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Requirements for the Application of Governance Standards in Faculties of Education in Arab Universities

Requerimientos para la aplicación de estándares de gobernanza en facultades de educación en universidades árabes



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Abstract:

This study aimed to identify the requirements for applying the dimensions of governance in the faculties of education in Arab universities. The descriptive analytical method was used, analyzing the content of previous studies related to the topic. The most important results are that the faculties of education in Arab universities actually apply, to a moderate degree, the dimensions of governance in their management, as well as for some instances of self-monitoring, development and sustainability. It also came out with a number of recommendations, the most important of which are: issuing regulations and legislation related to governance standards in the faculties of education in Arab universities, establishing independent committees within the faculties of education to follow up and evaluate the implementation of governance standards, adopting unified and declared standards for the various faculties of education in Arab universities, strengthening the role of the Union of Arab Universities, and consolidating the bonds of partnership between the union and the faculties of education.

Keywords: Implementation of governance; Governance Standards; Faculties of Education; Arab universities; Descriptive Analytical Method.

Resumen:

Este estudio pretende identificar los requerimientos para aplicar las dimensiones de gobernanza en las facultades de educación de las universidades árabes. Se utilizó el método descriptivo analítico, analizando el contenido de estudios previos relacionados con el tema. Los resultados más importantes son que las universidades árabes efectivamente aplican, en un grado moderado, las dimensiones de gobernanza en su administración, así como para algunas instancias de automonitoreo, desarrollo y sustentabilidad. El estudio obtuvo también una serie de recomendaciones, las más importantes de las cuales son: emitir regulaciones y legislación relacionada con estándares de gobernanza en las facultades de educación en las universidades árabes, establecer comités independientes dentro de las facultades de educación para dar seguimiento y evaluar la implementación de estándares de gobernanza, adoptar estándares unificados y declarados para las varias facultades de educación en las universidades árabes, fortaleciendo el papel de la Unión de Universidades Árabes, y consolidando los lazos de compañerismo entre la unión y las facultades de educación.

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Palabras clave: Implementación de gobernanza; Estándares de gobernanza; Facultades de educación; Universidades Árabes; Método descriptivo analítico.

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Requirements for the Application of Governance Standards in Faculties of Education in Arab Universities

| Introduction

Governance has become an integrated framework of pillars and standards that aims to be adopted to create institutions that enhance transparency, accountability and participation, and in which the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the administrative bodies legally responsible for management is balanced, with a role for stakeholders (beneficiaries) in the administrative process (Al-Qasim & Abu Bishara, 2019). Higher education institutions are considered creators of knowledge. They produce and direct it for progress and cooperate with their partners in making the most of this knowledge, exchanging visions and benefits, as they become partners in knowledge, development and destiny.

The faculties of education in Arab universities are among the important institutions that contribute in most countries of the region to promote development in its various aspects, be it social, economic, administrative, and political. As such, those faculties must have a wise and modern approach to management. One of the most relevant of these modern approaches to management is the approach to governance, which has attracted the attention of researchers, and has been addressed in the fields of economics, politics and development (Al-Hamoud, 2021).

With the increasing interest in the subject of governance in education in recent years, many conferences were held, such as the Conference on Governance of Arab Universities in Amman (2016), in which one of the most important recommendations was to expedite the application of governance standards in Arab universities (Al-Roudan, 2021).

The development and progress in the educational field, witnessed by universities in general and faculties of education in particular, did not liberate the traditional grip and administrative routine associated with the centralization of decisions. Most departments of education faculties in Arab universities still ignore this, as many Arab universities suffer in some of their legislation from the centralization of decision within an atmosphere characterized by deficiencies in integrity, transparency and accountability. These may reflect negatively on their performance and constitute an obstacle to their development, especially in light of the competition they are witnessing (Anab, 2021). The results of the study of Al-Shammari (2018) and Al-Fawzan (2017) assured that the application of university governance principles is an administrative method that conducts to the effectiveness, leadership and efficiency required for work. Therefore, it can be said that neglecting to activate the standards of governance in the faculties of education in Arab universities will lead to a weak level of their administrations.

