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The Administrative Impact of Empowerment and Flexibility in Achieving Organizational Commitment: Dampak Administratif Pemberdayaan dan Fleksibilitas dalam Mencapai Komitmen Organisasi

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Abstract

General Background: Organizational commitment is a key factor that influences employee performance and institutional stability in modern organizations. **Specific Background:** Many institutions increasingly adopt administrative empowerment and job flexibility as managerial practices intended to strengthen employee participation, autonomy, and organizational attachment. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite growing attention to empowerment practices, limited empirical studies have examined their combined role with job flexibility in shaping organizational commitment within academic institutions. **Aims:** This study investigates the administrative impact of empowerment and job flexibility in achieving organizational commitment at the University of Samarra. **Results:** Using a descriptive-analytical method and questionnaire data collected from 40 administrative employees, statistical analysis indicates that empowerment dimensions, including delegation of authority, training, participation, and information sharing, together with job flexibility, are significantly associated with higher levels of organizational commitment. The findings also reveal that limitations in the work environment and reduced participation in decision-making may weaken these managerial practices. **Novelty:** The study provides an integrated examination of empowerment and flexibility as managerial mechanisms influencing organizational commitment within a university context. **Implications:** The findings highlight the importance of creating supportive organizational environments, improving communication systems, and expanding employee participation to strengthen commitment and institutional performance.

Keywords: Administrative Empowerment, Job Flexibility, Organizational Commitment, Organizational Behavior, University Management

Key Findings Highlights

Empowerment dimensions relate to stronger employee attachment within institutions

Flexible work practices support participation and managerial autonomy

Organizational environment conditions shape commitment outcomes

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Introduction :

In view of the rapid changes related to business organizations and their environments, as well as the ongoing pressures of global competition and the international effects of globalization, many organizations have increasingly shown interest in dealing with these inevitable realities. To adapt and be competitive, organizations must use modern managerial concepts that are consistent with the dynamic changes taking place in the business environment. The choice of contemporary management approaches has become necessary for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

Managerial empowerment, among these approaches, holds a prominent place since it is regarded as one of the main pillars for achieving organizational excellence. This concept has also been widely researched in Arab countries and more specifically in Iraq. Managerial empowerment is no longer an optional concept for organizations to accept or reject but rather has become a critical practice that organizations need to pursue in order to improve performance at all levels. Organizations and administrations therefore attempt to apply empowerment because they realize its great impact on effectiveness and success. The extent to which the organization attempts to realize empowerment varies according to its capabilities. There are several important conditions for the successful application of employee empowerment, including greater autonomy delegation, participation in decision-making, and quick decisions making—especially during times when competition is fierce, time constraints exist, and information and technology are advancing rapidly across the globe [1].

Problem of the Research:

The problem of the research is determined by the degree of application of flexibility and empowerment concepts at the University of Samarra in the performance of university employees and their dealings with students with different needs. To answer this problem, the study sought to answer the following sub-questions:

1. What is the impact of employee empowerment on achieving organizational commitment at the University of Samarra?
2. What is the impact of employee flexibility on achieving organizational commitment at the University of Samarra?

Significance of the Research:

The research is significant because it addresses core managerial themes that play a major role in setting an organization apart and helping it grow. Additionally, the significance of this research is highlighted through its analysis of how key variables—such as empowerment and job flexibility, along with their future dimensions—affect the organizational commitment of employees at the University of Samarra.

Objectives of the Research:

1. To identify the impact of the dimensions of managerial empowerment on achieving organizational commitment.
2. To identify the impact of the dimensions of job flexibility on achieving organizational commitment.
3. To identify the combined impact of both empowerment and job flexibility dimensions on achieving organizational commitment.

Population of the Research:

The population of the study includes 40 employees at the Presidency of the University of Samarra. A questionnaire was distributed to all the study participants, and all 40 forms were retrieved. Therefore, the study achieved a 100% response rate.

Scope of the Research:

1. Subjective scope: The managerial impact of empowerment and flexibility in achieving organizational commitment.
2. Spatial scope: The University of Samarra.

Theoretical Framework of the Research

1. The Concept of Empowerment :

The theoretical foundations relevant to the important administrative domain of empowerment and previous studies and research in the field have been given significant attention by management scholars and theorists over the past few years. Empowerment describes a process whereby employees are provided with the authority to act and participate actively in decision-making within the organizations in which they operate, find solutions to problems, innovate, take responsibility, and exert control over results [1]. Al-Sulami (2001) described empowerment as the delegation of authority to people according to their responsibilities and qualifications while overall control remains with top management which is still responsible for completing major tasks and meeting organizational objectives [2]. Brillman (2003) added that empowered people should have enough skills and experience to do their jobs properly and should be motivated all the time to do their best work [3].

