The impact of managerial empowerment on problem solving and decision making skills: the case of Abu Dhabi University

Kais Lassoued[a*], Atef Awad[b] and Rafika Ben Guirat[c]

[a]*Associate Professor, MENA College of Management, Dubai, UAE*
[b]*Associate Professor, Abu Dhabi University, Abu Dhabi, UAE*
[c]*Assistant Professor, Higher College of Technology, Al Ain Campus, UAE*

CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	The objective of this work was to study the influence of Managerial Empowerment on the enforcement of problem solving and decision-making skills. To test a pertinent set of proposed hypotheses, empirical data were collected from 82 individuals among the administrative employees at Abu Dhabi University via a questionnaire survey. The results assure that the level of administrative empowerment implementation at Abu Dhabi University was average while the elements and dimensions of problem solving and decision-making skills studied were relatively high. At the same time, there was globally a moderate impact of the dimensions of administrative empowerment on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among employees of Abu Dhabi University. Taking these results into consideration can be crucial to better understanding the use of empowerment strategy to enhance employees' managerial skills.

1. Introduction

The administrative problems are the most important dilemmas faced by any administration or small institution. The problems that face different kinds of administrative works and frequency of their occurrence are the main challenges facing the decision-makers. It imposes on them their calculation and the speed of dealing with them with the necessary timely solutions, not to aggravate and damage the level and quality of performance within the department or administrative unit or establishment in general. Without a doubt, many institutions and companies have given considerable attention to their human resources by adopting the concept of empowerment, because it has an effective impact in enhancing the skills of the workers in solving the administrative problems they face. The concept of empowerment focuses primarily on establishing and forming trust between management and employees, motivating them and their participation in decision-making, breaking administrative and internal administrative boundaries between management and employees, or in management literature "they" versus "us". Leading companies and institutions recognize that interest in the human element is the way to compete and achieve excellence. The effective implementation of the concept of "empowerment" aims at contributing to the creation of the necessary factors to create a healthy and effective work environment. Dealing with the problem requires the necessary determination, speed, appropriate entry and optimal use of the administrative, organizational and legal powers of the employee to implement the approved plans and programs. Hence, this research aims to examine the impact of administrative empowerment in enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among employees, as well as clarifying the importance of empowerment in order to create a creative and developmental environment that meets the requirements of the times and is capable of achieving the goals and fulfilling the aspirations. Inexistence, to the best of my knowledge, of researches we study the performance evaluation of the emirate's higher education institutions and using Balanced Scorecard (BSC).

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +971 562020479
E-mail address: kais.lassoued@mcm.ac.ae (K. Lassoued)

1.1. Research Problem

Arab organizations suffer from a variety of industrial, commercial or service activities, which are clearly problematic due to the strong centralization in all areas of their work, the level of administrative levels, the multiplicity of official lines of communication and the confidentiality of information given to employees. In the face of development and reform aspirations, it has become a burden that can no longer be afforded. Administrative empowerment has become a core concern of any administrative organization. Management scholars argue that contemporary organizations live in changing and complex circumstances, which makes their need to enhance problem-solving and decision-making skills an urgent need. Managers must comprehend what choices to make and keep the enthusiasm of all partners included. Adherents will be less dedicated to the group if the managers question their choices. They should indicate devotees that they can recognize when they are incorrect and advance to a superior arrangement. In talking about the announcement of the issue; terrible arrangement and inconsistence in choices making are among the real difficulties in hierarchical frameworks and have made numerous uncertain issues among managers and their representatives in our present working environment and whole society. Managers who manage contemporary administrative organizations must develop themselves and develop their staff capacities to contribute to problem solving & decision making, generating new ideas and working in the spirit of one team, outstanding and serious, leading to outstanding performance at work. Therefore, the problem of this research is limited to determine the level of the influence of administrative empowerment in enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among the staff at Abu Dhabi University. The problem of study is framed in the following main question:

What is the influence of administrative empowerment in enhancing the skills of the staff in problem solving and decision making at Abu Dhabi University?

A number of sub-questions arise from the main question, as follows:

(1) What is the level of administrative empowerment at Abu Dhabi University from the point of view of its employees?

(2) What is the level of staff skills in problem solving and decision-making at Abu Dhabi University from the angle of the staff?

(3) What is the impact of the administrative empowerment dimensions in enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among the staff at Abu Dhabi University?

(4) Are there differences of statistical significance to the dimensions of administrative empowerment at Abu Dhabi University due to the functional variables (job title, duration of service at the university)?

1.2. Research Objectives

(1) To recognize the level of administrative empowerment at Abu Dhabi University,

(2) To identify the level of problem-solving and decision-making skills at Abu Dhabi University,

(3) To explain the impact of the implementation of the policy of administrative empowerment in enhancing the skills of staff in solving problems and decision-making at Abu Dhabi University,

(4) To submit proposals and recommendations to Abu Dhabi University regarding the subject of the study,

1.3. Research importance

Empowerment is especially important because it is linked to a range of important issues, mainly administrative decentralization, total quality management, re-engineering, restructuring, teamwork, the learning institution, the horizontal institution and other issues related to the success, excellence and competitiveness of the institution. These concepts have a close relationship to empowerment and this relationship is almost always a cause or a result.

