The Reality of Administrative Empowerment among School Leaders in the Directorate of Education in Karak, Southern Jordan

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KEYWORDS Directorate of Education. Ministry of Education. Modern Management Concepts. Motivation. Study

ABSTRACT The study aimed to identify the reality of administrative empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region in southern Jordan. To achieve the goal of the study, the researcher used the descriptive research methodology and the analytical field where the study population consisted of 44 school leaders. The results indicated that there are no statistically significant differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample individuals towards the questionnaires of the study tool according to the gender variable on the tool as a whole. Finally, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education in Jordan review the delegation of powers to school leaders so that the powers granted to school leaders are commensurate with the nature of their tasks, and that freedom is granted to perform the job functions in an optimal manner without the intervention of higher departments.

INTRODUCTION

The accelerating variables in the business environment are among the things that make organisations adopt modern management concepts to achieve a competitive advantage, and the formation of motivated and self-enabled work teams in order to support competitiveness (Blau and Shamir-Inbal 2017; Brooks and Brooks 2019).

The concept of empowerment is one of the modern concepts that came with the tremendous changes in institutions as well as the development of management thought in general (Bugliza 2014), and administrative empowerment as one of the areas of general empowerment is one of those that reveal many effective aspects within the work environment, such as employee participation, employment of their capabilities, worker behaviours, affiliation, decision-making, and job satisfaction (Salama 2011). Administrative empowerment is one of the effective administrative methods that give school leaders complete freedom to act when they fulfil their job responsibilities. This method works to give them powers

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and responsibilities, and the freedom to perform work, with all the resources and an appropriate work environment available. It enabled them to qualify the managers technically and behaviourally to perform schoolwork, and they become influential in the teachers' hearts, hence allowing them to act freely and to think independently (Al-Manouri 2014; Lee and Nie 2017).

As Evans (2014) points to "taking advantage of the creative and intellectual energy of everyone" and empowerment seeks to give workers greater freedom in decision-making, this new empowerment came to demand the abandonment of the old model that focuses on monitoring and control of workers to give confidence in workers, giving them the ability to participate in decision-making. Empowering school leaders is a qualitative shift in school management, as it helps to develop the school and improve the performance of workers, and helps to quickly solve the problems that face it (Bryant et al. 2017).

Although there are some efforts made to foster administrative empowerment of school principals in some Arab countries, they are still limited and insufficient efforts to achieve the care required for administrative empowerment of school principals (Al-Muslim 2012; Lee and Nie 2016), and this gave importance to highlighting the conduct of this study to learn more about the reality of administrative empowerment

of school leaders and determine the level of empowerment they have (Ng and Szeto 2016).

The Study Problem

The achievement of any institution for its goals is related to the ability of its administration to perform its administrative roles effectively, and this is related to empowering its employees and giving them powers and confidence in their ability to take responsibility and encouraging them to make decisions. Despite the great efforts made by the Ministry of Education to improve the education process in general, and to develop the school in particular, there are challenges and problems that still exist and affect the development of education, the most prominent of which are related to the centralisation of the Ministry of Education, which has led to the elimination of creative and developmental attempts and the spirit of the initiative for school leaders, as well as the inability of school leaders in the school works, which necessitates the Ministry of Education that school leaders are given powers to help them fulfil their responsibilities, and giving school leaders wide powers is a key step for enabling them, as he indicated (Cartwright 2002; Alfadli and Al-Mehaisen 2019).

The studies indicate that administrative empowerment needs more delegation of powers to school leaders towards participation in making decisions related to the affairs of their schools, and consolidating work as a team between the elements of the educational process to achieve a shared vision, and qualifying leaders for creative management (Balyer 2017), where Al-Zuhaiber's study (2017) indicated a low balance between the responsibility and authority of school principals, and the lack of powers delegated to them in terms of financial, technical and environmental responsibilities. Hence, the problem of the study is determined in answering the following questions:
  ◆ What is the reality of administrative empowerment of school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region, south of Jordan?
  ◆ Do the degrees of empowerment among school leaders in the directorate of education in Karak, southern Jordan, differ according to the variables of the study,

namely, educational qualification, gender and years of experience?

