

The Effectiveness of the Decision Making of the Saudi Arabian Universities Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils

*Anas Satti Satti Mohammed, *Ghada Mohamed Alhaj, *Awad Mohamed Osman, *Ahmed Osman Ahmed, *Mohammedl nour Eltahir Ahmed, *Manal Mohamed EL Mekebbaty, *Osman Saad Shidwan and #Mutasesm K. Alsmadi

**Department of Business Administration, College of Applied Studies and Community Service, Imam Abdurrahman Bin Faisal University, Al-Dammam, Saudi Arabia.*

#Department of MIS, College of Applied Studies and Community Service, Imam Abdurrahman Bin Faisal University, Al-Dammam, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the decision making of the Saudi Arabian Universities Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils. This study's main hypothesis is that the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards are highly effective in their decision-making. Also, the hypothesis is that each board member is familiar with the Faculty Board's policies and rules and that the Heads of Departments support the Applied College's quality assurance policies and procedures. The researcher used the analytical descriptive method to achieve this study's objectives. The researcher conducted this study by contacting a sample of the members of the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils. The results show that the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils are characterized by a moderate decision-making efficiency, and that the Heads of Department support the Allied Colleges' quality assurance policies and procedures. Based on this study's results, the researcher recommends that the Heads of Department should attend specialized training courses in the field of meeting management so that they pay attention to the needs of the Faculties Boards' and Departmental Council meetings and ensure that the meeting halls have all modern office facilities and equipment.

Keywords: College Council; Department Council; Decision Making.

1. INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher education play an important and integral role in ensuring that society both develops and progresses. Despite the multiplicity of concepts about the objectives of higher education, it focuses on the functions of teaching, scientific research and community service. Through the activation of scientific research, it aims to provide qualified, academically knowledgeable researchers in the fields of work, production and knowledge development. Each University consists of Faculties and Applied Colleges. These comprise of departments that contribute to achieving the University's overall objectives by making important decisions such as choosing Faculty members, developing academic programs and determining courses. The Departmental Councils determine the nature of the University's institutions with the organizational culture included within these Councils.

2. IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY

With the increasing demand for Applied Colleges and, bearing in mind, the Saudi Arabian Government's response by expanding the number of Applied Colleges, it is important to reveal the effectiveness of the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils. The quantitative expansion of the number of Applied Colleges requires the Departmental Councils to perform especially well since this has an impact on the overall development process. This study is important because it determines and provides a clear picture of the effectiveness of the Saudi Arabian Universities Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils and demonstrates, also, the need for these Councils to continue to develop in a way that is proper to their tasks and responsibilities.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY

The objective of this study is to explore the importance of effective decisions and the degree to which the decisions, taken by the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils, are effective from the point of view of Saudi Arabian Universities' Faculty members having regard to their relationship with some demographic variables.

4. STUDY QUESTIONS

This study answered the following questions:

1. How effective are the Applied Colleges' Departmental Councils in making decisions?
2. How effective are the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards in making decisions?
3. How knowledgeable is the Council member of the College Council's and the Departmental Council's policies and rules?
4. What is the level of support given to Departmental Heads and Faculty members in relation to quality strategies?
5. How effective are the Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures?

5. STUDY HYPOTHESES

- The Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards are highly effective in making decisions.
- The Applied Colleges' Departmental Councils are highly efficient in making decisions.
- Members of the Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards Members of the Departmental Councils shall be acquainted with the institution's rules and policies and the Departmental Heads of departments and Faculties Boards members support quality strategies.
- Applied Colleges are highly effective in applying quality assurance procedures.

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

• Decision-making by College Council

The effectiveness of College Councils means the extent to which they achieve their objectives by carrying out the tasks specified in the faculty system in force in Saudi Arabian universities.

The College Council is the decision-making body that forwards recommendations on shared governance issues that do not require mutual agreement between the Academic Senate and the Board to the Superintendent/President either for action or presentation to the Board for action. With the exception of curriculum issues, the College Council provides the means for the combined thinking of faculty, staff, students, and management to be included in the formation of all these recommendations. With the exception of curriculum committee issues, the College Council may review, also, and provide input for all items that require MAC consideration.

