



## The Role of Electronic Customer Trust Building Tools On Excellent Performance An analytical study of the opinions of a sample of individuals in the administrative and leadership positions in the Northern Cement Company

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### Abstract

The current study aims to overcome the conflicts facing the company in its way of staying and continuing to maintain its performance excellent in light of the intense competition, which made it seek to find strong ways and links with its customers through electronic communication using electronic platforms, and this put confidence and safety in The place of suspicion and fear of not fulfilling credibility or violating the privacy, so this research comes to answer about the question: "Can the company achieve an excellent performance by relying on the customer's electronic confidence?".

The study followed the descriptive and analytical approaches by providing a virtual model and testing the zero hypotheses, which stipulates that there is no significant effect of the customer's electronic confidence on outstanding performance. A three-point scale questionnaire was used as the study tool. the employers in administrative and leadership positions at Northern Cement Company in Nineveh Governorate was chosen as a study sample. The study concluded that the measurement and compatibility with the sincerity and reliability of the study model. The results showed the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the variables of the study, which indicates the importance of building electronic customer confidence tools in enhancing the performance of excellence in a researched company.

**Paper type:** Research paper

**Keywords:** Electronic Customers Trust, Excellent Performance, Northern Cement Company.

## 1. Introduction

The availability of tools that are used to build electronic customer trust (e-trust) has an impact on the organization survival, creativity and excellent performance which is superior to its counterparts in the competitive environment. The main problems facing organizations are the loss of customers due to lack of communication reliability and difficulty of retaining customer privacy which makes the organization investigate tools to protect and secure the communication processes between the organization and the customer. This is reached by focusing on gaining and retaining customer trust as a strong point to increase the organization's performance and sustain excellent performance.

While e-trust building tools are used as an important variable contributing to enhancing the excellent performance in the organization this study was designed to investigate the correlation between e-trust building tools and its effect on enhancing the excellent performance in the Northern Cement Company.

## 2. literature review

### 2.1 Electronic Customer Trust

#### 2.1.1 The concept of Electronic Customer Trust (e-trust)

The management literature presented several definitions of the concept of trust that differ according to the author's opinions and his field of specialization. Thus, Garbarino and Johnson (1999, 79) emphasize that trust is the basis for a long-term relationship, while De Wulf, et al., (2001, 34) note that more trust gained between organizations and their customers, leads to a greater likelihood that their mutual relationship will survive and endure. Ali and Shehata (2004, 130) define trust as the responsibility of the organization to disclose, in its website, the safety of its operations and procedures in performing transactions, ensure the privacy of the visitors of the website, and safeguard the security of the website. Abboud et al., (2015, 198) point out that trust is the most prominent outcome of a relationship between two parties based on a sense of content resulting from successful and satisfactory exchanges and that trust ensures efficient and effective performance. Sulayman et al., (2015, 215) believe that trust is a basic requirement to build sustainable, credible, and effective communications with the customer. While Yasin (2016, 291) states in his study that it is an organized process to compile and present evidence of the truth of organization management's claims on its website to test whether these claims are in line with the principles of trust used in the website in particular and between the management and visitors of the site in general. This generates a firm belief in the customer that his needs will be met by the organization in the future and under various circumstances. (Saleh., 2017, 104). This leads to a personal belief of the customer that the electronic site sets and implements rules and procedures in its basic system to ensure fair results for all parties with efficiency, reliability, and integrity. the electronic site would provide protection for customers from opportunistic behaviours of service providers (Abdul Hamid et al., 2022, 208).

In light of the above, the researcher can determine the concept of customer e-trust as the ability of the customer to rely on the organization and trust it to provide a sense of security and credibility by meeting the agreed-upon obligations between the two parties on its website.

#### 2.1.2 Principles of Electronic Customer Trust

Customers want trustworthy organizations that can be more qualified in their offerings and keep their promises to provide excellent services and show respect to the customers through their employees in whatever position they hold while carrying out their obligations (Lombard, et al, 2013, 208). Liang and Wang showed that e-trust is developed along two main axes: the behavioural elements of trust (integrity and justice) and the cognitive elements of trust (reliability and satisfaction) (Liang and Wang, 2006, 129). However, the widely accepted principles of e-trust can be stated as those agreed upon by the American AICPA and Canadian

CICA institutes (Arens et al., 2003, 822; Arens et al., 2012, 800; Sulayman et al., 2015, 215-218; Yasin, 2016, 292; Niall, 2021, 23) as follows:

➤ **Reliability:** Trusted practices to ensure that the design of information is confidential, private, and protected according to a binding agreement.

