



# Degree of Academic Staff Participation in Decision Making Process at the Hashemite University in Jordan

Tasneem Al khateeb<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Hail , Hail, Saudi Arabia

Received 07 April 2016, Revised 14 May 2016, Accepted 27 June 2016, Published 01 July 2016

**Abstract:** The purpose of the current study is to determine the degree to which academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan are effective participants in decision making process. The results of the study indicated that the university academic staff participation in the decision making process concerning the academic issues is strong; a moderate degree of participation appeared concerning the developmental issues , but there was a very low degree of participation in decision making process concerning the financial issues. Furthermore there were no significant differences among participation dimensions and proposed demographics of faculty members. However, there were significant differences between faculty members in scientific colleges and those in social sciences colleges in the dimension of developmental and planning issues for the favor of faculty members in the social sciences colleges.

**Keywords:** Decision-making, Shared Decision, Participative Decision-making, Higher Education

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's organizations, decision making is not a very complicated matter. Decisions are made by the boss. Even in institutions where follower's ideas are important, the last word is for the supervisor. Although each University and college in this country has its own unique approach for management and governance, there are three basic, general models that seem to represent most of these approaches. Traditional ways gives the authority of making decision to the supervisor as mentioned above. Another way is to decide that we will not decide. Failure to take efficient action in an issue is also a decision. Voting is another way which can be considered as a democratic way in most cases. This study suggests that decisions can be made effectively when the relevant group reaches a collective decision that everyone in the group accepts and supports it.

The central focus is decision-making. The primary function of administration is directing and controlling the decision making process. The challenge to the administrator is to provide for and encourage an on-going dialogue between administrators and faculty members. Such a dialogue can be successful only in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Administrators must recognize that faculty members can contribute

significantly to the decision-making process. Each institution must constantly strive to find ways to keep channels of communication open so that ideas can be heard and decisions can be influenced by those who will carry them out (Joseph, 1968).

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Because of the-growing number of stakeholders and administrators who have reached positions of responsibility on campus, a direct assault is being launched on the practice of shared governance in higher education. There is a feeling among political leaders, boards of governors (regents or trustees), and top administrators (chancellors, presidents and the like) that any sharing of authority impedes their "right" to make the big decisions. They believe that they know what is best and that faculty and staff should step aside and let the managers take charge.

The purpose of the current study was to answer the following question:

To what extent are academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan effective participants in the decision making process in their college?

In addition, this study was to address the following questions:



- To what extent are academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan participants in the decision making process concerning budget and financial issues in their college?
- To what extent are academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan participants in the decision making process concerning academic issues in their college?
- To what extent are academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan participants in the decision making process concerning development and planning issues in their college?

### 3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One can argue that the significance of this study comes from the assumption that the findings of this study will reveal to what extent the academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan are effective participants in the decision making process in their college.

The findings of this study will serve as input for higher education institutions in the decision making process field. They will also provide Researchers and students in higher education with a starting point for further research in this area of educational policies.

While, this study's practical importance can be explained in its contribution to supporting the idea of shared governance in higher education institutions, which can be taken into consideration in formatting the shape and priorities of higher education policies that govern and organize the universities and other higher education institutions.

### 4. THE STUDY OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

Escotet (2013) clarified that there is a trend at universities large and small to develop authoritarian systems of centralized, top-down government or to form systems of academic resistance. Decision making is made evident by a hierarchical system that is based strictly on the delegation of power and hardly ever on epistemological authority (Escotet, 2013).

Certainly, it is easier to take decisions under an imposed or self-imposed authoritarian system, especially in an environment such as a university, in which every member thinks of himself as an authority. For this same reason decisions are taken but never fully implemented, which affects significant movements like educational reforms. For, any educational reform is doomed to failure if the people who are affected by it are not involved in its decision making process and are not protagonists of this reform nor are not convinced of its worth (Escotet, 2009).

This study aimed at assessing the degree to which academic staff members at Hashemite University are real participants in the decision making process in their

college. This is in addition to addressing the sub-questions mentioned earlier in section 2.

### 5. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study has the following limitations:

- This study was limited to the Hashemite University in Jordan, and therefore reveals only the situation in the Hashemite University rather than in all the Jordanian universities.
- This study was limited to academic staff members; in other researches, we can take other stakeholders' conceptions into consideration.

### 6. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Higher education has been recognized as an effective tool in changing and improving progress in all fields of life, given clear-proof of its viability over the centuries and of its ability to change and to induce change and progress in society (Gomez, 1999).

Owing to the scope and pace of change, society has become increasingly knowledge-based, that higher learning and research now act as essential components of cultural, socio-economic and environmentally sustainable development of individuals, communities and nations. Higher education itself is confronted therefore with formidable challenges and must proceed to the most radical change and renewal it has ever been required to undertake, so that our society, which is currently undergoing a profound crisis of values, can transcend mere economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality (Agrawal, 1995).

Willis (2011) clarified that scholars engaged in studies on faculty attitudes toward shared decision have primarily been interested in two areas: faculty opinions about the importance of shared decision and faculty opinions about their level of participation in governance. Therefore, there is a clear national support for faculty governance.

A 2004-2005 national study out of the University of California, Los Angeles found that less than 50% of full-time faculty members at four-year public universities agree that faculty is sufficiently involved in campus decision making (Leach, 2008). For any type of effective shared governance between administration and faculty, there must be sufficiently high levels of trust and communication. Several scholars have attempted to examine faculty attitudes regarding trust and communication between faculty and administration with regard to faculty governance.



