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The role of school administration in enhancing educational outcomes

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Abstract

This study examined the role of school administration in enhancing educational outcomes. A descriptive survey method was employed, utilizing a questionnaire administered to a randomly selected cluster sample of 226 participants. The findings indicate that respondents perceive school administration as having a moderate overall impact on improving educational outcomes. While school administrators were found to fulfill their functional roles at a high level, teachers rated their effectiveness as moderate. Among the various dimensions assessed, the administration's role in technical and administrative tasks was the most prominent, receiving an average rating. Conversely, engagement with parents was identified as the least developed aspect. Based on these findings, several recommendations were proposed to support educational policymakers and school administrators in strengthening public education outcomes. The study underscores the need for enhanced administrative strategies, particularly in fostering stronger collaboration with parents, to further improve educational effectiveness.

Keywords: Educational outcomes; performance improvement; school administration; school principals

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1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing costs of education have underscored the urgency of improving educational outcomes (Al-Hassanat, 2003). As a result, educational institutions must enhance their efficiency by focusing on maximizing results while optimizing the resources invested in the learning process. Many countries aim to align educational advancements with improvements in input factors and operational processes to ensure that their investment in education yields the best possible results. By refining the mechanisms involved in teaching and learning, institutions can strengthen their educational outputs, ultimately contributing to a more effective and sustainable education system.

Taya et al. (2010) conducted a study that analyzed the outcomes of secondary education and their compatibility with university admission requirements, using the University of Aden as a case study. The research employed both descriptive and analytical methodologies, gathering data from students applying to the university's various colleges, including Education, Engineering, Medicine, and Administrative Sciences. The study focused on a sample of 11,110 applicants for the 2019-2020 academic year, representing graduates from both literary and scientific secondary education streams. Data collected from the university provided insights into different variables, such as general applicant demographics, acceptance rates, distribution by field of study, gender, and academic major. The findings revealed that the number of applicants significantly exceeded the available seats, surpassing capacity by more than 500%, with only 18% of students gaining admission. Additionally, significant statistical differences were identified between high school grades and university entrance exam scores, while no correlation was observed between secondary school averages and entrance exam results for both accepted and non-accepted applicants.

Similarly, Al-Salai'a (2020) conducted research titled *Improving the Role of Educational Leaders to Achieve Quality Standards for Teaching Performance*. The objective was to evaluate the extent to which quality teaching performance standards were met in secondary schools in Najran and to align these standards with official Saudi educational policies. The study also sought to identify the obstacles affecting teaching performance at the secondary level. Using a descriptive and analytical approach, data were collected from a randomly selected sample of 56 school principals, assistant principals, and 70 educational supervisors from Najran's general secondary schools. The results emphasized the critical role of school leaders in enhancing educational quality by facilitating professional training programs for administrators, organizing specialized courses for newly graduated teachers, and implementing national initiatives aimed at improving both educational and administrative efficiency. The study also highlighted the challenges faced by school principals, such as excessive workloads and responsibilities beyond their core administrative duties, which may hinder their ability to focus on improving school performance.

In another study, Al-Ani (2017) examined the role of private school principals in implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) and Its Relation to Educational Leadership Styles. The research explored how school administrators integrate TQM principles into their leadership strategies, with a particular focus on teachers' perspectives. Employing a descriptive methodology, the study surveyed 100 teachers from private schools in Muscat during the 2016 academic year. Using questionnaires, the research assessed the extent to which principals applied TQM strategies and the leadership styles they adopted. The findings indicated that private school principals implemented TQM at a moderate level and predominantly favored a democratic leadership approach. Furthermore, the study identified a strong relationship between the application of TQM practices and the leadership methods employed by school principals, demonstrating the importance of effective management in achieving educational quality.

The importance of inputs, processes, and outputs in an educational system has been a subject of study for decades. Nashwan (1986) highlighted that educational systems consist of several key components: inputs, which include economic, human, and material resources; processes, which represent the interactions that occur within the learning environment; and outputs, which reflect the educational outcomes that result from these interactions. These elements must be carefully managed to ensure that educational institutions produce

competent graduates who are well-prepared to meet academic and professional demands. By addressing inefficiencies and improving educational leadership, schools can enhance the overall quality of education, thereby bridging the gap between secondary and higher education and better preparing students for future academic and career pursuits.

1.1. Conceptual background

The researcher found that Jordan's educational system falls short of expectations, as reflected by several key indicators. One major concern is the growing discrepancy between the skills of high school graduates and the demands of university-level education. Additionally, Jordanian students have performed poorly in international assessments. For instance, in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, students from Jordan scored below 500 points, and the country ranked low among the 83 participating nations in the 2018 assessment. Similarly, findings from the most recent Program for International Student Assessment revealed that students from five Arab nations including Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia placed in the bottom third among 79 countries.