The majority of the members of any representation on the College Council may defer a vote on an issue until it has time to confer with its constituency. This delay must be accomplished within a specific period not exceeding twenty days of regular instruction.

The College Council establishes rules of order and other processes to be used by the College Council in its deliberation of college issues related to shared governance. Any member of the College Council may submit an item for the agenda.

• Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Quality Assurance (QA) is defined as system document procedures aimed at ensuring that the overall process meets specified objectives and demonstrates that quality is a managed outcome Dawson (1995)

Applied Colleges' QA units are committed to the continuous improvement of program quality and processes to support academic excellence and a successful student experience. Everyone should be involved in the improvement process; only those, who do the job well, can improve quality. However, there is a need for help and support along with reporting, accountability and verification arrangements to ensure that quality is achieved.

According to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Higher Education official website, NCAAA, which is the governmental body acting under the auspices of the Council of Higher Education with responsibility for academic accreditation in higher education institutions, was established in 2003. NCAAA aims to upgrade the quality of private and governmental higher education to ensure clarity and transparency [1].

In order to guarantee higher education institutions' efficiency and accountability, QA was introduced to provide evidence of the HEIs' 'value for money' performance. According to Harvey in [2], this is done by focusing on the following objectives:

1. Making higher education more relevant to social and economic needs;
2. Widening access to higher education;
3. Expanding numbers, usually in the face of reductions in unit costs;
4. Ensuring comparability of provision and procedures within and between institutions and including international comparisons;
5. Ensuring higher education is accountable for public money;
6. Ensuring students receive value for money
7. Ensuring that institutions are able to cope with the increasing globalization of higher education and the deregulation of the market.

7. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Sumbol in [7] aimed to find out the extent of the participation of faculty members in the universities' decision-making processes. This study was conducted at the country's University of Umm Al-Qari. The questionnaire was used as a tool to gather information about participation in decision-making. This study's conclusions show that, while members of the teaching staff see the need to participate in the decision-making process, they have a sense of not doing so sufficiently. This gives them a sense of insignificance and has a negative effect on their educational role.

Al-Sahlawi and Al-Najim in [8] aimed to study the current and desirable participation of King Faisal University education and agriculture faculty members in administrative decision-making. The study, which was conducted on a sample of the faculty members, aimed to identify the obstacles in the decision making process. The findings show that, for all types of decisions, the level of free participation in decision-making is lower than the desired level. The first obstacle to participation in the Faculty of Education is the central decision-making process and the formality of participation.

Abu-Ashour and Shatnawi in [3] study aimed to identify the degree of effectiveness of the decisions taken by the boards of the Jordanian universities' academic departments. In order to achieve this study's objectives, he developed a questionnaire,

consisting of 52 questions, which was divided into the following four areas: participation in making decisions; organizational culture; empowerment; and leadership. Once its sincerity and stability had been ascertained, the questionnaire was sent to a sample of faculty members in Jordanian universities

The results show that, from the point of view of faculty members, the decisions made by the boards of the Jordanian universities' academic departments, were regarded as highly effective and this was particularly the case in public universities when a comparison was made between government and private universities. Muhanna in [4] conducted a study entitled, "The relationship between delegation of authority and effective decision-making in academic departments fields from the point of view of faculty members in Palestinian universities". The study aimed to identify the relationship between delegation of authority and effective decision making from the point of view of faculty members in Palestinian universities. This study's findings recognized both the degree of delegation of authority, and the degree of effectiveness of the decisions made by the academic departments' Councils. This study's conclusions show that, from the perspective of lecturers in the Palestinian universities, there was a high degree (82.2%) of delegated authority to the academic departments. Also, from the perspective of lecturers in the Palestinian universities, there was a very high degree (76%) of effectiveness in the decisions made by the academic departments.