Brown (2001) found that in over 85% of institutions surveyed, faculty had primary control over decisions regarding curriculum and academic performance (Brown, 2001). Kaplan (2005) in his national study of faculty governance at over 900 institutions of higher education found that faculty authority appears to be concentrated in the areas of degree requirements, curriculum, tenure, appointments, and degree offerings (Kaplan, 2005). Minor (2005) found that faculty at HBCUs have fairly significant influence in academic matters but very little in non-academic matters (Minor, 2005).

Kater and Levin (2004) focused on shared governance in community colleges. Using a methodology that consisted of document analysis of collective bargaining agreements at over 300 community colleges, Kater and Levin found that the most commonly cited areas of faculty participation were grievance (93%), curriculum (56%), faculty evaluation processes (52%), sabbatical recommendations (48%), retrenchment (47%), and the college calendar (42%). The researchers also found that within the 56 percent of the contracts which provided for faculty involvement in academic policy, the language tended to be stronger than in other governance areas in which faculty were involved (Kater & Levin, 2004).

The community college was also the focus of the Welsh et al. (2005) piece on shared governance. Their study of two and four year institutions in the state of Kentucky found that faculty at two year schools reported more involvement in strategic planning than faculty at four year schools (Welsh et al., 2005). Each of the aforementioned studies in this section provide some evidence that faculty influence in shared decision is concentrated primarily in the area of academic policy. Other scholars, however, have attempted to examine faculty influence in non-academic areas of the institution. Two of these studies focused on faculty influence in institutional budgeting.

Kissler (1997) used data from University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, to examine faculty influence in institutional budget decisions. His results indicated that faculty had only around 7 percent of the total influence over budgeting and resource decisions (Kissler, 1997).

Dimond (1991) also looked at the extent to which faculty are involved in institutional budgeting decisions. His results found a great deal of variety in the depth of faculty involvement in governance among research universities. In the 52 institutions studied, he found that faculty, though limited in their overall control and influence on institutional budgeting, were often involved in consultation in specific areas such as salaries and the merger or discontinuation of programs (Dimond, 1991).

Both of these studies suggest that faculty involvement and influence in institutional budgeting are relatively low, especially in comparison to faculty influence in other areas of institutional governance (Willis, 2011).

Jordan represents a regional model in planning, setting and implementing real development agendas, in order to meet challenges of globalization and technology, and to guarantee the welfare of its citizens. Jordan recognizes that students are the hidden power of the future, and that knowing the right way of planning and using this power will be the best way to achieve its success (Awadallah, 2005).

#### A. *A Brief Overview of Shared Governance*

Shared governance refers to the shared responsibility between administration and faculty for primary decisions about the general means of advancing the general educational policy determined by the school's charter (Flynn, 2005). It's the set of practices under which college faculty and staff participates in significant decisions concerning the operation of their institutions (American Federation of Teachers, 2006).

Each of these definitions provides a foundation with which to conceptualize shared governance. The organizational structure of colleges and universities typically begins at the top with a board of trustees who appoint a president/chancellor to serve as the chief executive of a college community. While the president/chancellor and his/her administrative cabinet typically serve as the chief decision makers of an institution, the tradition within higher education has been for other campus constituencies, especially faculty, to have significant involvement in institutional decision making (Minor, 2004).

This tradition of faculty involvement in institutional governance, however, has not always been the norm within American higher education. The first colonial colleges were run almost exclusively by governing boards and institutional presidents. Presidents were in charge of a wide range of activities and served in most instances as authorities themselves (Lucas, 1994). Faculty dissatisfaction with this model, however, began to manifest itself during the 19th century. Perhaps the most notable manifestation of this faculty dissatisfaction occurred at Harvard University in 1826. Following several years of heated debate over faculty involvement and discontent with the administration of college affairs and the traditional curriculum, a new set of statutes for the governance of the college was introduced in 1826. This statute provided faculty with control over the admission of students, student discipline, and the conduct of instruction (Brubacher & Rudy, 1997).



Over the next 150 years, several changes in the structure of higher educational institutions in addition to the changing composition and structure of the faculty led to an expansion of the principles of shared governance. The development of the research university in the late 19th century, the increased professionalism of faculty in the early twentieth century, rapid enrollment growth, the changing composition of the student body, and the volatile political climate in the 1950s and 1960s all helped to increase faculty voice in various areas of institutional governance (Birnbaum, 2004).

It was not until the appearance of the 1966—Statement on Government in Colleges and Universities, however, that a unified statement legitimated the role of faculty involvement in institutional governance (Birnbaum, 2004). The 1966 joint statement from the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges was the first document to provide a detailed breakdown of the responsibilities and authority that should be conferred upon faculty and administrators. Two primary principles emerged out of this document. The first states that important areas of action involve, at one time or another, the initiating capacity and decision-making participation of all institutional components. The second states that difference in the weight of each voice, from one point to the next, should be determined by the responsibility of each component for the particular matter at hand (American Association of University Professors, 1966). In other words, the joint statement recommends both the sharing of authority among constituents on endeavors that require joint decisions and a segmenting of authority on endeavors where one constituent has primary responsibility.

### B. Deciding How to Decide

In deciding how to make decisions, we have to know what kind of decision making we want to follow. Here the concept of openness arises; it's the real acceptance of distributing decision making authority throughout the institution and believing that the collective thinking and expertise of the whole staff is more efficient than the individual ones. This kind of shared decision making has to be combined with adequate access to support, information, and resources, in order to have the desired goals achieved. (Patterson, 1999).