Studies have varied on determining the level of governance in Saudi universities. Some studies, such as the one by Al-Ramthi and Eid (2019), indicated that the actual application of governance in faculties of education in Arab universities is weak, which points to the necessity of educating about governance and ways to activate it, as well as limiting the obstacles to its application. The results of Al-Mufaiz's study (2018) showed that the level of activation of the areas of governance in the faculties of education in Arab universities was average. The study highlighted some of the obstacles that could prevent its implementation, including centralization, weak financial and administrative independence, and low level of

academic freedom. Also, the studies of Al-Aklabi (2019), as well as Asiri and Al-Qahtani (2017) indicated that the level of governance application was medium in some faculties of education in Arab universities.

Perhaps what prompts and encourages an increasing interest in activating governance in the colleges of education in Arab universities is the existence of many studies on the positive impact of university governance, including the findings of Al-Aklabi (2019) about the existence of a relationship between strategic vigilance and the governance of colleges of education in Arab universities. Also Mogabala's study (2016), revealed the existence of a relationship between administrative governance and job performance, while the study by Al-Zahrani (2012), indicated that there is a relationship between good governance, job satisfaction and organizational loyalty among faculty members in faculties of education in Arab universities. Based on the preceding considerations, it is clear that the application of governance in the faculties of education in Arab universities needs awareness of the concept and mechanism of its application. This increases the desire to get closer to its reality, and try to reach solutions and proposals that increase its activation, by identifying the following main research question: What are the requirements for applying governance standards in faculties of education in Arab universities?

The following secondary questions arise from it: a) What is the extent of the application of governance standards in the faculties of education in Arab universities? b) What are the possible suggestions for applying governance standards in colleges of education in Arab universities?

The importance of this study lies in the modernity of its subject, since it looks at "governance", one of the modern administrative concepts in the field of education. As this concept is relatively recent, so subjecting it to the field study gives it clear importance, especially in light of the circumstances and changes taking place in the faculties

of education in Arab universities, which must adopt this concept to face rapid educational changes.

Also, this study sheds light on the concept of governance, its ethics and the mechanism of its application, which creates awareness among educational, political and intellectual circles to strive for its proper implementation at colleges of education in Arab universities.

| Method

The researcher used the descriptive-analytical methodology because it is the most appropriate for evaluation research. Abdullah (2011) defines it as a way to study scientific phenomena or problems by describing them in a scientific way, and then coming to logical explanations that have evidence and proofs that give the researcher the ability to develop specific frameworks for the problem, and this is used in determining the results of the study. The researcher also performed a content analysis of previous studies concerning governance standards.

Based on the nature of the study and the objectives that it seeks to achieve, the analytical descriptive approach was used, which is based on the study of the phenomenon as it is in fact and is concerned to provide a precise description, expressed in qualitative and quantitative terms. For this approach it does not suffice to gather information about the phenomenon in order to investigate its manifestations and its different relations, but rather to analyze linkage

| Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Annab (2021) states that:

good governance [is] based on integrity, transparency, accountability, and combating corruption, achieving justice without discrimination, applying the law to all, while providing effective internal and external

oversight, and it can be applied in any organization: governmental or eligibility, and at any level: international, regional or local, and in any field: the field of goods or the field of services. (p. 56)

and in the goals of the college can be achieved. The means to achieve those goals and to monitor performance, and its importance can be determined (Al-Qasim & Abu Beshara, 2019) as follows:

University governance means: "the ability of universities to achieve their goals with a high level of quality, and to improve their performance by following effective plans and appropriate methods" (Al-Shammari, 2018, p. 14).

Muslim (2016) defines the governance principles as: "the principles through which the university can properly direct its performance towards achieving its goals, and in a way that guarantees achieving balanced requirements of all parties." (p. 239).