Literature Review

The current paper used data collected by the National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES), and the survey method was applied to school leaders in schools from 1999 to 2000. The sample consisted of 4,304 principals and 35,564 teachers. The results found that school principals have a high level of participation in leadership practices related to the system, discipline, resources, and inputs, and a low level of participation in culture. It has been found that principals meet leadership responsibilities.

Al-Hajri et al.'s (2011) study aimed to identify the dimensions of empowerment of managers in middle schools in the State of Kuwait and the components of the application of this approach. Determining the factors that must be taken them into account as empowerment and overcome its constituents, while revealing the effects resulting from the application of the empowerment of managers in middle schools in the State of Kuwait and access to any extent and access to what extent affects the empowerment of middle school principals in the State of Kuwait, the study indicated a set of results that were most prominent. The results showed that empowerment is one of the most important pillars of management and one of its primary functions and is the true influence of the success of any administrative work, and the selection of employees needs criteria regarding efficiency, which need to re-review, evaluate and diagnose the obstacles that impede their implementation, methods of administrative control, the level of follow-up, accountability and transparency in some schools, poor oversight of the employees 'performance of their work and the absence of binding regulations in this regard (Mestry 2017; Avidov-Ungar and Hanin-Itzak 2019).

Al-Taani's study (2011) aimed to identify the degree of administrative empowerment among the principals of public schools in Karak governorate in Jordan, The study population consisted of 25 principals and directors, The study sample consisted of 44 male and female students, and a tool was developed consisting of 26 questionnaires covering five dimensions of adminis-

trative empowerment. The most prominent results of the study were that all dimensions of administrative empowerment got high averages and the absence of statistically significant differences in the respondent's estimates of the degree of administrative empowerment due to the type and qualification variable and the interaction between them and the results of the analysis showed the presence of statistically significant differences in the respondents' assessment of the degree of enabling empowerment irrigation due to the variable experience in favour of experience of 11 years or more.

Nesman's study (2011) aimed to shed light on the concept of administrative empowerment and its importance as a modern administrative method that contributes to achieving administrative effectiveness and revealing the degree of administrative empowerment in Palestinian universities. The study community is among the administrators working in Al-Azhar University, Islamic University and Al-Aqsa University, and they equalled 914 administrators, and the researcher designed a questionnaire consisting of two main axes. One measures the degree of empowerment, and the other is to measure the degree of creativity. The researcher adopted the use of a simple random method, and he chose a sample estimated at 252 administrators. The most important results that he reached provide dimensions of administrative empowerment in the Palestinian universities under study. The study concludes that there is a statistically significant relationship between the administrative empowerment and creativity of workers in Palestinian universities. It also revealed statistically significant differences in the sample responses about empowerment and its relationship to the creativity of workers due to the sex variable and the name of the university.

Additionally, Jaber's study (2012) aimed to identify the reality of administrative empowerment for secondary school principals in the Jeddah education zone in Saudi Arabia in general and its ten dimensions in particular, to determine the most important obstacles and benefits of their empowerment. To achieve these goals, two study tools were used with two parts. The first data tool was for the study sample, and the other was a measure of the reality of administrative empowerment for high school principals that

includes ten dimensions represented by 47 words in addition to 18 phrases to measure the order of obstacles and benefits of administrative empowerment of women managers. The study sample reached 168 educational directors and supervisors, and the data was statistically treated using a computer program. The study reached several results, and prominently the following. The reality of administrative empowerment of secondary school principals in the Jeddah educational region from the point of view of the study sample members was generally high, as it was high in the variables of self-efficacy, impact, prestige, human resources and independence training, team spirit and communication development. The flow of information, while it came as an average in the dimensions for delegation of authority and powers and participation in decision-making and incentives, there were statistically significant differences in the levels between the responses of school principals to the reality of administrative empowerment in general and in the dimensions of delegation of authority and competencies, team spirit development, communication, information flow, human resources training and prestige. According to the number of years of experience, the differences were in favour of more experienced female managers.