The change in the business world is also accompanied by a change in the skills needed by the world of tomorrow, a world in which innovation becomes the key to success, excellence and competitive advantage. All of these require innovative human resources, which have the ability to adapt to environmental factors and are quick to change.

In light of the above, the importance of this study is reflected in:

(1) Participating in enhancing problem-solving and decision-making skills among the staff at Abu Dhabi University- UAE.

(2) The study will try to fill the gap between what is being said and written about the use of problem-solving and decision-making skills (i.e., the theoretical aspect) through conferences and seminars, and the application and actual practice in the administrative process, through the experimental aspect in this study.

(3) The results of the study can determine the impact of administrative empowerment in enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among the staff at Abu Dhabi University – UAE.

(4) This study is in a field where scientific research is low (especially in the field of experimental and administrative skills of high importance, namely problem solving and decision-making), thus filling a gap in it.

(5) The study will try to provide a measure of problem-solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University, which can benefit researchers on the one hand, and benefit decision makers in the departments of organizations when selecting these employees on the other hand.

(6) It deals with the topic which is of particular importance to all of us in our lives both at present and at future.

2. Research concepts

2.1 Managerial Empowerment

From a managerial angle, "employee empowerment is a relational construct describing how those with power in organizations share power and authority with those lacking it" (Bowen & Lawler, 1992, 1995; Kanter, 1979 in Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011, p.3). Murrell and Meredith (2000, in Price, 2011, p. 254) define empowering as: "... mutual influence; it is the creation of power; it is shared responsibility; it is vital and energetic, and it is inclusive, democratic and long-lasting.". Randolph and Sashkin (2002) state that "empowerment is the recognition of the individual's right to freedom and control, which man possesses with the independent will, experience, knowledge and inner motivation". Nevertheless, "sharing power is insufficient if the benefits of empowerment—including better quality service, greater customer satisfaction, and higher employee job satisfaction—are to be realized" (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2011). According to Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995), empowering employees is the process by which employees can share information, train and develop, plan and control their job functions in order to reach positive results in work and achieve individual and organizational goals. The use of staff empowerment is one of the governance approaches to improve service quality, productivity, employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational effectiveness. Through the point of view of practitioners and officials in business organizations, it is clear that empowering workers refers to: the forces through which people gain the ability to increase their trust and level of loyalty, the ability to take responsibility, and the ability to act to improve activities and processes and interact in working to meet the basic requirements of customers in order to reach the goals of the organization. Therefore, the empowerment must be provided to the subordinates with the tools and means of force necessary to plan their activities and completion of their work, and performance so that they are fully responsible of it (Al-Khatib & Ahmed, 2000). From his side, Al-Maany (2010) defines the administrative empowerment as an organizational strategy aiming to give employees a broad freedom within the organization to make decisions and solve problems by expanding delegation of authority, training personnel, increasing their participation in the management of the organization, motivating them and emphasizing the importance of teamwork, providing the necessary resources and an appropriate working environment to achieve it. In the literature many definitions have been given to the concept of managerial empowerment. However, a lot of studies use, at least, 4 common dimensions to operationalize and measure this concept namely: Delegation of Authority, Training, Communication and Motivation (Al-Maany & Akhoershaideh, 2009; Al-Madi, Nseirat , 2011; Diab, 2017).

Delegation of Authority

Managerial Empowerment rests on authority delegation to employees of the lower administrative levels, with the aim of giving them power. The empowerment philosophy needs to be successful leaders who believe strongly in the personnel participation in decision-making.

Training

Empowering the employees needs a rich training program to give them the opportunity to develop new skills and enhance their experiences and competences. These skills should include skills such as decision-making skills, problem solving skills, leadership skills and negotiation skills.

Effective Communication

It is one of the main pillars of employee's empowerment. It translates the freedom and the ease to access the crucial information in the different managerial levels within the organization in such a manner that the employees are able to identify information relevant to their performances, objectives and strategies.

Motivation

Empowerment develops worker commitment, creativity, productivity, satisfaction and motivation. Traditional recompenses such as financial compensation are not always the best motivators. Recognition, meaningful work, fulfilling and flexible work environment are strong motivating factors (Sarkissian, 2017).

2.2 Problem solving Skills

The problems that face the different kinds of administrative work and frequency of their occurrence are the main challenges facing the decision-makers. They impose their calculation and the speed of dealing with them with the necessary solutions and at the appropriate time, not to aggravate and damage the level and quality of performance within the department or administrative unit or establishment in general. Problem solving skills are the ones where the employee is placed in real situations that enable him to practice skills logically and continuously whenever he has a problem, be it an administrative, cognitive, functional, personal or psychological problem. His problems are sufficient, capable and flexible in his behavior and performance. Problem solving holds an important place in information creation and handling. In fact, cognitive psychology has considered the method of problem solving, including and includes most other cognitive processes such as attention, remembering, imagination, decision making, etc., and that the individual practice of solving the problem allows for the development of these processes and others. Despite the different problems that individuals can face, there are common guidelines for most problem-solving strategies. These strategies can be taught to individuals because they help them find effective solutions. The simplest of these strategies consists of the following four elements: understanding the problem, planning solution, and review the position or comprehensive assessment (Al-Harithi, 1999).

