

Level of Practicing Decision Making Skills by Female School Principals in the Directorates of Education in Zarqa Governorate

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Abstract

This study aimed at identifying the level of decision-making skills of the female school principals of the directorates of education in Zarqa Governorate. It also aimed at identifying the obstacles facing the female school principals in the decision making process of the directorates of education in Zarqa Governorate. Furthermore, the study discussed the methods for developing the practical skill level of decision making by female school principals at the directorates of education, Zarqa Governorate. The study sample consisted of 165 female principals, employed the descriptive method, and was applied during the academic year 2015/2016. The most important results of the study were as follows:

There was agreement among the study sample on the level in practicing decision-making skills as well as agreement on the obstacles that face the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate in practicing decision-making skills.

There are statistically significant differences related to the academic degree in practicing the decision making skills, statistically significant differences in the obstacles facing the principals in practicing the decision making skills, and statistically significant differences in the ways to develop the decision making skills of the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.

There are no statistically significant differences according to the years of experience, training, and number of training courses on the level of practice of the decision-making skills. The same also is true for the obstacles facing the decision-making skills, and the methods of developing skills in the practice of decision-making.

The study further showed agreement among the study sample on ways of developing the decision-making skills of the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate, as viewed by the female principals themselves. The study concluded with some recommendations in the light of these results.

Key words: Decision making; Female school principals; Directorates of education; Zarqa governorate

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INTRODUCTION

The success of a school achieves largely depends on the ability of its leadership in decision making, simply because managerial decisions are the core of the leaders' job and initiator of all the activities and actions occurring at the school. As the school is part of educational management, the way it is managed should be clear, its methods unambiguous, and skills mastered. One of the most important skills that the principals should master is that of decision-making.

Administrative effectiveness is not an innate ability, but one that the leader can acquire and develop, with one of the most important aspects of being effectiveness in decision-making (Al-Ibrahim, 2010). Effective practice of the decision making process is apparent on one hand through being effective in the performance and objectives of the organization he/she leads, because it demands joint efforts of the leader and his/her subordinates, and on the other hand because it expresses the type of organizational structure as well as human relationships (Al-Bakri, 2008). As stated by Shamout (2006) leaders at different administrative levels should have a good command of

decision making skills since it is not an individual talent, but rather a number of rules, procedures and steps which if learnt, would improve his/her decision making abilities and develop managerial skills.

The decision making issue is an important topic in the management and administration field and one of the most important and necessary processes to change and develop current practices (Al-Sayyid, 2008). It is the core and essence of the managerial process and as such, educationalists define management as the decision making process. Abu Sabt (2005) stated that in order to achieve reformation in education it should be linked with every management reformation attempt concerning the field. In the case of exemplary management, its landmarks are clear and decided upon through employing several methods in their Levant field of knowledge (Suleiman, 2000). Therefore the management, when it plans, organizes, directs or controls, actually makes planning, organizational, directive or control decisions (Abu Baker, 2001).

The decision making process encompasses a complete overview including a multi-step approach to a particular problem and its solution (Al-Blouchi, 2002). It is not one of the decision formulating stages, as some may believe, but a structured process that includes all the stages through which the decision passes, starting with defining the problem and ending with dealing with and solving it in one way or another (Al-Tartouri, 2004). Qasem, (2011) agrees, defining decision making as a broad process which includes more than one step or method, as well as ideally involving the widest possible range of management personnel and managerial units concerned, throughout most of the decision-making stages. According to Al-Kafaween (2005), the decision making process is the core of the administrative process, and the essence of managerial duties. In addition, it is an effective tool with which to achieve the objectives of the organization, both internally and externally. It is viewed as a basic function practiced by the administration anywhere, any time.

The decision making process in any organization is one of the most important administrative functions, in terms of defining the objectives of the organization, regulating its rules, laws, methods and procedures, directing and performing the work and defining its standards to evaluate and judge quality. The administrative section is required to take the relevant decisions (Zain El-Din, 2010); this being so, measuring the success achieved by any school depends on the ability and efficiency of the manager in making appropriate decisions (Kana'an, 2011).