A study by Jacobs (2014) aimed to identify empowerment with school leaders from kindergarten through twelfth grade and to show the importance of training high school principals on empowering teachers. The study relied on a scale consisting of four areas (concept, competence, report rate and influence). The author used the survey methodology using the survey for three schools. The results found that the school culture has been classified much higher than the other three enabling conditions, and the secondary school teachers ranked themselves much higher in the areas of concept and efficiency for empowerment. Also, the state of school culture was linked to rank closely related to self-determination.

Mansour and Wan's study (2018) aimed to identify the reality of administrative empowerment among principals of secondary schools in Lattakia governorate according to the dimensions of delegation of powers, teamwork, decision-making, support and attribution, and to

study the differences between the managers in the reality of administrative empowerment (sub-dimensions and scale as a whole). According to the variables of gender, years of experience in administrative work and educational qualification, the study adopted the descriptive approach, and a questionnaire was developed and distributed to a sample of 152 principals and administrators, with a response rate of 90.79 percent. The study reached a number of results, the most important of which are that the principals of secondary schools in Lattakia Governorate have good administrative empowerment in general, and at the sub-dimension level of delegation of powers, teamwork, decision-making, support and attribution. The gender variable does not affect the degree of administrative empowerment among secondary school principals in the Lattakia Governorate, as it was found that there were no statistically significant differences between the average degrees of male and female principals in the reality of administrative empowerment in general, but with regard to sub-dimensions, it was found that there is a difference in the dimensions of support and attribution, and taking decisions is in favour of the males. The degree of administrative empowerment among secondary school principals in Lattakia Governorate increases with the increase in the number of years of experience and the educational qualification, as there were statistically significant differences between the averages of the degrees of the principals according to the variables of years of experience in administrative work and the educational qualification, and the differences in favour of years of experience were more than ten years, in favour of postgraduate educational qualification, at the level of sub-dimensions, and the scale as a whole.

Al-Ruqi's study (2016) aimed to identify the reality of administrative empowerment among male and female leaders of public education schools in Afif Governorate, and to learn about proposals to improve administrative empowerment of male and female leaders of public education schools in Afif Governorate. The study found that members of the study sample see that administrative empowerment among school leaders in Afif governorate applied with an average degree with an arithmetic average of 2.77.

The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences according to gender, qualification, years of experience, and training courses in the field of school leadership, while the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample individuals for degrees of empowerment of leaders and leaders of schools in the different educational stage.

Al-Shehri's study (2017) aimed to identify the reality of private secondary school leaders' practice of administrative empowerment in the light of the indicators of the school supervisory performance leadership system in Riyadh from the point of view of the female leadership, and obstacles to its application This was applied to a sample of 30 female agents, and the study reached a number of results. The most important of the results are that the leaders of the private secondary schools in the north of the city of Riyadh apply administrative empowerment to a medium degree in light of the indicators for building a school supervisory performance leadership system.

Al-Tarawneh's study (2017) aimed at identifying the reality and level of administrative empowerment and the level of administrative skills of school principals of Khamis Mushait, and identifies the most important obstacles to administrative empowerment. The study relied on a descriptive-analytical approach and reached a number of results. The most important of which is that administrative empowerment is available to school principals but to a moderate degree. The study results indicated the availability of managerial skills among the principals, including the skill of forming teams, leadership and decision making, and the most prominent obstacles were to enable the administrator that there is no free exchange of information and the lack of conviction of the higher management to administrative empowerment. The study made several recommendations, the most important of which is the need for an appropriate organisational climate to encourage empowerment and the need to provide training and development programs to develop personal skills for managers with the granting of powers and delegation to managers in addition to adopting a system of rewards and good motivation.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study were to:
- Understand the reality of administrative empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in Karak, southern Jordan.
- Understand the level of administrative empowerment for school leaders in the Directorate of Education in Karak, southern Jordan.
- Identify the degrees of difference in response to the instrument's questionnaires for empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in Karak, southern Jordan, according to the different variables of the study, namely, educational qualification, gender, and years of experience.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To achieve its objectives, the study adopted a descriptive research methodology and the analytical field. On the level of descriptive research, a desk survey was conducted, and the previous theoretical and field studies and research were examined in order to elaborate the foundations and starting points on which the theoretical framework of the study is based and to stand at the most important previous studies related to the subject of the study that constitutes a tributary vital to it, and its cognitive axes.

