The Degree of Psychological and Structural Empowerment for Women Academic Leaders at the Jordanian Universities in Light of the Glass Ceiling Methodology

Ghufran Mahmoud Ahmad Altemh [1]

[1], Alzarqa, Jordan, Email: drghufranaltemah1969@gmail.com

Abstract
This study, mainly, sought to investigate the degree of empowering of women academic leaders at the Jordanian Universities in light of glass ceiling methodology. The study relied on the quantitative method for collecting the data from 159 women academic leaders in the Jordanian universities. The researcher adopted the psychological empowerment instrument (PEI) to measure the degree of women academic leaders' psychological empowerment, and the work effectiveness questionnaire (WEQ) to measure the structural empowerment. The results indicated a high level of equality for the opportunities between the two genders at the leadership positions in the academic institutions. As well, the results did not point to any existence for glass ceiling approach at the Jordanian academic institutions due the high level of structural and psychological empowerment for women academic leaders. This empowerment is illustrated in the accessibility for information and resources, training, support, and decision making. The results indicate a high level of psychological empowerment for women academic leaders in terms of dimension of self-determination, meaning, impact, and competence respectively.

1. Introduction

The idea of women empowerment came into practice by 1990s in the higher education institutions [1]. Since that time, administrative empowerment became an indicator for the success of higher education institutions [2]. Some studies have focused on the career difficulties that women academic leaders face [3]. Administrative empowerment refers to the progress of promotion from lower to higher execution power positions [4]. In general, researchers have divided the administrative empowerment concept into structural and psychological empowerment. The former refers to the access to the institution structure and resources and support [5] and the latter refers to the improvement of self-efficiency feelings through enriching the work environment with the circumstances and conditions that enhance the power [6]. Psychological Empowerment refers to the motivational structure demonstrated in four dimensions and they are: "meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact" [7].

According to [8], [9], women encounter various difficulties to advance in leadership positions at academic institutions. These difficulties stems from gender schemas and social reasons. Despite of the significant numbers of effective women leaders at higher education institutions, few research turned to focus on the status of women academic leaders [10]. Besides, lacking to mentoring, women receive promotion in their career until they encounter unbreakable glass ceiling to reach leading positions [11]. Glass Ceiling refers to the cultural belief that higher managerial positions are restricted to men [3]. The hypothesis of the Glass Ceiling indicates that women encounter higher difficulties to get promotion in the workplace to reach up levels of authority. As well, promotion discrimination based on gender relates relatively to the levels of authority hierarchy [12].Women leadership in educational institutions encounters various challenges in all societies in the globe to some variant degrees. In the Jordanian society, women leaders also encounter some challenges to reach high administrative positions despite of their higher education and experiences. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the degree of empowering women academic leaders at the Jordanian Universities in light of glass ceiling methodology.

The study of [10] aimed to introduce the glass ceiling methodology from the viewpoint of senior women leaders at higher education institutes in the Midwest, to sum up the characteristics of these leaders, and to identify the resources and tools that women need to reach higher administrative levels. The study relied on direct interviews with 7 women leaders at senior administrative levels. The studies revealed that participants agree on the existence of glass ceiling in higher education institutes due to the low number of senior women leaders. The study of [13] aimed to investigate the impact of different methodologies on the gender inequality in the academic context. The study sought to apply glass ceiling methodology to challenge the gender based inequalities. The study indicated that glass ceiling methodology has a positive impact to provide a professional development and gender quality through gender empowerment, gender awareness, and per support principles.

The study of [3] aimed to provide a theoretical background for glass ceiling methodology, and to investigate the barriers and challenges that women academic leaders encounter in India due to the cultural beliefs. The study stated that women could be academic leaders at educational institutions because they are highly educated and experienced. Results of the study revealed that academic institutions apply effectively a legal framework in the administrative affairs to ensure the equality between the two genders and to reduce glass-ceiling challenges. The study of [1] aimed to investigate the impact of empowering women leaders on their creativity in the administration. The study targeted 377 leaders at Saudi universities, and females constitute 47% of the total sample. The study found a strong positive relation between the empowerment and creativity in the administration. As well, there is a need for psychological empowerment for female leaders in order to enhance their administrative creativity at the Saudi universities. The study of [14] aimed to investigate the structural and psychological empowerment in Malaysian universities. The study found that leadership at educational institutions has to support the workplace through increasing the structural empowerment, administrative support, vision sharing, and resources availability. The study revealed that higher both types of empowerment have positive impact on the academic leaders' organizational structure.