Alhejaili in [5] study aimed to identify the opinions of the heads of academic departments at the University of Dhamar (Syria). The results show that the heads of the academic departments realized that 87 out of the 97 administrative tasks were "important" in achieving their departments' goals. The departmental heads considered that only Sub-administrative tasks (9%) were unimportant in achieving their departments' objectives.

8 METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the descriptive method in identifying the reality through studying the effectiveness of the Applied Councils' Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils in their decision making. In this regard, the Study Society and Study Sample are described as follows.

Study Society consists of the members of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Applied Colleges' Faculties Boards and the Departmental Councils in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Study Sample is represented by the members of the boards of departments and the Council of the Faculty of Applied Studies Community Service at Saudi Arabia's Imam Abdul Rahman bin Faisal University.

9. STUDY TOOLS

In order to achieve this study's objectives, the researcher used a questionnaire to gather the necessary information. It consisted of the following five dimensions: the effectiveness

of the College Councils; the effectiveness of the Departmental Councils, the members' knowledge of the College's rules and policies; the strategies of quality support from the heads of departments; and the quality assurance procedure.

For arbitration purposes, the researcher presented the questionnaire to a group of experienced arbitrators. They agreed with most of the statements and after it was altered, the arbitrators approved the terms of the questionnaire which was considered to be a valid study tool.

a. The Stability of the Study Tool

The stability means that the questionnaire is consistent and that it yields the same results if, under the same circumstances and conditions, it is redistributed more than once. In other words, the questionnaire's stability means that its results are stable and do not change significantly if redistributed several times over certain periods of time. As shown in Table (1), the stability of the study questionnaire was verified through the Alpha Kronbach coefficient.

Table 1: Coefficient of Stability (Alpha Kronbach), Source: Field study

Dimension	Stability	Validity
Effectiveness of Applied Colleges Councils	0.88	0.84
The Effectiveness of the departments councils in the applied colleges	0.98	0.89
Knowledge of Board members on college rules and policies	0.91	0.86
Quality support strategies from department heads	0.87	0.83
Effectiveness of quality assurance procedures	0.94	0.86
Average	0.97	0.87

Table (1) shows the high coefficient of stability (Alpha-Cronbach) for all dimensions. As shown in Table (1), the average value of the stability coefficient (Alpha Kronbach) for the total questionnaire is (0.97) and this indicates that the study questionnaire is very stable.

The researcher distributed the questionnaires electronically to the members of the College Council and to the members of the Faculties' Boards Departmental Councils. In total, 60 completed questionnaires were returned and the researcher analyzed all of them.

Table 2: The total number of responses to the Questionnaire divided by Specialization.

Gender	Scientific department						Total
	Business administration	Marketing	Accounting	Financial sciences	General courses	MIS	
Female	4	3	9	2	8	2	28
	14.29%	10.71%	32.14%	7.14%	28.57%	7.14%	46.67%
Male	2	2	5	5	14	4	32
	6.25%	6.25%	15.63%	15.63%	43.75%	12.50%	53.33%
Grand Total	6	5	14	7	22	6	60
	10%	8.33%	23.33%	11.67%	36.67%	10%	100%

Source: Field study

10. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Question 1: How effective are the Applied Colleges' Councils of in making decisions?

Table 3: Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of the effectiveness of the Applied Colleges' Councils decision-making

	1 st dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Results
1	All faculty members are informed with the recommendations and decisions taken after their approval by the College Council	3.72	1.03	Agree
2	Substantive scientific steps are Taken in making administrative Decision in the College Council	3.43	0.77	Agree
3	The decisions of the college council verify the integration between the councils of the various scientific departments in the college	3.93	0.76	Agree
4	The decisions taken by the College Council relate to the vision and mission of the College	3.92	0.74	Agree
5	The decisions taken by the College Council achieve the Objectives of the College	3.97	0.74	Agree
6	Decisions of the College Council is taken by majority vote	3.43	0.72	Agree
7	The subjects listed in the College Council shall be sent to all members of the College Council well in advance before the meeting	3.31	0.72	Agree
8	Every member of the Board has the opportunity to take part in the decisions of the College Council	3.33	0.63	Agree
9	Weighted average and over all standard deviation	3.36	0.76	Agree