1.1. Dimensions of Empowerment:

Managerial empowerment consists of four dimensions [1]:

1. Delegation of Authority, which is the process by which a manager hands over part of his duties to subordinates under him after training and preparing them for the job.
2. Employee Training, equipping employees with the needed skills, principles, and behavioral rules that will enhance their performance on the job.
3. Teamwork, reflecting the employees' shared commitment to a goal that they work together to achieve.
4. Motivation, referring to management efforts in improving employee performance through satisfying personal and intrinsic needs.

1.2. Steps of Empowerment:

Blanchard emphasized that employee empowerment requires several structured steps: [4]

1. Sharing Important Information with All Members of the Organization: In order for subordinates to make the best decisions within the organization, they must have important information about their jobs and a total understanding of the organization. Al-Otaibi states that it is very important to give employees access opportunities to relevant sources of information so that they can see how their job relates to the performance of the whole organization. [5]
2. Setting up a Framework for Self Management: To prevent confusion, disorder, and deviation from the general objectives of an organization, it is necessary to provide a clear framework in which employees can operate freely. This involves stating clearly the general strategy of an organization, informing management about what long-term results it wishes to achieve, and specifying what area of authority and responsibility each employee has; this indicates how far he is empowered. Also required is training in adequate skills through structured programs designed to increase employee competence.
3. Establishing Self-Managed Work Teams: One major aspect of empowerment has been increasing reliance on self-managed work teams. It has become necessary for employees in departments, units, and divisions to work together if they are going to get large projects done effectively and efficiently. [4][5]

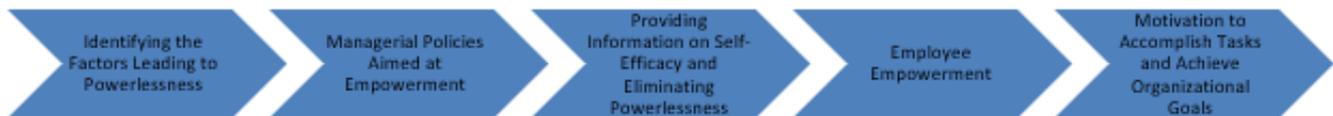


Figure 1. Figure (1): Steps of Empowerment as a Managerial Process

2. Flexibility:

2.1. Concept of Flexibility:

Flexibility is one of more complex and multidimensional managerial concepts. As such, it can be defined with precision only with difficulty. It is an aspect of the organization that denotes a capacity to change course quickly and take preemptive action. In organizational and strategic literature, flexibility is associated with modern management approaches and high-performance work systems [6]. It is also linked to strategic alignment and organizational performance improvement in dynamic environments [7]. Furthermore, flexibility contributes to organizational resilience and effective adaptation within competitive contexts [8].

From these definitions, then, flexibility may be taken to mean generally adaptability and capacity for improvement or change; that is, readiness and ease with which one adjusts oneself to new conditions.

2.2. Importance of Flexibility:

Flexibility is important because it helps in the following ways: [9]

1. Streamlining Processes: The goal of Flexibility is to remove any unnecessary routine steps that do not affect the essential controls or the quality and accuracy of the services provided.
2. Performing Tasks with Less Effort: By using flexibility, employees can reduce the time needed for each task assigned to them, thus saving time and increasing productivity.
3. Cutting Down Operational Costs: There is a direct relationship between the number of procedural steps and operational costs; therefore, flexibility will reduce redundant steps and consequently lower operating expenses.
4. Increasing Employee Confidence: Granting some authorities to employees will enhance flexibility as well as build their confidence in themselves and their sense of value in the organization.
5. Developing Employees' Ability to Innovate: Allowing for flexibility in job performance will create motivation and responsiveness as well as interaction among employees which results in innovative ideas that hasten the pace of organizational development and excellence.

3. Organizational Commitment:

3.1. Definition of Organizational Commitment:

Organizational commitment is one of the most frequently discussed concepts in organizational behavior literature. It denotes the psychological attachment of employees to their organization [10], [11]. This concept encapsulates the readiness of an individual to expend considerable effort for the sake of the organization, a strong yearning to persist as a member of this particular entity, and full acceptance and belief in its goals and values.

