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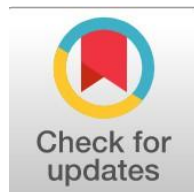
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Governance of Iraqi Universities and Its Role in Improving Institutional Performance Efficiency

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Abstract

General Background The current higher education sector is transforming rapidly due to global expectations for academic quality and competitiveness. **Specific Background** Modern university governance models rely heavily on transparency, accountability, and administrative autonomy to optimize resources and elevate institutional performance. **Knowledge Gap** Despite recent reforms, tertiary entities in Iraq continue to experience unequal organizational outcomes and lack modern administrative applications compared to global standards. **Aims** This study investigates the correlation between university governance and operational outcomes in Iraq alongside a statistical comparison with regional models. **Results** Analysis of stakeholder responses revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between administrative implementation and institutional performance efficiency. Furthermore, comparative benchmarking demonstrated that King Saud University and the University of Jordan achieved significantly higher accountability scores than local institutions. **Novelty** This research provides a unique empirical framework that contrasts local academics directly with leading regional models to identify specific higher education deficiencies. **Implications** Adopting clear national regulatory frameworks based on successful regional paradigms will optimize human resource investment, foster administrative autonomy, and improve overall decision-making quality.

Highlights:

- Statistical data confirms that transparent policies strongly correlate with optimized institutional operations.
- Regional academic models demonstrate significantly higher accountability levels than local tertiary entities.
- Establishing clear national regulatory frameworks elevates resource management quality for long-term sustainability.

Keywords: University Governance, Institutional Performance, Higher Education, Comparative Benchmarking, Administrative Autonomy

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Introduction:

Today's higher education landscape is undergoing a fast-paced transformation in response to scientific and technological advances, economic and social changes, and growing expectations for quality, academic accreditation, and competitiveness in the global arena. Today universities are expected to perform more extensive functions than those consisting of university teaching and research, but also activities related to sustainable development, the development of a knowledge-based economy, innovation and community service. This means that such administrative and organizational systems should be able to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of institutional performance.

During this change, the idea of university administration has become one of the modern management methods that seek to develop the higher education institution by arranging relations between various stakeholders inside and outside the university on the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, autonomy and fairness. In this context, the concept of university administration has become one of the modern methods of administration that seeks to develop the university by arranging the relationship between various stakeholders inside and outside the university on the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, autonomy and fairness. Governance is no longer simply a regulatory or administrative tool – it is a strategic framework that can facilitate the quality of university decisions, efficient use of resources and balance the autonomy of the university with social responsibility.

Coordinating the governance of the university is gaining significance in today's context of administrative and organizational difficulties, particularly in the developing world, where higher education institutions seek to catch up with global standards and to comply with the needs of institutional development and reform. In this context Iraqi universities are facing a number of challenges such as low efficiency in institutional performance; overlapping authorities; and the lack of implementation of modern principles of governance; challenges posed to the management of universities; of the quality of educational services; and of effective use of human and financial resources.

The study of the governance of Iraqi universities, its role in improving its efficiency in performance, is a scientific and practical problem related to future of higher education in Iraq, which highlights its importance. Institutional performance in the universities should be developed by introducing modern management models which are based on transparency, accountability and participation in decision making, while establishing a flexible organizational setting that is conducive to creativity and continuous improvement.

This study is also important because it aimed at comparing some of the models of universities in the region and internationally in order to draw lessons from their achievements in the field of university governance with the aim of adopting and adapting them to Iraqi educational environment. Good governance has been proven to have direct impacts on administrative and academic efficiency, the quality of educational outputs and university competitiveness in the global context.

Based on this, the study aims to analyse the current situation of governance in Iraqi universities, to identify the type of governance relationship with the efficiency of institutions, and to propose some practical proposals and recommendations that will contribute to formulating a university management and enhance the quality of higher education in Iraq, according to the standards of modern higher education governance in the world.

Research Problem:

Despite the reform efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq, Iraqi universities still suffer from disparities in institutional performance and a weakness in the application of modern university governance principles.

Therefore, the research problem is defined by the following main question:

What role does university governance play in improving the efficiency of institutional performance in Iraqi universities, and how can regional and international university models be utilized to develop this role?

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of application of university governance principles in Iraqi universities?
2. What is the level of efficiency of institutional performance in Iraqi universities?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between university governance and the efficiency of institutional performance in Iraqi universities?
4. What are the most prominent differences between the reality of university governance in Iraq and regional and international university models in the field of improving institutional performance?

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the level of application of governance principles in Iraqi universities.

2. To measure the level of efficiency of institutional performance in Iraqi universities.
3. To analyze the relationship between university governance and the efficiency of institutional performance.
4. To conduct a comparative analysis between Iraqi universities and selected regional and international university models.
5. To present practical proposals for developing university governance in Iraq in accordance with international standards.

Importance of the Research:

1. Scientific Significance

- It enriches the Arabic literature with a modern study linking university governance and institutional performance.
- It presents a comparative analytical model that can be applied in higher education research.

2. Applied Significance

- It provides practical indicators for decision-makers in the Ministry of Higher Education and Iraqi universities.
- It contributes to improving the efficiency of university administration and the quality of higher education outcomes.

Research Methodology and Type:

• Research Type:

This research is descriptive, analytical and comparative research. It seeks to explore the reality of the governance in the university in Iraq and its role in improving the efficiency of universities' work. It also analyzes it with some models of other universities in the region and globally to find similarities and differences, and to learn from successful experiences in university administration.

• Research Methodology:

The research adopted a set of integrated scientific methodologies that align with the nature of the study topic and its objectives. These methodologies are as follows:

Descriptive Methodology:

The method was employed to describe the reality of university governance in Iraq and to measure the level of performance efficiency of the universities. This was done by gathering and systematically scientifically analyzing data on the study variables.

Analytical Methodology:

This method was employed to identify the relationship between university governance and university performance efficiency, and to determine the form of the impact of university governance principles on enhancing the performance of administration and academic affairs in Iraqi universities.

Comparative Methodology:

The research adopted a comparative methodology to analyze the reality of Iraqi universities with some regional and international university models. This aimed to identify the most prominent modern practices in the field of university governance and the possibility of utilizing them in developing Iraqi higher education institutions.

Research Population and Sample:

• Research Population:

The research population consists of university leaders, faculty members, and administrators working in a number of selected Iraqi, regional, and international universities. The purpose of the research is to study the reality of university governance and the level of institutional performance efficiency, and to conduct a field comparison between these universities. • Field research sample:

The study adopted the purposive stratified sampling method to select sample members from the universities included in the study, to ensure representation of groups related to the topic of governance and institutional performance.

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Country	University
Iraq	Al-Mustansiriya University
Iraq	University of Baghdad
Saudi Arabia	King Saud University
Jordan	University of Jordan
—	Total

The research sample consisted of (250) individuals, selected from a number of chosen universities and distributed according to job title as follows:

Job title	s
Faculty members	1
Administrators	2
University leaders	3
—	Total

Justification for Sample Selection

This sample was selected for the following reasons:

1. The sample members are directly involved in the topic of governance and institutional performance within universities.
 2. University leaders, administrators and faculty have hands-on experience in university systems and processes.
 3. The fact that there are various universities, public or not, gives a more rounded and complete view of reality when it comes to universities.
 4. The sample size is appropriate for the desired statistical analyses and research goals.
- Research Tools
1. A questionnaire, which was sent through the internet to the research participants outside Iraq, to measure the level of university governance and the efficiency of institutional performance.
 2. Benchmarking with regional and international models.
 3. Scientific observation to study administrative practices.
- Comparative University Models

For the purpose of the study, several models of universities from the region and international universities were used as standards for comparison, with the aim of identifying the most prominent models of governance of universities, and using them to develop the Iraqi universities. The models were chosen according to the criteria of performance, institutional excellence and international academic rankings.