Source: Field study

The value of the total arithmetic mean of the first dimension (effectiveness of the Applied Colleges' boards of in decision making) shows that, with weighted average of 3.36 over all standard deviation of 0.76, the study sample agree generally with the hypothesis that Applied Colleges' boards are effective in making decisions boards of the applied colleges,

The phrase, taking the objective scientific steps in administrative decision making in the College Council, has the highest weighted average of 3.43 with a standard deviation

of 0.77. Also, the phrase, decisions taken by the College Council by majority vote, has the same mean of 3.43 with a different standard deviation value of 0.72. The minimum weighted average is 3.33 which is achieved by the phrase, every member of the Board has the opportunity to participate in the decisions of the College Council, with a standard deviation of 0.63. There is no phrase in the "effectiveness of college boards in decision making" dimension section that is rated poorly or has not been achieved. All this dimension's sentences have achieved intermediate scores.

Question 2: How effective are the Applied Colleges' Departmental Councils in making decisions?

Table 4: Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of the effectiveness of the Applied Colleges Departmental Councils' decision-making.

	2 nd dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation	Result
9	Subjects included in the Board of the Section shall be sent to all members well in advance of the meeting	3.95	1.1	Agree
10	All faculty members of the department shall be informed of the recommendations and decisions taken after their approval by the department council	4.13	1.05	Agree
11	I have the opportunity to share an opinion on the department's decision-making	3.93	1.04	Agree
12	Faculty members are given the opportunity to submit proposals for the inclusion of topics for discussion on the agenda of the Board	4.12	1.01	Agree
13	I feel the importance of my participation in the department council decisions	3.97	0.91	Agree
14	The head of the department implement and follow up the decisions and recommendations of the department council	4.37	0.76	Agree
15	Weighted average and over all standard deviation	4.08	0.98	Agree

From the analysis of Table (4), most of the sampled participants agree that the Applied Colleges Departmental Councils' meetings are effective in decision making. This is evidenced by the general weighted average of 4.08 and the general standard deviation OF 0.98.

Most of the sampled participants agree that subjects included in the district councils' meetings are sent to members of the

Board well before the Council convenes.

The phrase, the head of the department to implement and follow the decisions and recommendations of the Council of the department, has obtained the highest average of 4.37 and a standard deviation of 0.76.

The second dimension's mean averages are between 4.37 and 3.93.

Question 3: How knowledgeable is the Council member of the College Council's and the Departmental Council's policies and rules?

Table 5: The Arithmetical Means and Standard Deviations of the Council member's knowledge of the Council's Policies and Rules

	3rd dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Results
15	The functions of my job are specified	3.95	0.96	Agree
16	I can determine who is responsible for a particular job within the college	3.85	0.95	Agree
16	I know what I have to do and what I should not do	4.32	0.92	Agree
17	I am familiar with the work regulations in college	4.13	0.99	Agree
18	I am familiar with the work Procedures in college	4.02	0.88	Agree
19	There is a tangle in the responsibilities and Specialisations between the various departments/divisions in the college	3.23	0.94	Agree
	Weighted average and standard deviation	3.92	0.82	Agree

The general weighted average of 3.92 and the standard deviation of 0.82 show the sampled participants' approval of the phrase that the members are aware of the policies and rules of the College Councils and the district councils.

The phrase, I know what to follow and what to do, has the highest mean of 4.32 with a standard deviation of 0.92. None of the terms of the third dimension have any words that have received a weak degree of acceptance.

Question 4: What is the level of support given to Departmental Heads and Faculty members in relation to quality strategies?

Table 6: The Arithmetical Means and the Standard Deviations of the Level of Support given to Departmental Heads and Faculty Members In relation to quality strategies.