➤ **Online Privacy:** Privacy practices that ensure that personal information obtained for e-commerce is only used for its intended purpose and that the process of disclosure and retention is conducted according to a confidentiality and commitment agreement.

➤ **Integrity Procedures:** Integrity practices ensure that the processing system is integrated, accurate, timely, and authorized. This reflects the organization's ability to meet the promises made during the exchange process, which means responding to customer expectations and achieving his/her satisfaction.

➤ **Readiness:** Readiness practices ensure that the system is available for operation and use according to an agreed commitment.

➤ **Security:** Security practices ensure that the system is protected against unauthorized access or hacking whether by people or electronic systems. It also indicates that the entrusted party will abide by the rules of exchange accepted during and after the exchange.

### 2.1.3 Electronic Customer Trust (e-Trust) Building Tools

Many explanations were listed by many to explain manuscripts-trust building tools, Smith (1999, 13) considered trust an essential element in developing the relationship between the organization and the customer. It is an important determinant in maintaining their mutual relationship. Building customer e-trust in the organization is a great way to increase profits and establish a strong foundation to deal with customers in a satisfying way to build customer e-trust by following strategies (Gurviez and Korchia, 2002, 10; Paliszkiwicz and Klepacki, 2013, 129; Navickas, et al, 2014, 164) :

#### ➤ **The organization's biography**

The organization can build trust by presenting its history and telling its success stories as well as helping the customer to take these experiences and compare them with his own. When a professional association, as a third party, publicly highlights and acknowledges the professional achievements, certificates, and awards of an organization, this could reflect its experience and efficiency in the market and may lead to increasing customer's trust towards it.

#### ➤ **Honesty in advertising and marketing**

The key to building customer trust is that the organization must be honest and clear in advertising and marketing by keeping its word and delivering what it promises in accordance with the specific stated terms and conditions.

#### ➤ **Reliability and protection**

The organization must ensure the safety of its transactions by proving to the customers its ability to protect their data using secured communications while providing valuable and reliable information and services. The customer should be assured that there is no impact of actual or fictitious threats, regardless of their origin, in all levels of the information system structure he uses (Albdainah, 2006, 23).

#### ➤ **Customer review sites**

Customer review sites when available are a trust-building tool through which the customer or any potential customer is allowed to state his opinion. The organization must respond to such correspondence which can be in a form of a suggestion or complaint, by showing its appreciation to the customer and providing his opinions through the organization's direct phone number or email. Customer review sites will allow the customer to communicate and interact with the website vendors and management in addition to former customers. Careful attention should be paid by the organization to make elegant website page designs in these review sites (Abu Fara, 2012, 138-140).

### ➤ **Strong Attendance in social media**

The customer assumes that the organization is present on all social network sites and this may aid in building a strong relationship with the customer by keeping in touch with him to determine what encourages his participation in the process of gathering updated and accurate data concerning his orientations and aspirations.

### ➤ **Providing the right advice**

Giving sound advice to the customer if the product does not conform to the solution he seeks by using it. The sales representative can advise and direct the customer to the more appropriate product or service and thus prompts the customer to adopt positive behaviours towards the organization thus he may be an advocate for the organization against any negative word-of-mouth in the future.

### ➤ **Design user-friendly professional sites**

Easy-to-use professional website design on the internet provides information that answers customer queries including search functions, website maps, products, indices, general website layout, and a free email account.