Therefore, the decision making skill is fundamental for every school principal (Garthe, 2004), while Al-Sufyani, (2012) states that a school's effectiveness depends on the principal's ability having identified the problem, to define alternatives, study their effectiveness and take the decision for its best solution. In addition, the success of the school management is associated with many other issues which

must be taken into consideration, such as the principal's knowledge and awareness of modern administrative concepts, and his/her ability to take administrative decisions appropriate for the particular school and circumstances. Suleiman (2000) suggested an additional facet, that of the principal's awareness of the associated concept that guarantees the effectiveness of decisions and follow-up of their implementation

Isaacs (2003) explains that the success of the administration is embedded in granting it the power of autonomy to take decisions, which enable it to perform its duties with higher efficiency and effectiveness in improving the performance of the institution. At this point, the management could be transformed from a traditional one to that following the sharing, modeling and simulation system of problem solving, in the making of institutional decisions.

Making administrative decisions is the corner stone of the administrative and educational process (Al-Masri, 2008), and the main axis around which the administrative and educational process is centered (Massad, 2005). Therefore, the successful manager will be more able to face difficult situations and make the right decisions once subordinates share in decision making, as this has positive reflections on the school's success and achievement of its objectives (Morrión, 2005). In general, this depends on the manager's skill, broad perspective, and his/her academic and professional experience (Mohanna, 2006).

The thinking process, problem solving, future outlook, and decision making are basic functions of both management and administrative personnel (Nazzal, 2009). Therefore, one official cannot do it alone regardless of his/her abilities (Al-Naeemi, 2013). It is therefore necessary to enlist the expertise and experience of a group of people of various specializations and abilities to discuss the situation and through the contribution of their various talents, offer varied opinions and resolutions of a problem as well as alternatives directed toward facing future challenges (Al-Noshan, 2004). The "group mind" concept is further elaborated by Abdeen (2001) who defines it as employing the mind in concert with other minds systematically, practically and objectively, to discover various solutions for problems resulting from natural or societal incidents or situations, and suggest viewpoint alternatives for facing future challenges.

Decision making through consultation is deemed a joint cooperative process that contributes to the advancement of the school (Al-Ashhab, 2002). And, since the current age is an information and communication age, it thus requires engineering or constructing of these relationships, as well as the processes (Jubran, 2013). This imposes a major challenge represented in the development of educational leadership within a modern intellectual framework, which takes account of the disposition of the leadership to learn and development, and restructures it in a manner conducive to contemporary innovations and

technologies. This is based on the concept of leadership as being conceived, planned and formulated, enabling the administrative staff to manage schools efficiently and effectively (Ahmad, 2002).

A host of researchers have conducted numerous studies concerning this concept of decision making, while Gholoum (2009) concluded that the obstacles to decision making which face the principals of elementary schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain, generally had a medium effect on their decision making. The obstacles having least influence were those concerning the school principal, followed by those concerning the students, and lastly those concerning the cooperation climate in the school whereas no statistically significant differences were found due to gender, type of school, or years of experience variables. On the other hand, the Nazzal study (2009) of public high school principals showed the following results: The level of practice of educational decisions, as viewed by the public secondary school principals themselves, was very high, as was their level of ability in problem solving. There was a positive statistically significant relationship between the level of performance of the public secondary schools and the level of ability in problem solving by the principals of the public secondary schools in the Northern governorates of the West Bank. There were also statistically significant differences in the performance level of educational decision making in the teaching duties domain, attributed to the variables of gender, academic degree, experience, school location, and number of courses in management.

Haines and Leonar's study (2007) indicated that the processes of ethical decision making vary according to different situations and emphasized that managers should focus not only on one factor, but should consider all relevant aspects and circumstances when engaged in ethical decision making. De Vore and Martin (2008) concluded that there is a strong relationship between personal and professional ethics, so that compassion and consideration, spiritual values and respect of others are among the characteristics displayed during the decision making process. The results further showed that the female decision makers were more cooperative and expressive while the male decision makers were more autocratic.