Leadership effectiveness at academic institutions requires academic credibility, collaboration, selflessness, transparency, and adaptability [15]–[20]. Despite of the high number of educated competent women workers, they encounter various challenges and high volume of opportunities inequalities to reach higher administrative roles [3]. In addition, organizations shall close the gender gap in the workplace through maintaining a proper framework for polices that secure and improve the women's opportunities and access to information and financial means [21]. Therefore, this study, mainly, sought to investigate the degree of empowering of women academic leaders at the Jordanian Universities in light of glass ceiling methodology. The fowling are sub-goals:

1. This study presents a framework to understand psychological and structural empowerment for women academic leaders at their workplace.

2. This study presents the challenges that women leaders encounter in their workplace to reach higher administrative positions.

3. This study identifies the glass ceiling methodology and degree of empowerment that women leaders receive at the Jordanian universities.

2. Method

According to Creswell (2014), the quantitative method is the most appropriate to collect data related to habits, beliefs, descriptions, and perceptions. The researcher used two instruments to answer this study questions.

2.1 First Instrument

The researcher adopted the psychological empowerment instrument (PEI) that developed by [7] to measure the degree of women academic leaders' psychological empowerment. This instrument consists of four dimensions and twelve items.
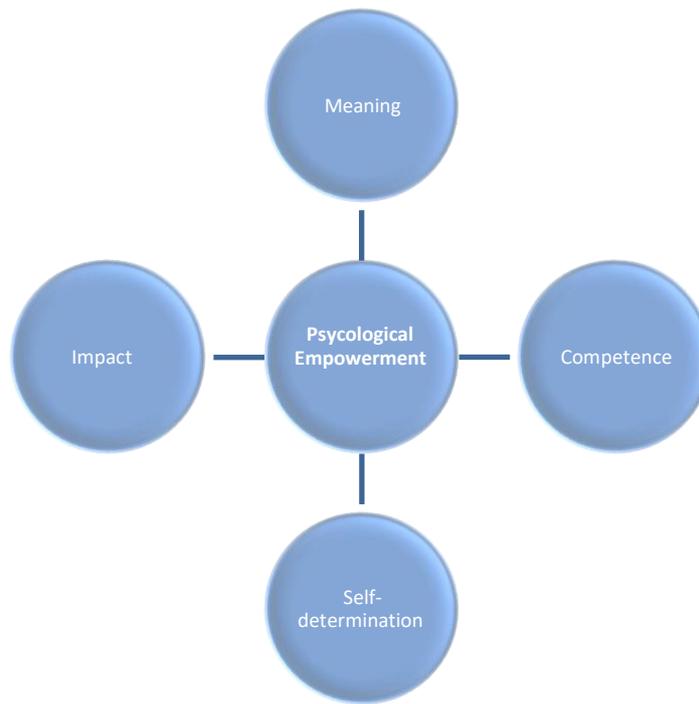
Psychological Empowerment Instrument (PEI) developed by [7]

2.2 Second Instrument

The researcher adopted the work effectiveness questionnaire (WEQ) that developed by [22] to measure the structural empowerment. This instrument consists of four dimensions and nineteen items. According to the study of [22], we can measure the degree of structural empowerment through the accessibility to the following structures:

- **Opportunities accessibility:** refers to the person's possibility to receive promotions and growth, to get internal movements, and to expand their skills and knowledge.

- **Resources accessibility:** refers to the person's accessibility to financial means, materials and supplies, and the required time to operate the tasks.

- **Information accessibility:** refers to the employees' accessibility to the effective formal and informal knowledge that they need to have for workplace.