When institutions of higher education have become increasingly complex organizations, the issue of institutional governance has become a point of major contention on many campuses (Gerber, 2001).

This tension has been exacerbated by the increasing pressures and expectations being placed on higher education institutions by government, business, and other outside constituencies in recent years. Institutions are being asked to do more with less money while being held increasingly accountable for both organizational and academic decisions (Kezar & Eckel, 2004).

### C. Advantages of Shared Decisions

A brief look at some of the policy implications of shared decision making will lead us to verify the wide range of advantages that results from implementing such type of decision making. These advantages, as Alfred (1998) indicated, are that shared decision making:

- Creates a sense of responsible freedom and empowerment as people feel that they have the right to participate in decision making.
- Promotes greater loyalty by all groups as they are able to influence the outcomes.
- Increases the staff feeling of responsibility for decisions; once they have a shared decision, they will be more careful to guarantee the implication of this decision since they agreed and accepted it.
- Results in a better educational environment, as there are greater chances for involvement in decision making, which encourage good relationships between faculty members.
- Develops better understanding of the different issues; good decisions are made when everyone listens to all points of view. When all think alike, our discussion follows a narrow path, devoid of the diverse views that enrich truly collective decisions.
- Improves awareness of other constituent's issues and procedures, which results in better understanding for the organization as a whole.
- Fosters an agreement on the divergent points of view on different issues.
- Increases the ability of the college to move forward in the future.





#### *D. Brief of Higher Education Sector in Jordan*

As Khader (2010) mentioned, the sector of higher education in Jordan plays a key role in the process of comprehensive development at various levels and areas. That is, during the last ten years (in the reign of His Majesty King Abdullah II), higher education in Jordan witnessed a significant progress in terms of the diversity of study programs, patterns of teaching and learning that control both the quality and quantity and expansion of higher education institutions (Brief on Higher Education Sector in Jordan, n. d., ¶ 4). In spite of the limited financial and human resources in the Kingdom, higher education lies within the priorities of the State as of the role it plays in promoting the economic, social and knowledge level of the Jordanian citizen.

Higher education in Jordan commenced by the establishment of the Teachers House 'Dar Al-Mu'lemeen' in 1958, with a two-year program aiming at preparing qualified teachers to work at the schools which belong to the Ministry of Higher Education. Afterwards, the establishment of the Teachers' House became known as the 'Teachers Institute', which developed into 'Community Colleges' in the seventies. As for university education, it commenced by the establishment of the University of Jordan in 1962, followed by the establishment of Al-Ahliyya Amman University in 1989 as the first private university in Jordan (Al-Yousef, 2007).

His Majesty King Abdullah II has paid special attention to higher education, as he steered his successive governments to shed more light on higher education and its development. Thus, during his Majesty's reign, many public and private universities were established. This is in addition to the foreign universities operating in Jordan, the programs emanated from cooperation agreements between Jordan and foreign universities, and the programs of the Jordanian universities in various universities of neighboring Arab countries.

During the last two decades, the sector of higher education in Jordan witnessed a prominent development, as well as progress evidenced by the increasing number of institutions of higher education, enrolled students, faculty members, administrative and academic members; the size of expenditures; and the financial government support to this significant educational sector (Brief on Higher Education Sector in Jordan, n. d., ¶ 4).

The number of public universities, as a result, has reached (10), besides (17) universities that are private and (51) community colleges. This is in addition to the World Islamic Sciences and Education University. This progress in numbers of universities accompanied by a significant increase in number of students enrolled to study in these universities- where the number of enrolled students in both public and private universities is estimated at nearly (236) thousand, (28) thousand out of the total are from Arab or foreign nationalities- make Jordan proud. The pride created by this development, as well as the progress, put us face-to-face with various challenges- the thing which leads us to pay more efforts in order to overcome the difficulties and obstacles that stand before us, to realize a balance between the spread of higher education and its establishment from one side, and its level and quality from the other (Al-Saeh, 2010).

As a result of the development that occurred in this sector and in order to maintain the quality of higher education, the next phase required a reconsideration of the law that governs public and private universities as well as higher education. Therefore, by the issuance of the new "Law of Higher Education No. (23), for the year 2009" and "The Jordanian Universities Law No. (20), for the year 2009", the Jordanian universities have become more independent in managing their administrative as well as financial matters. In addition, by virtue of the new law, the following units agreed to be developed within the ministry's organizational structure:

- The Policy Analysis and Planning Unit which assumes, by virtue of the new law, the responsibilities of collecting data and information on higher education sector; conducting studies in order to support the work of Higher Education Council, and fulfilling many other tasks stated in the law.
- The Unified Admission Coordination Unit which assumes the responsibility of students' admission into public universities according to the principles approved by the Council of Higher Education.

The ministry has paid a special attention to higher education in order to have it at the top of our national priorities. Attention, herein, has been mostly focused on the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy of higher education and scientific research for the years (2007-2012), to maintain a shiny image of higher education and scientific research, its outputs, competitive capabilities; and to admit the largest possible number of young people into Jordanian universities according to a goals system that is in line with our national goals.



We can say that, despite the big challenges that higher education faced, Jordan was capable to realize quantitative and qualitative achievements in this sector. In other words, appropriate procedures aiming at improving its role were developed in order to achieve a quantum leap with a high quality and to catch up with recent developments applied by the Jordanian institutions of higher education. All this was due to the various initiatives that worked on limiting the power of these challenges and weakening and processing them for the sake of realizing a comprehensive national strategy for the sector of higher education in Jordan.