Another troubling issue is the high unemployment rate among secondary school graduates. According to data from the Department of Statistics in 2020, overall unemployment stood at 12 percent, while 33 percent of secondary school graduates were jobless. Public concerns about the quality of secondary education graduates have been widely expressed in the media and by parents. Al Harbi in 2013 highlighted the disconnect between public schooling and higher education, emphasizing the necessity of a strategic plan to bridge these gaps. Additionally, educational supervisors and researchers, such as Al Ghamdi in 2006, have noted that many students lack fundamental academic skills.

Students' weak performance points to deficiencies in the educational system's outcomes. In Jordan, there is an ongoing debate over who is primarily responsible for this decline, whether it is the Ministry of Education, which produces graduates with insufficient skills, or the Ministry of Higher Education, which faces criticism from employers regarding the preparedness of university graduates. Experts in educational quality suggest that deficiencies in secondary education account for roughly 40 percent of the shortcomings observed in higher education, reinforcing the argument that weaknesses in early education have long-term consequences. The deterioration of educational standards affects multiple areas, leading to decreased labor productivity, lower economic and social returns from education, and widespread unemployment among educated individuals. These concerns underscore the urgency of implementing educational reforms.

As a response, efforts to enhance educational outcomes and restructure school administration have gained traction. To improve student achievement, school leaders must consider external factors, actively oversee school operations, continuously develop their expertise, and track students' progress to maximize academic performance. Studies by Ma et al. in 2023, Al Zubi et al. in 2024, and Acut in 2024 support this approach. The study recommends prioritizing the school environment, increasing parental involvement, and consistently monitoring student performance to enhance educational outcomes. Given the significance of secondary education and the need for improvement, this research investigates the role of school administration in elevating academic performance.

The study is particularly relevant because it focuses on secondary education, a critical stage before university enrollment. As one of the first studies to analyze how school administration influences academic success in Amman, its findings could contribute to improving the effectiveness of school management practices. The insights gained may also apply to secondary schools across Jordan, potentially leading to broader educational improvements.

School administration refers to the set of coordinated efforts aimed at managing school functions, including planning, organizing, supervising, and evaluating activities to ensure that institutional goals are met. This process involves guiding and influencing individuals to optimize school operations and improve educational outcomes. He

et al. in 2024 defined school administration as a tool that enhances school inputs to achieve the desired outputs based on established goals.

Adam in 2007 described educational outputs as the services an academic institution provides to its beneficiaries. These outputs encompass not only the graduates themselves but also the knowledge, personal growth, social development, and broader economic and cultural contributions that result from education. Procedurally, the researcher defines educational outcomes as the knowledge, values, skills, and behaviors a student acquires by the end of a school year or academic stage.

Enhancing educational outcomes involves increasing the overall value of what schools produce annually, which includes both the quantity and quality of student achievements. Xie and Zhang in 2020 emphasized this point. According to Al Khamisi in 2007 and Bhutoria and Aljabri in 2022, a high-quality education system meets established standards and effectively delivers on its intended objectives. This requires a well-balanced approach that ensures efficiency across all educational components, including inputs, processes, and outputs, ultimately maximizing the benefits for students and society as a whole.

1.1. Purpose of study

The study is focused on the role of school administration in improving educational outcomes, with a temporal scope limited to the second semester of the 2020 academic year. Geographically, the study is confined to public secondary schools for boys in Amman, as these schools are more numerous and widespread within the city.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1. Participants

The study's original population included two distinct groups. The first group consisted of 266 principals and assistant principals, while the second group comprised 1812 teachers. According to statistics from the General Administration of Education in Amman for the 2020 to 2021 academic year, there were 55 government secondary schools in the Amman region.

Table 1

Shows the distribution of the total study population

No	variable	Frequency	Percentage 100%
1	School principals& Assistants	543	30%
2	Teachers	1269	70%
Total		1812	100

2.2. Data collection tools

The researcher developed a questionnaire after reviewing relevant educational literature, which included four main sections. The first section focused on roles related to students and consisted of 10 items. The second section addressed roles related to teachers, with another 10 items. The third section covered technical and administrative tasks, with 11 items. Finally, the fourth section examined roles related to parents, which included 7 items. As a result, the initial questionnaire had a total of 38 items. To measure responses, the researcher used a five-point Likert scale, with participants choosing from five options: very high, high, medium, low, and very low.

