582 – 0265

**Abstract:** There is no doubt that the Japanese theory (Z) is a prestigious administrative model that should be emulated, and Third World countries can benefit from this unique experience that brought Japan to the pinnacle of glory. It is an integrated theory based on cooperation, respect, and places employees first as the most valuable asset in the organization. Some people think that this theory is hard to apply and only Japanese society is capable of adopting its terms, and it cannot be applied in other societies. In fact, this research aims to refute these claims. This study casts a positive light on developing world societies, assuming that the qualitative leap that occurred in Japan could occur in other countries if the appropriate conditions were created.

**Keywords:** Japanese theory, Iraqi organizations, Team Spirit, Long-term employment

### Chapter I

#### Introduction

It is known to all that Japan is a developed country of the first class, it is one of the largest automobile manufacturers in the world, the largest ship and yacht manufacturer in the world. A country at the forefront in the field of technology and robotics. Japan suffered near-total destruction after the WW II, especially after the incidents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the infrastructure of the country was destroyed, economic facilities and factories stopped working, Hundreds of thousands of casualties, depletion of natural resources during the war, but Japan only took a few years to stand again using the experience of Western countries, led by the former enemy the United States of America to rebuild the country. Despite Japan's assistance from countries for reconstruction, Japan's renaissance would not have occurred without a specific philosophy and strategic plans for rebuilding and advancement. Japan's progress and renaissance are due to the interdependent and cooperative nature of Japanese society and the theory of (Z) by William J. Uchi, which was essentially based on individual development as the basis for community development and teamwork to foster team spirit, eliminate selfishness and achieve collective success. The Japanese experience is an example and many countries are trying to replicate the Japanese experience to achieve progress and advancement. But the problem lies in the question: Are the characteristics of the theory (Z) theory applicable in all societies? The answer, according to the researcher, is No, and some of these items must be adjusted to suit each country. Each country has its characteristics, habits, demographics and what succeeds in one country does not mean its success in other countries.

The Japanese educational system has played a central and vital role in Japan's renaissance, said Harvard professor of history (Edwin Reischauer). "The factories are nothing but a family," he said. Thus, Japan was able to achieve its first renaissance, and after its military defeat in World War II, it achieved its second renaissance, engraved its name firmly in the world of industry and technology. The Japanese experience proved that betting on the human element qualification, training, and education are the most appropriate ways toward an effective and comprehensive renaissance.

#### 1-1: Importance of the study

The importance of this study is its ability to answer the following questions:

- 1- Does adopting the Japanese model in management consider the best in achieving progress and development?
- 2- Does the reproduction of the Japanese experience greatly guarantee success?

- 3- Should the theory be adopted as it is without any changes or modifications?
- 4- Does the theory fit all different societies and all institutions?
- 5- What should be modified or added to adopt this theory and achieve progress and development in Iraq?

### 1-2: Objectives of the study

The researcher seeks through this research to achieve some objectives:

- 1- Shed light on the (Z) theory and indicate the most important features and terms of that theory.
- 2- The applicability of adopting the (Z) theory in Iraq and the Arab world.
- 3- Does the adoption of the elements of (Z) theory is the key to achieve progress and advancement.
- 4- Does the theory need modifications when applied in Iraq and other countries? or is it applied without modification?

### 1-3: The problem of the study

The problem of research is evident in the absence of a clear philosophy for achieving progress and advancement in Iraq and most Arab countries. This prevents progress and advancement in third world nations, including Arab countries, specifically Iraq. Most developing countries do not have long - term plans, a clear vision for the future, or even a way to deal with crises. The research problem can be explained in the following:

- 1- Lack of clear philosophy or long-term plans in developing countries including Iraq to develop their workers.
- 2- Government plans, if any, are limited to the period of government (4) years only.
- 3- Continued demands for change and reform in the country and the adoption of clear strategic plans for future developments.

