

Change Management as an Approach to the Development of the Administrative Performance of Academic Leaders in Saudi Universities in the Light of Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's Directives: A Theoretical Study

Abdullah M. Almanie*

Full Professor of Educational Administration, College of Education, King Saud University

*Corresponding author: almanieam@yahoo.com

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Abstract Vision 2030 referred to the Kingdom's efforts in all its educational departments and institutions to bridge the gap between education outputs and the needs of the labor market. The vision aimed at making at least five Saudi universities among the best (200) international universities by 2030. The purpose is to present the change management as an approach to the development of the administrative performance of academic leaders in Saudi universities in the light of Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's Directives. This paper provided the foundations of the proposed model, the premises of the proposed model, the objectives of the proposed model, the dimensions of the proposed model, requirements for implementing the proposed model, and finally the obstacles to implementing the proposed vision and how to overcome them.

Keywords: change management, administrative performance, academic leaders, Saudi Universities

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1. Introduction

Higher education institutions have become strategic actors competing for reputation and resources in a global market [1]. This development has also put more focus on academic management and leadership [2], and extensive earlier research has shown that the power, responsibilities, as well as expectations of leaders have increased in the last decades. Higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a stage of education that comes after secondary education, which lasts three years. Higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia are divided into universities, colleges, and institutes, including governmental (public) and private (private) institutions. There are generally three stages in higher education in Saudi Arabia: Bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. As for the bachelor's degree, public universities offer it free of charge to Saudi citizens, and all regular students and external scholarship students are paid a monthly stipend during the study period [3].

Higher education in Saudi Arabia lasts four years in the humanities and social sciences, and five to six years in medicine, engineering, and pharmacy. The creation of

King Saud University in 1957 was the actual launch of the contemporary higher education system in Saudi Arabia. It was the first university to be established in the Arab Gulf states [4].

Vision 2030 referred to the Kingdom's efforts in all its educational departments and institutions to bridge the gap between education outputs and the needs of the labor market. The vision aimed at making at least five Saudi universities among the best (200) international universities by 2030 [5].

There are more than 29 public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including Taibah University, Qassim University, and Taif University, which were established under the Seventh Development Plan. Universities consist of colleges and departments that offer certificates, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in various scientific and humanities disciplines. Some colleges and departments also provide distance education. There are also private and community colleges affiliated with universities and women's colleges, in addition to government agencies and institutions that provide specialized education at the university level, with a total of 4 government academies, 4 government technical colleges and 87 intermediate technical colleges for male and female students. In addition to public universities, there are more than 38 private universities and colleges [6].

Administration is a process of systematically arranging and coordinating the human and material resources available to any organization for the main purpose of achieving stipulated goals of that organization [7]. educational administration can be defined as a process through which the school administrators arrange and coordinate the resources available to education, for the purpose of achieving the goals of the educational system. While management is a term most often used to describe industrial activities. Management is getting things done through others. Management is the coordination of all resources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling in order to attain the objectives [8]. Therefore, the development of university education does not take place without changing and developing university administration [9]. The development of university administration has also become a top priority for the development of university education [10].

Universities are generally managed by academic leaders, who are among the most prominent members of the university administrative system and one of its most important elements. In contemporary global challenges and changes, these leaders need to reorganize traditional leadership methods, and give modern administrative systems and methods that urge change, renewal, decentralization, and undermining powers. Participation in decision-making, creativity and innovation is a greater interest so that it is able to deal with those changes [11].

Therefore, this requires attention to developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in light of the vastness and availability of information and modern technologies, as it is the academic administration that is meant to start achieving the goals of university institutions. Development in this category will contribute to introducing those leaders to the most prominent developments, trends and modern methods in the field Administration [12].

Change management is one of the modern administrative approaches, which is represented in the planned effort that aims to achieve the goals of change through the development of employees by influencing their values, skills, behavior patterns, and changing work methods, structures and technology used. It is a systematic method and application of knowledge, tools and materials to deal with change within an environment. Work under the new conditions, and it is also represented in how to make change in a planned manner with the aim of containing new effective and developed methods and methods, so that the changes in the organization are managed, controlled and monitored [13].

Thus, change management enables leaders to face changes and challenges and remain strong and steadfast by adapting to events and making continuous changes, and creating a new management capable of using modern management methods that enable creativity, innovation, renewal and dealing with changes in a more efficient and effective manner [14].