To ensure the validity of the study tool, the researcher assessed both the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. For face validity, the initial version of the questionnaire was presented to a group of experts in educational administration and educational planning at various Jordanian universities. The experts suggested several revisions, including the deletion of some items, the merging of others, rephrasing certain sentences, moving some content to different sections, and adding some new items. Following these suggestions, which were

agreed upon by at least 85% of the experts, the questionnaire was revised. The final version retained the same axes and scale but reduced the number of items to 34. The first axis now contained 9 items, the second axis 9 items, the third axis 10 items, and the fourth axis 6 items, achieving apparent validity for the questionnaire.

For content validity, the researcher conducted statistical analyses to verify the relevance of the items to the questionnaire's axes. A random sample of 20 participants from the study population was used for this purpose. To assess the reliability, the researcher employed Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The reliability coefficient for the first axis was 0.89, while the second axis had a coefficient of 0.91, indicating a high level of reliability. The third axis scored 0.88, and the fourth axis had a value of 0.86. The overall reliability of the tool was 0.87, which is considered high, confirming the reliability and validity of the questionnaire for application.

2.3. Study procedures

The study went through the following steps:

- 1- Preparing the theoretical framework, reviewing previous studies, developing the study questionnaire, and checking its suitability for the application.
- 2- Determining the study sample "principals, assistants, and teachers."
- 3- Obtaining letters to facilitate the task of collecting data.
- 4- Applying the questionnaire to the study sample.
- 5- The study data were processed according to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

2.4. Analysis

The researcher used the following statistical methods:

- 1- Frequencies and percentages to describe the distribution of the study sample and to determine the responses of the participants. To demonstrate the degree of these responses, the class length was determined by the formula:

Class length = range/number of classes. Since range = (greatest degree of approval - smallest degree of consent) = 5 - 1 = 4, then length of class = (range / number of classes = 4/5 = 0,8). Then, the sample responses were distributed quantitatively into five levels (very high, high, medium, low, and very low) according to their average incidence in the category.

- 2- Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Cronbach's alpha were used to determine the content validity factor of the study tool.

3. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the study and addresses its primary question, which seeks to highlight the role of school administration in enhancing educational outcomes. The criterion in Table (2) explains how the sample responses are interpreted based on the five-point scale.

Table 2
Sample responses according to the five-point scale

N	The range of averages	Degree
1	Less than 1.80 is very low	very low
2	1.80 to less than 2.6 is low	Low
3	2,6 to less than 3,40 average	Average
4	3,41 to less than 4,2 high	high
5	4,2 to 5 is very high	very high

3.1. Results related to the question: What is the role of school administration in improving educational outcomes?

To answer the question, the researcher used arithmetic averages and standard deviations. These are presented in descending order as shown in Tables (3,4, 5, 6, 7).

Table 3

The sample responses to the first axis: the roles of the school administration related to students

No	Item	M	SD	Degree
1.	Building good relationships with students.	3.80	1.1	high
2.	Providing additional programs and activities for students to develop their abilities and potential.	3.77	0.91	high
3.	Follow-up on attendance and absence in school.	3.76	1.05	high
4.	Monitor student achievement levels.	3.75	1.07	high
5.	Solve students' problems with appropriate educational methods	3.71	1.14	high
6.	Addressing the causes of academic delay among some students.	3.69	1.19	high
7.	Helping students who have family problems	3.61	1.13	high
8.	Developing the creative talents of students	3.59	1.17	high
9.	Material and moral encouragement for excellent students.	3.52	1.2	high
Total		3.69	1.10	high

Table 3 presents the average scores for the items in the first axis, reflecting the respondents' opinions on how effectively the school administration applies practices aimed at enhancing educational outcomes. The average scores for the items in this axis range from 3.80 to 3.52, with an overall average of 3.69, placing the axis in the high-performance category. This suggests that the school administration is fulfilling its responsibilities toward students and demonstrates a strong commitment to improving educational results.

Upon examining the findings for this axis, it becomes evident that Item 3, "Monitoring student attendance and absenteeism," achieved the highest ranking with an average score of 3.73, indicating a high level of implementation. This can likely be attributed to the school administration's greater focus on maintaining control over school attendance compared to other areas. Following this, Item 1, "Establishing positive relationships with students," received an average score of 3.80, underscoring the school administration's dedication to engaging with students, particularly through school meetings.

Additionally, Item 8, "Fostering the creative abilities of students," garnered an average score of 3.59, reflecting a high level of attention to nurturing students' creative talents. This result may be linked to the school administration's recognition of the value of developing students' creativity, which contributes to both student excellence and the overall prestige of the school. The institution's success is often gauged by the creativity and achievements of its students.