Statistical Methods

- Frequencies and Percentages

Arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

- Pearson correlation coefficient.
- Linear regression analysis.

Comparisons: t-test and ANOVA.

Research Limitations

Spatial Limitations: Selected universities.

Temporal Limitations: Academic year 2024-2025.

Thematic Limitations: These focus on University governance and efficiency in institutional performance.

Section Two: Theoretical Framework of the Research:

First: University Governance

Conceptual Framework of University Governance

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The idea of governance in a university is a relatively new one in the world of higher education management. It has developed as an organizational and intellectual reaction to the fast changing dynamics of universities in the region and internationally. Traditional university management models are being changed and new models based on shared authority, responsibilities and increased institutional accountability are emerging as a result of increased pressures for quality, academic accreditation and competitiveness in the global scene. Based on this, governance is described as a system of rules and procedures that control the relationship among the various stakeholders within and outside the university. It is important to address the conceptual framework of university governance to clarify the confusion between related concepts like the university administration, academic leadership and strategic management (Al-Karim, 2022, p. 20). Governance is a more comprehensive process than day-to-day administration, including the process of formulating public policy, decision making processes, performance monitoring and balancing autonomy and responsibility. A clear concept is also required to grasp the dimensions and principles of governance, as well as to define indicators for measuring governance in field studies, particularly in areas with multi-level governance and low levels of organizational capacity. (Mahmoud, 2021, pp. It is important to base the notions of university governance on the institutional and legal features of higher education, as is needed in the Arab context, specifically in Iraq. (44-46) It has been found in recent studies that the understanding of the concept of governance is not precise and is one of the greatest barriers in the implementation of this concept in universities. Governance is frequently limited to a set of monitoring or managerial protocols and decisions, rather than seen as a culture within institutions that relies on participation, transparency, effective use of resources, and the pursuit of organizational justice. (Hussein, 2023, p. 112)

Thus, it is a study whose main aim is to build a conceptual shape of the governance in the university through presenting the most important theoretical and contemporary definitions of this concept and analyzing its goals and justifications for the use of it in higher education institutions, so that in the next part of the study, it will be examined its dimensions and principles, and it will be linked to the efficiency of the performance in higher education institutions in Iraq.

The concept of Governance: It is a modern administrative concept, which was first introduced into the field of organizational literature at the end of the last century, because of the rapidly changing work environments, the complexity of institutional structures and the need for regulating the relationship between various parties in institutions. The development of governance was associated with efforts to solve problems of traditional governance, such as lack of transparency, overlapping jurisdictions, lack of accountability and mismanagement of resources. For more details on this subject, please consult Mahmoud, *Modern Management: An Introduction to Governance and Transparency*, 2021, p. 32.

Many Arab scholars describe governance as a process of laws, regulations and mechanisms that regulate the way of decision-making in an organization and specify the roles and responsibilities of various actors while ensuring an equal balance of authority and accountability. This definition highlights the importance of governance in not only being about oversight but also includes the broader system which covers institutional relations and the conduct of people and organisations. (Salem, *Organizational Governance: Concept and Application*, 2022, p. 19)

In a related context, Al-Shammari (2022) argues that governance represents an advanced administrative model aimed at achieving the optimal use of human and material resources by adopting the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and the rule of law. This contributes to raising the efficiency of institutional performance and strengthening trust between the organization and its stakeholders. This perspective highlights the ethical and value-based dimension of governance alongside its organizational dimension. (Al-Karim, *Corporate Governance in Light of Contemporary Administrative Transformations*, 2022, p. 42)

University governance is defined as: "A system of laws, regulations, and procedures that govern the relationship between different parties within the university, ensuring transparency, accountability, and participation in decision-making, and enhancing performance efficiency and achieving the strategic goals of the university institution." (Al-Karim H., 2023, p. 112)

University governance is defined as: "The set of organizational and administrative mechanisms through which authority is exercised within the university, achieving a balance between academic autonomy and social responsibility, and ensuring the optimal use of resources and the achievement of institutional quality" (Ibrahim, 2022, p. 54).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines university governance as: "The structures, relationships, and processes through which higher education institutions are directed, managed, and held accountable at the institutional and national levels, ensuring the achievement of their academic and societal objectives." (*Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society*, 2008, p. 61).

The European Commission defines university governance as:

"The framework that determines how authority is exercised and decisions are made within higher education institutions, through the distribution of responsibilities among different stakeholders and ensuring transparency, accountability, and institutional efficiency" (European Commission, 2017). From the above definitions, it is evident that governance in the university is not just about administration or supervision. Instead, it is a holistic model for governance within the university institution, based on transparency, accountability, participation and independence in relationships and authorities. This is directly related to the efficiency of institutional performance and quality of higher education outcome.

Objectives of University Governance:

There are several objectives for university governance, including:

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1. Enhancing Transparency in University Operations

University governance intends to provide clarity of the university procedures, decisions and policies and to provide information to stakeholders. This helps to build trust between the University administration, faculty, students, and the community. Transparency also helps to limit the ambiguity of administration and to improve the quality of institutional decisions. In Ibrahim (Governance of Higher Education Institutions and Quality Management, 2022, p. 78), it would read:

2. Promoting Accountability

Governance aims to create the concept of accountability defining responsibilities and authorities and to associate performance with the results achieved. This contributes to improving institutional performance and minimising unnecessary administration. The study revealed that the initial research on governance in Arab universities was conducted in the 1970s. A study by Al-Karim H. (2023, p. 126) found that the first research work on governance in Arab universities appeared in the 1970s.

3. Improving Institutional Performance

Governance is designed to improve administrative and academic performance by utilising human, financial and technological resources in an optimal way. It also helps to increase the productivity of the university and attain the strategic objectives efficiently and effectively (Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society, 2008, p. 108).

4. Supporting Participation in Decision-Making

Governance increases stakeholder involvement at the university level, including faculty, students and staff. This helps to promote the quality of decisions and a sense of responsibility and institutional belonging (European Commission, 2017, p. 24).

5. Enhancing University Autonomy

The goal of governance is to enable the universities to handle their academic, administrative and financial affairs independently, yet uphold the principle of accountability to the society and the state. This supports universities to meet and react to the current demands and shifts. (United Nations Educational 2015, p.34)

6. Achieving Justice and Equal Opportunities

Governance aims to promote the use of equitable, non-biased criteria in the recruitment, promotion, assessment and utilization of resources in the University. This results in greater institutional integrity and realization of an academic environment of competency and merit. (Mohammed, 2018, p. 145)

7. Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education

Governance helps to foster the quality of academic programs, scientific research and community service through the adoption of standards for assessment, feedback and ongoing improvement to enhance higher education outcomes. (Jassem, 2023, p. 91)

Justifications for Implementing Governance in Higher Education:

1. Improving the Efficiency of Institutional Performance

The need to raise the efficiency of administrative and academic performance is one of the most important justifications for implementing governance in higher education institutions. Governance helps to coordinate university activities and establishes responsibilities and authorities, which can result in better performing activities and effective and efficient accomplishment of institutional goals. (Jassem, 2023, p. 99)

2. Enhancing Transparency and Accountability

The universities now have to formulate policies on transparency of administrative and academic processes and decisions, and mechanisms for accountability to ensure good performance and efficient utilization of resources. Governance is an organizational structure that helps to meet these requirements and can help build trust between the university and its stakeholders. (Al-Karim H., Governance of Arab Universities: Contemporary Concepts and Applications, 2023, p. 136)

3. Responding to Quality and Academic Accreditation Requirements

The development of higher education has come to rely on quality and academic accreditation as basic requirements and this requires good administrative systems with governance principles. Governance supports an organisation learning context and quality of educational and research processes through continuous improvement. According to Ibrahim, Governance of Higher Education Institutions and Quality Management, 2022, p. 91, the ministry is responsible for developing the national strategies for university and college education and government is responsible for implementing them.