## **2.2 Excellent Performance**

### **2.2.1 The Concept of Excellent Performance**

Excellent performance is a contemporary topic, which attracted the attention of researchers and specialists in the business environment as a result of the increasingly fierce competition among organizations to gain a distinguished and unique position that allows the organization to survive and endure compared to its competitors. There were various views in defining the concept of excellent performance. Egan (2003, 8) describes excellent performance as an inherent practice in the organization that focuses on and expresses a set of core standards to achieve results; while Ali and Al Dallal (2006, 27) define excellent performance as the organizations attempt to exploit available opportunities through effective strategic planning, adhering to clear objectives, adequacy of sources, and diligent performance. Pakwihok (2010, 32) believes that excellent performance is an organization's superior performance when compared to the performance of its competitors and the ability to sustain this superior performance. In the same context, Lindah (2012, 71) states that excellent performance is the organization's ability to perform the required work with a high degree of skillfulness, discipline, and quality without tolerance for error or deviation by having excellent entrepreneurial skillful management capable of delivering unprecedented results. Nonetheless, Al-farra and Sahmod (2015, 11) defines it as the organization's implementation of a number of capabilities that support the achievement of the desired results in accordance with its objectives and ensure its excellence in the business environment. While Al-Amiri (2016,270) and Abdulwase et al, (2020, 137) reach that excellent performance helps the organization in achieving its strategic objectives coupled with competitive advantages to remain the best. Muhammad (2022, 103) indicates that it is a set of behaviors, capabilities, and high intellectual and cognitive skills enjoyed by the employees of the organization. Hence, they can be employed in their field of work and their specialization to accomplish work that exceeds the limits of the organization's standards and excels over what others offer. In addition, Abu Nasser and Al-Hattab (2022, 68) list that excellent performance represents the advanced stage of serious and creative work and creative ideas leading to extraordinary efficiency, unexpected results, and more positive performance, striving towards distinguished levels of performance that exceed expectations.

In light of the above, the researcher believes that excellent performance is the organization's ability to exploit its available resources efficiently and effectively in order to achieve superiority and innovativeness by creating a competitive advantage unique to its peers in the market.

### 2.2.2 Excellence Performance Objectives

There are several objectives of excellent performance which can be identified as follows: (Ivancevich et al., 1986, 43; David, 2000, 10; Darwish and Abdelkader, 2006, 734; Jaber, 2017, 49; Muhammad, 2020, 646).

- Setting the necessary standards for developing the organization's mission statement.
- Creating an environment that supports and maintains continuous improvement.
- Identifying errors and deviations and taking the necessary steps to address them.
- Determining a customer-based culture.
- Adhering to customer satisfaction and meeting all his requirements.
- Achieving sustainable development of the organization.
- Improving participation and implementing social responsibility.
- Improving productivity, efficiency, and achievement of the organization's objectives.
- Maintaining innovation and excellence as a competitive advantage.
- Improving employees' trust and work performance and increasing cooperation between management levels.

### 2.2.3 Excellence Performance Standards

The process of highlighting the main guidelines for excellence is the pillar upon which various excellence models are based including the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA), the Deming Prize, and other models. However, the measures of these models are not comprehensive in the strict sense as they may vary from one organization to another and from one model to another, and according to the activities performed. Through the past couple of decades, these models underwent a series of developments and continuous improvements. Here we will mention the most important criteria that establish a comprehensive framework and an integrated understanding of the excellent performance process of any organization as follows (Vokurka et al, 2000, 46; Shawky, 2010,6; Lindh, 2012, 82-83; Sahmod, 2013, 29-30; Al-Zayyan, 2020, 40)

#### ➤ Strategic planning

Strategic planning reflects the direction and future vision of the organization in implementing its mission and achieving its vision through strategizing and by formulating, developing, updating, disseminating, and materializing its plans in stakeholders' terms.

#### ➤ Leadership

Focusing on leadership functions and its organizational capability in determining the values and expectations of organizational performance and identifying future trends in the short and long term that creates excellence in performance through creativity and innovation among employees.

#### ➤ Customer orientation

Customer orientation is measured by the organization's ability to perceive and anticipate the expectations of its current and potential customers and the needs of the market, thereby contributing to the creation of distinct value and both customer and stakeholder satisfaction which will result in organizational sustainability.

#### ➤ Human resources

Human resources are the key to the success of the organization in carrying out its tasks and duties and achieving its objectives soundly and properly. Cooperation and knowledge among human resources represented by individuals at different management and operations levels support and stimulate their knowledge and development and provide opportunities for learning, training, and skills development.