Table 4

The sample responses to the second axis: the roles of the school administration related to teachers

No	Item	M	SD	Degree
1.	Encouraging teachers to attend training courses to increase performance effectiveness.	3.84	.84	high
2.	Settling disputes that may arise between teachers fairly.	3.76	.99	high
3.	Helping teachers solve the problems they face.	3.74	.88	high
4.	Encouraging teachers to work in a team spirit.	3.73	.87	high
5.	Follow-up notebook preparation lessons for teachers at regular intervals.	3.71	.88	high
6.	Involving teachers in school decision-making.	3.69	.95	high
7.	Motivate teachers to improve their job and scientific performance.	3.61	1.00	high

8.	Establishing positive human relations with all teachers in a balanced degree	3.49	.94	high
9.	Evaluate teachers 'performance with objectivity, transparency, and fairness	3.30	.84	Average
The total mean of the axis		3.65	1.63	high

Table 4 displays the average scores for the items in the second axis, which reflect the participants' views on the school administration's effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities aimed at improving educational outcomes related to teachers. The average scores for this axis ranged from 3.30 to 3.84, indicating a generally high level of implementation. The overall average for this axis was 3.65, placing it in the high category.

Upon analyzing the responses, it was noted that Item 9, "Evaluate teachers' performance with objectivity, transparency, and fairness," received a moderate rating. This outcome could be attributed to the lack of clear and effective criteria for assessing teacher performance or to potential dissatisfaction among teachers regarding the evaluation methods used by the administration.

These results align with findings from Al-Hasanat (2003), which emphasized the significant role of school administrations in encouraging teachers to participate in professional development programs. This suggests that while the school administration plays an essential role in promoting teachers' professional growth, there may still be concerns regarding the fairness and transparency of the evaluation process.

Table 5

Shows the responses for the third axis: the roles of the school's technical and administrative management

No	Item	M	SD	Degree
1.	Familiarity with educational regulations and systems.	3.89	.77	high
2.	Providing the necessary facilities to implement the academic courses to the fullest extent.	3.87	.81	high
3.	The use of modern technologies in management.	3.86	.78	high
4.		3.85	.68	high
5.	Attention to the school building and school equipment.	3.72	.40	high
6.	Assist in planning the activities accompanying the courses.	3.69	.62	high
7.	Attention to methods of school work evaluation.	3.61	.76	high
8.	Assisting in employing modern educational technologies in implementing academic courses.	3.59	.64	high
9.	Supervising the organization of school records periodically.	3.57	.73	high
10.	Follow up the distribution of tasks and responsibilities to workers to facilitate appropriate decision-making.	3.55	.77	high
11.	Supervising the organization of school records periodically.	3.59	.81	high
The total mean of the axis		3.70	.69	high

Table 5 displays the average scores for the items in the third axis, which represent participants' views on the effectiveness of the school administration in executing technical and administrative tasks. The average scores for this axis ranged from 3.89 to 3.59, suggesting that the implementation of these practices varied from high to moderate levels. The overall score for this axis was 3.70, positioning it within the moderate category.

Among the items in this axis, Item 3, which states, "Ensuring the availability of books and educational materials before the start of the school year," ranked first with a high score of 3.86. This suggests that school administrations prioritize timely preparation for the academic year, possibly due to frequent visits by educational supervisors at the beginning of the year to assess the progress of the educational process. Additionally, Item 1, "Familiarity with educational regulations and laws," also received a high rating, indicating that school administrations demonstrate a strong commitment to adhering to official policies and procedures.

Conversely, lower-ranked items included “Assisting in planning activities that complement the academic curriculum,” which received a lower score. This may be attributed to school administrations relying heavily on teachers to design and implement these activities rather than actively participating in the planning process. Item 7, “Emphasizing methods for evaluating school performance,” was also rated lower, potentially due to inadequate training among school administrators in evaluation techniques.

These findings highlight certain weaknesses in school administration, particularly in areas related to school infrastructure and evaluation processes, which could negatively affect educational outcomes. The roles associated with parents are further examined in Table 6;

Table 6

The sample responses to the fourth axis: the roles of school administration related to parents

No	Item	M	SD	Degree
1.	Ensure that parents are represented on the school council.	3.90	0.78	high
2.	Discussing with parents about how to raise the standards of their children.	3.87	0.68	high
3.	Parents receive appropriately.	3.86	0.4	high
4.	Building distinguished relationships with parents.	3.85	0.62	high
5.	Inviting parents to attend various school events.modern educational technologies in implementing academic courses.	3.81	0.75	high
The total mean of the axis		3.85	0.65	

Table 6 presents the average scores for the items in the fourth axis, which reflect participants' opinions on how effectively the school administration implements practices related to parental involvement. The scores for this axis ranged from 3.90 to 3.81, showing that these practices were applied at levels ranging from high to moderate. The overall score for this axis was 2.96, placing it in the high category. Within this axis, Item 4, “Parents are received appropriately,” received the highest score. Likewise, Item 1, “Ensuring constant communication with students' parents,” also earned a strong rating. These results suggest that the school administration is actively working to involve parents by organizing meetings and maintaining regular communication to support and enhance the educational process.