### 1-4: Hypotheses of the Study

This research is based on two basic hypotheses:

- 1- (Z) theory can be considered as the basis for development and renaissance as a successful philosophy to achieve growth and the evidence that Japan has become now as a great economic power because of the adoption of this philosophy.
- 2- Some of the elements of (Z) theory must be amended to suit the country to be applicable in, and does not guarantee the success of the application of the original theory items unchanged.

The researcher will try to ascertain whether these hypotheses can be achieved.

### 1-5: Data collection

In this research, the researcher relied on the following data:

**A- Secondary data:** Data extracted from books, researches, and other sources as they are without making any change or modification.

**B- Primary data:** The extracted data from the sample by the researcher for the first time.

### 1-6: Sample design

The samples of this study are the employees of government and private sectors. The sample consists of (100) employees as follows:

**A-** (50) government employees of the following departments: Missan Oil Company, Missan University, Health Dept, Agriculture dept, and Rafidain Bank.

**B-** (50) private-sector employees of the following institutions: UBI Bank, Imam Sadiq University, Asiaccell company, PetroChina Company, and Amarah University.

## Chapter II

### 2-1: Reasons for the success of the Japanese model

Although it is difficult to know all the reasons for the success of the Japanese modernization experience because of the surrounding ambiguity, still we can identify with the following reasons and areas:

**1- The sanctification of work:** The humanitarian factor played a prominent role in the success of the Japanese experience. These human qualities cannot be understood without linking them to the three socio-economic and political dimensions (Adopting the principle of efficiency, Pride in belonging to the company, the balance between private and common interests).

**2- Collective decision-making:** the Japanese are characterized by the spirit of collective and working as an integrated team and this is a feature of their national character, and Japanese society has been able to overcome the arduous nature that existed, thanks to the formulation of its unique pattern of formative unity only after the decision or direction fused into the crucible of consensus or at least tacit social consent. (Sabah, 2010)

**3- Japanese Administration:** Administration is one of the keys to the Japanese economy, this administration whose success factors overlap between excellent education and the historical social fabric that connects the Japanese work and loyalty to the institution and the sympathy of the administration and understanding of the demands and needs of its employees. The Japanese administration is characterized by rational and pragmatic and is manifested in the following:

- Dependence on efficiency and scientific level, not inheritance or favoritism.
- Dependence on seniority and age to progress in the career to the end of service.
- Cooperation and intimate relationship between workers and managers at all levels, and the adoption of the principle of collective decisions.
- Cooperation between trade unions and businessmen and between them and state administrations and rational because absolute preference must be given to Japan's supreme interest and role at the international level.
- Relying on the principle of the partner in the work and notifying him of the general stability throughout his professional life, so he becomes an integral part of the company.

**4- Education:** Japan's education curriculum has become one of the global curricula, that is imitated by other nations, and the Japanese education system is not to prepare students only theoretically, but the rapid preparation of professional and practical. (Isamu, 1990, p.34-37)

**5- Media:** The Japanese media network is enormous and includes print and daily newspapers distributed in millions and within the regional and national, the Japanese pay their subscriptions to Japanese television like the British but in a voluntary manner and 90% of the citizens regularly without demand from the Japanese officials.

**6-Taking Advantage:** of International Conditions In addition to the above, Japan's ability to take advantage of the post-war embargo and to disarm and tame the Japanese military spirit, which until then was a feature of the Japanese character can be mentioned in this regard. By this policy, Japan has been able to provide the energy that has enabled it to go to economic production for peace and rely on Americans for peacekeeping in Southeast Asia.

### 2-2: Theory of (Z) William Uchi

Uchi William George was born in 1943 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He received his BA from William College in 1965, his MBA from Stanford in 1967, and his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1972. He was a teacher and associate professor at Stanford Business School from 1971 to 1979. Since 1979, Dr. Uchi has been a professor at the Graduate School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles. Uchi is a regular consultant in 500 successful companies. (Melhem, 2008, p. 47—54)

**2-3: (Z) theory features**

**Family 1-**

The institution is seen as a family enterprise whose members work together, live their joys and suffer together, and act as if everyone belongs to the same family.