2.3 Decision-making skills

Decision-making is a mental process in which an individual conducts mental activity in order to achieve a goal or solve a problem. The process of decision-making is practically applicable to all aspects of administrative organization. Any thought in the administrative process should focus on the principles and methods of decision-making. Therefore, the decision-making process is a series of steps and procedures that ultimately lead to the selection of the best alternative solutions, and the issuance of orders for their implementation (Morjan, 2002). Memar and Bin Darwish (2003) define the decision-making skills as "the ability of the individual to reach a solution to the problem they face, in light of both the available possibilities and personal outlook, so that this solution is applicable and implementation without causing any other problems, psychological, social or economic". Decision making skills are essential to be a successful manager. Whether deciding which employee to select, which supplier to trust, or which strategy to adopt, the ability to make the right decision based on the available information is crucial.

3. Literature review

3.1 Empowerment and work outcomes

Sun et al. (2012) conclude "that structural empowerment partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment". They also discovered that "psychological empowerment fully mediated the relationship between structural empowerment and creativity, and structural and psychological empowerment sequentially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and creativity". Chiang and Hsieh (2012) find that increasing employee empowerment stimulate a higher level of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among a hotel employees by providing more attention and care to employees and offering them appropriate control at work. They conclude that Hotel employees' readiness for OCB is crucial to better job performance. Gyumin et al. (2016) found "that the effect of empowerment on job satisfaction is more salient for customer-contact employees, and the effect of empowerment accelerates over the years regardless of the nature of work". Barton and Barton (2011), in their conceptual research, explain that the Russian organizational managers can enhance the organizational effectiveness using the stimulation of psychological empowerment among employees. Their main contribution consists in showing "the importance of trust as an antecedent to psychological empowerment within Russian organizations, an environment characterized by high power distance and collectivism" (Barton & Barton, 2011). Ukil (2016) finds that employee empowerment has an impact on both employee satisfaction and service quality. They argue that "the growing need of coping with the diverse challenges admits organizations to realize the essence of empowering employees and its effect on quality of service and employee satisfaction" (Ukil, 2016). The study of Klidas et al. (2007) claims that there is an association between client-oriented culture and management style of empowerment, with the behavior of employees who feel empowered. Omari (2011) studied the impact of the empowerment on organizational commitment of the academic managers at King Saud University. His investigation concludes the following results: A positive association was identified between some empowerment dimension (such as freedom of choice, self-efficiency and meaning of labor) and the whole level of the organizational commitment. The study of Shousha (2011, in Al-Magableh and Otoum, 2014) shows of positive influence of the psychological empowerment on the innovative attitude of employees. Moreover, he highlights the role of the innovative attitude in realizing competitive advantage, and developing the organization's aptitude to subsist and adapt.

3.2 Impact of empowerment on managerial skills and problem solving

Muduli (2017) finds that "an environment that encourages teamwork has the most influence in promoting agility, followed by programs that address reward systems, employee involvement, organizational learning and training, and information systems". Moreover, he argues that "agility is fostered by the psychological empowerment variable of impact, followed by self-determination, meaning, and competence".

Al-Salem (2011) studies the concept of administrative empowerment through its main elements such as: skills communication information flow organizational trust participation and delegation. He points out that there is a need to deal with the question of administrative empowerment since it helps to get through some of the issues related to the functioning of public organizations and affects their performance. According to Bogler and Somech (2005), participation in decision-making is able to increase staff willingness and commitment to work, and enable them to better understand their work challenges. Participation involves providing the best decision-making information and facilitating the successful implementation of the work. Szabo (2006) concludes in her study that empowering subordinates and giving them a specific role to participate in decision-making reasonably reduces many of the problems that can occur. Where they can repeatedly obtain access to the information held by the presidents, and the group can agree on the decision taken, especially if the participation represents an opportunity to understand and give the other a worthy appreciation.

Scott-Ladd et al. (2006) warn that employee satisfaction with participation in decision-making does not necessarily guarantee improved performance and commitment. The likelihood of improvement in performance can be increased when there is a clear definition of the role of participation in decision-making. The realization of participation is through setting goals and plans, participating in the development of alternatives, selecting the best alternative, evaluating results and cooperating in problem solving. The results of the study also indicate that the lack of competence and experience of workers for active participation can lead to confusing results. The lack of clarity of roles and processes regarding participation can create confusing, frustrating and unpredictable roles. It is therefore essential that there be clarity in the role and level of the need for participation. According to Tony (2002), there is a positive association between the method of problem solving and the motivation for achievement and general health. There are statistically significant differences among individuals according to the type of emergency stimuli in their ability to solve problems, simple and less complicated stimuli. Thomas et al. (2001) noted that managers' willingness to promote a culture of participation is linked to their trust in their peers. Their study also showed that the most satisfied subordinates are those who have a high degree of confidence and trust in their managers and a high degree of participation and encouragement from their supervisors. These findings indicate a link between trust and a willingness to call for participation. The assumption of this possibility makes the work of managers with subordinates sufficient to feel their credibility and positive participation and consolidate the process of empowerment. Managers need confidence in the competence and commitment of subordinates when invited to participate in the decision-making process.