The Chi Keung's study (2008) indicated that teachers preferred to be included in the decision making process concerning the educational model, school curricula, and management areas, concluding that teacher participation in decision making resulted in a positive and influential outcome in increasing job satisfaction and acceptance of the workload. Charles Fetton (2008) concluded that the sample of public elementary school principals in this study exhibited a low level of decision making ethics in their methodology of decision making which was not influenced by the variables of age, gender, or academic level. Fitch (2009) concluded that there are no statistically

significant differences between the principals' years of experience and ethical decision making. The study further indicated that ethical decision making is the obligation of every school principal, since every decision he/she takes results in ethical consequences.

Kaucher (2010) concluded that there is a strong relationship between effective leadership and the ethical decision making process, characterizing the effective leader as one who exhibits credibility, honesty, efficiency, motivation, and the ability to listen attentively. In this context, credibility means being truthful, honesty means following through on promises and obligations, and trust means the effectiveness of the educational leader. Vincent (2010) indicated that many school principals employed various criteria to evaluate candidate teachers, most of which were related to teaching efficiency. These criteria however were unofficial and followed no comprehensive written guidelines produced as a result of cooperative discussion or agreement. There is therefore a lack of procedural instructions and any systematic mechanism for the evaluation process. Although the selection process was found to be decentralized to a wide extent in the studied schools, the study illustrated the limitations imposed on the school principal in choosing the teacher, since his/her role was restricted to the following: observation, defining the eligibility of the teacher for the job, concluding his/her recommendations.

Shanhee (2011) concluded four types of decisions related to the curricula (i.e. the content that will be taught, the teaching strategy, the time allocated for teaching the units, and the sequence of the units). Factors related to their perception of controlling these decisions include their familiarity with the content of the curriculum, their opinion on the content, and their knowledge and cooperation with their peer teachers. Al-Darwish (2012) concluded that the level of ethical decision making of intermediate school principals in the State of Kuwait was viewed as medium by the principals themselves. Furthermore, the level of organizational loyalty of the intermediate school teachers in the State of Kuwait was also medium, as viewed by the teachers themselves. The study also found a positive statistically significant relationship between the level of ethical decision making by the principals of intermediate schools in the State of Kuwait and the level of the organizational loyalty of the teachers.

Al-Sufiani (2012) concluded that the degree of the teachers' participation in the school decision making (with its five domains) was low in general. He also found that the degree of the teachers' participation in the school decision making which concerned students' affairs was medium in general, except for one statement, which showed a low level of participation. This statement was concerned with measuring approval of the student's program for scientific visits. The study found statistically significant differences between the means of the study

sample members' estimations of the participation degree in the school decision making concerning the students' affairs domain, attributed to the years of experience variable.

Al-Rashidi (2013) found that the personal values held by the school principals are ranked according to the importance of each value. Concerning these values, the school principals rated theoretical values first, followed by social values, then religious values, political values, aesthetic values, and finally economic values. He also found a statistically significant difference between the aesthetic and economic values, in favor of the females according to the gender variable. He did not find statistically significant differences between the values ascribed to the residence, specialization, marital status or years of experience variables. Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences in the school principals' decision making attributed to gender, specialization, or years of experience variables. There were statistically significant differences in the ability of the school principals' decision making concerning the residence and marital status variables. The study also reported a direct correlation between decision making and personal values, illustrating that the higher the values, the higher the decision making ability.

Al-Omari (2014) found high overall level of responses by the principals and assistant principals in evaluating obstacles to the manner of application of scientific methods to decision making. The study concluded that there were no statistically significant differences between the means of the study population members' responses regarding the evaluation degree of the obstacles in applying the scientific methods in overall administrative decision making, as viewed by the principals and assistant principals, according to academic degree, training course, and educational stage variables. Finally, the study reported statistically significant differences in the organizational obstacles, both administrative and technical, and the overall obstacles, attributed to the years of experience variable in favor of ten and more years of experience, as compared with those having less than five years of experience.

1. STUDY PROBLEM

The decision making process is the core and axis of school administration, as it is very strongly and closely related to the elements and principles of managerial work. In this concern, the efficacy of decision making is reflected on the administrative practices, and the application of assignments and duties. In order to approach effective decisions, the stakeholders must take part in such decision making. In the Ministry of Education, in order to take effective decisions, it is inevitable that the organizational hindrances that stand as a barrier to participation in decision making should be defined.