The concept of university governance emerged to express the real crisis that universities are going through and the proposed solutions to it. This is a crisis that is represented in the fact that there are university administrations placed by the executive authority above students and faculty members, whose task is to make decisions related to their affairs, without any of them having the right to discuss or object these decisions. As a result, most of the decisions are in the hands of one of the parties to the university institution, and the rest of the parties – students and faculty members–, are placed in the position of the recipient of these decisions and the obligation to implement them without discussion. This could reinforce the continuation of the culture of reluctance to participate in public life, whether inside or outside university, and weakens the development of the university as an academic institution in that is supposed to reformulate the cultural, cognitive and scientific trends of society.

The importance of governance in faculties of education

Governance is of great importance in faculties of education because it provides the organizational structure through

1. Contributing to the creation of independent colleges of education that have governing councils and bodies responsible for defining their strategic direction and ensuring the effectiveness of their management.
2. Helping colleges of education to achieve their goals in the best possible way.
3. It is useful in revealing shortcomings in performance and weak outputs.
4. Ensuring a balance between long-term strategic responsibilities and short-term operational responsibilities.
5. Governance helps enhance competitiveness and avoid administrative and financial corruption.
6. Ensuring the resources of the faculties of education and their optimal investment.
7. It guarantees the rights and interests of employees of the administrative and academic bodies without discrimination.
8. Governance is a system of self-control and supervision, which leads to the safety of the legal application of legislation, and consequently to good management and guaranteeing the rights of employees.

Objectives of Governance of Faculties of Education

The objectives envisaged from implementing governance cannot be assigned to one party, but rather relate to many parties that seek goals and benefits as a result of strengthening governance applications in government agencies and various business organizations. Halawa and Taha (2012) consider that among the most important of these objectives are:

1. Enhancing the effectiveness of colleges of education and increasing their internal and external efficiency by creating a work environment.
2. Laying down laws and rules that guide the leaders and administrations of faculties of education when assuming administrative work, in a way that guarantees democracy and justice for all concerned parties.
3. Enhancing the participation of all parties, including academic and administrative members, leaders, and students, in decision-making processes.
4. Achieving justice and equality among workers to obtain high performance from all categories.
5. Providing the right of accountability and accountability to all parties benefiting from the existence of these institutions.
6. Achieving transparency by working according to clear mechanisms and frameworks, enabling workers to fully practice their work, and helping them to give more.
7. Active participation in all activities inside and outside the faculties of education.

Principles of Governance in Faculties of Education

Due to the increasing interest in the present era in the concept of governance, many organizations, bodies and community institutions with their various activities have studied and analyzed the concept and set specific criteria for its application. In this section, the most important principles of governance of colleges of education will be reviewed. Those principles, their adoption and their observance in their executive and administrative policies, will be presented. The principles of governance in faculties of education have been defined taking into consideration the following factors considered in the works by Hamad (2020) and Al-Dahshan (2020):

1. Equality: It includes moving away from

discrimination and prejudice among members of faculties of education, as well as among executive departments and leaders, and dealing with the principle of justice for all.

2. Maintaining the rights of the members of the Higher Council of faculties of Education: It is summarized in allowing the members of the College Council to express their opinions, giving them opportunities to participate and discuss, and accepting their proposals, with the development of financial and administrative rewards and incentives to motivate them on an ongoing basis.

3. Ensuring the rights of stakeholders: Stakeholders mean the group benefiting from the existence of colleges of education, and their rights can be preserved through sincerity and seriousness in setting and implementing educational policies, and feeding students with science and knowledge. To graduate qualified forces capable of that includes monitoring the fulfillment of responsibilities for all administrative areas such as risk management, financial review, and supervision of the methods used to evaluate the performance of students, administrative and academic staff (Annab, 2021).

4. Transparency: Its importance lies in reducing ambiguity and eliminating the ambiguities of legislation, the growth of work with high quality standards, the interdependence between different organizations, and the development of administrative units (Al-Hadabi & Al-Azizi, 2019). It also includes disclosing the educational, scientific, and executive policies of the faculties of education, expressing opinions and ideas, and cooperation and coordination among members of the same educational institution (Hamad, 2020).