On the other hand, lower-ranked items included Item 2, “Parents’ representation within the school council,” which, despite receiving a relatively high score of 3.85, indicates weak community participation between schools and families. This may be due to the school administration’s lack of encouragement for parents to visit the school regularly or the reluctance of many parents to engage in school-related matters. Additionally, Item 6, “Inviting parents to attend various school events,” was among the lowest-rated. This result suggests that some parents do not respond to invitations for meetings or school visits, leading the administration to be less proactive in encouraging their attendance.

Table 7

The total position at the level of all axes for all sample members

Axes	The roles	M
First	school's technical and administrative management	3.85
Second:	School administration towards parents.	3.70
Third	school administration towards students	3.69
Fourth	school administration towards teachers	3.65
The total average of the axes		3.73

Table 7 reveals that the average score reflecting participants' perceptions of the school administration's role in enhancing educational outcomes was 3.73, indicating a high level of effectiveness. Among the different aspects evaluated, parental participation ranked second, followed by the school administration's role concerning students in third place and its role about teachers in fourth place.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of school administration in enhancing educational outcomes, particularly through their involvement in technical and administrative tasks. The results indicate that while school management is highly engaged in ensuring the availability of educational resources, compliance with regulations, and maintaining structured administrative processes, there is a noticeable gap in their engagement with teachers and parents. Although parental participation was ranked second in terms of importance, issues such as weak community involvement and limited encouragement for parents to actively engage in school affairs suggest that more efforts are needed to bridge this gap. Similarly, the school administration's role in teacher evaluation was found to be moderate, potentially due to a lack of effective assessment frameworks or dissatisfaction with existing evaluation methods. These findings suggest that while administrative efficiency is prioritized, more attention should be directed toward fostering stronger teacher support and parental engagement to achieve a holistic improvement in educational outcomes.

Moreover, the results align with previous studies, such as those by Al-Hasanat (2003) and Al-Manama (2005), which emphasized the strong role of school administration in administrative affairs. However, the relatively lower ratings for teacher-related responsibilities and parental involvement suggest that school leaders need to adopt a more balanced approach. Encouraging professional development opportunities for teachers, implementing fair and transparent evaluation systems, and fostering more interactive relationships with parents could contribute to a more effective educational environment. Additionally, addressing challenges such as inadequate planning for extracurricular activities and limited parent-school communication may enhance the overall quality of education. A comprehensive strategy that integrates strong administrative practices with improved teacher support and parental engagement will be essential for maximizing the impact of school leadership on student learning outcomes.

5. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to explore the role of male school principals in enhancing educational outcomes. Secondary schools hold a crucial position in the educational system as they are responsible for preparing students for higher education, ensuring that graduates possess the necessary qualifications for university studies. To achieve this, the study utilized survey methods to gather the perspectives of teachers, school principals, and their assistants regarding the effectiveness of school administration in improving educational outcomes. The findings revealed that school principals were perceived to contribute to educational improvements at an average level across all aspects. However, there was a discrepancy in opinions, as principals rated their performance at a high level, whereas teachers viewed it as moderate. Among the various responsibilities of school administrations, technical and administrative tasks were the most effectively implemented, while the role of school management in engaging parents was identified as the least prioritized.

Based on these results, the study provided several recommendations to support decision-makers in the Ministry of Education and school administrations. It emphasized the need for regulations that encourage school leaders to focus on educational outcomes beyond just student success rates. Additionally, the study suggested appointing specialized administrative staff to strengthen school-parent relationships through continuous training and workshops. Decentralizing administrative procedures and granting more autonomy to secondary school administrations was also recommended to enhance efficiency. Moreover, showcasing successful schools based on student performance in aptitude and achievement tests was proposed as a strategy to highlight best practices. The study further advocated for targeted training programs for principals to reinforce their role in improving

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educational outcomes. Lastly, organizing workshops for exemplary school principals across different educational regions, particularly in Saudi Arabia, and sharing their recommendations with all schools was suggested as a means to foster nationwide improvements in school administration.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval: The study adheres to the ethical guidelines for conducting research.

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