The contemplator of the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities finds that it suffers from some shortcomings, which are: the dominance of the traditional stereotype of university administration, the stagnation and obsolescence of laws, legislation and

administrative regulations, and their inadequacy to pursue changes that occur in society, the shortcomings in the application of modern technological methods in university administration. The university administrative system's resistance to change and development, the intense centralization of university administration [14], the loss of the independence of university units in administrative aspects, routine and adherence to the literalism of regulations and laws among some leaders in accomplishing their tasks, the hierarchy of the organizational structure of universities, the centralization of decision-making and the concentration of power at the higher levels of the administrative hierarchy.

Through the foregoing, it is clear that there is a need to develop the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities, through the entrance of change management by bringing about change in many areas of methods and work procedures, organizational structure, prevailing culture, and technology used in (Administrative) in order to develop the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities.

2. Problem Statement

University education is one of the basic pillars that contribute to the formation of the individual and society and the crystallization of its features in the present and the future together, and the success of the university depends on its effective response to many challenges and variables because of its clear impact on university administration. Always aware of the changes and developments on the global and local arena and be able to deal with them in order to achieve leadership [15]. The university's efficiency in achieving its goals depends to a large extent on the administrative and academic competence of its leaders, but when looking at the current situation of university education, we find that it suffers from many problems facing the performance of leaders and impedes the processes of change, development and improvement.

3. Research Questions

1. What is change management in universities?
2. What is the nature of administrative performance of academic leaders in universities?
3. What is the proposed vision for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities?

4. Purpose

The research aims to:

1. Learn about the nature of change management in universities.
2. Identify the nature of the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities.
3. Develop a proposed vision for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities.

5. Method

The current research used the descriptive approach to achieve the research objectives [16]. This approach relies on a set of research procedures that integrate to describe the phenomenon or topic based on the collection, classification and processing of data and facts [17]. It is not limited to collecting and tabulating data, but includes a degree of analysis and interpretation of this data, within its societal framework, and trying to provide solutions and alternatives to it, and then choosing the best solutions. or alternatives in the form of a proposed perception.

6. Conceptual Framework

6.1. What is Change Management in Universities?

The era in which you live is characterized by the speed of change and renewal, which has become an essential feature in all areas of life, especially in light of the political, social, economic, technological and informational changes that have imposed on all institutions in general and the management of educational institutions in particular to use some modern administrative methods in managing these institutions and to update Some kind of change in its management to keep pace with these changes [18].

The university, as one of the educational institutions, is not isolated from these changes, which made it face many contemporary challenges. In order for these challenges to be faced efficiently and effectively by the university, there must be a distinct and conscious university administration whose responsibility is assumed by leaders with a high degree of efficiency and effectiveness who can bring about change and manage it within universities [19].

Change management is one of the most important administrative entrances through which universities can be developed, staff efficiency raised, university administration effectiveness increased, administrative communication, coordination and decision-making processes improved, loyalty and belonging deepened, university work climate improved, problems solved, resources rationalized, and new administrative policies adopted. Through achieving change in a range of areas represented in methods, work procedures, organizational culture, organizational structure, and technology used within the university, this will help develop the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities [20].

6.2. The Concept of Change Management in Universities

Change and its management are among the important issues that have received increasing attention in recent times due to the rapid transformations and the increasing pressures that various organizations are exposed to [21]. In making and taking decisions, and reviewing the goals themselves, so that those in charge of organizations find no way out to accommodate these rapid changes and absorb these criticisms except to adopt change, and here it is necessary to distinguish between change as a

phenomenon and change management as a work method [22].

a. **The concept of change:** Change is a necessity for organizations as they operate in an environment characterized by continuous change in the forces affecting them, and therefore the right path to survival and good performance of the organization lies in change to adapt to the new environment. To ensure the transition to an organizational state that is more capable of solving problems, and therefore change is a conscious behavior to influence the course of change [20].