Described further, it embodies an individual's willingness to exert their utmost effort on behalf of an organization—having an intense desire for that individual to remain a part of that specific organization—and full acceptance as well as belief in its goals and values. In addition, it involves total conviction by a person regarding the goals and values of an organization, with readiness to exert maximum effort and loyalty even in the face of better opportunities elsewhere [11].

3.2. Importance of Organizational Commitment:

The importance of the concept of organizational commitment comes from the fact that it is one of the most discussed behavioral variables in management literature [12]. It has been found that low levels of organizational commitment result in high rates of absenteeism, lateness, and turnover, as well as low levels of job satisfaction [13]. This establishes the need to explore why these negative conditions exist.

Studies have clearly established the significance of organizational commitment: higher levels of workplace commitment are associated with lower levels of negative outcomes, especially absenteeism and avoidance behavior [14].

Additionally, organizational commitment acts as an important link between employees and their organizations when the latter cannot provide sufficient incentives to motivate them [15]. Employee commitment tends to be a more reliable predictor than job satisfaction in determining whether employees stay or leave an organization [16].



Figure 2. Figure (2): The following figure illustrates the significance of organizational commitment:

3.3. Dimensions of Organizational Commitment:

The dimensions of individuals' commitment to organizations vary according to the motives and driving forces behind them. However, in general, it is well known from literature that organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct rather than a single one [17][18]. Most researchers agree with the fact that there are multiple dimensions of commitment; however, they differ in defining these dimensions [7][18][19].

1. **Affective Commitment:** Allen & Meyer (1990) proposed affective commitment as an emotional attachment of an individual to the organization that develops when employees perceive their job as meaningful, autonomous, skill demanding, and supported by supervision [7]. It also depends on how much the organizational environment allows participation in decision-making whether related to work or personal issues. People with high affective commitment are bound by a feeling of belongingness and psychological attachment toward the organization; they judge their involvement based on what the organization provides in return [18][20].
2. **Normative Commitment:** Normative commitment is defined as a feeling of obligation toward staying with the organization which develops through support from the organization for employees and positive participation not only in executing tasks but also in setting goals planning for future activities and forming general policies for the

organization [7]. Normative commitment can be considered as moral attachment. Employees who have high normative commitment are usually very conscientious people motivated by ethics and a sense of duty toward their organization and public good [21][22].

3. **Continuance Commitment:** Also proposed by Allen & Meyer (1990), continuance commitment is related to perceived cost-benefit analysis regarding staying with an organization [7]. Individuals evaluate how valuable it would be to stay versus what they would lose or gain by moving on to another employer. This type of commitment happens when one feels that it would be more beneficial to stay rather than leave even if he/she does not have any emotional attachment toward his/her current company; hence this type of commitment can be termed as utilitarian because it mainly results from benefits provided by an organization. As long as rewards perceived are more than those that can be offered by other organizations, one remains committed; otherwise, if better opportunities come up elsewhere one will not hesitate to leave. Employees having high continuance commitments are generally pragmatic opportunists with great ambitions looking forward to maximizing personal gains [20][23].

Figure: The three dimensions of organizational commitment—affection, normative, and continuance—illustrate the relationship between these dimensions and the individual's level of commitment within the organization.