#### ➤ Operations

This standard reflects the capability of managing and improving the organization's operations effectively and efficiently using innovative methods and continuous improvement of operations' design such as developing a new product, attracting new customers, or achieving growth in the quality of delivered products.

### ➤ Information and analysis

This standard provides the organization with the ability to measure and analyze the internal performance of the organization and its potential to establish an information system that supports strategic decisions at all levels. The information system must be accurate, powerful, and comprehensive, based on facts and not guesses in order to provide the opportunity to achieve excellence in organizational performance.

### ➤ Results

Emphasis is placed on achieving balance in creating value for all stakeholders (customers, employees, suppliers, financiers, and the community) by identifying the operational procedures and measures used to monitor, understand, and identify errors and deviations and to address them through feedback and the review of indicators. Improving the key performance results is considered an indicator of excellent performance.

## 3. Material and Methods

Our study includes two parts first represented by a used descriptive method in completing the theoretical aspect of the study based on the books, papers, and thesis related to the subjects of the study. The second was the analytical method adopted by using the questionnaire as a tool to obtain data for the practical aspect.

The analytical method includes two main parts the first focused on electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools (independent variables) while the second focused on the excellent performance (dependent variables), the 3-point Likert scale was used to assign a weight (agree = 3, neutral = 2, disagreed = 1).

Northern Cement company has excellent quality and a reputation among its competitors in the Middle East market. It was started in 1965 and still produces so far, the company includes 6 factories for the production of dry and wet cement with a capacity of 600-300 tons per day.

One hundred and twenty questionnaires were distributed to the individuals in the investigated company and 100 valid questionnaires were returned for analysis with reliability reach to (83.3%), fig.1. The SPSS and Amos program was used to describe and analyze the variables of the study model by using confirmatory factor analysis test.

### 3.1 Research problem

It discussed the risk of confronting the company in the way of severe competitive challenges and accelerating technology, so that outstanding performance comes to represent the only way to keep the company and its continuation in light of these challenges, based on the electronic confidence of the customer by building its tools.

The following questions are emanating from

- 1- Can the institutional institution achieve a distinguished performance based on the customer's electronic confidence?
- 2- Does the company have a visualization of customer's electronic?
- 3- Does the company have a visualization of excellent performance?

### 3.2 Hypothesis

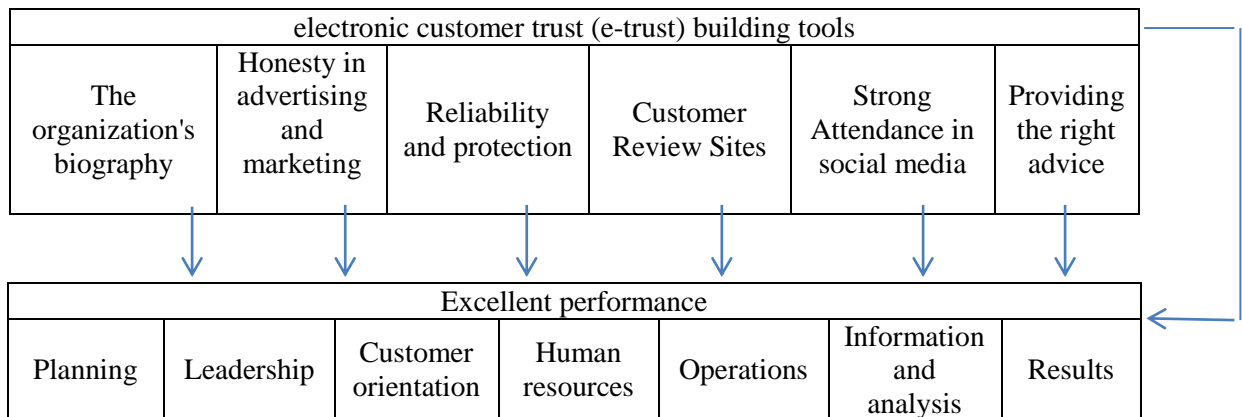
It is represented by the following statement:

H01: There is no significant relationship between the variables of the study (there is no correlation between the electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools and excellent performance).