5. Independence: It is a concept that means the freedom of universities and granting them autonomy, to become more responsive to social and economic environments, and more able to

adapt to change and innovation. The university's independence has a multidimensional character. These are the administrative independence, financial independence and academic independence of universities (Al-Ghazali, 2018).

Stages for applying governance in faculties of education

The implementation of governance in faculties of education passes through specific stages, which are (Al-Qasim & Abu Beshara 2019):

1. The stage of introducing corporate governance: It is the first and most important stage of governance, in which a distinction is made between governance as a culture and as an administrative style that is adhered to, where the nature, approach, importance, tools and means of governance are clarified.
2. The stage of building the infrastructure for governance: Corporate governance needs a solid infrastructure, capable of interacting with developments and surrounding variables.
3. Stage of work of a standard program for governance: governance needs a specific timetable for tasks, so that the progress in implementing governance in the university institution can be monitored, and the obstacles and difficulties that hindered the implementation stage can be identified and evaluated.
4. Implementation stage: It is the stage of measuring the willingness and desire of the beneficiaries to implement governance, as implementation requires a number of practices such as independence of authority, transparency, accountability, responsibility, equality, and studying and analyzing them to identify weaknesses in implementation.
5. Follow-up and development phase: It is carried out with the aim of ensuring good implementation, through internal and external oversight and reviews, and scrutiny of the mechanism for implementing

administrative procedures and processes.

Many Arab studies deal with the reality of applying good governance in faculties of education; the next section presents a review of previous studies closely related to the topic.

Annab (2021) aimed to measure the degree of application of e-governance and its relationship to the degree of practice of administrative empowerment in Jordanian public universities from the point of view of faculty members. He used the quantitative methodology, and the results of the study showed that the degree of application of e-governance and the practice of administrative empowerment among faculty members in Jordanian public universities from their point of view was average. The results also indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in the application of e-governance and the practice of administrative empowerment due to the variables of gender and academic rank.

Al-Hamoud's study (2021) aimed to identify the degree of governance application and its relationship to organizational excellence in Jordanian private universities in the capital governorate, Amman, from the point of view of the faculty members. A descriptive survey method was used. The results also indicated that there were differences between the average estimates of the sample members of the degree of governance application due to the difference in the gender variable in favor of males, and the difference in the academic rank variable in favor of the professor's rank. And there were no differences due to the difference in the academic path variable. She also indicated that the level of organizational excellence in private Jordanian universities was moderately high. In addition, there are no statistically significant differences between the average estimates of individuals due to the difference in the gender variable.

Al-Roudan's study (2021) had the objective of identifying the level of governance of the College of Education at Qassim University in the light of the Kingdom's vision

2030 from the point of view of the faculty members. The descriptive survey method was used. The results of the study concluded that the level of governance activation in the College of Education at Qassim University came to a good degree, which is below high, and there are differences between the sample response due to gender, in favor of males.

The study by Abu Qattamet al. (2020) aimed to know the degree of application of governance at the University of Jordan from the point of view of academics. The study used the descriptive analytical approach, and the results showed that the reality of the application of governance at University of Jordan appeared to be at a medium degree, in addition to the absence of statistically significant differences between the average estimates of the sample members due to the study's categorical variables (sex, rank, years of experience, type of college) in all fields, except for the type of college, as it was found that there is statistical significant difference between the science and humanities faculties and in favor of the humanities faculties.

Hamad's study (2020) studied the reality of the application of governance at Jerash University and the viewpoint of the faculty members. The study relied on the descriptive analytical approach, and it concluded that the reality of applying Governance at University of Jerash is medium, in addition to the absence of statistically significant differences in the averages the estimations of the sample members in the degree of application of governance at Jerash University due to the categorical study variables in all fields, except for the college variable.