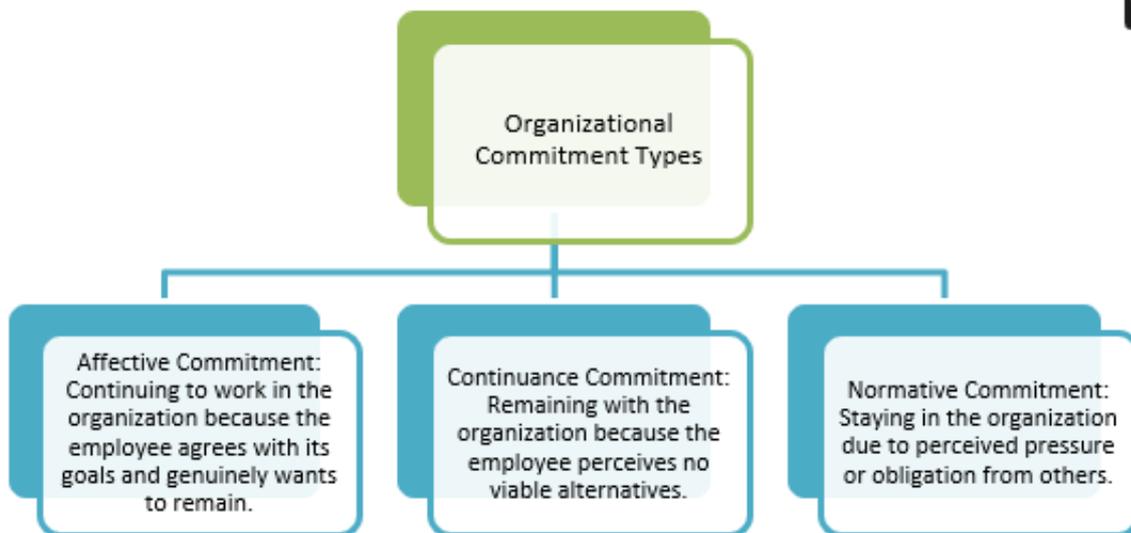


Figure 3. Figure (3) illustrates the dimensions of organizational commitment.

3.4. Relationship Between Organizational Commitment and Education Level:

A few writers have tried to find out if there is any link between the level of education attained by the employees and their level of organizational commitment. Education has been viewed as having an effect on attitudes, expectations, and behavioral patterns within organizations [24][25]. Higher levels of education are generally accompanied by higher levels of professional awareness, career aspirations, and performance expectations; hence, this may also relate to the type of commitment that such employees will have toward their organizations [26][27]. As one's educational attainment increases, so does the tendency for that person to look for wider career opportunities and alternative employment options. This can relate to continuance commitment as well as retention decisions [31][32].

Studies in organizational behavior have suggested that an employee's education level could determine his or her values held about the organization, perceptions about it, and degree of psychological attachment to it. This then influences the affective and normative dimensions of commitment [12][18]. Empirical studies have found significant relationships between educational background and loyalty to an organization. Education has been found to help one understand better the goals of an organization and align oneself with those institutional objectives [19][21]. Other studies mentioned how education could help improve one's analytical ability, participation in decision-making, and involvement in processes related to the development of an organization all positively influencing levels of commitment [20][22].

In general literature review education level is considered significant factor in determining organizational attitude and commitment though its direction may change according to different contextual situations since strength varies with structural aspects [23][28].

Practical Framework of the Research

4. Presentation of Results :

Table (1) presents the means and standard deviations of the responses of the study sample regarding the Training

Dimension at Samarra University, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
5	The university administration adopts a clear training plan based on job-related training needs	4.60	0.54	1	High
7	The university administration implements purposeful and well-defined training programs to enhance employee competencies	4.56	0.55	2	High
6	The university administration provides the necessary training courses to develop employees' skills	4.24	0.65	3	High
8	The university administration ensures suitable conditions for applying the skills and knowledge acquired from training	4.20	0.66	4	High
9	The university administration determines training needs based on outcomes and results (evaluation, indicators, performance)	4.16	0.64	5	High

Table 1. Table (1) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Training Dimension Items Ranked in Decreasing Order for the Training Dimension seen in Table (1) ranged from the highest mean of 4.60 (SD = 0.54) and Item (9) having the lowest mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.64). There were no statistically significant differences among these items, indicating that the university administration follows a clear training plan aligned with job-related training needs.

4.1. Delegation of Authority Dimension:

Table (2) shows the means and standard deviations of the study sample responses regarding the Delegation of Authority Dimension at Samarra University, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
11	My immediate supervisor grants me sufficient flexibility to act in performing my duties.	3.71	0.73	1	High
10	My immediate supervisor delegates adequate authority to me to carry out my job responsibilities.	3.69	0.92	2	High
12	My supervisor continuously monitors my performance and provides guidance and support for the	3.69	0.85	3	High

14	delegated tasks. Clear criteria for the delegation of authority are established at the university.	3.64	0.93	4	Medium
13	The administration of the university I work for provides me with the opportunity to make decisions within my area of responsibility independently.	3.64	0.80	5	Medium

Table 2. Table (2) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Delegation of Authority Dimension Items. The mean scores for the Delegation of Authority Dimension, as shown in Table (2), were between 3.64 and 3.71. The highest mean was found in Item (11) with a value of 3.71 and standard deviation of 0.73 while Item (13) had the lowest mean at 3.64 with a standard deviation of 0.80; however, there are no statistically significant differences between them. In general, these findings indicate that university administration provides adequate room for flexibility to its staff members when carrying out their responsibilities.