4. Supporting University Autonomy

Governance helps universities exercise their academic, administrative, and financial powers more independently, while

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maintaining the principle of responsibility and accountability. This contributes to enhancing the university's ability to make appropriate decisions and keep pace with scientific and technological changes (Allah, 2022, p. 121).

5. Addressing Administrative and Organizational Challenges

Higher education institutions are under many pressures due to a lack of organizational unit coordination and overlapping jurisdictions. This is essential for creating administrative structures, better decision-making processes and less administrative bureaucracy so that governance can be implemented. (Muhammad, 2018, p. 137)

6. Enhancing the Competitiveness of Universities

The University wants to move up the rankings and attract students and researchers, which means that it needs to implement Modern Administrative systems based on governance. Good governance helps to ensure good institutional performance and increases the reputation and competitiveness of the university in the local and global arena. (Ahmed, 2022, p. 802)

7. Rationalizing the use of human and financial resources

Governance supports efficient use of the resources available, by establishing clear processes for planning, monitoring and evaluation, which helps minimise financial and administrative waste, and ensures institutional sustainability. (Youssef, 2024, p. 905)

Second: Institutional Performance Efficiency in Universities

The concept of institutional performance efficiency is one of the main concepts that has received more and more attention in the current state of management literature. This is because this affects the efficiency and effectiveness of institutions in meeting their goals in today's fast changing and increasingly competitive environment. The higher education institutions are now obliged to continuously improve their institutional performance, not only to ensure the quality of the educational process, but also to keep up with the scientific and technological progress and the requirements of sustainable development, as well as to increase their competitiveness on the local, regional and international levels. Institutional performance is seen as a reflection of the extent to which an institution has been able to make use of its human, financial and technological resources to fulfill its mission and strategic objectives.

So, in this regard, the purpose of this study is to explain the concept of institutional performance efficiency in universities and its dimensions and indicators, and to discuss the factors affecting it. Finally, it aims to provide clarity on how the performance efficiency of the institution relates to governance in the university, which is considered one of the foundations for developing higher education institutions and meeting their strategic goals in the ever-changing and competitive environment.

The Concept of Institutional Performance in Universities

Institutional performance is a basic concept of modern management literature because it is by this that the success of an institution in attaining its targets and utilizing its resources efficiently and effectively is measured. In Universities, the role of institutions as a knowledge institution with various functions as education, scientific research, and community service makes the importance of institutional performance become greater. This allows for their performance to be a true reflection of how they are able to achieve their academic and developmental goal. In addition, the dynamic transformations that have taken place in the higher education sector, and the growing competition from both within and outside the country between universities, have drawn attention to the importance of measuring and developing institutional performance to achieve quality and institutional excellence.

Darwish's definition of institutional performance is: "The ability of the institution, to carry out the planned activities and processes optimally, using the available human, financial and material resources, while guaranteeing efficiency and effectiveness in the work of the institution. (Mohammed D., 2019, p. 85)

From the point of view of Al-Salmi, institutional performance is defined as: "The aggregate of efforts and activities carried out by the institution to realize strategic goals and can be seen from the efficiency, effectiveness and quality in carrying out various tasks and programs. (Al-Rahman, 2018, p. 115)

Abdul Wahid defines institutional performance in universities as: "The university's ability to achieve its educational, research, and community goals by efficiently utilizing its human, material, and technological resources, thereby ensuring the quality of academic outputs and achieving institutional excellence." (Jasim, 2023, p. 156)

It is clear from the preceding definitions that institutional performance represents the institution's ability to achieve its goals efficiently and effectively through the optimal use of available resources. The definitions also agree that institutional performance is not limited to final results alone, but also includes the processes and procedures that lead to those results. Within the university context, institutional performance is viewed as a reflection of the university's success in fulfilling its academic, research, and community functions, and in achieving quality and institutional excellence in its various activities.

The Concept of Institutional Performance Efficiency

Institutional performance efficiency is a modern administrative concept that has received considerable attention in administrative and organizational literature, due to its direct connection to the ability of institutions to achieve their goals in

the best possible way through the optimal use of available resources. In higher education institutions, institutional performance efficiency is a crucial indicator of how effectively a university invests its human, financial, and technological resources to achieve its academic, research, and community mission and objectives. Institutional efficiency also reflects a university's ability to achieve high-quality results with minimal cost, effort, and time, ensuring sustainability and continuous improvement in a competitive and rapidly changing environment.

It is defined as: "The institution's ability to achieve its goals by using available resources in the best possible way, maximizing outputs and minimizing waste in inputs and processes." (Hajim, 2020, p. 67)

It is also defined as: "The institution's ability to accomplish required tasks and duties according to established standards at the lowest possible cost and in the shortest possible time, while maintaining the required level of quality." (Al-Rahman, Contemporary Management, 2018, p. 142), or, it is defined as: "The extent to which a university can utilize its human, financial, and technological resources to achieve its educational, research, and community service goals efficiently and effectively, contributing to improved output quality and institutional excellence." (Jassem, 2023, p. 168)

It is clear from the preceding definitions that institutional performance efficiency represents an institution's ability to achieve its goals through the optimal use of available resources, while achieving the highest level of quality and productivity at the lowest possible cost, effort, and time. In universities, institutional efficiency is linked to its ability to manage its resources and organize its processes in a way that achieves quality education, scientific research, and community service, which positively impacts the level of institutional performance and university excellence.

The researcher defines it as: the university's ability to optimally invest its human, financial, and technological resources to achieve its academic, administrative, and research goals efficiently and effectively, thus contributing to improving the quality of outputs, enhancing institutional excellence, and achieving the goals of higher education.

The Importance of Measuring Institutional Performance in Universities

Measuring institutional performance is a fundamental pillar of contemporary university administration, as it provides accurate and objective information about the level of achievement and the extent to which the university is able to achieve its educational, research, and community goals. It also serves as a way of assessing the effectiveness of different activities and programmes and identifying strengths and weaknesses, which means that the university administration can make effective decisions, based on realistic data and indicators and not on personal or subjective opinion. For subjective judgments. (Osama, 2018, p. 7)

The significance of measuring institutional performance in universities can be emphasized on the basis that the performance measurement is used in the process of strategic planning and decision making. It helps with tracking progress towards plans and objectives, and can be used to identify any deviations or obstacles that might prevent plans and objectives from being met. The ongoing performance measurement also enables to guide resources to strategic priorities and enhance the efficiency of using the resources available in the university. (Nour, 2022, p. 214)

The application of institutional performance measurement also helps to improve the quality of higher education and to ensure its academic accreditation by providing explicit "marks" for measuring the quality of academic programs, scientific research, and the services provided by the university. The results of performance measurement are sometimes used by accreditation and quality assurance bodies as a way of assessing how well universities meet the academic and administrative standards that are expected. One crucial element of the institutional performance measurement is that it can be used to facilitate transparency and accountability in universities. (Al-Fattah, 2020, p. 88) It is used for the objective assessment of the performance of academic and administrative units and for the assessment of the real level of achievement vis-à-vis the planned objectives. It is also an important part to develop institutional culture of continuous improvement and accountability in line with the demands of current University governance. (Saleh, 2022, p. 66)

With growing competition in both local and international universities, the use of performance measurement in institutions has become a strategic tool to support the competitiveness of institutions and enhance academic ranking. The universities that implement successful performance measurement systems can adjust their academic programmes, enhance quality of educational and research outputs, and more effectively and efficiently respond to the demands of society and the labour market. (Nour, 2022, p. 220) It is clear from the above that institutional performance measurement in universities represents a necessary strategic tool for developing higher education, improving the quality of outputs, and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in various university activities, in addition to its role in supporting governance and achieving institutional excellence and organizational sustainability.