The Study Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all the male and female directors and principals of schools in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region in southern Jordan, which equalled 44 male and female principals.

Given the small study population, it was considered a sample for it, and the study tool was distributed to them electronically. The respondents were a total of 44 male and female administrators, with a rate of thirty-eight percent of the study community. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the study sample according to their personal and functional variables.

It is clear from the data of the previous Table 1 that:

Table 1: The distribution of the study sample individuals according to variables (personal and functional)

Variable	Variables categories	Number	Percentage
Qualification	Bachelors	3	6.8
	Higher Diploma	22	50.0
	Postgraduate	19	43.2
Experience	Less than five years	2	4.5
	From 5 years to less than ten years	5	11.4
	More than ten years	37	84.1
Gender	Male	13	29.5
	Female	31	70.5

1. Regarding the variable of the academic qualification, the higher diploma category ranked first and accounted for fifty percent of the total number of the study sample, followed by the second class graduate studies category that constituted 43.2 percent. Then in the third and last rank the baccalaureate category was at 6.8 percent of the total number of the study sample.
2. With regards to the variable of years of experience, it was found that the category of 'more than ten years' ranked first and accounted for 84.1 percent of the total number of study sample individuals, followed by the category for 'from to less than ten years', that formed a percentage 11.4 percent of the total number of study sample individuals. In the last place was the category of 'less than five years', and it constituted 4.5 percent of the total study sample individuals.
3. With regard to gender, it was found from the data of the previous Table 1 that females constituted a percentage of 70.5 percent of the total members of the study sample, compared to males who made up 29.5 percent of the total members of the study sample.

Study Tool

The study tool consists of a questionnaire, which was built and developed based on previous studies and the theoretical framework of the study, and consulting with experts and specialists, and it consisted of two parts.

The first part includes the information expressing the characteristics of the study sample according to the variables of educational qualification, years of experience, and gender.

The second part includes a number of questionnaires that measure the reality of administrative empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region in southern Jordan, as follows:

1. Delegation of authority, as measured in questionnaires (1-7)
2. Communication and information flow, as measured in questionnaires (1-6)
3. Professional growth, as measured in questionnaires (1-6)
4. Decision-making and measured in questionnaires (1-7)
5. Incentives and measured by questionnaires (1-6).

Validate the Study Tool

To ensure the validity of the study tool, that is, to ensure that it is suitable for measuring what was set for its measurement, it was presented to a number of arbitrators from faculty members.

Statistical Processing

To answer the study questions, descriptive and analytical statistical methods were used, using the statistical package (SPSS.22), and by using the following statistical methods.

1. Frequencies and percentages to describe the characteristics of the study sample.
2. The mean and standard deviations for answering the first study question.
3. Mono-variance analysis and Xavier test for dimensional comparisons with regard to the different degrees of empowerment for school leaders according to two variables (qualification, years of experience).
4. Test (t) with regard to the different levels of empowerment among school leaders according to the gender variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results related to the first question, about the reality of empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region, south of Jordan, are discussed below.