Al-Dahshan study (2020) aimed to develop a proposed vision for the requirements of applying e-governance at Assiut University in the light of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the conceptual framework for e-governance. The study relied on the descriptive approach to get to know the opinions of faculty members in some faculties of Assiut University about the reality of application and the obstacles that prevent its good

application.

Al-Zuhairi and Al-Quraishi's study (2020) aimed to know the role of the components of strategic planning in implementing e-governance at Wasit University in Iraq. The descriptive correlative approach was used, and the results of the study showed that the mathematical average from the university's vision was 1.91, meaning that it is partially available, and the gap between what is available and what is required to be reached is 54%, which is a large gap that needs appropriate strategies to address it. The mathematical average of the university's mission reached 1.88, meaning that it is partially available, and the gap between what is available and what is required to be reached is 55%, which is a large gap that needs appropriate strategies to address it.

Miqdadi and Ibrahim's study (2020) aimed to identify the administrative performance of the heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities and its relationship to the application of governance principles. The questionnaire was used as a tool for the study to collect data through the application of the descriptive survey method. The most prominent results of the study showed that the degree of application of the principles of governance in Jordanian universities was at a medium degree, and the results indicated that there were statistically significant differences due to the variables (university, type of college, years of experience for the degree of application of governance, and the absence of statistically significant differences due to the variables like gender, age and academic rank).

The study by Mthethwa and Chikoko (2020) had the goal of identifying the academic value of the university's participation in the field of governance. The study used the qualitative research method to understand the relationship between participation in university governance and academic experiences. It concluded that the academic value of the university's participation in governance is affected by several political factors such as the level of study and the ability to balance time, and that

participation in governance adds academic value to the university.

Al-Qahtani's study (2019) aimed to identify the level of application of university governance at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University to achieve competitive advantage in light of the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for 2030. The study relied on the descriptive analytical approach, and the most prominent results showed that the degree of applying governance to achieve competitive advantage in decision-making at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University was high, and the level of competitive advantage in decision-making was also high.

Al-Qasim and Abu Beshara's study (2019) aimed to identify the extent to which the principles of governance are applied in the faculties and departments of physical education in Palestinian higher education institutions, from the point of view of current and former officials. The results indicated that the extent to which the principles of governance are applied in the faculties and departments of physical education in the Palestinian higher education institutions was significant in all axes and the total degree, as the average axis of implementation of transparency was 3.97, while the axis of participation and the axis of accountability were, respectively 3.75 and 3.51.

The study by Muhsin et al. (2020) aims to identify the relationship between governance and quality of teaching on student satisfaction, as well as study the impact of learning facilities on university governance and student satisfaction. It notes the use of the descriptive approach (relational), so that the results concluded that governance, quality of teaching and learning facilities had a positive impact. Regarding student satisfaction, the study found that quality of teaching is affected by the governance of the university, in addition to the fact that learning facilities have a significant role and impact on university governance.

Al-Hadabi and Al-Azizi's study (2019) aimed to identify the level of activating the principles of governance in

Yemeni universities, using the descriptive survey method. The results came by determining the sample members' assessment of the level of application of governance principles at Sana'a University showing that it presented a low degree, with the field of justice in the first place, and the field of participation in the last. The degree of appreciation of the sample members to the level of application of governance principles at the University of Science and Technology was determined with a high general estimation, where the field of responsibility ranked first, and the field of participation ranked last.

The research by Salahudin et al. (2019) aimed to design a model of university governance with integrity that focuses on the basic operations of universities, by using a qualitative research method. It concluded that universities do not activate the principle of integrity in the core of their work and functions represented in teaching, scientific research, community service, human resources, budget, infrastructure, leadership, in addition to the spread of corruption practices in university administrations.

Al-Ramthi's study (2019) aimed to identify the development of institutional performance at the University of Bisha in the light of the most prominent global systems of university governance, by following the descriptive survey method. The results of the study revealed that the level of Saudi university administrations is weak, which may negatively affect their outputs and their ability to achieve their strategic goals. It also proved that the application of governance has an effective impact on developing their institutional performance, raising the level of its quality and supporting its strategic plans. The level of governance application at the University of Bisha was generally average.