Section Three: Fieldwork:

After distributing the questionnaire to a number of people, the researcher reached the following conclusions:

Table (3) Gender:

Total		University of Jordan		King Saud University		Al-Mustansiriy ,University		University of Baghdad		Categories
ratio	repetition	ratio	repetition	ratio	repetition	ratio	repetition	ratio	repetition	
%		%		%		%		%		

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60.0	150	50.0	25	70.0	35	60.0	45	60.0	45	Male
40.0	100	50.0	25	30.0	15	40.0	30	40.0	30	Female
100	250	100	50	100	50	100	75	100	75	Total

The table above shows the distribution of the study sample by gender across the universities included in the comparison. The number of males at the University of Baghdad was 45, representing 60% of the total student body. The same percentage was recorded at Al-Mustansiriya University, also with 45 males. King Saud University had the highest percentage of males at 70%, with 35 males. The University of Jordan achieved a gender balance with 25 males and 25 females, each representing 50%.

The number of females was 30 at both the University of Baghdad and Al-Mustansiriya University (40%), 15 at King Saud University (30%), and 25 at the University of Jordan (50%). The total number of males in the sample was 150 (60%), compared to 100 females (40%). This distribution indicates the diversity of the sample in terms of gender among the universities studied, which enhances the representation of different perspectives on university governance and institutional performance efficiency, and contributes to increasing the accuracy of the results and the possibility of conducting statistical comparisons between the universities included in the study.

Table (4) Job Title

Total		University of Jordan		King Saud University		Al-Mustansiriya University		University of Baghdad		Categories
ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	
44.0	110	44.0	22	44.0	22	44.0	33	44.0	33	Faculty members
34.0	85	36.0	18	34.0	17	33.3	25	33.3	25	Administrators
22.0	55	20.0	10	22.0	11	22.7	17	22.7	17	University leaders
100	250	100	50	100	50	100	75	100	75	Total

From the table above, faculty members constituted the highest percentage across all universities. At the University of Baghdad, they were represented by 33 individuals (44%), at Al-Mustansiriya University by 33 individuals (44%), at King Saud University by 22 individuals (44%), 22 people (44%) performed at the University of Jordan. This means that this category can be made clear in the sample, as it is directly linked to the academic process and the assessment of institutional performance.

Administrators were in second place (25, 33.3%) followed by the University of Baghdad (25, 33.3%) and followed by the Al-Mustansiriya University (17, 34%) and the last was the University of Jordan (18, 36%). The percentages are high because of the important role played by administrative. University leaders were third with 17 (22.7%) at University of Baghdad, 17 (22.7%) at Al-Mustansiriya University, 11 (22%) at King Saud University and 10 (20%) at University of Jordan. These percentages suggest good representation of university leaders and that the perspectives of decision makers on governance and efficiency of institutional performance can be measured.

The distribution of respondents by job title was fairly even across all four Universities, with faculty members being the most common at all Universities, followed by administrators, and then University leaders. This distribution is suitable for the type of comparison study.

Table (5) Academic Qualification

Total		University of Jordan		King Saud University		Al-Mustansiriya University		University of Baghdad		Categories
ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	
34.0	85	32.0	16	34.0	17	34.7	26	34.7	26	Bachelor's degree
36.0	90	36.0	18	36.0	18	36.0	27	36.0	27	Master
30.0	75	32.0	16	30.0	15	29.3	22	29.3	22	Ph.D
100	250	100	50	100	50	100	75	100	75	Total

The table shows the distribution of the sample members according to their academic qualifications at the universities included in the study. The results revealed a relative variation among the universities in terms of the academic qualification levels of the respondents.

The number of Bachelor's degree holders at the University of Baghdad was 26, representing 34.7% of the total sample of 75. The same number (26) was also found at Al-Mustansiriya University, representing 34.7%. At King Saud University, the number of Bachelor's degree holders was 17, representing 34% of the total sample, while at the University of Jordan, the number was 16, representing 32%. The total number of Bachelor's degree holders across the four universities was 85,

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representing 34% of the total study sample.

Master's degree holders constituted the highest percentage among the sample members, with 27 individuals (36%) at both the University of Baghdad and Al-Mustansiriya University (36%). The number of individuals with master's degrees was 18 (36%) at King Saud University and 18 (36%) at the University of Jordan. The total number of master's degree holders across all universities was 90 (36%).

Regarding doctoral degree holders, the number was 22 (29.3%) at the University of Baghdad and 22 (29.3%) at Al-Mustansiriya University. At King Saud University, the number was 15 (30%), and at the University of Jordan, it was 16 (32%). The total number of doctoral degree holders was 75 (30%).

Based on these results, the largest proportion of the sample was those with a master's degree, followed by those with a bachelor's degree and then those with a doctorate. The results also show an appropriate variety of academic qualifications of the sample, which helps to yield multiple academic and administrative views of university governance and institutional performance efficiency. This distribution is also consistent with what the occupations of the respondents were: The pieces with Bachelor's degrees were more common among administrators, those with Master's degrees with faculty members and those with Doctoral degrees in university leaders, which gave better accuracy and objectivity.

Table (6) Years of Service

Total		University of Jordan		King Saud University		Al-Mustansiriya University		University of Baghdad		Categories
ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	ratio %	repetition	
16.0	40	14.0	7	18.0	9	16.0	12	16.0	12	Under 5 years
26.0	65	28.0	14	26.0	13	25.3	19	25.3	19	5–10 years
28.0	70	28.0	14	28.0	14	28.0	21	28.0	21	11–15 years
30.0	75	30.0	15	28.0	14	30.7	23	30.7	23	Over 15 years
100	250	100	50	100	50	100	75	100	75	Total

The table shows the distribution of the sample members according to years of service at the universities included in the study. The number of respondents with less than five years of service was 12 (16%) at the University of Baghdad, 12 (16%) at Al-Mustansiriya University, 9 (18%) at King Saud University, and 7 (14%) at the University of Jordan. This group comprised 40 individuals, representing 16% of the total sample.

The 5-10 years of service category included 19 (25.3%) at the University of Baghdad, 19 (25.3%) at Al-Mustansiriya University, 13 (26%) at King Saud University, and 14 (28%) at the University of Jordan. This group comprised 65 individuals, representing 26% of the total sample. The 11-15 year age group comprised 21 individuals (28%) at the University of Baghdad, 21 at Al-Mustansiriya University (28%), 14 at King Saud University (28%), and 14 at the University of Jordan (28%). This group totaled 70 individuals (28%).

The category with more than 15 years of service represented the highest percentage among the sample. This group numbered 23 individuals (30.7%) at the University of Baghdad, 23 at Al-Mustansiriya University (20.7%), 14 at King Saud University (28%), and 15 at the University of Jordan (30%). This group included 75 people (30 % of the total sample). These findings suggest that most of the sample has a medium to long term professional experiences with 11-15 years and over 15 years making up 58% of the total sample. It is appropriate to the nature of the study, which focuses on governance and institutional performance in universities, because it is these kinds of issues that need to be assessed by those who have enough experience and knowledge of the systems and procedures of Universities. This distribution also reflects the job title distribution with higher levels of service having a higher concentration of university leaders and a substantial portion of faculty.