The key performance indicators of the strategy of higher education appear clearly through: (1) percentages of males and females enrollment into regular admission programs and parallel programs; (2) the steady increase in faculty members; (3) financial government support for institutions of higher education; (4) turnout for expansion of private universities (private sector) that aim to participate in shouldering the burden and responsibilities of education with the public sector; (5) the Higher Education Accreditation Commission that supervises quality assurance at both public and private institutions of higher education, to make them consistent with international standards; (6) updated libraries of universities and the linking of all institutions of higher education to the electronic periodicals and universities networks; (7) the Scientific Research Support Fund that finances projects with national priorities, offering grants for outstanding graduates, granting the outstanding research prize, the outstanding researcher prize and the outstanding student prize; (8) and finally the accrediting of the TOEFL certificate as an admission certificate for joining Master's and PhD programs. Moreover, the ministry worked on bridging the gap between higher education output and the labor market, in order to respond to the present and future needs of qualified and specialized cadres in various areas of knowledge and to compensate for the lack of natural resources in the region, by creating qualified human resources fortified by knowledge and efficiency.

All of these achievements mentioned here helped in moving the process of comprehensive development forward via providing an academic, psychological and social environment supportive for creativity, excellence, innovation and talent development. This is all in order for Jordan to assume a prominent position that is consistent with its status and strategic location, if compared with its capabilities and limited financial resources.

In the region as a whole, Jordan's educational role has become so effective that the high quality of its educational system has become the focus of attention and admiration in the region.

This is clearly reflected in the number of foreign students studying at the Jordanian universities which is close to 28.000 students from around the world (Brief on Higher Education Sector in Jordan, n. d., ¶ 4).

Higher education institutions in Jordan realized early on the importance of empowering individuals, especially the youth, through focusing on the knowledge economy, and the use of technology in planning and educational programs. To this end, Jordan has been effecting continuous changes, transformations and developments of the higher education sector, with the aim of achieving quality and distinction. Over the years, higher educational institutions in Jordan have attempted to strike a balance between academic and vocational education.

Future strategic goals for the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Jordan are:

1. Improving higher education sector management,
2. Improving the quality of higher education environment,
3. Enhancing scientific research quality and the role of higher education institutions; and
4. Providing national quality data-bases and periodic studies on the higher education sector and scientific research in accordance with international best practices (Al- Tarawneh, 2011).

The Ministry has developed a strategy for higher education and scientific research. Its main components include admission policies of Jordanian universities, curricula and study plans, developing human resources, University management, quality assurance, and legislation. Accreditation is the hub of all this. It lays the foundation for quality and excellence. Consequently, it was instituted from the very beginning and assigned to different agencies and bodies, but always impelled by two objectives, for which purpose a number of by-laws, guidelines and benchmarks were formulated to be observed by the private universities in Jordan as basic requirements for any progress towards quality and excellence.

The Accreditation Council, which until recently shouldered this responsibility as part of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, was dissolved in June, 2007, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission was set up in its place by Law (20) for the year 2007. The Commission Council consists of a president, vice president, two full-time members, and three part-time members, all of whom are of high academic and administrative qualifications.



According to the enabling Law, the Commission is administratively and financially independent. It is entrusted with a number of tasks that constitute its mission. The Law states that the objective of the Commission is to enhance and guarantee quality in higher education, to encourage universities to be open to and interact with international scientific research institutions and accreditation commissions, and to upgrade higher education in Jordan based on internationally recognized criteria. The Commission Council is empowered to formulate relevant criteria; to audit, evaluate, and accredit institutions of higher education, making sure that they comply with all pertinent regulations; to collect data and do research related to higher education; and to ratify reports by the President and committee members, and to issue relevant research, studies and brochures.

Obviously, the Commission has wider jurisdiction. First, it has a mandate over private and public universities, and overall foreign institutions of higher education in Jordan affiliated with Jordanian universities, which means, an addition to ten public universities. The total stands now at twenty-seven universities. It is not difficult to imagine the amount of extra work and effort to be exerted for this purpose. Second, the Commission is charged with the establishment and management of the National Testing Center, which will design and conduct all kinds of standardized tests in almost all fields, to be used, among other things, for graduation and admission, and not only an exit test in a limited number of fields, as was formerly the case. A set of bylaws and regulations have already been drafted, and committees set up to do the job. The plan delineates tests of Arabic for foreign students and aptitude tests as well.

Third, the Commission is working on better ways and means to make sure that the institutions are in full compliance with all its regulations. To this end, the Commission has done a study of these universities based on a number of criteria and come up with a preliminary evaluation and ranking. This step has already had its fruits, urging universities to revise their policies, activate their internal self-assessment plans, and improve their functioning. The higher education system is being refined and developed to become as accurate as possible (Higher Education in Jordan, n. d., ¶ 4).

#### *E. Management in Higher Education in Jordan*

Khader (2010) stated that the ultimate goal of management must be to enhance the institutional mission by ensuring high-quality teaching, research, and services to the community (Zemsky, 2009). Management of higher education institutions in Jordan is still heavily centralized. The Higher Education Council has significant power over private universities (Burke & Alwaked, 1997). Decentralizing higher education will make our institutions more competitive. No longer will a college have to wait 5-7 months for the establishment of a new major.