The study by Sayidah et al. (2019) aimed to analyze the importance of quality and university governance in Indonesia, using the qualitative research method, and the results of the study indicated that university governance declines if its cadres are unqualified. The university was represented by students, and this demonstrates the

critical importance of governance in the management of universities and their outputs.

Hamada's study (2019), aimed to identify the position of the Japanese teaching profession on reforms to school governance, and the difficulties teachers face with the progress of these reforms. The experience in the teaching profession is based on a mixture of academic and practical (the term educational professionals should be interpreted as including researchers, and practitioners). The governance mechanism for teaching should be built through a four-way relationship between researchers, practitioners, citizens, and the government.

By reviewing the results of previous studies, it can be concluded that university governance is an integrated process that creates balance for all activities and works of the university, as well as enabling universities to manage themselves and ensure their independence and growth. Therefore, the studies conducted in the Arab countries concluded with the need to build a system of scientific, encyclopedic, and measurable standards and procedures for the application of university governance, and to oblige departments and councils by creating a special department on the organizational structure concerned with following up on the application of good governance. All this, taking into account that they are universities operating in an Arab environment, which have cultures that distinguish them from Western environments in which the idea of governance is already applied.

Most Arab universities also suffer from the absence of complete independence in management or, in other words, the formality of the independence granted to the university, whether at the administrative or scientific level, given mainly the composition of university councils, institutions, and the specializations entrusted to them. The slogan of the university's independence is devoid of its real content, since the presidents of universities and institutions, as well as the majority of the members of the councils of universities and institutions are appointed instead of being elected. Furthermore, the powers of

these councils are purely advisory, even with regard to the scientific function, while decisions are still being taken at the level of the central administration- any diligence, lapse, facility or personal error of an official in university administrations may cost him his position.

| Conclusions

In the light of the analysis of the theoretical literature and previous studies, the following conclusions and recommendations were reached, which could help in applying the dimensions of governance in the faculties of education in Arab universities.

This study concludes that the faculties of education in Arab universities currently apply to a medium degree, the dimensions of governance in their administration, and that the term usually appears under different names, such as academic quality. It was also possible to detect that some faculties of education have institutions of self-monitoring, development, and sustainability.

Likewise, it is pertinent to offer a few recommendations to promote the application of governance principles:

1. Issuing regulations and legislation regarding standards and principles of governance in faculties of education in Arab universities and obligating departments and councils to work with them.
2. Establishing independent committees within the colleges of education to follow up and evaluate the implementation of governance standards.
3. Adoption of unified and declared principles and standards for the various faculties of education in Arab universities.
4. Strengthening the role of the Union of Arab Universities and consolidating the bonds of partnership between it and the faculties of education.
5. Establishing an association of faculties of education in Arab universities, to activate more broadly the principles of transparency, participation, and accountability.
6. Work to increase awareness of the concept of go-

vernance and its principles, through holding educational sessions and meetings.

7. Providing effective and multiple means of communication between the college administration and all officials, in a manner that ensures easy dissemination of laws and regulations.

8. Activating the role of the internal and external audit and control committees, and assisting them in creating the appropriate conditions to carry out their work.

9. Issuing bylaws and regulations to ensure the achievement of the principle of clarity and transparency in the college administration.

10. Codify serious and strict penalties to hold accountable individuals who use their powers to achieve their own interests at the expense of the interests of other parties.

11. Separating the work of the administrative departments from each other and trying not to duplicate them as much as possible, so that it makes it easier for the college administration to determine the defective sectors, and who is responsible for possible errors.

12. Adopting a performance appraisal method that includes the participation of all parties (administrative body, academic staff, students, officials, and observers), in the light of which weaknesses are addressed and points of strengths are fortified.

13. Adopting an approach that enables the participation of the concerned parties in decision-making, by forming committees and councils that include a number of members representing them.

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