Table (7) Items of the Governance and Institutional Performance Scale at the University of Baghdad

Total		I strongly disagree.		I disagree.		neutral		I agree.		I strongly agree.		Paragraph	s
%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s		
100	75	4.0	3	6.7	5	13.3	10	33.3	25	42.7	32	University decisions are characterized by transparency and clarity.	1
100	75	4.0	3	6.7	5	10.7	8	32.0	24	46.7	35	Clear mechanisms for accountability exist.	2
100	75	5.3	4	10.7	8	20.0	15	34.7	26	29.3	22	Staff participate in university decision-making.	3
100	75	5.3	4	10.7	8	22.7	17	33.3	25	28.0	21	The university enjoys administrative and academic independence.	4
100	75	5.3	4	8.0	6	16.0	12	37.3	28	33.3	25	Fairness and equal opportunities are applied among employees.	5
100	75	5.3	4	6.7	5	13.3	10	36.0	27	38.7	29	Human resources are utilized efficiently.	6
100	75	5.3	4	8.0	6	17.3	13	37.3	28	32.0	24	Financial resources are utilized efficiently.	7

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100	75	5.3	4	6.7	5	14.7	11	36.0	27	37.3	28	Management contributes to the speed of transaction processing.	8
100	75	4.0	3	6.7	5	10.7	8	30.7	23	48.0	36	The university uses clear indicators to measure performance.	9
100	75	6.6	5	10.7	8	20.0	15	34.7	26	28.0	21	The university efficiently achieves its educational goals.	10
100	75	6.6	5	10.7	8	21.3	16	34.7	26	26.7	20	The university efficiently achieves its research goals.	11
100	75	6.7	5	10.7	8	21.3	16	36.0	27	25.3	19	Governance contributes to improved institutional performance.	12

As seen on the table, 32 people (42.7%) agreed strongly that university decision making is transparent and clear, 25 people (33.3%) agreed that decision making is transparent and clear, 10 people (13.3%) were neutral, 5 people (6.7%) disagreed and 3 people (4%) strongly disagreed about the statement that university decision making is transparent and clear. The overall results show that most of the respondents have the impression that decisions made by the university are clear and transparent.

As for the statement "There are clear mechanisms for accountability," it received 35 responses in the "strongly agree" category (46.7%), 24 responses in the "agree" category (32%), 8 responses in the "neutral" category (10.7%), 5 responses in the "disagree" category (6.7%), and 3 responses in the "strongly disagree" category (4%). This is a positive perception on the clarity of accountability mechanism in the university by most of the respondents.

For "Employees participate in university decision making," 22 (29.3%) strongly agreed, 26 (34.7%) agreed, 15 (20%) neutral, 8 (10.7%) disagreed and 4 (5.3%) strongly disagreed." These results indicate a positive trend toward employee participation in decision-making, although a percentage of respondents believe this participation still needs strengthening.

The statement "The university enjoys administrative and academic independence" received 21 responses in the "strongly agree" category (28%), 25 responses in the "agree" category (33.3%), 17 responses in the "neutral" category (22.7%), 8 responses in the "disagree" category (10.7%), and 4 responses in the "strongly disagree" category (5.3%). These results indicate a moderately positive assessment of the level of independence within the university.

Regarding the statement "Justice and equal opportunities are applied among employees," the responses were 25 "strongly agree" (33.3%), 28 "agree" (37.3%), 12 "neutral" (16%), 6 "disagree" (8%), and 4 "strongly disagree" (5.3%). These results indicate that the majority of respondents believe the university applies the principles of justice and equal opportunities to a good degree.

Regarding the statement "Human resources are invested efficiently," 29 responses (38.7%) fell under the "strongly agree" category, 27 under the "agree" category (36%), 10 under the "neutral" category (13.3%), 5 under the "disagree" category (6.7%), and 4 under the "strongly disagree" category (5.3%). This indicates that most of the respondents are of the opinion that Human resource investment at the University is efficient.

32 respondents (37.3%) strongly agreed, 28 (37%) agreed, 13 (17.3%) were neutral, 6 (8%) disagreed, and 4 (5.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement "Financial resources are invested efficiently. The findings reveal that most of the respondents give a positive rating to the management of financial resources.

Regarding the statement "The administration contributes to the speed of completing transactions", 28 responses (37.3%) were marked "strongly agree", 27 responses (36%) were marked "agree", 11 (14.7%) were marked "neutral", 5 (6.7%) were marked "disagree", and 4 (5.3%) were marked "strongly disagree". From these results, it was evident that administrative procedures were well appreciated.

Thirty-six respondents, or 48% strongly agreed (23, or 30.7%, agreed), 8 (10.7%) were neutral, 5 (6.7%) disagreed, and 3 (4%) strongly disagreed that "The university adopts clear indicators to measure performance. The overall findings suggest that most in the sample feel there are clear signals to assess institutional performance.

The response distribution for the statement, "The university achieves its educational goals efficiently", were as follows: 21 responses indicated strong agreement (28%), 26 indicated agreement (34.7%), 15 indicated neutral (20%), 8 indicated disagree (10.7%) and 5 indicated strongly disagree (6.6%). The majority of the respondents believe that the university is doing a good job in achieving its educational objectives as reflected in the above results.

In response to the statement, "The university achieves its research goals efficiently," there were 20 responses in the "strongly agree" category (26.7%), 26 responses in the "agree" category (34.7%), 16 responses in the "neutral" category (21.3%), 8 responses in the "disagree" category (10.7%), and 5 responses in the "strongly disagree" category (6.6%). These results suggest a relatively positive assessment of the university's level of achievement of its research goals.

The results show that the level of achievement of the university's research objectives is relatively positively evaluated. Fully half of the respondents (25.3%) answered "Strongly Agree" to the statement that "Governance contributes to improving institutional performance," 36% answered "Agree," 21.3% answered "Neutral," 10.7% answered "Disagree" and 6.7% answered "Strongly Disagree. The above findings reveal that most of the respondents have a faith in the role of governance in enhancing the performance of the institution, but there are also conflicting and negative opinions, which show that not all the respondents have a positive perception of the role of governance in the university.

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Table 8: Items of the Governance and Institutional Performance Scale at Al-Mustansiriya University

Total		I strongly disagree.		I disagree.		neutral		I agree.		I strongly agree.		Paragraph	s
%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s		
100	75	4.0	3	6.7	5	12.0	9	37.3	28	40.0	30	University decisions are characterized by transparency and clarity	1
100	75	4.0	3	8.0	6	10.7	8	36.0	27	41.3	31	Clear mechanisms for accountability exist.	2
100	75	6.6	5	12.0	9	16.0	12	38.7	29	26.7	20	Staff participate in university decision-making.	3
100	75	6.7	5	12.0	9	18.7	14	37.3	28	25.3	19	The university enjoys administrative and academic independence.	4
100	75	6.7	5	9.3	7	13.3	10	38.7	29	32.0	24	The university enjoys administrative and academic independence	5
100	75	6.7	5	8.0	6	12.0	9	37.3	28	36.0	27	Human resources are utilized efficiently.	6
100	75	6.7	5	9.3	7	14.6	11	38.7	29	30.7	23	Financial resources are utilized efficiently.	7
100	75	6.6	5	8.0	6	12.0	9	38.7	29	34.7	26	Management contributes to the speed of transaction processing.	8
100	75	4.0	3	8.0	6	10.7	8	34.7	26	42.7	32	The university uses clear indicators to measure performance	9
100	75	8.0	6	12.0	9	16.0	12	37.3	28	26.7	20	The university achieves its research goals efficiently.	10
100	75	8.0	6	12.0	9	17.3	13	37.3	28	25.3	19	Governance contributes to improved institutional performance.	11
100	75	8.0	6	12.0	9	17.3	13	38.7	29	24.0	18	The university achieves its research goals efficiently.	12

The level of responses on the items of university governance, and institutional performance efficiency, in the sample of Al-Mustansiriya University is showed in the table below. Overall the results indicated a favourable trend for the majority of items with most responses in the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' range. It shows the understanding of the importance of university governance principles and how they can help improve the performance of institutions within the university.

