



## The Role of Administrative Empowerment in Improving the Quality of Collective Performance

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### ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the degree of administrative empowerment represented by the dimensions (delegation of authority, training and learning, motivation, independence) among senior leaders in achieving university performance quality represented by (tangibility, reliability, credible responsiveness) at the University of Basra, in addition to the differences in the degree of administrative empowerment among college deans. To achieve this, the study was conducted on a sample of a group of senior leadership opinions in universities and colleges (head of department, department headquarters, head of units and divisions), and the (SPSS) program was used to process the data. Among the most important results reached by the study are that the study proved the existence of two main relationships between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance at the university under study: a correlation relationship and an influence relationship. Also, in terms of impact, the results showed that administrative empowerment has a direct and positive impact on the quality of university performance.

**Keywords:** Administrative empowerment; Quality of university performance; Independence.

## INTRODUCTION

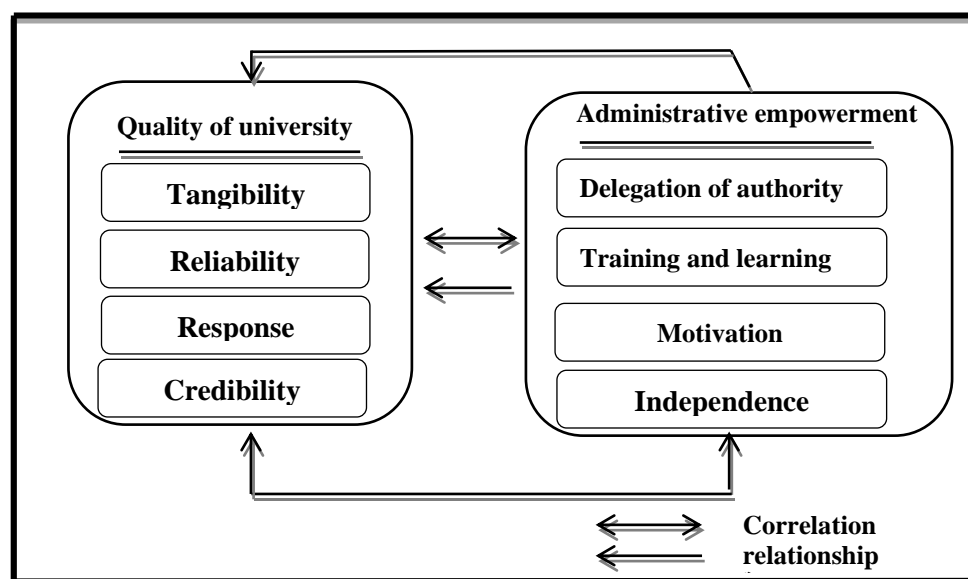
Administrative topics are among the most important topics that universities and educational institutions should pay attention to, due to their positive role in guiding universities and colleges to achieve their goals (McCaffery, 2018; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2021). Achieving the message for which universities were established, and among the administrative topics under current study and their applications in the field of educational institutions, with regard to administrative empowerment, is one of the modern administrative topics (McPherson & Schapiro, 2021). Administrative empowerment appeared in the mid-eighties of the last century in the field of public administration, and then its use extended to various fields, including the sports field (Bean, 2018). Therefore, the essential aspect of administrative empowerment lies in giving club presidents the powers, bearing responsibilities and making decisions for the members of the administrative body in these universities (Rudalevige, 2018). Empowerment: It is the sharing of power and authority among all members of the institution, which means granting individuals the powers that enable them to carry out their work freely and allow them to innovate, develop, participate in decision-making, bear responsibilities and results (Sharp, 2019). The nature of administrative work in sports clubs requires administrators to make field decisions according to changing situations and in accordance with laws and regulations, and bear responsibility for those decisions (Hums et al., 2023). In addition, the concept of empowerment goes to being a multi-dimensional structure that is not limited to additional powers and participation in decision-making only, but also includes freedom and independence in work and the ability to influence work outcomes, a sense of appreciation and professional status, self-efficacy, and professional growth, and all of these aspects are the main requirements for the success of administrators in universities (Kamruzzaman, 2020). The important of the study is consist of, Comprehensiveness in the current study in terms of addressing a vital and important topic for administrators in educational institutions, which is: administrative empowerment, and thus this contributes to reaching models that can be used to achieve quality university performance Also, the current study sheds light on the degree of administrative empowerment of administrative leaders in universities, identifying strengths and working to enhance them, and weaknesses to work on treating them now and preventing them in the future. In addition, it is hoped that the current study will open new horizons for researchers and officials in the field and its ability to conduct field studies in the administrative field. This study has conducted to explore the administrative preparation of heads of educational institutions in