**2- Long-term employment**

The Japanese administration is based on a high degree of stability, which comes from job security, management does not end the service of its workers only if they cause any physical damages, and the Japanese workers consider their work as life.

**3- Collective decision-making**

The Japanese tend to participate in decision-making and the advantage that they spend a lot of time in the debate, and in the adoption of decisions, and their decisions are rarely opposed after the adoption, because everyone affected by the decision has been involved in making it, and they consider making decisions a collective responsibility.

**4- Comprehensive attention to the individual**

Administration is concerned with the worker inside and outside the institution and that concern does not depend on the individual himself but goes beyond the interest of his family and his children, so the Japanese administration is working to pay attention to the human, psychological, social and economic needs, so he will be devoted to his work, increase his productivity, and find time for creativity and innovation.

**5- Social Responsibility**

Japanese institutions are very interested in society and are working hard to gain the trust of society. It prefers to gain community confidence over profits and seeks to have its goals very close to those of society.

**6- Team Spirit**

The Japanese administration adopts a team spirit that leads to a sense of collective responsibility. Everyone is responsible for the decisions and their implementation. (Yoshihara, 1985, 81-87)

**7- Reducing administrative levels and formal procedures**

Japanese organizations rely on a few administrative levels to reduce the gap between the manager and his subordinate on one hand, and to facilitate work procedures on the other, as there is no boring and prolonged bureaucracy between departments and units.

**Chapter III**

**The possibility of applying (Z) theory in Iraq**

Each item of (z) theory will be discussed individually to determine the suitability of each item for Iraq.

**3-1- Do you consider your colleagues as family members and your workplace as a home?**

**Table (1) the sample answers to work as a family concept by the researcher**

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	5%	17%	28 %
Private	2%	9%	39%
Total	7%	26%	67%

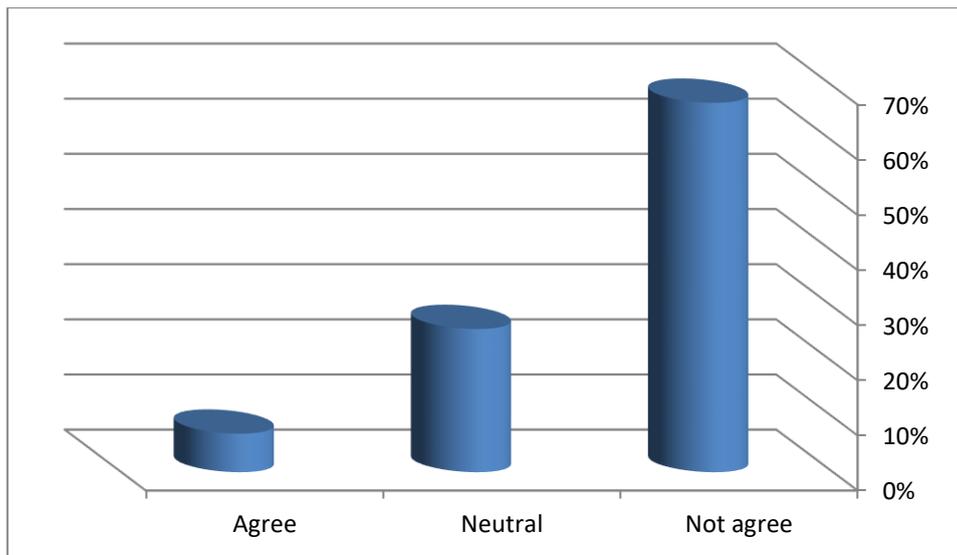


Figure (1) the sample answers to work as a family based on the data of table (1) by the researcher

$$\frac{7x5+26x3+67x1}{100} = 1.8 \text{ Mean} =$$

According to the answers of the sample, in most Iraqi institutions especially private sector ones this status does not exist at all, which causes long conflicts and continuous job rotation because of the instability of staff and workers working in those organizations mostly temporarily and waiting for the best opportunity to work elsewhere.