	4 th dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Results
21	The quality unit contributed to spreading the culture of quality in the faculty	3.87	1.02	Agree
22	There is an improvement in the overall performance of the college after the establishment of the quality unit	3.83	0.96	Agree
23	I have perfect knowledge about the objectives of the quality unit in the faculty	3.92	0.77	Agree
24	Quality is used as a key Criterion in performance evaluation	3.77	0.77	Agree
25	Attend the awareness sessions and workshops organized by the Quality Unit	4	0.76	Agree
26	Be sure to participate in the quality work teams in college	4.3	0.67	Agree
27	I am Interesting in attending awareness sessions and workshops organized by the Quality Unit	4.2	0.58	Agree
	Weighted average and general standard deviation	3.99	0.79	Agree

Table (6) represents the weighted averages and deviations of the sample data on the level of support given to Departmental Heads and Faculty Members in relation to quality strategies. The values of the arithmetical mean for this axis are 4.03, 4.02, 4.00, 3.92, 3.87, 3.83 and 3.77 respectively. From this, we conclude that:

The Applied Colleges' Departmental Heads and Faculty Members support the quality strategies and the general

arithmetical mean is 3.99 and the standard deviation is 0.79.

The phrase, be keen to participate in the quality work teams in college, has obtained the highest average score of 4.3 with a standard deviation of 0.67. This is considered to be a high degree of approval.

The phrase, quality is used as a basic criterion in a performance evaluation, has a weighted average of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 0.77. The approval score is average.

Question 5: How effectives are the Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures ?

Table 7: Statistical Averages and Standard Deviations of the Level of Effectiveness of the Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures

	5 th dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Result
28	The results of the students' tests are discussed in the department council	3.62	1.12	Agree
29	There is an effective internal review system based on the results of student assessment questionnaires	3.62	1.08	Agree
30	Make decisions for improvement based on student evaluations	3.92	0.81	Agree
31	There is an effective internal audit system for faculty member based on the results of student assessment questionnaires	3.82	0.81	Agree
32	The implementation of the quality requirements associated with to the course files and the annual report of the program is committed on to meet the academic standards	4.2	0.66	Agree
	Weighted average and general standard deviation	3.83	0.90	Agree

Table (7) represents the weighted averages and deviations of the sampled participants' responses to the dimension about the effectiveness of the Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures. The values of this dimension's arithmetic averages are 3.62, 3.62, 3.92, 3.82 and 4.2 respectively.

The Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures are of medium effectiveness as indicated by the general weighted average of 3.83 with a standard deviation of 0.90 and a moderate approval score.

The phrase, the implementation of the quality requirements associated with the program's course files and the annual report is committed to meeting the academic standards, has the highest weighted mean of 4.2 and a standard deviation of 0.66.

No phrase in the fifth dimension has a weak level of acceptance.

11. RESULTS

1. The Saudi Arabian universities Applied Colleges' Boards are characterized by moderate effectiveness in decision making.
2. The Saudi Arabian universities Applied Colleges' Departmental Councils are characterized by a medium decision-making efficiency.
3. Member of the College Council are aware of its policies and rules.
4. Member of the Applied Colleges Faculties Boards Departmental Councils are aware of the Departmental Councils' policies and rules.
5. Applied Colleges' Heads of Department and members of Faculties Boards support quality and development strategies.
6. Applied Colleges' quality assurance procedures are characterized by medium effectiveness.
7. The heads of departmental councils encourage members to discuss the issues in a transparent manner and foster a spirit of cooperation among the members.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Heads of Department need to attend specialized training courses in the field of meeting management.
2. The university should pay attention to the College Council and Departmental Council meetings and ensure that the meeting halls have all modern office facilities and equipment.
3. A mechanism should be developed to evaluate meetings to address deficiencies and correct errors and to motivate members to participate effectively in the meetings.
4. Quality assurance strategies and procedures should be developed in line with global and regional standards.

5. The Faculties Boards and the Departmental Council should work to avoid the shortcomings in the decision-making process in order to contribute to raising the effectiveness and efficiency of their decision-making.
6. Further studies and research should be conducted on the effectiveness of decisions taken by university Faculties Boards and Departmental Councils and consideration be given to the factors that increase their effectiveness.

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