4. Conceptual model and hypotheses

4.1 Conceptual model

The conceptual model of this research (Fig. 1) is inspired based on the review of some previous works such as the studies of Al-Maany and Akhoershaideh, (2009), Al-Madi and Nseirat (2011), Al-Magableh and Otoum (2014) and Alsharah (2018). In this conceptual model the Administrative Empowerment is represented through the 4 main dimensions developed by the literature: delegation of authority, continuous training, effective communication and motivation.
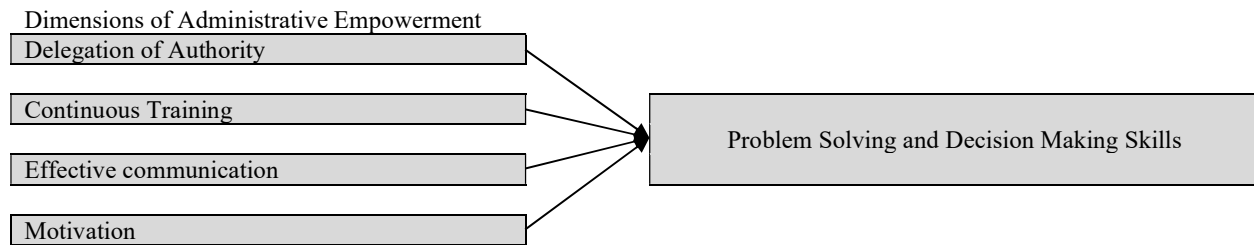

Fig. 1. Conceptual Model

4.2 Research hypotheses

Considering what have been said concerning the relationship between the managerial empowerment and Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills the hypotheses of the present research are as follows:

- The main hypothesis (H): There is a statistically significant positive effect of administrative empowerment (delegation of authority, training, effective communication, motivation) on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

- First sub hypothesis (H_1): There is a statistically significant positive effect of delegation of authority on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

- Second sub hypothesis (H_2): There is a statistically significant positive effect of training on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

- Third sub hypothesis (H$_3$): There is a statistically significant positive effect of effective communication on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

- Forth sub hypothesis (H$_4$): There is a statistically significant positive effect of motivation on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

5. Research methodology

5.1 Community of Study

The Community of Study is Abu Dhabi University, where the researchers adopted the method of comprehensive field survey in the collection of data from the members of the Community of Study.

5.2 Data Collection

Structured Questionnaire was the principle data collection instrument. It was collected through the distribution of questionnaires to managers, assistants and administrative supervisors, in the principal departments and directorates of the Abu Dhabi University distributed in the building and campus of Abu Dhabi University. The number of questionnaires distributed was (90), and (82) answers were valid for the analysis, with 91.1%.

5.3 Statistical Methods and Tools

Following are the statistical methods used:

(1) Frequency and percentages to describe the community study and determine their responses,

(2) Alpha Cronbach coefficient to determine the stability coefficient of the study tool,

(3) The arithmetical averages and the standard deviations to determine the relative importance of the responses of the study sample members towards the axes and dimensions of the study tool,

(4) Multiple regression analysis to test the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable,

(5) ANOVA Analysis to analyze the differences among group means.

5.4 Characteristics of the research Sample

In our survey, most of the sample members were male, with total of (60) individuals (73.2%). This indicates that most of the individuals who occupy the administrative levels are male. According to Fig. 2, most of the respondents were in the 30 and above age groups. The number of respondents in these two categories was (55) and their percentage was (67%).

Age

Years of service

Educational background

Position

Fig. 2. Personal characteristics of the participants

Fig. 2 also shows that most of the respondents have the first university degree, with a percentage of 65%. This indicates that the university is interested in appointing individuals with undergraduate degrees and above. The period of service indicated that most of the respondents were in the intermediate category (from 8 years and above), with a percentage of (59.7%). The majority of the respondents were administrative assistant, with 51.2%.

5.5 Validation of the Study Instrument and its Stability

Administrative empowerment was measured using 4 dimensions (delegation of authority, training, effective communication, motivation) and 19 items (see Table2) adapted from the empowerment scales used by Al-Maany and Akhoershaideh, (2009), Al-Madi and Nseirat (2011), Al-Magableh and Otoum (2014) and Alsharah (2018).

Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills variable was measured using 19 items (see table3) adapted from the scale used by Al-Rabadi1 and Salem (2018).

The validity of the instrument and the validity of the amended paragraphs were confirmed. It was presented to a number of specialized academics. The consensus of the arbitrators was approved to verify the validity of the tool. The internal consistency of the variables scales was also confirmed by the Cronbach Alpha test. Internal consistency (> 0.7) is a good percentage for the purposes of this study.