There are increasing responsibilities placed on the female school principal, including assignments, duties, activities and tasks concerning the school, such as management of the female teachers and students alike. There are also duties related to the student and educational programs, technical issues, such as educational supervision, teacher development and follow-up, in addition to financial (budget) and accounting responsibilities and numerous other duties and obligations, all of which contribute to creating unfavorable conditions which impede the principal's ability to make the necessary decisions.

The study objectives deserve research at this present time when there is a clear need in the educational field in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for educational leaders with high levels of abilities, to stimulate decision making in school administration. This is necessary in order to approach the desired target, of enabling schools to achieve the educational objectives for which they were basically founded. Here, the study problem becomes well defined: to identify the ability level in the practice of decision making skills by the female school principals of the Directorate of Education in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan).

2. STUDY QUESTIONS

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the level of the female school principals of the Directorate of Education in Zarqa Governorate in the practice of decision making skills?
- What are the obstacles that impede the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate, in the practice of decision making skills?
- Are there statistically significant differences in the level of the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate in the practice of decision making skills, attributed to the following variables: academic degree, years of experience, training courses, and number of training courses?
- What are the methods to develop the decision making practices by the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate, as viewed by the female school principals?

3. STUDY IMPORTANCE

The decision making process is the heart of the administrative activity of the female school principals, and the success of the leadership largely depends on making appropriate decisions. As such, care for the improvement of the decision making process becomes the focus of interest and attention of educational leadership development. We hope that the results of the current study will contribute to expanding the visions of the female

school principals and their role in making appropriate decisions in their work arena. The current study is an expansion of research and studies that focused on the decision making issue among female school principals, and also a diagnosis of the ability level of the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate in the practice of decision making skills. We hope that this study will identify the trends of the female school principals toward certain kinds of decision making. The importance of the current study stems from being a groundbreaking study, as far as the researcher knows, in the domain of practicing decision making skills by the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate. Its practical importance lies in the decision making for education departments and their role in creating change and development of the work, especially in light of scientific and technological advancement. Its practical importance further lies in dealing with the hindrances that may impede the decision making process by the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate.

4. METHOD OF THE STUDY

The study employed the descriptive, survey method, which is based on studying the actuality and occurrences as in reality, contributes to describe them very accurately, and expresses them either qualitatively or quantitatively.

4.1 Study Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all the female school principals of all the Directorates of Education in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan) in the academic year 2015/2016 ($n=165$), in the ratio of 83 female principals of public schools and 82 female principals of private schools. Furthermore, the study sample also consisted of the entire study population: 165 female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.

4.2 Study Instrument

Based on the nature of the data and the method applied for the study, the researcher found the questionnaire to be the best instrument to achieve the objectives of this study. The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher following revision of the previous literature and research related to the study subject, such as Al-Sufiani (2012), Al-Omari (2014), Al-Kafaween (2005), Muhanna (2006), and Al-Naeemi (2013). The questionnaire, in its final form, consisted of two parts:

The first part dealt in the primary data concerning the study sample members, such as academic degree, years of experience, and training courses in the decision making area.

The second part consisted of 44 items, distributed over three dimensions:

- First dimension (19 items): Dealt with the level of ability of decision making skills by the female school principals of Zarqa Governorate.
- Second dimension (8 items): Explored the obstacles to the practice of decision making skills facing the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.
- Third dimension (17 items): Examined the methods of developing the practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.

4.3 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The study instrument was a questionnaire developed by the researcher and submitted to a number of arbitrators for their valued opinions and suggestions. Following deep consideration their amendments and suggestions were taken into account and those required by the majority of the arbitrators, such as amending some clauses, deleting others, etc., were duly implemented. The questionnaire in its final form was then returned to the arbitrators and its validity confirmed, and was subsequently applied in the field by the researcher. Thereafter, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated to assure the internal validity of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient between the degree of every statement of the questionnaire and the overall degree in its specific dimension was calculated, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Correlation Coefficient of Each Statement of the Dimension to the Overall Degree of the Specific Dimension