H02: There is a significant impact between the variables of the study (there is an impact between the electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools and excellence performance).

### 3.3 Research Model

The analytical method includes two main parts the first focused on electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools (independent variables) while the second focused on excellent performance (dependent variables).



**Figure 1:** A model of study

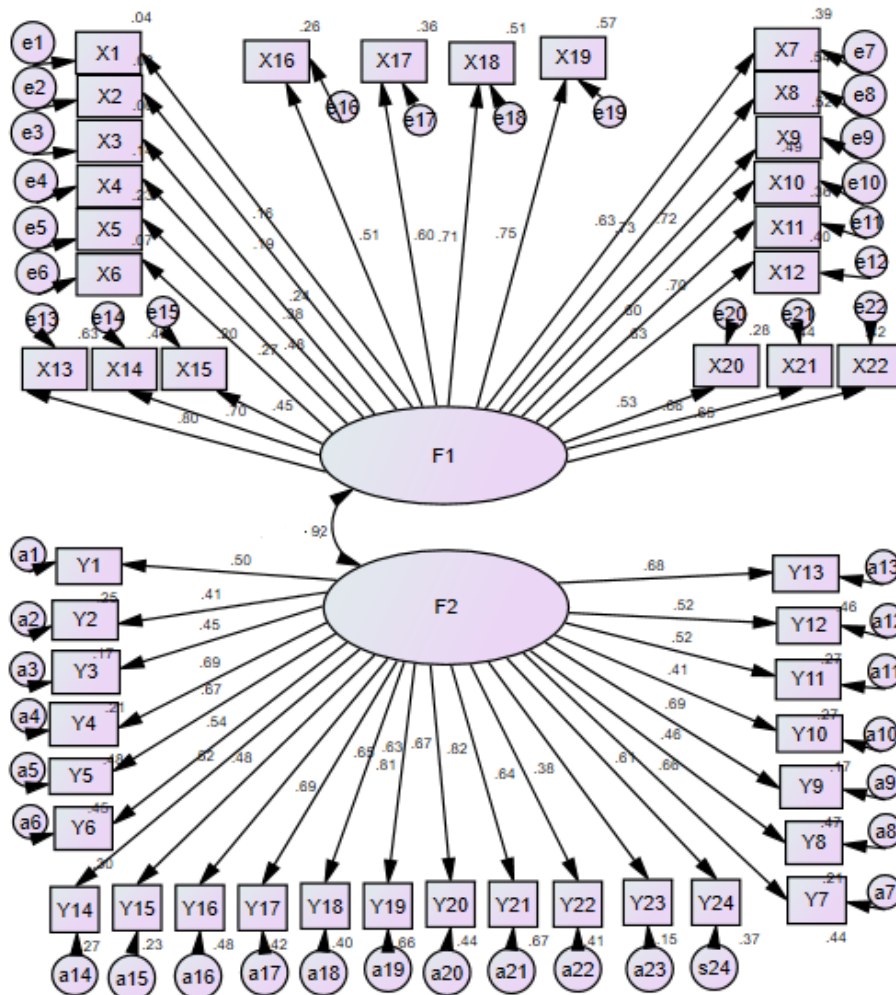
#### 4. Discussion of Results

the responses of the individual survey show that there is an agreement ratio 66.77%, and 59.91% with means 2.585, 2.482 and a standard deviation  $\pm 0.595$ ,  $\pm 0.635$  for independent variables and dependent variables respectively table 1.

**Table1:** Descriptive the variables

Variable	agreement ratio	Mean	standard deviation
electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools	%66.77	2.585	$\pm 0.595$
excellent performance	%57.91	2.482	$\pm 0.635$

The analysis of data collected by the confirmatory factor analysis test shows that the model fit index with the variable study model was in the accepted range for the main criterion, this confirms the existence of a similarity between the study model and study variables as shown in figure 2.



**Figure 2: Data Analysis by Confirmatory factor analysis test (F1:electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools (independent variables); F2: excellent performance(dependent variables ); X1,.....X22 F1items;Y1,.....Y24: F2 items**

The comparative fit index (CFI) values reached 0.92 which is larger than the standardized comparative value for acceptance of 0.9. and the Rote Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.02 is less than the standardization competitive value (0.08); the correlation between study variables F1 and F2 is reached up to 0.92, which emphasizes the significance and model validity at a significant level less than 0.05. This shows that there is a significant statistical relationship between the electronic customer trust (e-trust) building tools and excellent performance; thus, this leads to reject the  $H_0$  hypothesis. See Table 2.