5.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Question 1: What is the level of administrative empowerment at Abu Dhabi University from the perspective of the respondents?

To answer this question, the researchers calculated the arithmetical averages and the standard deviations of the responses of the members of the community study on the terms represented by the administrative empowerment axis, according to its constituent dimensions (see Table 1).

Table 1
Statistical averages and standard deviations of administrative empowerment dimensions

N	The phrase	Average Arithmetic	standard deviation	Response level
1	The administration authorizes me to do my job	3.58	1.04	high
2	The management in my department trusts in the performance of the tasks entrusted to me	3.98	0.89	high
3	My superiors exercise delegated powers only during the mandate period	3.25	0.98	average
4	Management gives me the right flexibility to act in my job	3.42	0.99	high
5	My job gives me the opportunity to make decisions independently	3.15	1.06	average
	The overall average of the dimension of the delegation of authority	3.47		high
6	The organization adopts a clear training plan	3.00	1.05	average
7	The organization provides me with training courses to develop my skills	3.06	1.08	average
8	The organization encourages staff to exchange experiences among themselves	3.26	1.01	average
9	Workers have access to learning opportunities and new skills in the workplace	3.21	0.98	average
10	The organization seeks to develop its staff	3.12	1.02	average
	The overall average of the training dimension	3.13		average
11	The organization's instructions and procedures are clear	3.12	1.12	average
12	Staff can reach decision-makers and explain their positions without difficulty	3.18	0.94	average
13	Administration is interested in finding ways effective and sophisticated communication	3.20	0.87	average
14	There is an information system that provides information quickly to decision makers	3.00	1.11	average
	The overall average of effective communication dimension	3.12		average
15	The organization appreciates my efforts at work	3.24	0.96	average
16	The organization's working system allows me to participate in decision-making	2.90	1.00	average
17	My salary is commensurate with the efforts I make at work	2.61	1.08	average
18	I feel fairly and objectively the promotion system in the organization	2.56	1.37	Low
19	Staff efficiency is an important criterion in the promotion system	2.58	1.32	Low
	The overall average of the dimension of employee motivation	2.77		average
	The general average of administrative empowerment dimensions	3.12		average

Based on what is stated in the Table 1, the dimensions of administrative empowerment prevail in Abu Dhabi University according to the following order:

First: Delegation of authority dimension with an average of (3.47).

Second: Training dimension with an average of (3.13).

Third: Effective communication dimension with an arithmetic mean (3.12).

Fourth: Employee motivation dimension with an average of (2.77).

The mathematical mean of the responses of the sample of the study on the axis of administrative empowerment for all its dimensions and general expression was (3.12). In other words, members of the study sample believe that the level of administrative empowerment at Abu Dhabi University is average but to varying degrees depending on the dimensions of the constituent according to the elements of each of these dimensions.

Question 2: What is the level of problem solving and decision-making skills at Abu Dhabi University from the perspective of the respondents?

To answer this question, the researchers calculated the arithmetical averages and the standard deviations of the responses of the members of the study community on the terms represented for problem solving and decision making skills (see Table 2).

Table 2
Arithmetical averages and standard deviations of problem solving and decision making

N	The phrase	Average	Standard	Response
1	I am trying to adopt different methods and methods to solve the problems I face at work	3.58	0.81	high
2	I'm working on collecting information about the problem I'm facing	3.39	0.90	high
3	I focus on all the alternatives that may be appropriate to solve the problem	3.38	0.95	high
4	I take advantage of all the ideas and suggestions I get which help solve business problems	3.69	0.85	high
5	I use a systematic approach to problems	3.76	0.76	high
6	I work on sin1plifying ideas and making them logical when faced with any problems with work	3.71	0.73	high
7	I plan to implement appropriate solutions	3.56	0.81	high
8	I feel motivated, motivated and challenging when dealing with business problems	3.74	0.73	high
9	I have the skills and abilities to anticipate work problems before they happen	3.72	0.81	high
10	I use specific tem1s to identify and describe the problems I face at work	3.43	0.95	high
11	I think of the positive and negative aspects of all the proposed solutions	3.53	0.88	high
12	I'm sure to take advantage of ideas that have already been applied when faced with a problem	2.92	1.24	average
13	I provide the necessary information for each stage of problem solving and decision making	3.68	0.75	high
14	I have the ability to identify the advantages, disadvantages and costs of each alternative in determining the decision to be taken	3.54	0.79	high
15	I have the ability to make the right decision if there are several possible solutions	3.69	0.75	high
16	I'm trying to be careful to take into account factors and the external environment surrounding	3.67	0.75	high
17	I am clearly influenced by the organizational factors that influence the nature of the decision taken	3.63	0.79	high
18	I make sure to make decisions based on extensive study and not randomly	3.55	0.93	high
	The general average of the phrases of problem solving and decision making	3.57		high

Referring to Table 2, the arithmetical average of the responses of the sample members of the study on the axis of problem solving and decision making for all its dimensions and expressions in general is (3.57). This indicates that the level of problem-solving and decision-making skills of the respondents at The Abu Dhabi University is relatively high.