- **Support accessibility:** refers to having guidance and feedback from superiors.
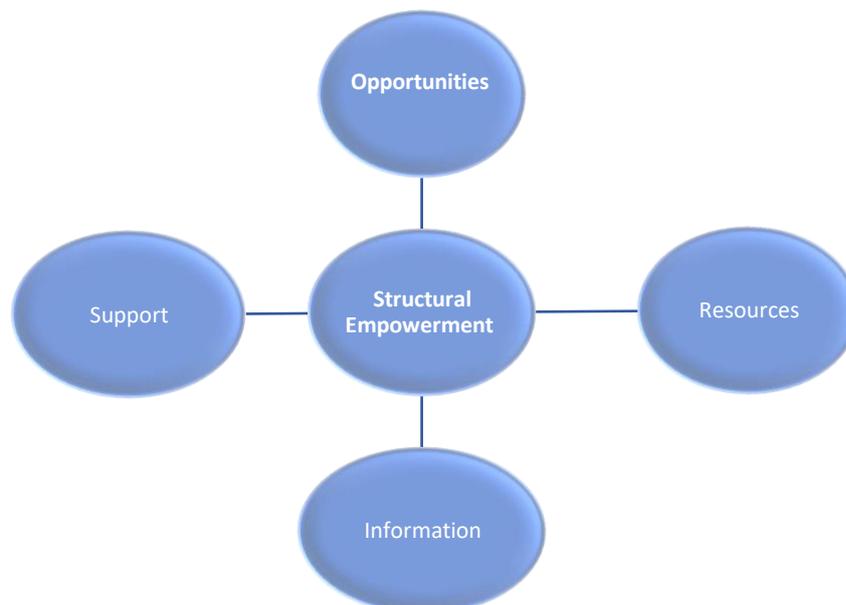
Dimensions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire (WEQ) [22]

2.3 Sample

The study sample consist of 195 women academic leaders at senior administrative levels at the Jordanian Universities. The study sample consisted of (195) of women academic leaders at Jordanian universities. Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample depending on the personal and functional variables.

Table (1) Frequency and Percent for the personal and functional variables

Variable	Classification	Frequency	Percent %
University Type	Emerging University	135	69.2
	Established University	60	30.8
Occupation	Dean	30	15.4
	Vice Dean		
	Department Chair	90	46.2
	Vice Department Chair	75	38.5
Academic Rank	Professor	45	23.1
	Associate Professor	45	23.1
	Assistant Professor	45	23.1
	Lecturer	60	30.8
Leadership Experience	Less than 5 years	60	30.8
	From 5 to 10 years	60	30.8
	More than 10 years	75	38.5
Unit size (number of staff under your supervision)	Less than 50 employees	180	92.3
	From 50 to 100 employees	0	0
	More than 100 employees	15	7.7

2.4 Study Procedures

1. Review the related literature and the theoretical background.

2. Develop the questions of the personal interview to collect the data from the study sample.

3. Expose the personal interview questions to a jury to ensure its validity, and make the amendments.

4. Collect and analyze the data.

5. Write the result, conclusion, and recommendations.

3   Results

The results of this study is presented based on the analysis. Three questions were developed in this study. The first research question: What are the leaders' perceptions about the psychological empowerment for women academic leaders at Jordanian universities? To answer this question, we compute the Means and standard deviations for each dimension in the Psychological Empowerment Items; table (2) shows that.

Table (2): Means and standard deviations for each dimension in the Psychological Empowerment Items

No.	Dimension	Mean	SD	Order	Importance
3	Dimension of Self-determination	4.62	0.584	1	High
1	Dimension Meaning	4.54	0.792	2	High
4	Dimension of Impact	4.33	0.629	3	High
2	Dimension of Competence	2.13	0.639	4	Moderate
Total		3.91	0.661	---	High

Table (3) shows dimension in the Psychological Empowerment level: the range means for items of this domain is between 2.13 and 4.62, the higher means for dimension (Dimension of Self-determination), but the lower means for dimension (Dimension of Competence.) Total means was (3.91) by highly agreement.