terms of administrative empowerment is one of the main aspects in preparing them for administrative work. Due to their role in the success of administrative operations in universities, and with the least possible number of errors. Specifically, the problem of the study can be summarized in answering the following question: What is the degree of administrative empowerment among heads of educational institutions?

The study aimed to clarify the degree of administrative empowerment among heads of educational institutions. Also, to find differences in the degree of administrative empowerment among heads of educational institutions.

### Hypothetical research outline

In order to conduct a scientific treatment of the research problem and achieve its objectives, and in light of what was produced by the initial exploratory study that was conducted, the researcher adopted a hypothetical scheme that reflects the nature of the relationship between the research variables, as shown in Figure (1).



**Figure 1:** Hypothetical research diagram

Source: Prepared by the researcher

### (1) The first correlation hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant correlation between administrative empowerment, symbolized by the symbol (X), and the quality of university performance, symbolized by the symbol (Y) in the university under study.

## **(2) The second impact hypothesis:**

There is a statistically significant correlation between administrative empowerment, symbolized by the symbol (X), and the quality of university performance, symbolized by the symbol (Y) in the university under study.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of administrative empowerment is one of the most prominent contemporary concepts in administrative thought, due to the great role those administrative institutions play in societies and thus advance all areas of development in the lives of societies (Kwak, 2019). Also, the quality of working lead to enhance the ability of achieving the desire and need of institutions (Hani, 2020; Ahmad et al., 2023; Hameed et al., 2024). Therefore, efforts must be combined among members of a single institution to achieve the desired goals in the best possible way (Suskie, 2018). Empowerment is concerned with the process of granting authority to individuals and working to make them bear responsibility for making decisions related to their work without referring to higher levels, which is reflected in one way or another on the effectiveness of their organizations. However, some believe that empowerment is the process by which employees are given or granted authority, skills and freedom to perform their jobs (Laverack, 2019).

Empowerment is defined as the method that increases the actual and essential work motivation of employees (Al Harbi et al., 2019). Empowerment is defined as the philosophy of giving more responsibilities and decision-making authority to a group or individuals at the lower levels of the organization who have the skill, ability, understanding of work requirements, motivation, commitment, and confidence to unleash their energies and creativity through training and emotional support, relying on preparing the organization's environment so that they feel capable of making decisions and developing their confidence in themselves and others, while enjoying a high degree of freedom in work to achieve results for which they are held accountable (Cavalieri & Almeida, 2018).

Administrative empowerment was defined as granting employees' broader powers and more participation in decision-making, in addition to providing opportunities for professional growth and a suitable work environment according to a permanent strategy that enhances their sense of confidence and contributes to achieving goals. From the above, the researcher concludes that there is agreement and a common denominator for the above definitions of administrative

empowerment, which is giving importance to employees by involving them in the decision-making process in addition to granting them authority (Kim & Fernandez, 2015).