6. Hypothesis testing

H₁: There is no statistically significant effect, at the level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), of the elements of administrative empowerment (delegation of authority, employee training, effective communication and employee motivation) on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among staff at Abu Dhabi University.

Table 3
Multiple regression test results of the effect of administrative empowerment in enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-Value (calculated)	F-Value (Table)	Sig.	Squared multiple correlation R2	Coefficient of correlation (R)
Model	7.33	4	1.85	5.61	2.47	0.004	0.21	0.31
Error	238.81	77	0.31					
Total	246.14	81						

* Significance level of (0.05)

To test this hypothesis, the multiple regression analysis was applied as presented in Table 3, where the calculated value of (f) was 5.61 and was greater than the tabular value of (2.47) at the $df = 4.77$, and level of significance = 0.05. This negates the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that there was an impact of the dimensions of administrative empowerment on enhancing problem solving and decision-making skills among employees. This result is confirmed by the level of significance (f) = 0.001 which is less than the level of significance used (0.05). The explanatory power of the model is ($R^2 = 0.21$), which is a medium explanatory force, which means that the dimensions of the independent variable (administrative empowerment) explain 21% of the dependent variable (problem solving and decision-making skills).

Table 4
Results of the strength factor of the dimensions of administrative empowerment in enhancing the skills of the staff in solving problems and decision-making at Abu Dhabi University

Variable	B	Beta	Value(T)	Sig.
Delegation of Authority	0.18	0.27	4.54	0.034*
Training Employees	0.15	0.26	3.79	0.001*
Effective Communication	0.14	0.21	4.39	0.040*
Employee Motivation	0.13	0.20	4.35	0.229*
Administrative Empowerment in General	0.21		4.47	0.001*

* Significance level of (0.05)

Table 4 indicates the extent to which the application of each dimension of administrative empowerment has contributed to the enhancement of problem solving and decision-making skills among employees at Abu Dhabi University. Results show that there is a statistically significant effect at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) for the variables (delegation of authority, employees training, effective communication), while there is no statistically significant effect on the variable (employee motivation).

7. Discussion and conclusion

Through the statistical analysis of data, the study reaches out a set of results that can be clarified as follows.
The level of administrative empowerment implementation at Abu Dhabi University is average, according to the responses of administrative employees at the university. This may be due to some of the factors experienced by university employees, such as: the unfairness and objectivity of the promotion system, poor participation in decision-making and low salaries.
This result agrees with the result of Almagableh and Otoum (2014) found in the context of Najran University. It agrees also with the findings of Hamouri and Saoud (2010) and Al-Qodah and Tarawneh (2011) in their studies dealing with public Jordanian universities. The question that arises here: is the cultural context of these countries responsible of the medium degree of the administrative empowerment in the different universities.
In addition, the results show that the dimensions of the administrative empowerment prevailing in the university are, respectively, according to their arithmetical averages: the delegation of authority dimension, training dimension, effective communication dimension, employees motivating dimension. In this regard, Hashim et al. (2013) confirms the supremacy of the dimension "authority delegation" in representing administrative empowerment among managers.
The study shows that the elements and dimensions of problem solving and decision-making skills studied were relatively high. This may be due to demanding recruitment process at Abu Dhabi University resulting in the selection of experienced and competent staff. This result appears to be better than some results found in a quiet similar environment by many researchers studying many aspects related to the problem solving and/or decision-making skills and abilities. For example, Ababneh et al. (2013) concluded to the medium level of this kind of skills among the educational leaders at the Directorates of Education in Irbid, Jordan. Ebdah and Jaghbeer (2008) found the same result while studying the case of many primary and high school principals' administrative behavior in Salt, Jordan. Similarly, the study of Al- Magableh and Otoum (2014) shows the medium degree of some problem solving and/or decision-making abilities among the head/ coordinators of the academic department at the Science and Art Faculty at Najran University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It seems that the difference in results could be explained by some important administrative barriers in the development of problem solving and decision making skills such as an inconvenient cultural environment, lack of motivation, lack of authority delegation (Ebdah & Jaghbeer, 2008), lack of experience, fear of failure and the absence of an innovative culture (Al- Magableh & Otoum, 2014).

The research indicates a statistically significant effect of the administrative empowerment dimensions studied in the level of problem solving and decision-making skills among the employees at Abu Dhabi University. This result matches largely with the results obtained by many studies dealing with the impact of administrative empowerment on many organizational aspects such as decision agility (Muduli, 2017), administrative creativity (Al-Ghamdi, 2016), employee satisfaction and service quality (Ukil, 2016), job satisfaction (Gyumin et al., 2016), job performance (Chiang and Tsieh, 2012), innovative behavior (Shousha, 2011) and workers a productivity (Al-Mohtaseb, 2011). More specifically, looking at the effect of each field individually, the study comes up with a statistically significant effect for the following administrative empowerment elements:

Delegation of authority: This variable explains 27% of the difference in the level of problem solving and decision-making skills. This may be due to the trust of the management of Abu Dhabi University in the ability of employees to perform successfully the tasks and responsibilities delegated to them and their ability to act with freedom within their specific areas. This helps employees to devise new ways of problem solving and decision-making, which increases their level of skills in this area.