The involvement of all key stakeholders in decision making in higher education institutions is of utmost importance (Eggins, 2003). Experience has demonstrated the value of such participation in enlightening the visions necessary for decision making. Accordingly, university top officials, including the president, should be chosen via transparent methods with participation of stakeholders, and they should be held accountable against tasks and objectives. In Jordan, appointment of the president of the university must be approved by the prime minister on the recommendation of the board of trustees.

Appointment of the presidents as well as the deans should be based on merit and selected by independent search committees. Appointment of a new president or dean should be advertised in the local and regional newspapers and refereed academic Journals. This procedure will inspire confidence among academics and students. It will make them feel that competent scholars are leading them. The universities should be managed by individuals, who are recognized for the quality of their integrity, scholarship and administration.

University autonomy shapes the relationship between government, society, and the university. It upholds freedom from arbitrary intervention. Autonomy is related to institutional self-management. Without self-management, faculty members will become a subordinate body with a diminished sense of public responsibility.

University autonomy does not mean in any way that the government must relinquish its responsibility to back higher education. The government should continue to be the main paymaster to guarantee a publicly accountable higher education system.

Private funds should complement rather than replace public funds, but the government should not have too much say in how universities run their own affairs.



It must lessen its control over university administration and curricula to allow for greater academic freedom (Hettleman, 2009).

Faculty members can only teach effectively and maintain their creativity in an atmosphere of academic freedom, which is needed in order to create diversity and to avoid uniformity. Individual capacity will blossom only in a supportive environment. The autonomy of the universities must be respected and fostered, and it should be accompanied by a high level of responsibility and accountability (Eisemon & Holm- Nielson, 1995). Autonomy to manage internal affairs is necessary, but with transparent accountability to society. Without institutional integrity no true excellence could be expected or achieved, neither in teaching nor in research.

#### F. The Hashemite University

The Hashemite University, often abbreviated HU, is a state-supported university located in Zarqa, Jordan. The Hashemite University has a comprehensive campus with a total built-up area of 300,000 square meters (3,200,000 sq. ft.), designed in four phases. The fourth design phase was completed in 2005, exceeding 50,000 sq. m. The university includes Faculties of Arts, Science, Educational Science, Supporting Medical Sciences Nursing College, and Engineering, Literature and many other buildings and related services. It is located on the outskirts of Zarqa on two main highways with a site area of about 1,100,000 square metres (12,000,000 sq. ft.), rendering it as one of the largest universities in Jordan. It is uniquely designed with a composition of the various campus buildings dispersed in the landscape while incorporating the latest technological and educational trends. The urban planning considered the environmental, transportation and socio-economic services in addition to the humanitarian aspects and interactions in order to create a homogeneous urban textile. Shaded walkways, pergolas and wind barriers were also designed for protection from high temperature, wind, sun and pollution. It is named after the Jordanian royal family—the Hashemites—and was established in the outskirts of Zarqa by a royal decree in 1995. It started out with four different colleges and expanded to fourteen through the years. Its vision is to achieve an academic pioneering position and excellence in university teaching, scientific research, at both the national and regional levels, to serve society through its educational functions, and to participate in the advancement of knowledge (Wikipedia, 2004).

## 7. METHODOLOGY

This study is quantitative in nature and was conducted using survey methodology. The survey was cross-sectional because the data were collected at one point in time. Means, Standard deviations, t-test, and one way analysis of variances (ANOVA) were utilized in this study. Means and standard deviations were used to measure the degree to which academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan participated in decision making. T-test and one-way analysis were used to determine whether, at a selected probability level ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ), there are significant differences among resistance dimensions in the following individual demographics of academic staff members: gender, academic rank, number of years teaching in the Hashemite University and, and the type of the college.

### A. Population

The target population of this study consisted of all academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan who taught during summer semester 2014/2015 (160). Questionnaires were distributed to participants at their workplace, for completion at their own convenience, to provide them with anonymity while disclosing personal information about themselves and their participation in decision making process at the Hashemite University in Jordan.

### B. Sample

A total of (114) academic staff members answered the questionnaire. The sample represents approximately 71% of the population (160) academic staff members who taught during the summer semester (2014/2015). Demographics of the sample indicated that 86 respondents are male and 28 are females. 88 Respondents are Assistant professor, 12 are Associate Professors and 14 full Professors. Years of experience ranged from 1 to 17 years. Other demographic data for the faculty members who participated in this study are shown in table (1).

**Table 1. Demographics s of the sample**

| variable         | Number and Percentage of Total (20)  |
|------------------|--|
| Gender           | 86 males (75.4%), 28 females (24.6%)   |
| Type of college  | 62 scientific faculties (54.4%),<br>52 social science faculties (45.6%)              |
| Academic rank    | 14 full prof. (12.3%), 12 Associate prof. (10.5%), 88 Assistant prof. (77.2%).       |
| Experience years | 39 with 1-5 years (34.2%), 42 with 6 -10 years (36.8%), 33 with 11-17 years (28.9%). |





**C. Instrumentation**

The survey instrument which was developed by the researcher and used in this study was a 40-item Likert-scale questionnaire that ranged from no participation (0) to very high degree of participation (4) and measured the degree of academic staff participation in decision making process in the three fields of decision making: (a) academic issues, (b) financial issues, and (c) development and planning issues. Academic issues concern academic staff participation in decisions of selecting course instructors, program revision and development, and curriculum. Financial issues explain their participation in budget, salary determination and research funding decisions. While the development and planning field indicates their participation in faculty grievances, promotions, evaluation and college’s technical issues.