Fullan [23] explains that the concept of change is a radical shift in thought in which a departure from traditional methods and approved methods is made to new foundations, values, and directions that address thought and reason, keep pace with development, and meet its demands. Change is also defined as modifications in the goals and policies of management or In any element of the organizational work with the aim of one of the two things: adapting the conditions of the organization and the methods of work of management and its activities with changes and new conditions in the surrounding climate, in order to create consistency and compatibility between the organization and the environmental conditions in which it operates, or to develop administrative conditions, organizational methods and new aspects of activity It achieves for the organization a precedence over other organizations and thus provides it with a comparative advantage that enables it to obtain greater gains and returns [22].

b. **The concept of change management:** change management is the practical application of change through the use of the best economical and effective ways to bring about change by identifying and fixing new values, directions, roles and behaviors within the organization, new supportive work methods, overcoming resistance to change, and building a consensus of workers around changes designed to meet their needs in a better planning, testing and application for all aspects of the organization [20].

For the success of change and its management within organizations, there is a set of factors that must be taken into account, which are: the commitment and conviction of senior management of the need to adopt a program for change, investing resources in terms of time, effort and money to provide material capabilities to support change, identifying and providing the necessary human resources and the training process and development during the various stages of change Facing resistance to change [22], abandoning the traditional leadership model that focuses on directing to a leadership model that believes in participation and consultation Administrative transformation from control and direction to trust, delegation and participation in decision-making and decision-making.

Universities, as an organization, are not isolated from change. It is the responsibility of university leaders to bring about change and manage it within the university. There is a need for change when methods and practices are no longer commensurate with the goals to be achieved [24]. Here, the reasons for change increase and become more urgent than they were in the past, and change is brought about in universities [25]. Or in any field of university work, it requires a planned and organized effort,

and it also requires the availability of the necessary capabilities and the required funding, in addition to the necessity of having trained and influential leaders who possess the technical and personal qualities and qualifications, as well as the capabilities and leadership skills, which makes them able to carry out the tasks and responsibilities of leading effective change within the university [24].

6.3. Fields of Change Management in Universities

Change management efforts include many aspects in organizations, including universities. Rapid developments and changes in cultures, technologies, methods of organization and management make the organization obligated to implement comprehensive change processes that include the areas of work, organization, culture, and technology. Change includes many interrelated and interdependent aspects that are linked together by dynamic relationships. The most important of these aspects and areas are:

a. **Change in methods and work procedures:** The organizational change in the organization must be compatible. With it, a change in work methods and procedures, such as job duties and tasks, methods of performing them, work structuring, and decision-making systems. Changing the values, attitudes and behaviors of workers is one of the most important areas of change and the most difficult. It is not an easy process, but rather it is considered one of the delicate processes because it is closely related to the psyche of the worker. There are several ways to change the values, attitudes and behaviors of workers, foremost of which is the leadership style [26]. It helps bring about change in the values and behaviors of employees, and the availability of an effective system of incentives in the organization is one of the factors that contribute to achieving the desired change. From the foregoing, it is clear that the change in the methods and methods of work and the attitudes and behaviors of the workers is considered one of the important areas necessary to bring about change within the organization and its acceptance by the workers [27].

b. **Change in the culture of the organization:** When the changes in the organization are small, the leaders can ignore the factor of the culture of the organization because the culture of the organization can absorb the small accumulations, but if the change is large, especially in the methods and methods of work, structure or technology, then it becomes necessary for the leaders to lead The process of change in the culture of the organization in order for the change to succeed [28]. For how to conduct cultural change and put in place mechanisms to change the culture that include the mechanisms of structures, systems and procedures in the organization, which are important to change the culture of the organization so that it can face the future with high confidence. Suitable work for these elements to ensure the success and continuity of the organization [27].

c- **Organizational change (structure):** The organizational structure is one of the factors influencing the performance and behavior of employees, as it clarifies the terms of reference, authorities, relationships, roles, and positions,

and contributes to achieving harmony, compatibility, unifying efforts among employees, working as one team, optimal use of the available resources of the organization, and the ease of flow of information, orders, and decisions between the parts of the organization. The organizational structure is the pattern of existing relationships [29]. It distinguishes between the main parts of the organization, which constitute the whole organization, and identifies the channels of communication in organizing, controlling, and the pattern of authority, and also distinguishes between the parts of the unified organization, as well as between those parts [30]. The organizational structure is the main tool for achieving the goals of the organization, as it generates several critical organizational decisions, the most important of which are: defining the organizational units and the scope of their work, the quality of the relationships between them, the delegation of powers and the communication channels that link them [29].