No.	Correlation coefficient		
	First dimension	Second dimension	Third dimension
1	0.635**	0.567**	0.743**
2	0.731**	0.676**	0.720**
3	0.723**	0.736**	0.796**
4	0.730**	0.763**	0.776**
5	0.750**	0.587**	0.768**
6	0.759**	0.361**	0.753**
7	0.727**	0.362**	0.815**
8	0.727**	0.362**	0.815**
9	0.697**	0.755**	0.710**
10	0.772**	0.695**	0.706**
11	0.814**	0.583**	0.746**
12	0.793**	0.726**	0.743**
13	0.700**		0.667**
14	0.664**		0.726**
15	0.228**		0.665**
16	0.301**		0.708**
17	0.726**		0.698**
18	0.584**		
19	0.672**		

Note. ** has passed the significant level at 0.01.

Table 1 illustrates all the correlation coefficients to be statistically significant level at 0.01, indicative of the internal consistency of the dimension items and the overall degree of the dimension.

5. STUDY RELIABILITY

The researcher measured the study reliability by applying the Cronbach Alfa Reliability Coefficient, i.e. the level of practicing decision making skills, where the reliability coefficient was 0.92. The other reliability coefficients were as follows: obstacles to practicing decision making skills (0.85); methods of developing skills of decision making practices (0.94); and the overall reliability coefficient of the instrument (0.95).

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses to the Level of Practice of Decision Making Skills by the Female School Principals of Zarqa Governorate (Jordan)

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Degree
1	Approval of the financial plan to identify the school requirements.	3.93	1.16	High
2	Adoption of the plan for receiving the female students in the beginning of the school year.	4.30	1.07	High
3	Approval of the number of students in each class	4.01	1.20	High
4	Adoption of the plan to raise the academic level in the school.	3.99	1.14	High
5	Approval of the plans of the female teachers' needs for the training programs.	3.92	1.19	High
6	Adoption of bases to assure the appropriate counseling and guidance of the female students.	3.93	1.22	High
7	Making everyday decisions required for running the school.	4.07	1.11	High
8	Making the planning decisions of the school activities programs.	3.02	1.11	High
9	Adoption of the decision to evaluate the female teachers' performance.	4.06	1.16	High
10	Facilitating the use of the equipment and appliances required for work.	4.05	1.13	High
11	Work to create coherence between the female teachers at school.	4.05	1.18	High
12	Takes decisions after collecting the needed information about the problem subject matter of the study discussion.	4.01	1.18	High
13	Participation of all the colleagues in decision making.	3.76	1.27	High
14	Consulting her subordinates before making the decision.	3.81	1.12	High
15	Insistence on her opinion when making the decision even if it was objected to by all others.	2.67	1.40	Medium
16	Limitation of the administrators' powers in decision making.	3.09	1.35	High
17	Making into consideration individual abilities in the decision making.	3.99	1.17	High
18	Neutrality when reviewing the opinions about a certain issue.	3.72	1.26	High
19	Making the decisions that receive acceptance and consent of all.	3.78	1.24	High
Overall mean		3.84	0.79	

Table 2 shows that level of practice of decision making skills by the female principals of the schools in Zarqa Governorate includes 19 items, with means ranged between 2.67 and 4.30.

The overall mean was 3.84, indicative of approval among the study sample members on the level of skills practiced in decision making by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate. In other words, the female school principals have the ability to make the decisions, and accept responsibility of the decisions they take. The current study results were high and were in agreement with most of the previous studies on the level of practice of the school principals' decision making,

6. RESULTS

Question one: What is the level of the female school principals of the Directorate of Education in Zarqa Governorate in the practice of decision making skills?

To identify the level of practice of decision making skills by the female principals in Zarqa Governorate, the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations of the responses of the study sample were calculated.

such as the studies by Al-Masri (2008), Nazzal (2009), Al-Darwish (2014), Al-Rawshdeh (2013), Kaucher (2010), and Fitch (2009).

Question Two: What are the obstacles that impede the female school principals of the directorate of education, Zarqa Governorate, in the practice of decision making skills?

To identify the hindrances to the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate to practice decision making skills, the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations of the study sample responses were calculated as shown in the following table.