Thirty respondents (40%) said that they strongly agree and 28 respondents (37.3%) agreed that "University decisions are transparent and clear. 12% were neutral, 6.7% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. The findings suggest that the majority of the respondents think that the decisions made by the university are clear and transparent.

With respect to the statement: "There are clear mechanisms for accountability": 31 responses (41.3%) were in the "strongly agree" category, 27 responses (36%) were in the "agree" category, 10.7% were neutral, 8% were in the "disagree" category and 4% were in the "strongly disagree" category. The overall implications of these results are that there is perceived to be a positive attitude towards accountability systems within the university.

20 respondents (26.7%) strongly agreed, 29 (38.7%) agreed, 12 (16%) were neutral, 9 (12%) disagreed, and 5 (6.6%) strongly disagreed with the statement "Employees participate in university decision making. The results show that employees participate in decisions made, but a significant number of employees voice dissent, which means that the university must increase its involvement in this area.

The university enjoys administrative and academic independence was supported by 19 responses in the "strongly agree" category (25.3%), 28 responses in the "agree" category (37.3%), 14 responses in the "neutral" category (18.7%), 9 responses in the "disagree" category (12%), and 5 responses in the "strongly disagree" category (6.7%). The findings suggest that most of the respondents have a positive attitude towards the level of independence, but there are some concerns from a minority.

With respect to the statement "Justice and equal opportunities are applied among employees," 32 (24) were "strongly agree," 38.7% were "agree," 13.3% were "neutral," 9.3% were "disagree," and 6.7% were "strongly disagree. These outcomes are a relative satisfaction with the fairness and equal opportunities at the university.

When it comes to the statement "Human resources are invested efficiently", 27 of the responses were in the "strongly agree" category (36%), 28 in the "agree" category (37.3%), 9 in the "neutral" category (12%), 6 in the "disagree" category (8%) and 5 in the "strongly disagree" category (6.7%). The results show that most of the respondents have high level of satisfaction with the way human resources are utilized at the university.

23 of the respondents (30.7%) strongly agreed, 29 respondents (38.7%) agreed, 11 (14.6%) were neutral, 7 (9.3%) disagreed and 5 (6.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement "Financial resources are used efficiently". These findings suggest a fairly favourable view of the efficiency of financial resource management.

With regard to the question "Management contributes to the speed of transaction completion" 26 respondents (34.7%) strongly agreed, 29 (38.7%) agreed, 9 (12%) were neutral, 6 (8%) disagreed, and 5 (6.6%) strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that most respondents were pleased with the time taken for administration.

For the statement "The university adopts clear performance indicators", 32 responses (42.7%) scored 'strongly agree', 26 scored 'agree', 10.7% scored 'neutral', 8% scored 'disagree' and 4% scored 'strongly disagree'. This finding is based on the belief of most respondents that there are clear evaluation criteria for the performance. With regards to the statement "The

university is efficient in achieving its educational goals," 20 responses (26.7%) were in the "strongly agree" category, 28 (37.3%) were in the "agree" category, 12 (16%) were in the "neutral" category, 9 (12%) were in the "disagree" category, and 6 (8%) were in the "strongly disagree" category. The outcomes suggest that the University is moderately successful in meeting its educational objectives.

19 (25.3%) strongly agreed, 28 (37.3%) agreed, 13 (17.3%) were neutral, 9 (12%) disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed with the statement "The university achieves its research goals efficiently. This indicates a positive, albeit somewhat limited, self-assessment of research performance with a need for further development. In regards to the question: "Governance contributes to improving institutional performance," 18 answers were "Strongly Agree" (24%), 29 were "Agree" (38.7%), 13 were "Neutral" (17.3%), 9 were "Disagree" (12%) and 6 were "Strongly Disagree" (8%). These results indicate that the majority of respondents believe in the importance of governance in developing institutional performance. The fact that there are some neutral and dissenting opinions, however, does indicate that the application of the principles of governance need to be reinforced and its influence in the university needs to be more visible.

In summary, the findings show that Al-Mustansiriya University has fairly good implementation of the principles of governance and efficient institutional functioning, and the results of the statements show a positive response in most of the statements. This is an environment that demonstrates the supportive organization and administration that fosters improved performance and attains the university's goals.

Table (9) Items of the scale for governance and institutional performance at King Saud University

Total		I strongly disagree.		I disagree.		neutral		I agree.		I strongly agree.		Paragraph	s
%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s		
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	8.0	4	28.0	14	56.0	28	Clear mechanisms for accountability exist.	1
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	8.0	4	26.0	13	58.0	29	Staff participate in university decision-making.	2
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	32.0	16	48.0	24	The university enjoys administrative and academic autonomy.	3
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	8.0	4	30.0	15	52.0	26	The university enjoys administrative and academic independence.	4
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	8.0	4	32.0	16	50.0	25	It applies fairness and equal opportunities among its employees.	5
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	6.0	3	30.0	15	54.0	27	Human resources are utilized efficiently.	6
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	32.0	16	48.0	24	Financial resources are utilized efficiently.	7
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	8.0	4	30.0	15	52.0	26	The administration contributes to the swift completion of transactions.	8
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	8.0	4	24.0	12	60.0	30	The university adopts clear performance indicators.	9
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	32.0	16	48.0	24	The university efficiently achieves its educational goals.	10
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	34.0	17	46.0	23	The university efficiently achieves its research goals.	11
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	8.0	4	32.0	16	50.0	25	Governance contributes to improved institutional performance.	12

Of the responses shown in the table, 28 were "strongly agree" (56%), 14 (28%) were "agree", 4 (8%) were "neutral", 3 (6%) were "disagree", and 1 (2%) was "strongly disagree" to the statement "University decisions are characterized by transparency and clarity". The findings show that the most respondents feel that the decision making of Universities is highly transparent and clear.

With regard to the issue of 'There are clear mechanisms for accountability', the responses were: 58% 'strongly agree', 26% 'agree', 8% 'neutral', 6% 'disagree' and 2% 'strongly disagree'. These findings indicate a strong belief of the sample on the clarity of the accountability systems in the university.

24 respondents (48%) strongly agreed, 16 (32%) agreed, 5 (10%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed in the section "Employees participate in university decision-making. The results suggest that the employees are involved in decision making in the university effectively.

Concerning the item "The university is administratively and academically independent, 26 respondents (52%) strongly agreed, 15 (30%) agreed, 4 (8%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed. The findings show that most of the respondents have a high level of confidence in the independence of the university.

As for the statement 'Justice and equal opportunities are applied among employees', 25 respondents (50%) strongly agreed, 16 respondents (32%) agreed, 4 (8%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed, and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed. The results show that people are satisfied with the level of justice and equal opportunities in the University.

When it comes to human resources being used efficiently, 27 said they strongly agreed, 15 said they agreed, 3 said they were neutral, 3 said they disagreed and 2 said they strongly disagreed. The results show a positive and high evaluation of human resources utilization efficiency.