d -**change in technology:** The technological changes taking place today have a significant impact on the work environment and its tasks, whether in terms of quality of service, work methods, organizational structure, or employees' feelings [31]. This change and impact is represented in electronic devices, office tools, calculators, computers, and modern means of communication. About innovations and modern technical means, and in order for change to succeed, there must be progress in the methods and pattern of doing business, meaning that change needs to introduce new and advanced technology so that there is the inevitable natural justification for the process of change [32]. The areas of technological change are determined by the factors of competition faced by organizations or the requirements of creativity, as organizations tend to change technology related to devices, equipment, methods, or computers [31]. Thus, technological change aims to make adjustments in the work systems and methods used in carrying out the work of the organization, and therefore it may include the introduction of new technology in the work or a new system in selecting new working individuals or the use of advanced methods in evaluating the performance of workers.

6.4. The Nature of Administrative Performance of Academic Leaders in Universities

Universities face many successive challenges and changes, which necessitate the need to bring about a set of radical transformations in the work system within them, such as the tendency towards decentralization, self-management, delegation of powers, participation in decision-making, and reliance on the technology used. Caring for the administrative performance of academic leaders is one of the most important forms and methods of facing these challenges due to its centrality and importance in detailing all institutional activities and programs at the level of departments, colleges and universities, or the behavior of employees, or the means and methods of leadership, so academic leaders are required to be effective leaders who possess the skills that make them able to perform their leadership role efficiently and effectively, and this will only happen through managing and leading change in universities [33]. Thus,

the administrative performance of academic leaders is one of the main factors that help develop work in universities and achieve their goals.

A proposed Model for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities.

In the light of the theoretical framework of the research that was presented on the nature of change management in university education, and the nature of the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities, a proposed model was developed for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities. Its dimensions and implementation mechanisms, the requirements for its implementation, and finally the obstacles to implementation and how to overcome them are as follows:

a. The foundations of the proposed Model

The proposed Model is based on the following:

1. Change management is one of the modern administrative approaches through which universities and colleges can develop their performance and move from the current situation to a better future situation by making changes in a range of areas related to work methods and systems, organizational structure, organizational culture, and technology in order to improve and develop performance and use Modern administrative methods to achieve goals.

2. The academic leaders are considered the main engine and the important pillar on which the various activities in universities and colleges are based. Therefore, they must rise to the challenges that are set before them, reconsider traditional leadership methods and adopt the use of modern administrative methods based on creativity, innovation and participation in decision-making so that you they keep up with the changes around them.

b. The premises of the proposed Model:

The proposed Model is based on the following premises:

1. The rapid changes that the current era is going through, the most important of which is the massive technological development, the knowledge explosion, globalization, and the information and communication revolution, which necessitates universities to bring about change in order to absorb these changes and advance and develop colleges and carry out their mission.

2. Modern administrative approaches and methods and what they require of new roles for academic leaders, which in turn need to be recognized by academic leaders and practiced in administrative work.

3. The need to grant academic leaders in universities administrative and academic powers that enable them to lead university work efficiently.

4. The importance of the role that academic leaders play at the college level in administrative work and the capabilities and skills it requires that help them to be efficient and effective at work.

5. The importance of the change management approach as one of the modern administrative approaches that works to raise the ability and efficiency of universities to respond to surrounding changes, and to allow the use of modern administrative methods to develop performance.

c. The objectives of the proposed Model:

The proposed Model aims to:

1. develop the positive attitudes of the academic leaders of the university towards the entrance to change management.

2. define the extent of the need for change, and set appropriate plans for necessary action and following them up.

3. develop the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities through:

- change in traditional work methods and procedures to contribute to the development of performance.

- change and developing the university's organizational structures to contribute to the development of performance.

- developing the existing organizational culture in the university to contribute to the development of performance.

- employing modern technology and using technological innovations to contribute to the development of performance.

4. provide mechanisms and proposals for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities.

The dimensions of the proposed Model¹

1. Dimensions of the proposed Model:

The proposed Model is based on four basic dimensions of the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities, namely:

a. The first dimension: the change in work methods and procedures that contribute to the development of performance.

b. The second dimension: change in the organizational structure to contribute to the development of performance.

c. The third dimension: the change in the prevailing organizational culture, which contributes to the development of performance.

d. The fourth dimension: the change in the technology used in administrative work, which contributes to performance development.