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses on the Obstacles Facing the Female School Principals in Zarqa Governorate in Practicing Decision Making Skills

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Degree
1	More use of the traditional decision making methods than the scientific ones.	3.49	1.30	Medium
2	Limited experience of the female school principal in the types of decision making.	3.46	1.32	Medium
3	Poor ability of the female school principal in innovation and creativity in decision making.	3.31	1.29	Medium

To be continued

Continued

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Degree
4	Principal is hasty in decision making.	3.15	1.39	Medium
5	Poor understanding by the female principal of certain instructions and regulations is negatively reflected on the decision making process.	3.80	1.26	High
6	Over heavy administrative burdens on the female principals hinder appropriate decision making.	3.66	1.27	Medium
7	Limited powers vested in the female school principal for decision making.	3.64	1.24	Medium
8	The female school principal gives priority to her personal opinion when making her decision.	2.88	1.47	Medium
9	Fear of losing power because of the results of making the decision.	3.01	1.41	Medium
10	Lack of data required for decision making.	3.38	1.25	Medium
11	Scarcity of training courses on decision making.	3.64	1.26	Medium
12	The female school principal rarely uses rapid communication channels in the decision making.	3.44	1.25	Medium
Overall mean		3.41	0.82	Medium

Table 3 shows that the hindrances facing the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate in practicing decision making skills, included 12 items, with means ranging between 2.88 and 3.80. The above results indicate a variation of the responses of the study sample members regarding the obstacles facing the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate to the practice of decision making skills. The overall mean was 3.41, indicative of agreement among the study sample members on the obstacles facing the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate to the practice of decision making skills. The following were the most apparent among the more important obstacles: Poor understanding by the female principal of certain instructions and regulations is negatively reflected on the decision making process; over heavy administrative burdens on the female principals hinder making appropriate decisions; limited powers vested in the female school principals for decision making, and scarcity of training courses on decision making. This is attributed to agreement in the responses of the study sample members that the female principals in Zarqa Governorate are honorable and uphold a strong work ethic

and thus do not give preference to their personal interest at work, considering their most important obligation to be achieving success in their duties. This is quite obvious through the responses of the female teachers which give no indications that the female principals give priority and preference to their personal interests in decision making.

The results of this study are in agreement with other studies, in terms of the existence of obstacles and challenges that inhibit the school principal in making decisions, such as the studies conducted by Al-Ibrahim & Al-Qudah (2006), Amlisri (2008), Ghooloom (2009) and Al-Omari (2014).

Question Three: Are there statistically significant differences in the level of the female school principals of the directorate of Education, Zarqa governorate in the practice of decision making skills, attributed to the following variables: academic degree, years of experience, training courses, and number of training courses

(a) Academic degree variable

The researcher employed the one-way ANOVA to identify the statistical differences of the dimensions in terms of the academic qualification.

Table 4:
ANOVA Test to Identify the Statistical Differences Among Responses of the Study Sample According to Academic Qualification

Dimension	Variance source	Sum of the squares	Freedom degree	Square mean	F value	Sig. level
First dimension	Inter-group	14.381	3	4.794	8.701	*0.000
	Intra-group	88.701	161	0.551		
Second dimension	Inter-group	6.678	3	2.226	3.459	*0.018
	Intra-group	103.607	161	0.644		
Third dimension	Inter-group	22.029	3	7.343	13.113	*0.000
	Intra-group	90.159	161	0.560		

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

Table 4 shows the following:

- There are statistically significant differences among the responses of the study sample members on the level of practice of the decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan). *F* value amounted 8.701 at a freed degree of 164 and significance level at 0.00, which is less than 0.05. The source of these differences was identified by the Scheffe Test.

- There are statistically significant differences among the holders of Diploma academic qualifications and those holding MA degree, in favor of the former.
- There are statistically significant differences among the holders of Diploma academic qualifications and those holding Ph.D. degree, in favor of the former.
- There are statistically significant differences among the holders of BA academic degrees and those holding Ph.D. degrees, in favor of the former. Table 5 illustrates this.