Empowerment is a visible part of the change in light of technological progress, as it leads to the agility of the organization's members who participate in daily tasks with the least number of managers, and empowerment is an important factor and a key to developing the creativity factor within the organization (Muduli & Pandya, 2018). The importance of administrative empowerment comes from the fact that it helps in maintaining human competencies and reducing the rate of turnover by enhancing mutual trust between the organization and employees and creating organizational loyalty, raising the morale of employees and reflecting this on their future orientation to work, which in turn reduces cases of leaving the job, which is positively reflected on work and production. Karami et al. (2017) pointed out that empowerment contributes to raising the morale and satisfaction of employees if they feel that they have the opportunity to work their capabilities, and they enjoy the management's appreciation and trust in them. This satisfaction, which contributes to the freedom of action, goes beyond drilling workers with external incentives, to replace them by building a work environment that motivates them internally, such as belonging and pride in practicing work in it, and leads to the speed of processing complaints and suggestions (Kgekoane, 2019).

A number of researchers who were interested in studying administrative empowerment and its relationship to some organizational variables, put forward a number of dimensions that clarify the nature and concept of empowerment, which focus on six basic dimensions: delegation of authority, training and learning, independence, motivation, participation in decision-making, and teamwork, which will be adopted in the current study (Al-Omari et al., 2020).

1- Delegation of authority Delegation includes tasks for subordinates and granting them the necessary authority to perform these tasks, with the subordinates' readiness to bear the consequences of responsibility for the acceptable performance of these tasks, and the delegate has the right to issue the decisions that he was delegated to take.

2- Training and learning: Training and learning are considered elements of administrative empowerment through which individuals can acquire the experiences and skills that qualify them to practice work and bear responsibilities.

3- Motivation is the readiness and self-direction of individuals stemming from within towards achievement and performance of work, i.e. it is a voluntary and voluntary behavior, and

empowerment contributes to giving workers the incentive towards the motivation to accomplish work and bear responsibility for it, as empowerment is a way to increase motivation by enabling workers to contribute effectively to setting their work goals and making decisions towards them by expanding

4- Independence: This means the trust granted to workers by giving them opportunities and space. Some say that administrative empowerment is giving workers the ability and independence to make decisions, especially at the lower administrative levels.

Quality means different things to different individuals and it is the extent of the unique and good characteristics of different businesses, especially when compared to specific standards. It also means striving to satisfy the needs and desires of customers with the least possible effort and cost (Hoyle, 2017). The quality of higher education is the striving to apply a wide range of basic educational and pedagogical standards and specifications to raise the level of quality and unity of the educational product through each individual participating in the educational process (Saroyan & Frenay, 2023).

The quality of higher education represents the ability to achieve the goals of educational programs in graduates in a way that achieves the satisfaction of society as the primary beneficiary. The quality of higher education represents accuracy, mastery, improving performance, developing knowledge among students, and the extent of success in achieving educational goals. The majority of the frameworks for the quality of higher education in the world are three-dimensional foundations consisting of planning for the university's mission, the active participation of its human elements, and the pursuit of comprehensive goals (El Talla et al., 2019). The basic criteria for evaluating the qualitative quality of university performance are based on the mission and general goals, the structure and content of the program, the educational/teaching environment, the quality of accepted students, the study system, success rates, the quality of graduates, the effectiveness of the study system, the quality of the teaching staff and learning facilities, external communication, knowledge exchange, and evaluation (Di Berardino & Corsi, 2017). The areas of quality in university performance are the mission and educational goals, academic courses, the teaching staff, students, scientific research, and the surrounding environment.

The concept of university performance quality relates to all the characteristics and features associated with the educational aspect that highlight the extent of excellence and the ability to demonstrate the desired results by translating students' needs into specific features that are the

basis for providing educational services and offering them to students in a manner that is consistent with their future aspirations (Gunn, 2018). The quality of higher education is a package of standards and characteristics that should be available in all elements of the educational process at the university, whether related to inputs, processes, or outputs that meet the needs and requirements of society through the effective use of all human and material elements at the university, while we see presented a model based on the model for quality to develop organizational performance and improve its quality, which is called the Deming cycle, and this cycle consists of:

A- Plan: It means planning the educational process (long-term, medium-long-term plans).

