The Leadership and the institutional excellence at the Saudi Arabia's Universities in the light of the vision 2030: An applied study on the academicians

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Abstract: The study aims to identify the demographic variables that are effective in leading the academic staff in general and to identify the most important obstacles that may prevent the empowerment of academics in various sectors in terms of leading projects in an academic way. Descriptive analyzes are used to find the level of academic leadership. We do not find statistically significant differences in academic leadership in Vision 2030 due to demographic variables such as gender, age, degree, place of residence, nature of work and experience. It was found that the most effective obstacle to academic empowerment in Saudi Arabia is the weakness of some equipment and capabilities that may provide the academic segment in some universities. The study recommends continuing to support decision-makers in state institutions in general and educational institutions in particular to empower academics in the academic aspects and activate the media role in continuing awareness of the importance of leading academics in the practical side and expanding the provision of vocational training

1. Introduction

Academics are represented, and no development can be achieved if the academic staff is marginalized. Lack of awareness of the importance of academics and their role may be seen as obstacles to academic empowerment in Saudi Arabia [1]. The current study aims to identify the level of Saudi academic empowerment in light of the Kingdom's vision 2030. Academic empowerment is defined as providing tools, means and mechanisms to obtain education and knowledge with equal opportunities such as men and freedom of expression. Defining academic empowerment, that increasing the capabilities of academics and their opportunities to teach and learn internally and externally would help them participate in decision-making on a personal and societal level [2]. The participation of academics in the educational system. Saudi academics must be empowered in the field of education and work gradually until they reach the highest levels in educational institutions and may reach higher ranks as deputy minister or university director, and this empowerment may enable academics to obtain membership in the Shura Council [3].

Academic empowerment indicators consist of the number of educational and academic programs offered. It may raise the skills of academics in computer, multimedia, scientific research, problem-solving, self-learning, scientific capabilities, scholarships, and professional specializations [4]. Moreover, the number of academics should be compared to the total number of students at different educational levels, and the number of jobs assigned to academics in the academic field should be compared to the total number of jobs available [5]. The level of academic and educational empowerment of Saudi academics is reflected in the fact that Saudi academics are ranked first in the Arab world and ranked tenth in the world in terms of education, according to the Spector Index. In 2019, the participation of academics in foreign scholarship programs increased [6].

The theoretical importance of the current research lies in the scarcity of studies in the field of Saudi academic empowerment under Vision 2030 [7], which would stimulate the state through the development of academic human resources, in which Saudi academics are an essential component [8]. This study can practically contribute by providing decision-makers with a vision of the most prominent indicators that the Ministry has overlooked in its plans to educate Saudi academics.

The current study aims to identify the level of Saudi academic empowerment, and to find statistically significant differences in the level of Saudi academic empowerment attributable to demographic variables such as gender, age, outcome, place of residence, work and experience, and to identify the most important obstacles that may prevent empowerment in various sectors [9]. After that, we propose several suitable solutions to overcome these barriers and formulate a future vision for Saudi academic empowerment in light of Vision 2030. We will identify the problems facing Saudi academic empowerment.

2.Background Of Study

Universities are the cornerstone of community development, as their institutions play a fundamental role in advancing development and providing society with human energies and scientific cadres. Hence, the mission of universities in all societies revolves around participation in the path of development. The successful universities are ranked by developing mechanisms that help them achieve distinction and keep pace with contemporary and future changes [10]. Leadership is a concept that has received attention for achieving quality, excellence and efficiency. Since organizations are influenced by their management style, leadership has a prominent role in providing the organization in general with good, robust and transparent management [11]. It also enables the leadership to design effective strategies to bring about a qualitative leap in the competitive position of the organization.

Leadership is the practice that expresses how to exercise, power and direct the work of a university institution. It focuses on the structure and function of higher education institutions, the regulatory and legislative framework to monitor them, and the roles and responsibilities of university management to ensure independence, accountability, accountability, transparency, and the expansion of participation outside universities [12].

The university leadership concept and principles emerged as a modern strategic choice. It shortens academic procedures, increases data accuracy, provides ease of exchange and storage, increases productivity, and reduces performance costs. Institutional excellence is: "A characteristic, or a group of characteristics, or an element of distinction for an institution that is unique to it, and enables it to maintain it for a long time due to the difficulty. It is emulated, and that period achieves its interest and enables it to outperform competitors in its distinguished output." [13]. At the same time, institutional excellence is also a state of excellence in providing all services efficiently and effectively by following the mechanisms that ensure continuous progress in all aspects and at all levels. And it works to maintain this distinction by keeping pace with developments continuously.