To be able to implement this item, the private sector must change its perception of workers and the government intervenes by imposing laws regulating the work of the private sector in terms of wages and working hours, as the workers in the private sector work longer hours and get lower wages and some private sector institutions do not provide social security for its employees. As for the public sector, wages should be standardized or at least nearly equal. Workers in some government institutions are paid (3) times double the other government institutions employees, both of which have the same educational qualification and experience. In this way, workers can view their workplace as their home.

### 3-2- The organization adopts the concept of long- term employment?

Table (2) the sample answers to long-term employment by the researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	45%	5%	0 %
Private	1%	6%	43%
Total	46%	11%	43%

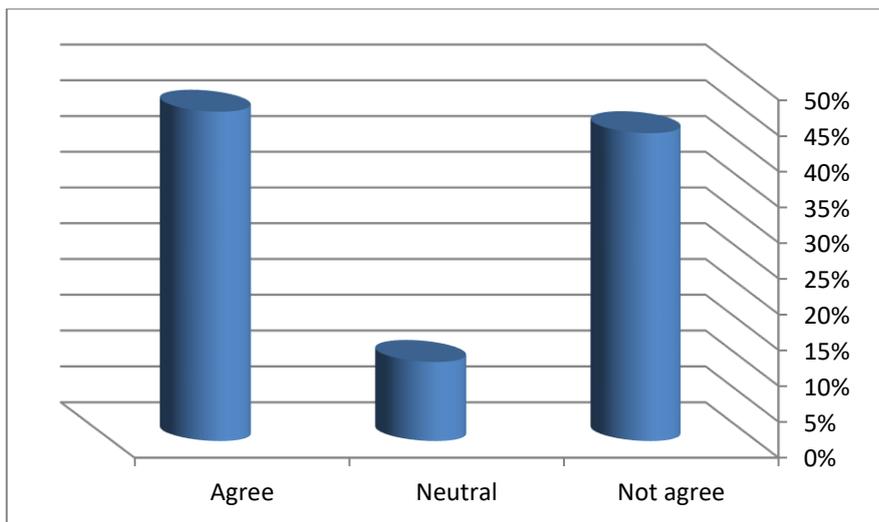


Figure (2) the sample answers to long term employment based on data of table (2) by researcher the  $\frac{46x5+11x3+43x1}{100} = 3.06$  Mean =

As the given answers we find in government institutions long-term employment, but the problem appears in the private sector institutions, which is not characterized by this at all, as it is very rare to find someone who has been in a private institution for more than (10) years. The reason for this is the low wages and increased working hours on one hand, and the ambiguity of the workers' future, on the other hand, can simply be replaced by another employee for a simple reason or even without a certain reason, due to the lack of control over private sector institutions and the submission of decisions to the desire of senior management.

To make this point applicable in Iraq, the work of the private sector should be regulated in terms of wages, recruitment, and termination procedures, and all private sector institutions must join social security. Demand on government sector jobs will be significantly reduced due to equal opportunities in both sectors. Creating a spirit of belonging to the organization and reducing career rotation.

**3-3 Management includes its workers in decisions making process?**

Table (3) the sample answers to collective decision making by the researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	4%	7%	39 %
Private	3%	4%	43%
Total	7%	11%	82%