B- Do: It means the initial implementation of the plan.

C- Check: It means monitoring and evaluating the development and improvement that will occur in order to compare the results.

D- Act: It means implementing the steps set in case indicators of success appear.

The effectiveness of any organization is linked to the efficiency of the human element, its ability to work and its desire to work, considering it the influential and effective element in the use of available material resources. Management relies on maximizing results and rationalizing the use of available material and human resources. It may be difficult to rationalize the use of the human element, to the point that it increases the difficulty of management's ability to rationalize the use of this element, which made the main problem facing management in any organization is to identify the specific variables of this element, which are reflected in the behavior of these individuals who represent the work capacity in the organization. The data of job satisfaction are represented by the feeling of happiness. An individual who is satisfied with his job or profession accepts it with enthusiasm and activity and is happy with it, which increases his productive efficiency. As for dissatisfaction with the profession, it results from poor adaptation, and many manifestations of boredom, tedium, resentment, and frustration appear. Among the reasons that led to interest in the importance of the quality of university performance are the growth of the phenomenon of private university education, the expansion of the circle of competition between universities to attract students, not only at the local level, the demand of stakeholders from higher education to increase its level of performance, and the keenness of educational institutions to obtain international quality certificates in university performance (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

A- Tangibility: It is divided into direct and indirect material requirements. Direct requirements: Classrooms, lecture halls, science laboratories, computer laboratories, visual, audio and written educational tools and means, etc. As for indirect material requirements: health and sports clubs, gardens, parking lots, etc.

B- Reliability: It is the ability of the service provider to perform the required service with a high degree of accuracy and mastery. Accordingly, reliability in higher education means the ability of education officials to provide services correctly and with a high degree of mastery and at the specified time.

C- Responsiveness: It means that the educational institution has sufficient flexibility to respond to changes that occur in its internal and external environment, by providing competent academic and administrative cadres and all the financial and material requirements and facilities that ensure the continuation of the educational process without interruption.

C- Credibility: It means the ability of the educational institution to fulfill its promises and obligations towards its students and the external community. This is done through the knowledge, experience and skills possessed by university professors, and the capabilities, material facilities and pioneering educational programs that distinguish the higher education institution.

## METHODOLOGY

This paragraph is devoted to presenting and discussing the results of the test of the correlation and influence relationships between the main variables of the research represented by administrative empowerment as an independent variable and between the dependent variable and the quality of university performance under study.

(1) The first correlation hypothesis:

**H1:** There is a statistically significant correlation between the symbol (X) and the quality of university performance under study, symbolized by the symbol (Y) in the university under study.

**Table 1:** *Testing the correlation between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance*



Variables	Delegation of Authority (X1)	Training for Learning (X2)	Motivation (X3)	Autonomy (X4)	Moral Relationships	Moral Relationships
Tangibility (Y1)	0.782*	0.913*	0.857*	0.609*	4	0.000
Dependability (Y2)					4	0.000
Responsiveness (Y3)					4	0.000
Credibility (Y4)					4	0.000

Table (1) shows the overall results of the correlation relationships between the paragraphs of the main variables. Thus, it is clear that the relationship is a significant correlation between the research variables. It was a correlation relationship with a correlation coefficient of (0.953) with a significant significance at the level of (0.05). These are statistically acceptable results that reflect the existence of essential and real correlation relationships between the research variables represented by the administrative empowerment variable and the university performance quality variable. It is clear from the data in the table above that the calculated (T) value is greater than its tabular value at a significance level of (0.05) and with confidence limits of (0.95). This confirms the strength of the relationship between the variables at the level of this research. Based on the results of the analysis and testing of the correlation relationship, the research hypothesis can be accepted, which stated that there is a significant correlation relationship between the administrative empowerment variable and the university's higher education quality variable.