In order for the researcher to guarantee the validity of the instrument, it was checked by five judges who are professionals in higher education and teaching in the Jordanian Universities (The University of Jordan and The Hashemite University) as full professors. On the advice of the judges, the age variable was neutralized because it had no effect on decision making process (as the judges clarified). Also the questionnaire items were reduced to 40 to avoid ambiguity. In addition, to ensure more valid results and to guarantee that the subjects of the study were actually addressing the items and replying precisely, the questionnaire included items which measured the same criteria from different points of view.

**8. RESULTS**

The data collected from all participants were coded, entered to the SPSS spreadsheets, and analyzed using software package SPSS version 12. Descriptive statistics of all items were examined by using SPSS descriptive option. Missing data were not detected.

**Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviations of the Three Dimensions of Decision Making Participation**

| Dimension                       | Mean | Std. deviation |
|---------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Development and planning issues | 1.85 | <b>0.60</b>    |
| Academic issues                 | 2.02 | <b>0.52</b>    |
| Financial issues                | 0.45 | <b>0.00</b>    |
| Valid N (listwise)              |      |                |

Question 1 addressed the degree to which academic staff members at the Hashemite University in Jordan participated in decision making process. Means and standard deviations were used to answer this question. Starting with the mean, it's observable from table (2) that the lowest mean of participation in decision making process is 0.45 and the highest mean is 2.01. This result indicates somewhat weak participation in decision making process.

With regard to the mean and standard deviations of the three dimensions of participation in decision making process, the mean of the participation in academic issues is higher than all other means (2.01), followed by developmental and planning issues (1.85) and the least mean is for the financial issues (0.45). (See table 2).

Question 2 concerned the significant differences among participation in decision making and followed individual demographics of faculty members in the college of educational sciences at the Hashemite University: gender, academic rank, the number of years of experience, and type of college. T-tests for independent samples were used to examine the difference in means between males and females and faculty members in social science colleges and faculty members in scientific colleges. However one-way analysis of variances was utilized to identify whether the variances of the three level groups of academic rank and the three level groups of years of experience were equal or significantly different.

**Table 3. The Differences between Male and Female Faculty Members in each dimension of the Scale**

| Dimension                       | Gender | Mean | Std. deviation | t     | Sig (2-tailed) |
|---------------------------------|--------|------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Academic issues                 | Male   | 1.82 | 0.46           | -2.07 | 0.05           |
|                                 | Female | 2.31 | 0.59           |       |                |
| Development and planning issues | Male   | 1.75 | 0.47           | -1.27 | 0.23           |
|                                 | Female | 2.01 | 0.40           |       |                |
| Financial issues                | Male   | 0.33 | 0.65           | -0.63 | 0.54           |
|                                 | Female | 0.63 | 1.40           |       |                |

Table (3) shows that there were no significant differences at the 0.05 level between male and female faculty members on the dimensions of financial and academic issues. However table (3) illustrates that there were significant differences at the 0.05 level between males and females on the development and planning



decisions. On the other hand Table (4) illustrates that there were significant differences at the 0.05 level between faculty members in scientific colleges and faculty members in social sciences colleges only in the dimension of developmental and planning issues for the favor of faculty members in social sciences colleges.

**Table 4. The Differences between Faculty Members in Scientific Colleges (sc.) and Faculty Members in Social Sciences Colleges (so.) in Each Dimension of the Scale**

| Dimension                       | College | Mean | Std. deviation | t     | Sig (2-tailed) |
|---------------------------------|---------|------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Academic issues                 | Sc.     | 2.50 | 0.46           | 0.90  | 0.36           |
|                                 | So.     | 2.41 | 0.51           |       |                |
| Development and planning issues | Sc.     | 2.98 | 0.55           | -2.11 | 0.03           |
|                                 | So.     | 3.21 | 0.60           |       |                |
| Financial issues                | Sc.     | 2.43 | 0.58           | 0.72  | 0.47           |
|                                 | So.     | 2.50 | 0.49           |       |                |

Utilizing one-way analysis of variance, as can be observed in table (5), shows that there were no significant differences among the three groups of ranks (full, associate, and assistant professor) in each dimension of the study

**Table 5. The differences among the Three Rank Level Groups (full, associate, and assistant professor) in Each Dimension of the Scale**

| Sum of Squares                  |               |       | df | F    | Sig  |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------|----|------|------|
| Academic issues                 | Between group | 0.44  | 3  | 0.43 | 0.74 |
|                                 | Within group  | 5.54  | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 5.98  | 19 |      |      |
| Development and planning issues | Between group | 0.13  | 3  | 0.18 | 0.91 |
|                                 | Within group  | 3.83  | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 3.96  | 19 |      |      |
| Financial issues                | Between group | 1.01  | 3  | 0.30 | 0.83 |
|                                 | Within group  | 17.94 | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 18.95 | 19 |      |      |

**Table 6. The differences among the four experience level groups (1-5 Y, 6-10 Y, and 11-17Y) in each dimension of the scale.**

| Sum of Squares                  |               |       | df | F    | Sig  |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------|----|------|------|
| Academic issues                 | Between group | 0.10  | 3  | 0.09 | 0.97 |
|                                 | Within group  | 5.88  | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 5.98  | 19 |      |      |
| Development and planning issues | Between group | 0.27  | 3  | 0.39 | 0.76 |
|                                 | Within group  | 3.69  | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 3.96  | 19 |      |      |
| Financial issues                | Between group | 1.08  | 3  | 0.32 | 0.81 |
|                                 | Within group  | 17.87 | 16 |      |      |
|                                 | Total         | 18.95 | 19 |      |      |

Similarly, table (6) revealed that there were no significant differences among the three experience level groups (1-5 Years, 6-10 Years, 11-17 Years).