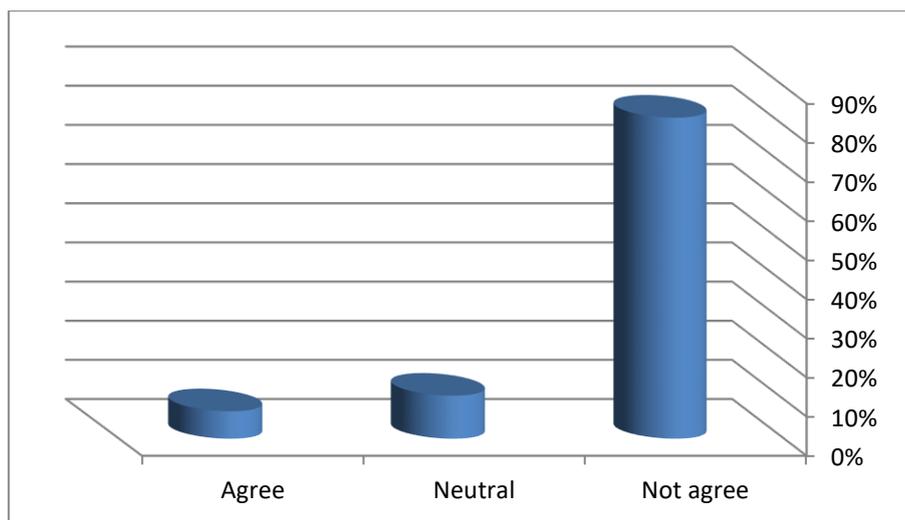


Figure (3) the sample answers to collective decision making based on data of table (3) by the researcher  $\frac{7x5+11x3+82x1}{100} = 1.5$  Mean =

As per the sample answers, this point does not exist in Iraq or developing countries at all, as decisions are taken purely individually and without taking into account the opinion of employees of Iraqi organizations at all levels. Decisions are a matter for the senior management, confined and without any consultation to workers in government institutions and the private sector alike. This is one of the reasons for the failure and confusion of those decisions, so we find that those decisions are not fixed and are always subject to change even at the highest level of government. To make this point applicable in Iraq, there must be a committee consisting of the most efficient and oldest staff in all sections consulted by management in some of the decisions on the work that being the most knowledgeable about the nature of work and considered part of the decision-making process, is considered as a gain for management because it has established the spirit of belonging to workers and rationalized the decision-making process in the organization thus minimizing errors.

**3-4: Management provides comprehensive care to its employees?**

Table (4) answers of the sample to comprehensive care to employees by researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	2%	6%	42 %
Private	0%	3%	47%
Total	2%	9%	89%

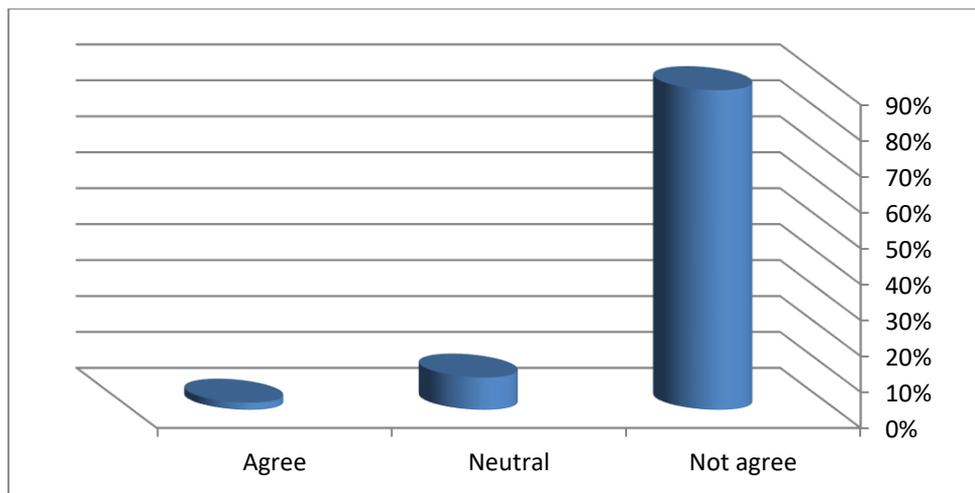


Figure (4) sample's answers to comprehensive care based on data of table (4) by the researcher

$$\frac{2x5+9x3+89x1}{100} = 1.26 \text{ Mean} =$$

The given answers show this concept is not available in Iraq and most developing countries. As the organizations (governmental or private) in Iraq do not pay any attention to the individual outside the workplace, and the employee's relationship with the organization ends with the end of working hours. Not only in Japan but in many countries, we find special attention is given to workers and provide them with housing, paying school fees for their children to establish the spirit of belonging to employees. But it is different in Iraq and most developing countries, as government institutions do not pay any attention to this aspect and that the best government institutions provide a piece of land for employees. Private sector institutions do not provide services to their employees at all. The researcher does not expect that this aspect is applicable in Iraq in the short or medium term. Through paragraphs (1,2,3,4) the research achieves the first hypothesis as the (Z) theory is a comprehensive philosophy based on the interest in the individual inside and outside the organization and based on cooperation and team spirit to achieve success. Success in the organization is a collective success as well as failure.