Twenty-four (48%) respondents strongly agreed, 16 (32%) agreed, 5 (10%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed, and 2 (4%)

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strongly disagreed in the section "Financial resources are invested efficiently. The results of this show a clear satisfaction on the management and investment of financial resources.

Regarding the item "Management contributes to the speed of completing transactions", 26 people (52%) strongly agreed, 15 (30%) agreed, 4 (8%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed, and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed. The results show a very high level of satisfaction to the speed of transactions and administrative procedures.

Sixty percent (30) strongly agreed, 12 percent agreed, 8 percent were neutral, 6 percent disagreed, and 2 percent strongly disagreed with the statement on the university adopting clear performance indicators. The findings suggest that there was broad consensus that there are clear markers and standards for measuring institutional performance.

The number of responses for the section "The university achieves its educational goals efficiently" were 24 (48%) in the "strongly agree" category, 16 (32%) in the "agree" category, 5 (10%) in the "neutral" category, 3 (6%) in the "disagree" category, and 2 (4%) in the "strongly disagree" category. The outcomes are high levels of satisfaction of the university's educational objectives.

The percentage of respondents that strongly agreed that the university achieves its research aims efficiently was 23 (46%) and 17 (34%) agreed, 5 (10%) were neutral, 3 (6%) disagreed, and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed. The findings reveal that most of the respondents feel that the University is very effective in meeting its research objectives.

Regarding the issue "Governance contributes to improve the performance of the institutions," the majority of the respondents (25, 50 percent) strongly agreed, 16 (32 percent) agreed, 4 (8 percent) were neutral, 3 (6 percent) disagreed, and 2 (4 percent) strongly disagreed. The findings from these results indicate that across the sample there was widespread agreement that governance has a direct link to the performance of institutions and efficiency of their operations.

Overall results indicated that King Saud University has a high level of governance principles and the efficiency of institutional performance. The majority of the responses were either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' demonstrating the success of the University in implementing modern administrative practices, increasing transparency, accountability and institutional independence, and ensuring high levels of institutional performance.

Table (10) Items of the Governance and Institutional Performance Scale at the University of Jordan

Total		I strongly disagree.		I disagree.		neutral		I agree.		I strongly agree.		Paragraph	s
%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s	%	s		
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	10.0	5	30.0	15	52.0	26	University decisions are characterized by transparency and clarity	1
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	10.0	5	28.0	14	54.0	27	Clear mechanisms for accountability exist.	2
100	50	4.0	2	8.0	4	10.0	5	34.0	17	44.0	22	Staff participate in university decision-making.	3
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	32.0	16	48.0	24	The university enjoys administrative and academic independence.	4
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	34.0	17	46.0	23	Fairness and equal opportunities are applied among employees	5
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	8.0	4	32.0	16	50.0	25	Human resources are utilized efficiently.	6
100	50	4.0	2	8.0	4	10.0	5	34.0	17	44.0	22	Financial resources are utilized efficiently.	7
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	32.0	16	48.0	24	Management contributes to the speed of transaction processing.	8
100	50	2.0	1	6.0	3	10.0	5	26.0	13	56.0	28	The university employs clear performance indicators	9
100	50	4.0	2	8.0	4	10.0	5	34.0	17	44.0	22	The university efficiently achieves its educational goals.	10
100	50	4.0	2	8.0	4	10.0	5	36.0	18	42.0	21	The university efficiently achieves its research goals.	11
100	50	4.0	2	6.0	3	10.0	5	34.0	17	46.0	23	Governance contributes to improved institutional performance.	12

The above table indicates the degree of responses obtained from the sample on university governance, institutional performance efficiency. The results indicated that there was a significant increase in the percentage of positive answers (strongly agree and agree) for all the items. This indicates a very high level of application of the principles of governance and institutional performance efficiency in the university.

When asked about the item 'University decisions are transparent and clear', 26 respondents (52%) strongly agreed, 15 agreed (30%), 5 were neutral (10%), 3 disagreed (6%) and only one strongly disagreed (2%). The findings suggest that there was a high level of satisfaction with transparency of university decision making.

When the question "There are clear mechanisms for accountability" was asked, 27 respondents (54%) selected "strongly agree," 14 (28%) selected "agree," 5 (10%) selected "neutral," 3 (6%) selected "disagree," and 1 (2%) selected "strongly disagree. This is an indication of a positive view on the effectiveness of oversight and accountability systems within the university.

In the section "Employees participate in university decision-making," 22 respondents (44%) strongly agreed, 17 (34%)

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agreed, 5 (10%) were neutral, 4 (8%) disagreed, and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed. These results indicate that the majority of respondents believe there is adequate employee participation in the decision-making process.

As for the section "The university enjoys administrative and academic independence," it received 24 responses in the "strongly agree" category (48%), 16 in the "agree" category (32%), 5 in the "neutral" category (10%), 3 in the "disagree" category (6%), and 2 in the "strongly disagree" category (4%). These results indicate that the university enjoys a good level of institutional independence. In the section "Justice and equal opportunities are applied among employees," 23 responses (46%) were "strongly agree," 17 (34%) were "agree," 5 (10%) were "neutral," 3 (6%) were "disagree," and 2 (4%) were "strongly disagree." These results indicate a high level of satisfaction with the fairness of administrative and academic procedures.

As for the section "Human resources are utilized efficiently," 25 responses (50%) were "strongly agree," 16 (32%) were "agree," 4 (8%) were "neutral," 3 (6%) were "disagree," and 2 (4%) were "strongly disagree." This is a very positive rating regarding the effectiveness of HRM.

A total of 22 respondents (44%) strongly agreed, 17 (34%) agreed, 5 (10%) were neutral, 4 (8%) disagreed, and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed in the section "Financial resources are invested efficiently. It is observed that the satisfaction level with the efficiency of financial resource management is not bad.

For the section 'Management contributes to the speed of transaction processing', 24 responses (48%) were scored as 'strongly agree', 16 responses (32%) as 'agree', 5 responses (10%) as 'neutral', 3 responses (6%) as 'disagree', and 2 responses (4%) were scored as 'strongly disagree'. This means that there is a high level of satisfaction with administrative procedures and that they are quick and efficient.

When asked about the university's clear performance indicators, 28 respondents (56%) answered "Strongly Agree," 13 (26%) answered "Agree," 5 responded (10%) "Neutral," 3 (6%) "Disagree," and 1 (2%) "Strongly Disagree. The results indicate that there exists a clear system of measuring performance and monitoring institutional achievement.

Regarding the section "The university achieves its educational objectives efficiently", 22 answers were given the value of "Strongly Agree" (34%), 17 "Agree" (44%), 5 "Neutral" (10%), 4 "Disagree" (8%) and 2 "Strongly Disagree" (4%). The outcomes show a positive judgement on the achievement of educational objectives.

Of the 21 respondents who strongly agreed with the statement, four (42%) agreed, five (10%) were neutral, four (8%) disagreed, and two (4%) strongly disagreed in the section "The university achieves its research goals efficiently. The findings reflect a satisfactory level of satisfaction on the performance of the university in research.

For the section "Governance contributes to improving institutional performance", there were 46% "strongly agree", 34% "agree", 10% "neutral", 6% "disagree" and 4% "strongly disagree" responses. The findings show that most of the respondents believe in the significance of governance and its contribution to the improvement of the efficiency of institutional performance in improving the quality of the work of the university.

The results show that most respondents firmly believe that governance is crucial and plays a vital role in improving the efficiency of institutional performance and in increasing the quality of the work carried out by universities. Overall, the results reflect high degree of agreement in terms of the governance and institutional performance indicators in the University of Jordan. This is an indication of the university's implementation of the good governance principles of transparency, accountability, institutional independence and their positive influence on the performance of the university, as well as its achievement of educational and research objectives.