Good leadership in universities helps them adapt to internal and external environmental variables to achieve a competitive advantage in the quality of the university's output and raise its academic reputation. The leadership also helps in improving and developing the performance of the educational institution. It avoids any risks that hinder its quality of performance from achieving a global competitive position for its counterparts in the global education market. Moreover, it is mentioned that leadership is the main element in increasing the competitiveness of institutions in performing the tasks assigned to the university.

The current research is distinguished from previous studies in its approach to leadership in Saudi universities and its dimensions [14]. The current research expresses the link between the influence of leadership and its concept on the academic side of Saudi universities.

As for university education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it is witnessing a developmental stage to modernize the structures, philosophy and trends of performance. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's vision embraced commitment to achieving the highest levels of transparency and leadership. Leadership in universities has become a standard for measuring administrative quality and academic performance of universities. This is achieved through the application of good leadership standards, relying on information and communication technology.

The Kingdom's Vision 2030 aimed to make a qualitative leap in the work of universities through commitment to achieving the highest levels of advanced leadership in their administrative, financial and academic practices. This research seeks to identify the role of leadership in achieving academic excellence in Saudi universities. To achieve this goal, the reality of the distinguished leadership practice of universities is determined at the academic level.

3.Research Methodology

This research is considered a descriptive and analytical approach. Describes the reality of driving. It defines the relationship between leadership and academic excellence in Saudi universities. All academics represent the Saudi community. The questionnaire was distributed via an electronic link, and the number of completed questionnaires valid for analysis was (166).

4.Results And Discussion

The reality of Saudi universities' application of modern and rational leadership standards. The arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated to find practice. The results are shown in Table (1).

Table (1): Standards of modern leadership in Saudi universities.

Items	Means	Standard deviations
1- Transparency		
The Academic staff are regularly informed of the academic circulars	4.22	0.804
There is an electronic link between all departments, deanships, and colleges	4.14	1.008
Failure to comply with time and place when executing transactions	3.62	0.813
Information is exchanged between faculties at the university	3.42	0.803
Accurate information is available on all faculties of the university	3.40	0.632
The academic participate in creating academic problems	2.74	0.953
General average	**3.59**	**0.449**
2- Accountability and calculation		
Academic staff are obligated to submit periodic electronic reports on the results of their work	3.58	0.862
There is awareness among the employees regarding the importance of the accountability principle electronically	3.18	0.987
There is an electronic system for receiving complaints from university academic	3.06	1.378
Complaints are dealt with objectively electronically	2.87	1.096
The accountability system is updated electronically	2.80	1.173
There is an online declared system for accounting academic	2.68	1.171
General average	**3.02**	**0.818**
3- Participation		
Academic staff participate in taking academic actions	3.00	0.874
Regular meetings are held for academic via the university's electronic network to get their opinions	2.86	1.113
Academic staff participate in shaping the vision and mission of the university	2.83	1.128
There is a mechanism for submitting complaints through the websites	2.70	1.227
Academic staff participate in drawing up business policies	2.40	1.211
General average	**2.76**	**0.935**
4- Level of service provision		
The university provides all the accounting extensions that the Academic staff needs in work	3. 88	1.055
The contents of the university's website cover all its activities and services	3.85	0.719
The university provides training courses and workshops to train Academic staff on how to use electronic management systems	3.78	1.114
Modern technological means are used	3.73	0.725

The university responds quickly to any technical requirements that serve the interest of work	3.60	0.927
General average	**3.77**	**0.661**
5- Human capabilities		
Increasing the flow of information through the website leads to successful communication	3. 77	0.852
Attention to updating the websites of the various faculty contributes to the speed of contacting them	3.76	0.847
The electronic authorization system must be adopted to facilitate communications	3.76	0.756
The university holds training courses for academic staff to provide them with the skills of electronic dealing	3.51	0.926
Spreading the culture of electronic interaction among academic staff	3.46	0.925
General average	**3.65**	**0.792**

It became clear from the results of Table No. (1) that the most applied dimensions of leadership according to the respondents 'answers are "the level of service provision" with a calculation (3.77) and a standard deviation (0.661).). As for the most applicable item, it is "the university provides all the accounting accessories that the employee needs in his work" with an average (3.88) and a standard deviation (1.055). It is followed by "infrastructure" with a mean (3.73) and a standard deviation of (0.691). The most frequent element is "the university provides sufficient computers" with an arithmetic mean (3.84) and a standard deviation of (0.819), then "human capabilities" with an arithmetic mean (3.65) and a standard deviation of (0.792). The most commonly used expression is "the increasing flow of information across the site that leads to successful communications" with a mean (3.77) and a standard deviation of (0.852), then "transparency" with a mean (3.59) and a standard deviation of (0.449). The most achievable element is "employees constantly look at administrative circulars" with an arithmetic mean (4.22) and a standard deviation of (0.804), then "change management" with an arithmetic mean (3.42) and a standard deviation of (0.799).)). The most achieved element is "the organizational structures must be reviewed continuously to achieve organizational excellence" with an arithmetic mean (3.62) and a standard deviation (0.898).