Table 5
Scheffe Test Showing the Source of Differences

	Diploma 4.30	Academic degree		
		BA 3.94	MA 3.59	Ph.D. 2.75
	Diploma 4.30			
Academic level:	BA 3.94	0.477		
Diploma or degree	MA 3.59	*0.042	0.097	
	Ph.D. 2.75	*0.000	*0.001	0.064

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

There are statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the obstacles facing the practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan), where the F coefficient was 3.459 at a freedom degree of 164 and significance level of 0.018, which is less than 0.05. In order to identify the source of these differences, the Scheffe Test was employed, with results showing statistically significant differences between the principals holding Diplomas and those holding Ph.D. degrees in favor of the former. There are also statistically significant differences between the principals holding BA degrees and those holding Ph.D. degrees in favor of the former. Table 6 illustrates this.

Table 6
Scheffe Test Showing the Source of Differences

	Diploma 3.70	Academic qualification level		
		BA 3.44	MA 3.34	Ph.D. 2.53
	Diploma 3.70			
Academic level:	BA 3.44	0.784		
Diploma or degree	MA 3.34	*0.622	0.930	
	Ph.D. 2.53	*0.028	*0.040	0.115

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

The results show statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the issue

Table 8
The One-Way ANOVA to Identify the Differences Among the Responses of the Study Sample Members According to the Years of Experience Variable

Dimension	Variance source	Sum of the squares	Freedom degred	Square mean	F value	Sig. level
First dimension: Level of practice of decision making skills	Inter-groups	1.295	3	0.432	0.683	0.564
	Intra-groups	101.876	161	0.632		
Second dimension: Obstacles to practicing decision making skills	Inter-group	2.193	3	0.731	1.089	0.355
	Intra-group	108.092	161	0.671		
Third dimension: Developing decision making practice skills	Inter-group	5.174	3	1.725	2.595	0.054
	Intra-group	107.014	161	0.665		

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

Table 8 shows the following results: There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members regarding the level of practice of decision making skills by the female school principals,

of the ways to develop skill practices in decision making by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate. The F coefficient was 13.113 at 164 free degrees and significance level at 0.00, which is less than 0.05. The Scheffe Test was used to detect the origin of these differences, and results showed statistically significant differences between the two academic degrees (Diploma and Ph.D.) in favor of the Diploma certificate holders. In addition, there were statistically significant differences between the two academic degrees (BA and MA) in favor of the BA degree holders. Finally, there were statistically significant differences between the two academic degrees (BA and Ph.D.) in favor of the BA degree holders. Table 7 illustrates this.

Table 7
Scheffe Test Showing the Source of Differences

	Diploma 4.29	Academic qualification level		
		BA 4.30	MA 3.60	Ph.D. 3.03
	Diploma 4.29			
Academic level:	BA 4.30	1		
Diploma or degree	MA 3.60	0.056	*0.00	
	Ph.D. 3.03	*0.007	*0.00	0.334

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

The results of this study, in terms of the existence of the statistically significant differences according to the academic degree variable, are in line with the study of Al-Ibrahim and Al-Qudah (2006), and the study of Al-Sayyid (2008), in which results of their studies indicated the presence of statistically significant differences in favor of the academic degree variable.

(b) Second variable: Years of experience

In order to identify whether there were statistically significant differences between the means, the one-way ANOVA was employed to identify the statistically significant differences of the domains according to the years of experience variable.

Zarqa Governorate (Jordan). There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members about the obstacles to practicing decision making skills by the female school principals, in Zarqa

Governorate. Also, no statistically significant differences were found in the responses of the study sample members about the methods of developing the practice of decision making skills by the female school principals, in Zarqa Governorate. The results of this study are therefore in agreement with the studies of Nazzal (2009), Al-Sufiani (2012), and Al-Omari (2014), which indicated the existence of statistically significant differences according to the years of experience variable. However, the results

of present study differ from the results of the studies by Al-Sayyid (2008), Ghooloom (2009), and Al-Rashidi (2013), which did not indicate the presence of differences according to the years of experience.

(c) Training course

In order to determine whether statistically significant differences exist among the means, the T-Test was employed, according to the training courses variable, in the domain of decision making as per the training courses variable.