Question Two: What are the men and women leaders' perceptions about the structural empowerment for women academic leaders at Jordanian universities? To answer this question, we compute the Means and standard deviations for each dimension in structural empowerment; table (3) shows that.

Table (3): Means and standard deviations for each dimension in the structural empowerment.

No.	Dimension	Mean	SD	Order	Importance
3	Information accessibility	4.28	1.193	1	High
4	Support accessibility	4.27	.801	2	High
1	Opportunities accessibility	3.82	1.125	3	High
2	Resources accessibility	3.77	.993	4	High
Total		4.04	1.03	---	High

Table (3) shows structural empowerment level: the range means for items of this domain is between (3.77 – 4.28), the higher dimension for item (Information accessibility), but the lower means for dimension (Resources accessibility) Total means was (4.04) by highly agreement. **Question Three: What is the degree of empowerment of women academic leaders in the Jordanian universities in light of the glass ceiling methodology?**

To answer this question, we compute the Means and standard deviations for each item of the empowerment of women academic leaders' level, table (4) shows that.

Table (4): Means and standard deviations for each item empowerment of women academic leader's level

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Order	Importance
5	The higher administration adopts advanced and modern strategies that enrich the ambitions and attitude of women leaders	4.77	0.577	1	High
6	The male leaders confront the women leaders to reach the higher leading positions	4.54	0.636	2	High
3	The higher administration policy focus on empowering the academic leaders	4.39	1.599	3	High
1	The higher administration believes in the psychological and structural empowerment for women academic leaders	4.31	0.994	4	High
2	There is a training for women academic leaders on decision making	4.3	1.384	5	High
4	The higher administration provides a full access to the information for women academic leaders to operate their tasks	4.08	1.643	6	High
Total		4.39	.603	---	High

Table (4) shows empowerment of women academic leader's level: the range means for items of this domain is between (4.08 – 4.77), the higher means for item (The higher administration adopts advanced and modern strategies that enrich the ambitions and attitude of women leaders), but the lower means for item (The higher administration provides a full access to the information for women academic leaders to operate their tasks) Total means was (4.39) by highly agreement.

4   Discussion

The results indicated that women academic leaders at the Jordanian universities receive a high psychological empowerment; the highest importance was for the dimension of self-determination, meaning, impact, and competence respectively. This result is an indicator for the Jordanian Universities prosperity because the existence of higher level of empowerment is an indicator for the success of higher education institutions [2]. As well, women academic leaders have a great creativity in their work at the Jordanian Universities, and this can be interpreted in the relation between the

empowerment and creativity [1]. Moreover, the results indicated that women academic leaders receive a high level of structural empowerment, and this result is illustrated in the high level of agreement on accessibility to information, support, opportunities, and resources. This result can be interpreted due to the credibility, collaboration, selflessness, transparency, and adaptability of the women academic leaders at the Jordanian Universities [17], [23], [24]. As well, this result stems from the policies that Jordanian universities adopt to improve the organizational structure because there is a high relation between both types of empowerment on the academic leaders' organizational structure [14]. Finally, the higher administration adopts various advanced policies that enrich the ambitions and attitude of women leaders such as reachability, empowerment, training, accessibility for the required information to operate the leadership tasks. As well, the leadership at the Jordanian educational institutions supports the workplace through increasing the structural empowerment, administrative support, vision sharing, and resources availability [14] [25].

5   Conclusion and Recommendations

The results indicated a high level of equality for the opportunities between the two genders at the leadership positions in the academic institutions. As well, the results did not point to any existence for glass ceiling approach at the Jordanian academic institutions due the high level of structural and psychological empowerment for women academic leaders. This empowerment is illustrated in the accessibility for information and resources, training, support, and decision making. The results indicate a high level of psychological empowerment for women academic leaders in terms of dimension of self-determination, meaning, impact, and competence respectively.   Future studies might focus on the relation between the physiological empowerment for women academic leaders and their creativity.

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