**3-5: Does the organization adopt social responsibility and help its society?**

Table (5) answers of the sample to organization social responsibility by the researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	9%	23%	18 %
Private	0%	15%	35%
Total	9%	38%	53%

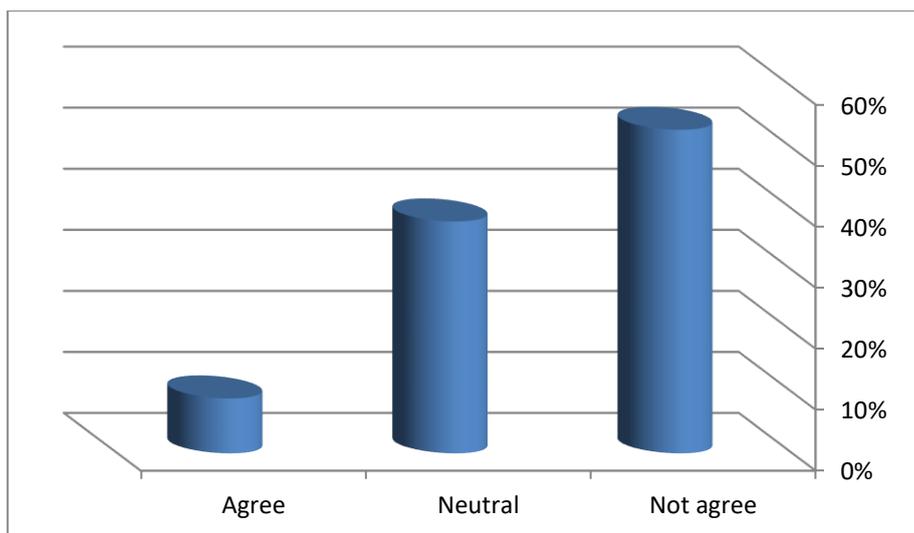


Figure (5) the sample answers to organization social responsibility based on data of table (5) by the researcher

$$\frac{9 \times 5 + 38 \times 3 + 53 \times 1}{100} = 2.12 \text{ Mean} =$$

From the given answers we conclude this concept can be applied in Iraq by imposing the contribution to private sector institutions in serving the community and avoiding harmful activities to the environment. This can be done through supporting charitable institutions, supporting the social welfare fund, supporting orphanages, the elderly houses. Etc.

**3-6: Does the organization encourage teamwork and promote team spirit?**

Table (6) answers of the sample to organization team spirit encouragement by researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	6%	18%	26 %
Private	8%	17%	25%
Total	14%	35%	51%