Table 2 indicates that the general arithmetic mean of the responses of the sample members to the questionnaires that quantify the reality of empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region in southern Jordan has reached 3.19 and represents a medium degree of appreciation, and the delegation domain of authority was ranked first with an arithmetic average of 3.49, followed by communication and information flow with an arithmetic average of 3.48. In third place came a decision taking with an arithmetic average of 3.27, and in fourth place came professional growth with arithmetic mean of 3.14, and finally came the incentives with arithmetic mean of 2.55.

This result means that the Ministry of Education in Jordan is keen on enabling principals (males and females) of schools in the governorates and districts to run the educational process that requires the concerted efforts of all workers in the Ministry of Education because of the large volume of work and the complexity of tasks and the increasing number of students as a result of population growth and migrations from neighbouring countries due to the political situation therein. All of this calls on the higher management in the Ministry of Education to delegate some powers to school leaders without interfer-

Table 2: The arithmetic mean and Standard Deviations (SD) to identify the reality of empowerment

No.	Name	Mean	SD	Sorted by average	Level by average
1	Delegation of authority	3.49	0.656	1	Medium
2	Communication and information flow	3.48	0.672	2	Medium
3	Professional growth	3.14	0.807	4	Medium
4	Make decision	3.27	0.781	3	Medium
5	Incentives	2.55	0.850	5	Medium
-	Arithmetic general mean	3.19	0.595	-	Medium

ence in accordance with the laws and regulations to suit the nature of their tasks and to facilitate these tasks for school leaders. It is clear that the Ministry of Education is keen to provide all material and human requirements to facilitate the process of communication and information flow for school leaders to enable them to perform their functional role effectively, as well as to provide opportunities for professional growth for school leaders through their participation in training programs and the development of their performance in a way that enhances the opportunity for self-development to enable them to enhance their capabilities in participating in taking decisions to solve the problems of the educational and teaching process. Given that the stimulus policy in the Ministry of Education is governed by regulations and laws, there are prizes that distinguish performance and in the past year the government agreed to increase salaries and reward workers in the Ministry of Education to motivate them to do more and give.

The result is consistent with the result of the study by Jaber (2012) whose results indicated that the reality of administrative empowerment of secondary school principals in the Jeddah Educational Region from the point of view of the study sample members was high in general, as it came high in the variables of self-efficacy, impact, prestige, human resource training, independence and spirit development team, communication and information flow.

The result also met with those from a study Al-Taani (2011), whose results showed that the reality of administrative empowerment among principals of public schools in Karak Governorate in Jordan was high. The result was consistent with the result of the study by Nesman (2011), which concluded that the dimensions of administrative empowerment are available in the Palestinian universities under study. The result also met with the result of the study by Mansour and Wan (2018), which showed that the principals of secondary schools in the Lattakia governorate have good administrative empowerment in general and at the sub-dimension level for delegation of powers, decision-making. The result also coincided with the result of the study by Al-Ruqi (2016) that showed that the study sample members believe that the administrative

empowerment of school leaders in the Afif governorate applies it to a moderate degree. The result also agreed with the study by Al-Shehri (2017), whose results concluded that leaders of private secondary schools in northern Riyadh apply administrative empowerment in light of the indicators for building a school supervisory performance leadership system with a moderate degree. The result also met with the result of the study by Al-Tarawneh (2017), which indicated that administrative empowerment is available to school principals with an average degree.

Differences According to the Variable of the Educational Qualification

Table 3 shows the existence of apparent differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample individuals towards the dimensions of the study tool. The differences were generally in favour of a bachelor's degree at the expense of graduate studies, and in favour of a higher diploma holder at the expense of graduate studies.

The result of this means that the principals and managers of the lower educational qualification holders have different perceptions than their counterparts who have higher educational qualifications about the reality of empowerment in the Directorate of the Kasbah of the Karak Governorate, and this difference may be due to reasons related to the desire of some school leaders to have more powers, professional growth policies, incentives, and others. The result also met with the result of the study by Mansour and Wan (2018) that showed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of managers and managers in the reality of administrative empowerment according to the variable of the educational qualification. The result also coincided with the result of the study by Al-Ruqi (2016) that showed a difference in the reality of administrative empowerment according to the variable of the educational qualification.