Employees Training: This variable explained 26% of the variation in problem solving and decision-making skills. This result may be explained by the fact that the training earns employees' knowledge and skills that help develop their abilities and enable them to devise new ways and methods that lead to the refinement of their skills.

Communication: Its explanatory power is relatively weak (21%) although statistically significant, this may be due to the lack in using modern technology and advanced communication techniques by the employees.

Employee motivation: This dimension is statistically insignificant. This result is may be because of the low level of financial rewards which, somewhat, frustrates the employees.

These results are not consistent with the findings of Al-Ha'ar (2016). The latter found that training and dedicating the authority have no influence on organizational good functioning of a sample of public schools in the province of Karak, Jordan. On the contrary, Al-Mahasneh and Al-Rahim (2007) agree with our findings in the sense that the empowerment dimension "delegation of authority" influences strongly some attributes of work teams like the capability to take the appropriate decision. From another side, of Al-Qadi (2009) is not far from our results. Indeed, he argued that ability of the academic leaders in Jordanian universities is influenced first by training and self-development and last by self-motivation.

8. Recommendations

After reviewing the main findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

Implementation of modern administrative concepts in Abu Dhabi University, such as activating the principle of participation and the formation of teams and team work and decision-making management to raise the level of performance.

Create a work environment at The Abu Dhabi University to support empowerment through the adoption of cooperation and coordination between departments, groups and individuals, exchange of information and improvement of communication, in order to avoid conflicts and individual rivalries.

Apply the decentralization, delegation of authority, and participation of subordinates in decision-making.

The necessity that all departments of the university care to train their employees to use modern technology and advanced communication techniques that contributes to raising the level of problem solving and decision-making skills, through the introduction of specialized training courses to increase their skills.

Work to develop an effective reward system, and that the incentives given to the effort, and to be linked to the rates of performance in work and timely.

Do not hesitate to apply new methods and take the risk of work, because of this is very important in raising the level of performance, and not afraid to apply methods that have a large percentage of risk.

Establishment of an incubator for the distinguished or the establishment of the so-called "Bank of Ideas", which will be responsible for supporting and encouraging the distinguished.

References

Ababneh, R.M., & Al-Shqran, R, I. (2013). The degree of practicing educational leaders for administrative innovation in directorates of education in Irbid. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences*, *14*(1), 459-486.

Al-Ghamdi, A. M. (2016). The Empowerment of Academic Women Leaders at Saudi Universities and Its Relationship to Their Administrative Creativity. *Scholarworks dissertation,* Western Michigan University.

Al-Ha'ar, H. (2016). The Impact of Administrative Empowerment on the Organization Performance at Jordainian Industrial Companies. *Canadian Social Science, 12*(2), 19-29.

Al-Harithi, I.A. (1999). *Teaching Thinking*. Riyadh: Al-Shakra Library.

Al-Khatib, A., & Ahmed M. (2000, April). The Potential of Implementing the Empowerment of Workers in Industrial Companies. *Second Annual Conference of the Supreme Council of Universities.* Permanent Scientific Committee for Business Administration. Modern Trends in Business Administration. Cairo, Egypt.

Al-Maany, A. (2010). *Modern Public Administration*. Amman: Wael Publishing House. (written in arabic).

Al-Maany, A., & Akhoershaideh, A. (2009). The Impact of Managerial Empowerment on Employees Innovation at The University of Jordan. *Jordan Journal of Business Administration*, *5*(2), 2-10.

Al-Madi, T., & Nseirat, F. (2011). The impact of managerial empowerment on the implementation of total quality management at Jordanian university hospital: a case study. *Jordan Journal of Business Administration*, *7*(4), 114-148.

Al-Magableh, M.Q., & Otoum A.M. (2014). The administrative empowerment and its relationship with the innovative behavior among the head / coordinators of the 178 academic department at the faculty of science and arts, Sharurah – Najran University. *International Research in Education*, *2*(22), 83-106.

Al-Mahasneh, M., & AL Rahim, A. (2007). The impact of administrative empowerment in the development of the administrative features teamwork. *Al- Nahdah Journal*, *8*(1), 127-164.

Al-Mohtaseb, A. A. (2011). Administrative empowerment and its impact on the productivity of workers at Hussein Bin Talal University. *Egyptian Journal of Commercial Studies*, *35*(2), 143-169.

Al-Qadi, N. (2009). Administrative empowerment among academic leaders at the Jordanian universities in the northern region from their point of view. *Journal of the Faculty of Education*, Ain Shams University, *3*(2), 625-654.

Al-Qodah, M. A., & Tarawneh, N. S. (2011). Reality of administrative empowerment of women at Public Jordanian universities, and affecting constraints it from the point of faculty members. *Muotah Journal for Research and Studies*, *a series of Humanities and Social Sciences, 26*(4), 133-178.