4.2. Providing Required Information Dimension:

Table (3) shows the means and standard deviations of the study sample responses regarding the Providing Required Information Dimension at Samarra University, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
15	The university administration provides the necessary technical and administrative resources to obtain and exchange information.	4.29	0.59	1	High
16	The university administration offers technological facilities, such as email and other tools, to distribute work-related information to employees.	4.16	0.71	2	High
19	The university administration ensures that work-related information is systematically organized in an archive for future reference.	4.02	0.72	3	High
18	The university administration builds an organizational memory of experiences and lessons learned, storing them in databases and expert systems for future use.	4.00	0.68	4	High
17	The university administration identifies the knowledge needs of the university in	3.93	0.75	5	High

order to provide them and offer the best conditions for users.

Table 3. Table (3) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Providing Required Information Dimension Items (3) in Descending Order for the Organizational Performance Dimension ranged from 3.93 to 4.29. Item 15 recorded the highest mean (4.29, SD = 0.59), while Item 17 had the lowest mean (3.93, SD = 0.75), with no statistically significant differences. Overall, the results indicate that the university administration provides adequate technical and administrative resources for obtaining and exchanging information.

4.3. Employee Participation Dimension:

Table (4) presents the means and standard deviations of the responses of the research sample regarding the dimension of Employee Participation at the University of Samarra, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
22	The university administration encourages the transfer of knowledge and information among departments.	4.33	0.71	1	High
24	The university administration promotes communication channels between top and lower management, both within and outside the workplace.	3.98	0.62	2	High
21	The university administration takes subordinates' feedback into consideration when making administrative decisions.	3.91	0.67	3	High
23	The university administration is keen on developing advanced means of communication among employees across different departments and job titles.	3.87	0.76	4	High
20	The university administration allows employees to participate in making administrative decisions that affect their work.	3.87	0.59	5	High

Table 4. Table (4) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Employee Participation Dimension Items (4) in Descending Order for the Employee Participation Dimension ranged from 3.87 to 4.33. Item 22 had the highest mean (4.33, SD = 0.71), while Item 20 had the lowest mean (3.87, SD = 0.59), with no statistically significant differences. Overall, the results indicate that the university administration promotes the transfer of knowledge and information among departments.

4.4. Organizational Performance Dimension:

Table (5) presents the means and standard deviations of the responses of the research sample regarding the Organizational Performance dimension at the University of Samarra, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
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26	The university administration systematically provides sufficient time, personnel, facilities, equipment, and financial resources to carry out activities related to serving clients.	4.09	0.56	1	High
25	The university administration plans for continuous improvement in all areas.	4.04	0.90	2	High
28	There is an effective communication system between top management and the public.	4.02	0.84	3	High
29	The university administration strives to achieve client satisfaction and loyalty, which are considered fundamental aspects of the services provided by the university.	3.98	0.78	4	High
27	The university administration periodically follows up on clients' complaints and provides solutions whenever possible.	3.87	0.81	5	High
30	The university administration continuously works on improving the organization of services offered to clients.	3.56	0.72	6	Medium

Table 5. Table (5) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Organizational Performance Dimension Items
Table (5) Descriptive Statistics scores for the Organizational Performance Dimension ranged from 3.56 to 4.09. Item 26 recorded the highest mean (4.09, SD = 0.56), while Item 30 had the lowest mean (3.56, SD = 0.72), with no statistically significant differences. Overall, the results indicate that the university administration systematically provides sufficient time, personnel, facilities, equipment, and financial resources for client-related activities.

4.5. Effectiveness Dimension:

Table (6) presents the means and standard deviations of the responses of the research sample regarding the Effectiveness dimension at the University of Samarra, as follows:

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Level of Agreement
31	The university is able to contribute to scientific research and field studies.	4.29	0.66	1	High
34	The university graduates students with a distinguished level of education.	4.27	0.69	2	High
33	Employees perform their tasks correctly from the first time.	4.24	0.57	3	High
32	The university	4.18	0.65	4	High

	strives to adapt continuously to the changing educational environment.				
37	The university's top management works to align the university's objectives with those of society as a whole.	4.09	0.79	5	High
35	The university contributes to serving the local community.	4.09	0.63	6	High
36	The university is committed to its responsibility toward environmental protection.	3.76	0.80	7	High

Table 6. Table (6) Descriptive Statistics (Means and Standard Deviations) of Effectiveness Dimension Items Ranked in Descending Order that mean scores for the Effectiveness Dimension ranged from 3.76 to 4.29. Item 31 had the highest mean (4.29, SD = 0.66), while Item 36 had the lowest mean (3.76, SD = 0.80), with no statistically significant differences. Overall, the results indicate that the top management at the University of Samarra provides technological facilities, such as e-mail and other tools, to distribute work-related information to employees.