The result is consistent with the result of a study by Jaber (2012) that showed statistically significant differences between school principals' responses to the reality of administrative empowerment in general and in dimensions of delegation of authority, powers, communication and information flow according to the number

Table 3: Arithmetic mean and SDs to identify the difference in the degrees of empowerment among school leaders in the directorate of education in the Karak Region in Southern Jordan, according to the difference in the educational qualification variable

Domain	Category the variable	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Delegation of Authority	Bachelors	3.7619	0.41239
	Higher Diploma	3.6558	0.53753
	Postgraduate	3.2556	0.75379
Communication and Information Flow	Bachelors	4.2778	0.38490
	Higher Diploma	3.5985	0.72677
	Postgraduate	3.2281	0.50678
Professional Growth	Bachelors	4.3889	1.05848
	Higher Diploma	3.2045	0.57948
	Postgraduate	2.8596	0.83382
Make a Decision	Bachelors	4.1905	0.65983
	Higher Diploma	3.5455	0.51722
	Postgraduate	2.7744	0.77856
Incentives	Bachelors	3.7222	1.34715
	Higher Diploma	2.5758	0.89491
	Postgraduate	2.3246	0.55687
The Tool as a Whole	Bachelors	4.0625	0.75777
	Higher Diploma	3.3338	0.44648
	Postgraduate	2.8964	0.55571

of years of experience. The result also met with a study by Al-Taani (2011), whose results showed the presence of statistically significant differences in respondents' assessment of the degree of administrative empowerment due to the variable of experience. The result also met with the result of the study by Mansour and Wan (2018) that showed statistically significant differences between the average scores of managers and managers in the reality of administrative empowerment according to the variable of experience. The result also coincided with the result of the study by Al-Ruqi (2016) that showed a difference in the reality of administrative empowerment according to the variable of experience.

The results indicated that the general arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample members to the questionnaires that measure the reality of empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region, south of Jordan, came with an average degree of appreciation, came after the delegation of authority was ranked first, followed by communication and information flow. Third, came after decision-making, and fourth came after professional growth, and finally came after incentives. The results indicated that there are statistically significant differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample individuals towards the items of the study in-

strument according to the variable of the educational qualification on the tool as a whole and on the sub-dimensions (communication and information flow, professional growth, decision-making, and incentives). The differences were generally in favour of a bachelor's degree at the expense of graduate studies, and in favour of a higher diploma holder at the expense of graduate studies. The results also indicated that there are statistically significant differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample members towards the study tool questionnaires according to the variable years of experience on the tool as a whole and on the sub-dimensions (delegation of authority, communication and information flow, professional growth, decision-making, and incentives). The differences were generally in favour of experienced managers (less than five years, from 5-less than ten years) at the expense of experienced managers (more than ten years). In addition the results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample members towards the study tool questionnaires according to the gender variable on the tool as a whole and on the sub-dimensions (delegation of authority, communication and information flow, professional growth, decision-making, and incentives).

CONCLUSION

The results indicated that the general arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample members to the questionnaires that measure the reality of empowerment among school leaders in the Directorate of Education in the Karak region, south of Jordan, came with an average degree of appreciation, came after the delegation of authority was ranked first, followed by communication and information flow. The results indicated that there are statistically significant differences between the values of the arithmetic mean for the responses of the sample individuals towards the items of the study instrument according to the variable of the educational qualification on the tool as a whole and on the sub-dimensions. The differences were generally in favour of a bachelor's degree at the expense of graduate studies, and in favour of a higher diploma holder at the expense of graduate studies. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education in Jordan review the delegation of powers to school leaders so that the powers granted to school leaders are commensurate with the nature of their tasks, and that freedom is granted to perform the job functions in an optimal manner without the intervention of higher departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conducting more scientific studies similar to the subject of the current study on societies other than those covered by the current study in order to benefit from its results and generalise its recommendations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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