## 9. DISCUSSION

The concept of an "organizational decision-making process" which has often been described in an industrial setting is not unlike the concept of "democratic administration" that is frequently described in the literature of educational administration. The modern concept of administration does not encompass the view that a centralized authority makes decisions for the group. Rather, it is based on the premise that the administrator, through their leadership or by the authority granted to them by the group, leads their faculty toward the achievement of a goal which has come to be accepted as desirable (Higher Education Program and Policy Council, 2004).

The results of this study indicated that the mean of academic staff participation at the Hashemite University in academic issues is higher than all other means, followed by developmental and planning issues. The least mean was for the financial issues and this result indicated somewhat weak participation in decision making process.

Funding the university should be directly related to the university ratings, world-class research activities, community service, quality of teaching, and number of students, and should be used based on shared decisions not individual ones (Eggins, 2003). In Jordan, the universities that work hard to improve performance and strive for improvements in quality are treated no differently from those universities that do nothing in these areas. Limited public funding is one of the main



constraints on the process of change and development in higher education. The government spending on higher education needs to increase funding, to cater to the rising demand for higher education (Khader, 2010).

Another strand of results in this study, regarding demographic variables, distinguished between faculty members in scientific colleges and faculty members in social science colleges in the dimension of developmental and planning issues for the favor of faculty members in social sciences colleges. This result might be justified by the nature of college and by the fact that teaching scientific courses seems to be more time consuming for the academic staff member and so they do not find enough time to be effective participants in decision making. They therefore receive decisions made for them especially concerning developmental and planning issues. Such is not the case with other demographic variables, which revealed no significant effect on resistance to change. This result opens the door for more demographic variables to be included in future research.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Decision making is a very important and sophisticated process that requires the presence of sufficient and precise information, wise leadership, adequate resources and suitable time. The principle of true partnership amongst higher education institutions worldwide is crucial for education and training in all fields that encourage an understanding of global issues, the role of democratic governance and skilled human resources in their resolution, and the need for living together with different cultures and values. The practice of multilingualism, faculty and student exchange programs, and institutional linkage to promote intellectual and scientific cooperation, should be an integral part of all higher education systems.

Conflicts have to be dealt with in an open environment; we have to use conflict power to support us, not to threaten our goals and decisions. If we work in this atmosphere we will make good communication engines in the institution that will lead to effective and collective decisions that we can rely on in the future of our institutions.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, the results of this study indicate that these college members' participation in decision making process exists but it is too weak, especially in the financial and budget issues. Second, in any shared governance institution that existed or are created, faculty and staff must have representatives of their own choosing. They must respect

the rights of other participants in shared governance. Third, institutional structures of shared governance should be constructed to incorporate the views of faculty and staff at all levels of decision making. The institutions' leaders have to provide their followers with time, support and information they need to be effective participants. Shared governance is our responsibility toward the coming generations.

Contrary to what is generally believed to be the relationship between faculty and administration, research indicates that faculties believe there are sufficient levels of trust and communication between faculty and administration with regard to faculty governance. This trust could be an indication that a solid foundation exists for cooperative shared governance arrangements between faculty and administration. Despite this trust, research has indicated that many faculty members are unsatisfied with the shared governance arrangements at their institutions. This apparent disconnect should lead researchers to examine in more detail the sources of dissatisfaction with shared governance among faculty.

## REFERENCES

- Agrawal, C. (1995). *Development and planning of modern education*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT.
- Alfred, R. (1998) "Shared Governance in Community Colleges". Education Commission of the States, p. 1-8.
- Al-Saeh, A. (2010, August 24). 243251 The Number of Students at Jordanian Universities. *Aldustour*, p. A20. Retrieved from: <http://www.addustour.com>.
- Al-Tarawneh, H. (2011). The Implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) On the Higher Educational Sector in Jordan. *International Journal of Industrial Marketing*, 1(1), 1-20.
- Al-Yousef, A. (2007). Quality assurance in higher education: the Jordanian experience. *Higher Education Institutions Accreditation Council*. Retrieved from [www.mohe.edu](http://www.mohe.edu).
- Association of University Professors, (1966). *Statement on government of colleges and universities*. Retrieved from: <http://www.aaup.org>.
- American Federation of Teachers. (2006). *Shared governance in colleges and universities: A statement by the higher education program and policy council*. Retrieved from: [www.aft.org/pubs-reports/higher\\_ed/shared\\_governance.pdf](http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/higher_ed/shared_governance.pdf)
- Asby, c. (1995). School failure caused by personal goals: teachers and administrators that dwarf social one. *Education*. 115(4), 560-568.
- Awadallah, B (2005). *Reform and development in Jordan*. Retrieved on February 16, 2014, from [www.washingtoninstitute.org](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org).
- Birnbaum, R. (2004). The end of shared governance: Looking ahead or looking back. In R. Tierney & V. Lechuga (Eds.), *Restructuring shared governance in higher education*. New Directions for Higher Education, 127(1) 5-22. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership* (2nd edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