Table (2): The reality of the dimensions of institutional excellence in light of the administration in Saudi universities.

Items	Means	Standard deviations
1- Leadership		
The higher leadership develops the vision and mission of the university	3.81	0.687
Leadership is involved in developing, implementing, and updating business systems	3.67	0.890
The leadership adopts a culture of discrimination in human resource management	3.53	0.8720
The leadership adopts a policy of change	3.45	0.8280
Leadership provides a suitable work environment that encourages creativity	3.25	1.828
General Average	**3.54**	**0.788**
2- The workers		
The university identifies and develops the skills and capabilities of	3.55	0.884

employees		
There is a vital department for human resources management at the university	3.39	0.899
The university plans and manages personnel affairs	3.37	0.910
There are training and qualification programs for employees	3.29	1.196
The university is keen to provide job security for workers by granting appropriate salaries and providing fair incentives	2.95	1.247
The university recognizes and rewards academic staff' efforts	2.86	1.159
General Average	**3.24**	**0.903**
3- The strategic planning		
The university has a clear and announced strategic plan	3.68	0.779
The university seeks the help of experts for a strategic plan	3.64	0.623
The strategic plan is determined for the financial resources required for implementation	3.63	0.826
The strategic plan is translated into actual programs	3.37	0.681
General Average	**3.58**	**0.665**
4- Processes		
The university seeks to formulate a strategic plan that fits with the Kingdom's vision	3.92	0.816
The university seeks to provide international quality services to students	3.78	0.839
The university seeks to provide services of international quality to the local community surrounding the university	3.73	0.725
The university has an operations management system that serve academician	3.73	0.766
The university documents work systems and guides	3.57	0.708
General average	**3.75**	**0.718**

It is clear from Table No. (2) that the most applied dimensions of institutional excellence are "operations" with an arithmetic mean (3.75) and a standard deviation of 0.718. In addition, the most implemented element in this dimension is "universities seek to formulate a strategic plan that fits with the Kingdom's vision," with an arithmetic mean (3.92) and a standard deviation of (0.816). The most verified items are "universities seeking to obtain institutional accreditation" with a mean (3.8) and a standard deviation of (0.871), followed by "strategic planning" with an arithmetic mean (3.58) and a standard deviation of (0.665). The most achievable items are "determining the strategic plan for the financial resources required for implementation" with an arithmetic average (3.68) and a standard deviation (0.771), followed by "leadership" with an arithmetic mean (3.54) and a standard deviation of (0.788). Likewise, the item "developing senior leadership and the university's vision and mission" stands with an arithmetic mean of (3.81) and a standard deviation of (0.687). Finally, the academic staff component stands with a mean (3.24) and a standard deviation of (0.903). The most achievable item "Universities perform by identifying the skills, capabilities and development of workers," with an arithmetic mean (3.55) and a standard deviation of (0.884).

5.Conclusions And Recommendations

The results of the study showed that the most applied dimension of advanced leadership on the academic side of Saudi universities is "service provision", and the least applied dimension is participation. The results also indicated that the dimension of institutional excellence is more applied. Whereas, the less applied dimension is the academic staff, where the results showed a positive correlation (0.01) between all dimensions of leadership and institutional excellence. The results also indicated that the leadership dimensions (93.5%) explained the difference

in the aspect of academic excellence in Saudi universities. The remainder (6.5%) of the variance in leadership excellence for the managerial side is due to other factors not included in the study. He calls for more studies to explain this paradox. The accountability dimension is the most influential dimension in managing leadership excellence in Saudi universities, while transparency is the least important dimension.

The research recommended universities to strive seriously and responsibly to apply the principles of electronic leadership to increase their efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness. It stresses the necessity of adopting it as an academic discipline in all university dealings, and requires the participation of academics in decision-making processes related to academic work. There is an urgent need for transparency and objectivity in the accountability system. The study suggests providing incentives and rewards to raise efficiency.

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