Following the results of the four universities (University of Baghdad, Al-Mustansiriyah University, King Saud University, and the University of Jordan) clear differences in the level of implementation of the governance principles and the efficiency of institutional performance between the universities studied became apparent.

The findings indicate that most of the indicators at King Saud University were reported as positive (strongly agree and agree) with a percentage exceeding 80% for most indicators. This indicates a well-established administrative system on transparency, accountability and institutional independence and efficient use of human and financial resources and performance indicators. The results show that the university has done well in applying governance principles, which have been effective in enhancing the efficiency of the university's performance and in achieving educational and research objectives. The University of Jordan also showed high rates of positive responses, with its scores being quite similar in the majority of the areas to those of King Saud University, especially for transparency, accountability, application of justice and implementation of performance indicators. This is an indication of the university's introduction of modern administrative practices which have helped to improve institutional performance and academic and administrative work.

The good positive results were also recorded by the University of Baghdad and Al-Mustansiriyah University, but their approval rates were less than the two regional universities. This gap was most pronounced in the sphere of participation in decision making, administrative and academic independence, and ability to achieve research objectives, suggesting organizational problems.

Administrative issues still affect the efficiency of institutions performance in Iraqi universities.

The findings show a high level of consensus across all universities around the items focusing on transparency, accountability and the use of clear performance measures, suggesting that these are the most established pillars of the university [ISSN 2714-7444 \(online\)](https://doi.org/10.21070/acopen.11.2026.14917), <https://acopen.umsida.ac.id>, published by [Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo](https://www.muhammadiyah.ac.id)

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governance systems. However the percentage of items pertaining to participation in decision making and in the attainment of research goals were relatively low, indicating the need to create participation mechanisms and create a conducive environment for scientific research.

Results also show that the degree of governance implementation is positively associated with the performance of institutions in terms of efficiency. Higher levels of transparency, accountability and institutional independence led to improvements in performance indicators in universities. This indicates that the governance of universities is a major determinant that affects the institutional performance development and enhance the quality of academic and research output. Overall, the findings of the study suggest that the regional universities that participated in the analysis of this study had better governance implementation and institutional performance efficiency than the Iraqi universities. It emphasizes the need to learn from the successes of some of the experiences from the region in devising university governance systems in Iraq and reinforce the principles of transparency, accountability, participation and autonomy, which would help achieve better institutional performance and quality of higher education.

Table (11) Statistical Comparison of Universities in University Governance and Institutional Performance Efficiency

relative weight %	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	Sample size	University
76.8	0.71	3.84	75	University of Baghdad
78.2	0.68	3.91	75	Al-Mustansiriya University
88.4	0.54	4.42	50	King Saud University
85.2	0.59	4.26	50	University of Jordan
80.8	0.63	4.04	250	Total

Results of the one-way ANOVA test

Sig.	Value F	Average of squares	degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Source of variation
0.000	8.537	6.214	3	18.642	Between universities
—	—	0.728	246	179.142	inside universities
—	—	—	249	197.784	Total

The tables show that there is a difference in the implementation of governance and the efficiency of the institutions between the four universities studied. King Saud University had the highest mean score of 4.42 and a relative weight of 88.4%, showing a good governance principles and institutional performance efficiency. The mean score of the University of Jordan was 4.26 with a relative weight of 85.2% which is also a high level of governance implementation and institutional performance.

The mean score for Al-Mustansiriya University was 3.91 and 78.2% (relative weight) respectively, while the mean score for University of Baghdad was 3.84 and 76.8% (relative weight) respectively. The results reveal that Iraqi universities have good governance and satisfactory institutional performance, yet they remain lower than their regional universities that have participated in the comparison. The calculated F value of the one-way ANOVA test was 8.537 at a significant level of 0.000 which is less than the accepted significant level of 0.05. This means that there are statistically significant differences between the level of university governance implementation and institutional performance efficiency between the four universities.

This finding indicates that there is variation between the universities studied, which indicates different performances in the efficiency of the administration system and the implementation of governance within the universities. The outcomes also reflect the possibility of transferring the experiences of the two universities (King Saud University and the University of Jordan) to the Iraqi universities to improve the institutional performance and enhance the quality of educational and research production in the Iraqi universities, this can be achieved through the transfer of university governance practices.

Conclusions:

1. The study results indicated that the application of university governance principles in the four universities studied was good and applied in different levels.
2. The highest governance implementation and institutional performance efficiency scores were obtained by King Saud University, followed by University of Jordan, and the Iraqi universities had relatively lower scores in both.
3. Among the key and successful aspects of governance in the universities studied were transparency and accountability.
4. The results revealed a positive relationship between the application of governance principles and improved institutional performance efficiency in universities.
5. Clear performance indicators contributed to enhancing the ability to monitor progress and improve the quality of institutional work.
6. The study showed that the efficient investment of human and financial resources is a key factor influencing the improvement of institutional performance.

7. The results indicated that universities with a higher degree of administrative and academic autonomy achieve better levels of institutional efficiency.
8. The study revealed the need for Iraqi universities to enhance employee participation in decision-making processes in line with modern governance principles.
9. The ANOVA results showed statistically significant differences among the four universities in the level of governance implementation and institutional performance efficiency.
10. The field comparison confirmed that benefiting from successful regional experiences in university governance can contribute to developing institutional performance and improving the quality of higher education in Iraqi universities.

Recommendations:

To reinforce the application of the principles of university governance, establishing administrative systems and procedures within Iraqi Universities that guarantee transparency, accountability and fairness at all levels.

1. Increasing the involvement of faculty and staff in university decision-making process, enhancing institutional affiliation and decision-making effectiveness.
2. Establishing institutional measurement of performance systems, and clear and periodic performance indicators to track the degree of achievement, recognise strengths and weaknesses, and respond to them continually.
3. Learning from good practices of the regional and international universities such as King Saud University and the University of Jordan, in the area of university governance and adapting the relevant practices to the Iraqi university context.
4. Supporting the administrative and academic independence of Iraqi universities and enabling them to manage their human and financial resources more efficiently, thereby contributing to raising the level of institutional performance and achieving excellence in education and scientific research.

Conclusion:

This study addressed the issue of governance of Iraqi universities and its role in improving the efficiency of institutional performance through a field study that included a number of Iraqi universities while conducting a comparative analysis of regional universities represented by King Saud University and the University of Jordan. The study was based on the importance of governance as one of the modern administrative approaches capable of enhancing transparency, accountability, participation, and institutional independence, which contributes to developing university performance and improving the quality of higher education outcomes.

The results of the study showed a positive relationship between the level of application of governance principles and the efficiency of institutional performance, as it was found that universities that apply governance standards to a higher degree achieve better levels of administrative, academic and research efficiency. The results also revealed the presence of statistically significant differences between the universities under study, as regional universities achieved advanced levels in implementing governance compared to Iraqi universities, which was reflected positively on their institutional performance indicators.

The study also showed that transparency, accountability, and adopting clear indicators to measure performance represent among the most prominent practices affecting improving institutional performance, while some aspects, such as expanding participation in decision-making and enhancing administrative and academic independence, still need further support and development in Iraqi universities.

The need for the creation of University governance systems is obvious in the context of the study results, as it is a strategic need to face the challenges that are currently facing the higher education institutions, to reach the level of excellence and to improve the quality of education and scientific research in the University. The study also shows the importance of learning from successful experiences in the region and applying modern administration that helps to establish more efficient universities and the way to reach their scientific development and their role in serving society.

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