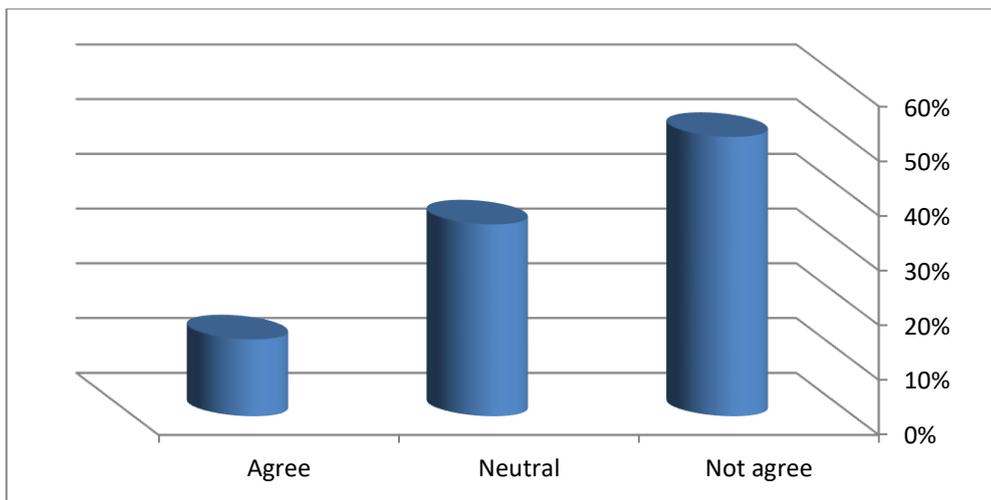


Figure (6) the sample answers to organization team spirit encouragement based on data of table (6) by the researcher

$$\frac{14 \times 5 + 35 \times 3 + 51 \times 1}{100} = 2.26 \text{ Mean}$$

According to the figure above the researcher finds it difficult to apply this concept in the short term because of the nature of society and the primacy of individual interest over collective in most Iraqi institutions if not all of them. The solution lies in the preparation of training courses for workers to develop the spirit of cooperation and work as a team and error borne by all and achievement is calculated for all. The consolidation of the spirit of cooperation and teamwork must start from the primary stages of education to establish this principle as a lifestyle.

**3-7- The organization always tries to reduce the paperwork to facilitate activities and eliminate the procedures?**

Table (7) answers of the sample to reduce work procedures by researcher

Sector	Agree	Neutral	Not agree
Gov.	3%	9%	38 %
Private	2%	11%	37%
Total	5%	20%	75%

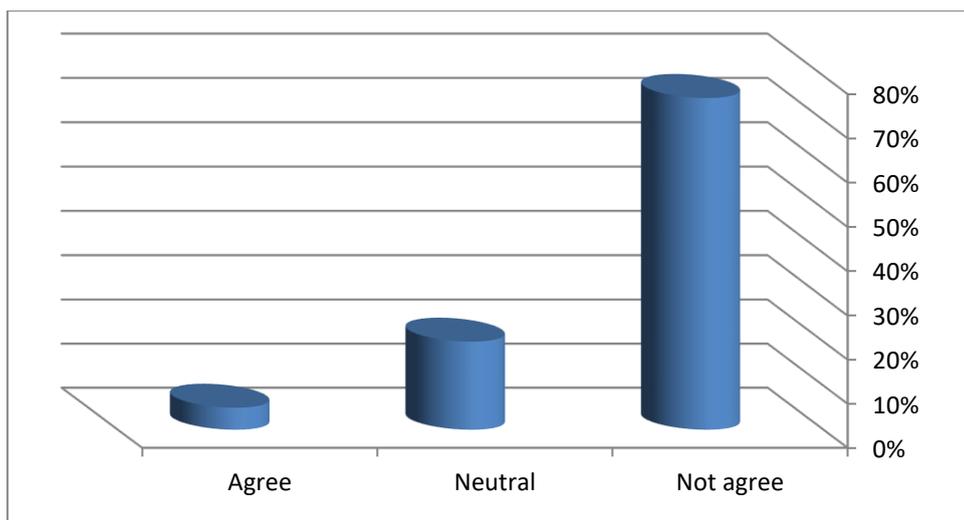


Figure (7) the sample answers to reduce work procedures and paperwork based on data of table (7) by the researcher

$$\frac{5 \times 5 + 20 \times 3 + 75 \times 1}{100} = 1.6 \text{ Mean}$$

Unfortunately, Iraq today suffers from obsolete bureaucracy, long and boring procedures that sometimes need days, weeks or even months to finish a particular transaction or procedure. The reason for this is a large number of administrative levels (unit, section, branch, etc) and the adoption of a written organization (formal correspondence) between departments and sections and even organizations, which requires a long time and great effort to accomplish and thus delay the decision on matters that need speed. The correspondence between the center in (mostly capital) and branches in the provinces through the authorized mailer who is sent every a few weeks and not to rely on e-mail insured to save the time, effort, and money needed to send those documents or orders. The most important thing that Iraq and some Arab countries need to reduce reliance on paper documents and to simplify correspond by adopting electronic correspondence to keep pace with development and reduce effort, money, and time to facilitate work. To achieve this, we must train and qualify staff members who are capable of converting the communications system from paper to electronic, as well as the adoption of a secured and immune system from penetration, which is easy to achieve these days due to the huge number of companies provide such systems.