5. Hypotheses Testing and Results Analysis :

To test the main null hypothesis, simple regression analysis was used to examine the effect of empowerment and flexibility on achieving organizational commitment at the University of Samarra.

Main Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant effect at the level ($\alpha = 0.05$) of achieving organizational commitment through its dimensions (training, delegation of authority, provision of required information, employee participation, organizational performance, and effectiveness) on the performance of educational institutions through its dimensions (empowerment, flexibility) at the University of Samarra.

Based on the analysis, the administrative effect of empowerment and flexibility on achieving organizational commitment in educational institutions at the University of Samarra is evident. The statistical analysis showed a statistically significant effect of total quality management on the performance of educational institutions, as the significance level for the overall dimensions was (0.000), which is less than the significance threshold (0.05), making it statistically significant.

Additionally, the calculated F-value ($F = 14.138$) exceeded the tabular F-value ($F = 2.56$) at degrees of freedom (4, 48), indicating that the model is significant. The correlation coefficient was ($R = 0.766$) at a significance level of ($\alpha = 0.05$), while the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.587.

Based on these results, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating that empowerment and flexibility have a significant administrative effect on achieving organizational commitment at the University of Samarra.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations :

6.1. Conclusions:

The key findings of the study, based on the responses of the research sample to the questionnaire items, are as follows:

1. The study results indicated the absence of a suitable work environment for implementing administrative empowerment and flexibility, which contributed to employees' confusion regarding the principles of organizational commitment.
2. The study confirmed that the university administration supports the application of empowerment and flexibility through all available means, as the top management develops strategic plans to guide employees toward prioritizing organizational commitment.
3. The results revealed an alignment between the strategic plans set by the university's top management and the requirements for implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) at the University of Samarra.
4. Statistical indicators and findings confirm that the university actively involves all employees in improving its performance, and this involvement is significant.
5. The study showed weak employee participation in decision-making processes by the top management, which

negatively affected the achievement of organizational commitment dimensions.

6. Findings indicate that the university clearly applies a continuous improvement approach and consistently seeks to embed this methodology into its philosophy and various activities, including employee training programs aligned with labor market developments.
7. The study confirmed that the university employs fair and practical performance evaluation procedures based on defined quality standards, linked to a clear and transparent rewards system for positive outcomes, avoiding punitive measures for negative results.
8. The study's findings and indicators highlight that applying empowerment and flexibility has a significant effect on achieving organizational commitment, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the University of Samarra. This is reflected in creating an intellectually stimulating environment, optimizing available resources to achieve quality objectives, adapting continuously to the changing environment, serving the local community, and integrating the university's goals with those of society as a whole.

6.2. Recommendations:

1. Based on the previous conclusions, the first and most important recommendation to enhance the leadership characteristics at the University of Samarra is to focus on providing the necessary factors for information sharing, freedom, and autonomy to its managers within the university environment.
2. The university administration should raise awareness among its managers about the importance of clearly communicating the institution's mission and objectives to employees, specifying their responsibilities, expanding their perspectives, and assisting them in solving problems. The analysis results indicate that there is still an opportunity to positively enhance managerial leadership traits.
3. Provide the necessary resources to ensure managers' freedom and autonomy within the institution by granting them broad areas for expressing opinions and respecting their suggestions, avoiding marginalization or neglect.
4. Establish and develop distinguished internal communication channels in all directions to coordinate work across the university's various tasks, provide and exchange information, and actively involve managers in the process.
5. Implement a comprehensive information system at the university that leverages modern technologies (e.g., internet-based systems), ensuring information availability across all university units, faculties, and other universities to support decision-making and effective resolution of issues.
6. Assist academic and administrative leaders in enhancing individuals' potential by providing learning and training opportunities, skill development, and knowledge acquisition, which are essential for performing work efficiently and effectively.
7. Grant administrative leaders additional authority to act in various situations by enhancing information-sharing mechanisms and providing them autonomy in performing their duties and activities.
8. Encourage managers to expand the practice of participation in exchanging ideas and suggestions, particularly before initiating work, to gather the maximum number of intellectual contributions, select the best, or integrate multiple strong ideas.
9. Reduce direct supervision and strengthen managers' awareness of their capacity for self-monitoring and exercising internal control.

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