This section of the applied research section is devoted to presenting and discussing the results of testing and analyzing the relationships of influence between the research variables, according to what was stated in the main influence hypothesis of administrative empowerment and the variable of university performance quality.

(2) The second influence hypothesis:

**H2:** There is a significant influence relationship between administrative empowerment, symbolized by the symbol (X), and the quality of higher education, symbolized by the symbol (Y) in the university under study.

**Table 2:** *The relationship between the impact of administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance*

Independent variable: cognitive empowerment and its dimensions (X)	Constants		(R <sup>2</sup> )	(F)	P value	Dependent variable: quality of university performance (Y)
	Beta	Fixed				
Delegation of authority (X1)	0.70	4.425	0.855	27.383	0.000	
Training for learning (X2)			0.732	27.385	0.000	
Motivation (X3)			0.953	27.380	0.000	
Independence (X4)			0.942	27.382	0.000	

Source: Computer results, program (Spss. V.25).

It is clear from Table (5) analysis of variance and the coefficients table for the relationship between administrative empowerment (X) and the quality of university performance (Y) at the level of the research sample of (135) teachers, that the value of (Tx) is large when compared to its tabular value and at a significance level of (0.05). This indicates that the regression curve is sufficient to describe the relationship between (X, Y) and at a confidence level of ((0.95). This is confirmed by the significance value of (X). According to the (T) test, it reached (Tx = 7.180), which confirms the existence of influential relationships between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance. In light of the regression equation, the constant (a = 4.425) indicates that there is an administrative empowerment of (4.425) when the value of administrative empowerment is equal to zero. The value of the marginal slope reached ( $\beta_1=0.800$ ) and is associated with (X). It indicates that a change of (1) in administrative empowerment (X) will lead to a change of (0.800) in the quality of university performance.

The value of the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) indicated a coefficient of (0.70), which means that administrative empowerment (X) explains (0.70) of the variance in the quality of

university performance, and (0.30) of the unexplained variance is due to variables that were not included in the regression model, which is a very good indicator of the strength of the regression model. Based on these results, the main effect hypothesis can be accepted, which stated that there is a significant effect relationship between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance.

## **DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

This study deals with the analysis of the relationships between administrative empowerment as an independent variable and the quality of university performance as a dependent variable, where two main hypotheses were tested: the correlation hypothesis and the effect hypothesis. Through the results extracted from the data analysis using the program (SPSS, v.25), the results can be discussed as follows:

First, with regard to the correlation hypothesis (H1), the results showed the existence of a statistically significant correlation between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance at the university under study. The table related to the correlation test indicated that the correlation coefficients between the dimensions of administrative empowerment (delegation of authority, training for learning, motivation, autonomy) and the quality of university performance (tangibility, dependability, responsiveness, credibility) were high and significant at the level of (0.05). For example, delegation of authority (X1) recorded a correlation coefficient of (0.782) with tangibility (Y1), while the correlation coefficient between training for learning (X2) and tangibility reached (0.913), which are values that reflect a strong and positive relationship. The overall correlation coefficient between the two main variables reached (0.953), which reinforces the idea of a substantial and real relationship between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance. These results are consistent with the idea that administrative empowerment, through its various dimensions, enhances the ability of the university institution to achieve distinguished performance, as delegation of authority gives employees greater flexibility in making decisions, training increases their efficiency, motivation motivates them to exert more effort, and independence allows them to be creative in performing their tasks.

Secondly, with regard to the hypothesis of influence (H2), the results of the regression analysis showed the existence of a significant influence relationship between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance. The table related to the impact relationship indicated that the calculated (F) value was significant (27.383 for delegation of

authority, 27.385 for training for learning, 27.380 for motivation, 27.382 for autonomy), and it exceeds the table value at a significance level of (0.05), which confirms that the regression model is able to describe the relationship between the two variables with high accuracy and a confidence level of (0.95). Also, the value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) which reached (0.70) indicates that administrative empowerment explains 70% of the variance in the quality of university performance, which is a strong indicator of the importance of this variable in improving performance. For example, it appears from the regression equation that the constant ( $a=4.425$ ) reflects the existence of a basic level of quality of university performance even in the absence of administrative empowerment, while the regression coefficient ( $\beta_1=0.800$ ) indicates that every one-unit increase in administrative empowerment leads to an increase of (0.800) in the quality of university performance. This means that administrative empowerment is not just a facilitating factor, but rather a fundamental element that directly and strongly affects improving performance at the university.