Thus, by analyzing paragraphs (4,5,6,7), the research fulfills the second hypothesis, which states that not all theoretical concepts of (Z) theory can be applied without adjustments to suit the country and the way it is managed. Some concepts may take a long time to be implemented in Iraq.

**Conclusions**

- 1- The (Z) theory is a comprehensive and integrated philosophy for dealing with an individual and groups, concerned with workers inside and outside the workplace, based on the development of individual and teamwork as its basis.
- 2- Most of the concepts of the (Z) theory are applicable in all countries, including developing ones especially Iraq, and can get impressive results if those concepts are applied properly.
- 3- Despite the applicability of this theory, but some of its concepts must be changed to suit the nature of our society to achieve the desired goals.
- 4- Concerning the concepts of comprehensive attention to an individual outside the work, this may need a very long time for implementation in developing countries and especially in Iraq.
- 5- The science of management is sometimes called the science of facilitation and simplification of work, but what we see is non-administrative practices at all, complicate and impede the workflow which is the opposite of what the administration seeks.
- 6- Consumption of time, effort, and money in the process of transferring orders and formal communications between the various branches through the authorized mailers, and institutions rarely rely on electronic

communications to facilitate the work.

7- The decision-making process in Iraq is a purely individual process by the responsible ones, often following his or her wish, without taking into account the opinions or suggestions of staff in the organization.

8- Multiple administrative levels in the Iraqi organization (unit, department, branch, directorate ... etc.), which requires addressing a series of references from the lowest to the highest levels and waiting for the response from the top to the bottom through all levels, which is a time - consuming process.

9- Excessive reliance on written (paper) work in dealings, which requires hard work and a long time to accomplish, and requires large areas for the conservation and storage of these papers as references for work. While there can be stored thousands or millions of files digitally on electronic memory does not exceed 2 cm.

### Recommendations

1- After the success of (Z) theory unrivaled in Japan has become possible to adopt this philosophy in developing countries including Iraq, as this theory can be adopted as a starting point to achieve success in organizations with some adjustments that suit our organizations and society.

2- Emphasis on teamwork within the organization and encourage team spirit and cooperation between workers instead of competition and individual work that leads to selfishness, isolation, and conflicts.

3- Enact laws to regulate the work of the private sector especially in the employment process, to bridge the gap between the public and private sectors in terms of wages, security, and employment. Provide them with social and health insurance.

4- Encouraging employees to submit proposals for the development of work and make them part of the decision - making process, preferably forming a committee of competent and senior staff in the organization to advise and evaluate decisions regarding their work.

5- Comprehensive attention to workers not only within the organization but also outside, such as providing housing and providing health insurance for them and their families.

6- Involving private sector institutions in servicing the community by obliging them to support charitable projects (building and renovating schools and hospitals, supporting orphanages, supporting houses of the elderly... etc) and contribute to serve Iraqi society.

7- Iraqi institutions should rely on electronic correspondence inside and outside the organization to reduce the time, effort, and money needed to complete those transactions and procedures.

8- Reducing written procedures (bureaucracy) and reducing the multiple administrative levels (unit, department, directorate .... etc) and eliminate the unjustified burdensome and unnecessary procedures to conduct the simplest transactions, and end the so-called chain of references.

9- Eliminate the phenomenon of paper archiving, which consumes time, money, and space. Adopting electronic archiving to reduce the time, effort, money, and space necessary to store those documents.

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