Requirements for implementing the proposed Model:

The following are the most important factors helping to achieve the proposed vision, by providing the following requirements:

1. Leaders of universities should be convinced by the importance of implementing change management.

2. The higher leadership in universities should implement the principle of decentralization, authority, by reducing the hierarchical organizational levels and adopting self-management, this will allow a large amount of academic leaders at the level of departments and colleges to participate in making decisions, and determining the type of decisions in which academic leaders participate at their various levels. This also will help to Identify the requirements for change in their behavior, and adopt the concepts of delegation and transfer of authority.

3. Developing training programs for academic leaders before they assume office and during their tenure in an administrative position in order to develop them administratively, in order to achieve the success of the change processes.

¹ The full description of the model can be obtained from the author

4. Developing the organizational structure of universities so that it becomes flexible and able to respond quickly to surrounding changes, achieve speed of communication, and reduce the number of administrative levels so that an exchange of visions, perceptions and information takes place in a direct manner that shortens time and effort and achieves organizational effectiveness.

5. Developing the technological methods used in universities.

Obstacles to implementing the proposed vision and how to overcome them:

By analyzing the theoretical framework, a group of obstacles that hinder the implementation of the proposed vision can be identified. The following is a presentation of these obstacles and ways to overcome them:

- Rigid regulations and laws regulating the work of academic leaders.
- Duplication and overlapping of specializations for the tasks of academic leaders.
- Absence of an appropriate climate within universities to manage change.
- Senior leadership's fear of losing power.
- Dominates the work of bureaucratic leaders in the methods and procedures of administrative work.
- Weakness of the academic leaders' desire to bring about change and adhere to the familiar.
- Academic leaders practice routine work for fear of risk, error in work performance, and failure.
- Academic leaders adhere to regulations and laws without using flexibility when applying them.
- The traditional hierarchical organizational structure in universities that does not encourage creativity and innovation.
- The use of traditional and routine administrative methods in the administrative work of leaders at all levels.
- Centralization of decision-making among leaders at different levels in universities.
- Lack of training programs for developing administrative skills for academic leaders.
- Weak desire among academic leaders to develop their administrative skills.

These obstacles can be resolved through the following:

- Developing academic leaders' awareness of the importance of adopting change management as one of the modern administrative approaches through which administrative performance can be developed, by holding seminars, conferences and training courses to train them in how to manage change and the necessary steps for that.
- Reconsidering the laws and regulations in force in universities, as they are based on centralization and bureaucracy.
- Developing clear-cut plans for change processes within universities and determine the time plans necessary for their implementation.
- Changing the negative concepts that some academic leaders embrace, such as fear of assuming responsibility, lack of confidence in others and their abilities, waiting to receive orders and instructions, and replacing them with positive concepts such as trust, initiative, innovation, participation, and bearing responsibility.

- Developing organizational relationships based on values of justice, respect for the opinions and rights of others, transparency, working for the common good, and doing things in the right way at the right time.

- Encouraging teamwork among academic leaders by deepening the concept and importance of work teams and activating their use as they achieve increased communication between university leaders, integration and exchange of experiences, cooperation to solve problems and find innovative solutions.

- Flexibility in applying regulations and the need to develop them, allowing academic leaders to present new ideas, proposals, and methods of work that contribute to the development of the college and the university as a whole.

- Getting rid of hierarchical organizational structures, and moving towards flexible flat structures that limit centralization, allowing and facilitating the process of effective communication in all directions, the flow of information and decision-making.

- Rebuilding a cultural pattern in the university that ensures changes in systems related to paradigms, values, motivations, skills and organizational relationships.

- Effective application of the principle of decentralization of authority, and the qualification of academic leaders to become self- and professionally capable of managing departments and colleges.

7. Conclusion

Change management is one of the modern administrative approaches, which is represented in the planned effort that aims to achieve the goals of change through the development of employees by influencing their values, skills, behavior patterns, and changing work methods, structures and technology used. In the light of the theoretical framework of the research that was presented on the nature of change management in university education, and the nature of the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities, a proposed model was developed for the role of change management in developing the administrative performance of academic leaders in universities. The author provided the foundations of the proposed model, the premises of the proposed model, the objectives of the proposed model, the dimensions of the proposed model, requirements for implementing the proposed model, and finally the obstacles to implementing the proposed vision and how to overcome them.

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