It is also noticeable that all dimensions of administrative empowerment (delegation of authority, training, motivation, autonomy) showed a positive and significant impact on the quality of university performance, reflecting the integration between these dimensions in enhancing performance. For example, training for learning (X2) which recorded a high coefficient of determination (0.732) indicates that improving employees' skills plays a crucial role in raising the level of quality, while motivation (X3) with a coefficient of (0.953) highlights the importance of motivating employees to achieve outstanding results.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the previous results, it can be concluded that this study has proven the existence of two main relationships between administrative empowerment and the quality of university performance at the university under study: a correlation relationship and an impact relationship. In terms of correlation, the results showed that administrative empowerment in its various dimensions (delegation of authority, training for learning, motivation, autonomy) is strongly and significantly related to the quality of university performance (tangibility, dependability, responsiveness, credibility), as the overall correlation coefficient reached (0.953) at a significance level of (0.05), which confirms the acceptance of the first correlation hypothesis (H1). This means that improving the level of administrative empowerment is accompanied by a noticeable improvement in the quality of university performance. In terms of impact, the results proved that administrative empowerment has a direct and positive impact on the quality

of university performance, as the calculated (F) values, the coefficient of determination ( $R^2=0.70$ ) and the regression coefficient ( $\beta_1=0.800$ ) showed that administrative empowerment explains a large percentage of changes in university performance, which supports the acceptance of the second impact hypothesis (H2). Thus, it can be said that administrative empowerment is a major factor in enhancing the quality of performance at the university under study, whether through delegation of authority that provides flexibility, training that increases efficiency, motivation that motivates employees, or independence that enhances creativity.

Based on the results and discussion above, the following recommendations can be made to the university under study to enhance the quality of university performance through administrative empowerment:

1. Enhancing delegation of authority: It is recommended to increase the level of delegation of authority to employees and faculty at the university, as the results showed that this dimension (X1) is strongly related to performance quality (correlation coefficient 0.782) and affects it (determination coefficient 0.855). This can be achieved by granting employees greater powers to make decisions related to their tasks.
2. Investing in training: Given the strong correlation between training for learning (X2) and performance quality (correlation coefficient 0.913) and its high impact (determination coefficient 0.732), the university should design ongoing training programs that focus on developing employees' skills to ensure improved performance quality.
3. Raising the level of motivation: Since motivation (X3) recorded the highest correlation coefficient (0.953) and a strong impact (coefficient of determination 0.953), it is recommended to implement incentive policies that include material and moral incentives to enhance employees' commitment and improve their performance.
4. Supporting autonomy: Employees' autonomy (X4) should be enhanced in performing their tasks, as the results showed a significant impact of this dimension (coefficient of determination 0.942), which requires providing a work environment that allows them to take initiatives and implement their ideas.
5. Focusing on performance quality: It is recommended to continue improving the dimensions of university performance quality (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, credibility) by linking them to administrative empowerment practices, as the study proved that these dimensions are directly affected by the level of empowerment.

6. Developing the administrative empowerment model: Based on the strength of the regression model ( $R^2=0.70$ ), the university can develop a comprehensive strategy that relies on administrative empowerment as a main tool to raise the quality of performance, taking into account the unexplained variables (30%) that may require subsequent studies.

Finally, these recommendations confirm the importance of administrative empowerment as a key driver for improving the quality of university performance, and provide a practical basis for applying the results in the context of the university under study.

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