Al-Salem, S. (2011). *The effect of administrative empowerment on job performance: a field study on the passport personnel of Jeddah governorate*. (Unpublished Master's thesis). Faculty of Economics and Administration, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Sharah, A. (2018). The impact of administrative empowerment on organizational citizenship level on Saudi universities. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, *6*(10), October, 580-604.

Barton, H., & Barton, L.C. (2011). Trust and psychological empowerment in the Russian work context. *Human Resource Management Review*, *21*(3), 201-208.

Bogler R., & Somech A. (2005). Organizational citizenship behavior in school how does it relate to participation in decision making. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *43*(5), 420-438.

Bowen, D.E., & Lawler, E. (1995). Empowering Service Employees, *Sloan Management Review*, *Summer*, 73-83.

Bowen, D.E., & Lawler, E.E. (1992). The Empowerment of Service Workers: What, Why, How, and When. *Sloan Management Review*, *Spring*, 31-40.

Chiang, C.F., & Hsieh, T.S. (2012). The impacts of perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment on job performance: The mediating effects of organizational citizenship behavior. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 31*, 180–190.

Diab, S.M. (2017). The Impact of Empowerment on the Organizational Creativity among Health Directors in the Jordanian Ministry of Health. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 7*(12), 821-837.

Ebdah, A., & Jagbeer M. (2008). Innovation degree in administrative behavior for secondary and elementary school principals from teacher's point of view belonging to the Directorate of Education in Salt. *Journal of Culture and Development*, *8*(24), 2-39.

Fernandez, S., & Moldogaziev, T. A. (2011). Causal Model of the Empowerment Process: Exploring the Links between Empowerment Practices, Employee Cognitions, and Behavioral Outcomes. *11th National Public Management Research Conference*. Maxwell School, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, June.

Hamouri, A., & Saud, R. (2010). The degree of career empowerment for academic leaders in official Jordanian universities and their relationship to Achievement motivation they have. *Mutah Journal for Research and Studies*, a series of Human and Social Sciences, *15*(7), 97.

Hashim, T., Ahmed, A., & Jaradat, N. (2013). The impact of structural empowerment in achieving psychological empowerment in the Jordanian public organizations. *Journal of Hebron University for research*, *8*(1).

Kanter, R. M. (1979). Power Failures in Management Circuits. *Harvard Business Review*, *57*, 65-75.

Klidas, A., Van Den Berg P.T., & Wilderom C.P.M. (2007). Managing Employee Empowerment in Luxury Hotels in Europe. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 18(1), 70-88.

Lee, G., Kim, P.B., & Perdue R.R. (2016). A longitudinal analysis of an accelerating effect of empowerment on job satisfaction: Customer-contact vs. non-customer-contact workers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *57*, 1-8.

Memar, S., & Bin Darwish, M. (2003). Towards the development of innovative work. *Umm Al-Qura University Journal*, *15*(2), 156-178.

Morjan, S.M. (2002). *Operations Research*. Benghazi: National Library.

Muduli, A. (2017). Workforce agility: Examining the role of organizational practices and psychological empowerment. *Global Business and Organizational Excellence*, *36*(5), 46-56.

Murrell, K.L., & Meredith M. (2000). *Empowering Employee*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Omari, M.S. (2011). Career Empowerment and organizational commitment to the academic leaders at King Saud University. *King Saud University Journal – Sciences*, Riyadh, AD 23, 60-97.

Price, A. (2011). *Human Resource Management*. (4th ed.). Boston: CENAGE Learning.

Randolph, W.A., & Sashkin M. (2002). Can Organizational Empowerment? Work in Multinational Settings. *Academy of Management Executive, 16*(1), 102-115.

Sarkissian, A. (2017). How does empowerment affect an employee's motivation & performance? Retrieved from http://small-business.chron.com/empowerment-affect-employees-motivation-performance-64535.html.

Scott-Ladd, B., Travaglione, A., & Marshall, V. (2006). Causal Inferences between Participation in Decision Making, Task Attributes, Work Effort, Rewards, Job Satisfaction and Commitment. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, *27*(5), 399-414.

Shousha, A. (2011). The effect of employees empowering to innovative behavior, practical study on the staff working in informational technology in Mansoura University. *Arab Journal of Commercial Studies*, *35*(1), 1-28.

Sun, L.Y., Zhang, Z., Qi J., & Chen, Z.X. (2012). Empowerment and creativity: A cross-level investigation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*, 55-65.

Szabo, E. (2006). Meaning and Context of Participation in Five European Countries. *Management Decision*, *44*(2), 276-289.

Thomas, J., Dickson, M., & Bliese, P. (2001). Values Predicting Leader Performance in the US Army Reserve Officer Training Corps Assessment Centre: Evidence for a Personality-mediated Model. *Leadership Quarterly*, *12*(2), 181-197.

Tony, C. (2002). Problem solving, achievement motivation, psychological distress and response to a simulated emergency. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, *15*(4), 325 – 333.

Ukil, M.I. (2016). The impact of employee empowerment on employee satisfaction and service quality: empirical evidence from financial enterprises in Bangladesh. *Business: Theory & Practice*, *17*(2), 178-189.