- Brief on Higher Education Sector in Jordan. (n.d.). Retrieved from [www.mohe.edu.jo](http://www.mohe.edu.jo)
- Brown, W. (2001). Faculty participation in university governance and the effects on university performance. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 44(2), 129-143.
- Brubacher, J.S., & Rudy, W. (1997). *Higher education in transition: A history of American colleges and universities* (4th ed.). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Burke, D and Al-waked, A. (1997) *On the Threshold: Private Universities in Jordan*. Retrieved from [www.bc.edu](http://www.bc.edu) .
- Carter, S. G. & O' Neil, M.H. (1995). *International Perspective on educational reform and policy implementation*. Hong Kong: Republic of Korea.
- Dimond, J. (1991). Faculty participation in institutional budgeting. In R. Birnbaum (Ed.), *Faculty in governance: The role of senates and joint committees in academic decision-making* (New Directions for Higher Education No. 75, pp. 3-78). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Duke, D (2004). *The challenges of educational change*. Boston: Pearson education.
- Eggins, H. ed. (2003) *Globalization and reform in higher education*, Open University Press.
- Eisemon, T & Holm-Nielson, L. (1995) Reforming Higher Education Systems: Some Lessons to Guide Policy Implementation. *Higher Education*, Vol. 29, No.4 June 1995 pp. 405-420.
- Escotet, M (2009). University Governance and accountability. In global network for innovation. *Higher education at a time of transformation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 126-132.
- Escotet, M (2013). *Shared governance in higher education*. Retrieved on February 15, 2014, from: <http://miguelescotet.com/2013/shared-governance-in-higher-education> .
- Flynn, J. (2005). *The moral foundations of faculty governance in colleges and universities*. Unpublished manuscript. Caldwell College.
- Gerber, L. (2001). Inextricably linked: Shared governance and academic freedom. *Academe*, 87(3), 22-24.
- Gomez, R. (1999). Higher education in transition: An agenda for discussion, *Electronic Journal of Sociology*. 51(9), 121-130.
- Hettleman, K. (2004) 5 Myths about Education Reform, *The Washington Post*, Feb- 22/2009.
- Higher education program and policy council, (2004). *Shared governance in higher education*. Retrieved from <http://facultysenate.tamu.edu> .
- Joseph, M (1968). Decision-making in community colleges. *Oregon School Study Council Bulletin*; 12 (3).1-25.
- Kaplan, G. (2005). How academic ships actually navigate. In R. Ehrenberg (Ed.), *Governing academia: Who is in charge at the modern university?* (pp.165-208). Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Kater, S., & Levin, J. (2004). Shared governance in the community college. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 29(1), 123.
- Ken, P. (2002). An alternative model for decision making. *Journal of Institutional Psychology*. 29(3), 189-195.
- Kezar, A., & Eckel, P. (2004). Meeting today's governance challenges: A synthesis of the literature and examination of a future agenda for scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education*, 74(4), 371-399.
- Khader, F. (2010). *Strategies and roadmap for effective higher education in Jordan*. Retrieved from [https://www.uop.edu.jo/download/Research/.../111\\_1548\\_khad.pdf](https://www.uop.edu.jo/download/Research/.../111_1548_khad.pdf) .
- Kissler, G. (1997). Who decides which budgets to cut? *Journal of Higher Education*, 68(4), 427-459.
- Leach, W. (2008). *Shared governance in higher education: Structural and cultural responses to a changing national climate*. Sacramento, CA: California State University, Sacramento.
- Lucas, C. (1994). *American higher education: A history*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Lunenburg, F.C., & Ornstein, A.C. (1996). *Educational administration: Concepts and practices* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- McCathy, J., Johnson, M., Veal, M., Holland, P., & Clift, R. (1995), *Collaborative leadership and shared decision making*. New York: Teacher College Press.
- McKnight, C., McIntire, D., & Stude, D. (2007). Faculty governance at evangelical Christian colleges and universities. *Christian Higher Education*, 6(2), 79-87.
- Miller, M. (2002). Faculty governance units and their leaders: A national profile. In National Education Association (Ed.). *The NEA Almanac of Higher Education* (pp. 51-58). Washington, DC: NEA.
- Minor, J. (2003). Assessing the senate: Critical issues considered. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46 (7), 960 - 977.
- Minor, J. (2004). Understanding faculty senates: Moving from mystery to models. *The Review of Higher Education*, 27(3), 343-363.
- Minor, J. (2005). Faculty governance at historically Black colleges and universities. *Academe*, 91(3), 34-38.
- Morrison, M., Rosenthal, A. (1997). Exploring learning organization: Enacting mental models – The power of the Rosenthal stage (Electronic version). *Journal of Workplace Learning*. 9(4), 124-129.
- Patterson, G. (1999). The learning university. *The Learning Organization*. 6(1), 9-17.
- Seng, P., Cambron- McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). *Schools that learn*. New York: Doubleday.
- The Education Commission of States. (1998). *Governance in community Colleges*.
- The Hashemite University. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved September 14, 2014, from <http://en.wikipedia.org>





- The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, (2005). *Reform and development in Jordan: Toward an Arab Renaissance*.
- The World Bank Group. (2004). *Jordan: Country brief*.
- Tierney, W., & Minor, J. (2003). *Challenges for governance: A report by the Center for Higher Education Policy*. Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California.
- Welsh, J., Nunez, W., & Petrosko, J. (2005). Faculty and administrative support for strategic planning: a comparison of two-and four –year institutions. *Community College Review*, 32 (4), 20-39.
- Willis, J. (2011). Faculty involvement in institutional governance: a literature review. *Journal of the Professoriate*, (6)1, 97-135.
- Zemsky, R. (2009). *Making reform work: the case for transforming American higher education*. Rutgers University Press.