**Table 2: Study Model Fit Indices**

Statistical parameter	Correlation	RMSEA	CFI	Chi2	P
Analysis results	0.92	0.02	0.92	707.778	0.00
Standardized comparative value	1	<1	0.09 to 1	-	≤ 0.05



## 5. Conclusion

The study revealed that the percentages of agreement with the answers of the respondents to the independent variable (customer's electronic trust) were high, which indicates the availability of tools for this variable in the researched organization, which seeks to gain the customer and enhance his confidence by dealing with him and meeting his desires and needs electronically.

While the percentage of agreement for the responses of the respondents to the dependent variable (distinguished performance) was acceptable, which indicates the need for the researched organization to strengthen this variable because of its role in the survival and continuity of the organization in strong competition.

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) showed the consistency of the study model and the validity of its test to be an appropriate hypothetical model.

The results of the analysis indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable (electronic customer trust) and the dependent variable (outstanding performance), which reflects the possibility of solving the problem of the study based on providing the requirements for establishing the tools of the independent variable represented by building electronic customer trust through which it is possible to achieve organization excellent performance and maintains its competitive position in the market. The need to pay attention to the tools of building electronic customer trust (electronic trust) the researched organization to achieve reliability with its customers and win the loyalty of current and future customers.

Raising the level of security in the exchanges between the customer and the organization and preserving confidentiality, ensuring privacy, and safety of information in the organization's websites.

Seeking to adopt honesty in dealing with customers and society associated with providing the correct advice and honest publicity in the organization's marketing activities.

The need to have space and a strong and distinguished presence in various social media and reach the target group of customers. Working to show the organization's CV in the best way to achieve a mental status among customers that competes with its counterparts in the market. Directing the leadership and employees of the organization to motivate and lead customers toward achieving the organization's goals by raising its excellent performance, survival, and continuity in the market.

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## دور أدوات بناء ثقة الزبون الإلكترونية في الأداء المتميز دراسة تحليلية لآراء عينة من الأفراد في المناصب الإدارية والقيادية في شركة الإسمنت الشمالية في محافظة نينوى

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### مستخلص البحث

ركزت الدراسة الحالية على الأدوات التي توفر وتطور ثقة الزبون عند التعامل إلكترونياً مع المنظمات التي تحقق الموثوقية والمصادقية كأساس للتواصل الفعال المستمر بينهم والحفاظ على المنظمة في السوق وكذلك إعطاء الفرصة لابتكار أداء متميز والذي يؤدي إلى تحقيق أهدافها وإعطائها مكانة تنافسية عالية ضمن البيئة التنافسية. إذ اتت هذه الدراسة للاستجابة على التساؤل الاتي هل المنظمة المبحوثة تستطيع تحقيق الاداء المتميز عبر الاستناد على ثقة الزبون الالكترونية؟. ولحل هذا التساؤل اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي والتحليلي عبر تقديم نموذج فرضي، واختبار فرضية العدم التي نصت على عدم وجود اثر معنوي للثقة الزبون الالكترونية في الاداء المتميز، إذ تم استخدام الاستبيان كأداة للدراسة ومقياس ليكرت الثلاثي، وجمعت بيانات الدراسة باستخدام (100) استمارة وزعت على الأفراد في المراكز الإدارية والقيادية في شركة أسمنت الشمالية في محافظة نينوى. وتوصلت الى أن القياس والتوافق مع صحة وموثوقية نموذج الدراسة ووجود علاقة إحصائية معنوية بين متغيرات الدراسة مما يشير إلى أهمية بناء أدوات ثقة الزبون الإلكترونية في تعزيز أداء التميز في المنظمة المبحوثة.

نوع البحث: ورقة بحثية.

المصطلحات الرئيسية للبحث: ثقة الزبون الالكترونية، الاداء المتميز، شركة الاسمنت الشمالية.