Table 9
T-Test to Identify the Difference Among the Responses of the Study Sample Members According to the Training Courses Variable in the Domain of Decision Making

Dimension	Mean	SD	Freedom degree	T value	Significance
First dimension: Level of practice of decision making skills	3.90	0.752	163	1.154	1.154
	3.76	0.837			
Second dimension: Obstacles to practicing decision making skills	3.34	0.843	163	1.017	0.311
	3.47	0.791			
Third dimension: Developing decision making practice skills	4.16	0.800	163	1.155	0.250
	4.01	0.856			

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

Table 9 shows the following: There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the level of practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan). There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members regarding the obstacles to practicing decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate. Also, there were no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the ways to

develop the practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.

Based on revision of the previous studies, the training courses variable was not included, except for that of Al-Omari (2014), which maintained that scarcity of training courses is an obstacle to the decision making process.

(d) Number of training courses

To determine statistically significant differences among the means, the One-Way ANOVA Test was employed, according to the number of training courses.

Table 10
One-Way ANOVA Test to Identify Statistically Significant Differences Among the Responses of the Study Sample Members, According to the Number of Training Courses

Dimension	Variance source	Sum of the squares	Freedom degree	Square mean	F value	Sig. level
First dimension: Level of practice of decision making skills	Inter-group	1.858	2	0.929	1.487	0.229
	Intra-group	101.223	162	0.625		
Second dimension: Obstacles to practicing decision making skills	Inter-group	2.319	2	1.159	1.740	0.179
	Intra-group	107.966	162	0.666		
Third dimension: Developing decision making practice skills	Inter-group	2.688	2	1.344	1.988	0.140
	Intra-group	109.500	162	0.676		

Note. * has passed the significant level at 0.05.

Table 10 shows the following: There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the level of practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan). There are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the obstacles of practicing decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate. Also, there are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample members on the ways to develop the

practice of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate.

The previous studies did not explore the number of the training courses, except for that of Al-Omari (2014), which maintained that the scarcity of training courses is an obstacle in the decision making process.

Question four: What are the ways to develop the decision making practices by the female school principals of the Directorate of Education, Zarqa Governorate, as viewed by the female school principals?

To identify the ways of developing practices of decision making by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan), the frequencies,

percentages, means (M's) and standard deviations (SD's) of the study sample members were calculated, as follows:

Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations of the Responses of the Study Sample Members About the Ways to Develop the Practice of Decision Making Skills by the Female Principals of Zarqa Governorate

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Agreement level
1	The female principal should work for the interest of the school when making a certain decision.	4.18	1.05	4
2	Making some decisions necessary to attract the school staff.	4.04	1.04	High
3	Work as an actual leader of the female teachers and the workers with her when she takes the decision.	4.15	1.03	High
4	Listening to the views of the workers with her at school before making any decision.	3.93	1.23	High
5	Sharing with others their views about what issues interest them before making a decision on them.	4.00	1.24	High
6	Work to create a consultancy committee from the female teachers to discuss issues concerning the school before making any decision.	4.04	1.22	High
7	Receiving proposals about the progress of the teaching process at school before making any decision thereto.	4.15	1.11	High
8	Developing the female principal's skills in applying decision making methods.	4.06	1.18	High
9	Training on methods to activate the rules, regulations and circulations.	4.10	1.06	High
10	Work to grant powers to the female school principal in decision making.	3.98	1.23	high
11	Sending the female school principal to take different courses on the methods of making school decisions.	4.24	1.03	high
12	Allowing the principal to participate in the courses concerning the design of mechanism to take the appropriate decision.	4.12	1.08	High
13	Allowing the principal to participate in the courses concerning the use of modern techniques in decision making.	4.03	1.20	High
14	Encouraging the school principal to take a group decision.	4.05	1.10	High
15	Making the principal acquire skills of dialogue management before making a decision.	4.24	1.08	High
16	The school principal should take into consideration the abilities of the workers and female teachers when making decisions that concern them.	4.05	1.15	High
17	Training the female school principal on mechanisms to authorize workers' powers on decision making.	4.23	0.998	
Overall mean		4.09	0.82	High

Table 11 shows that the methods to develop practices of decision making skills by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan) included 17 items, with M's, ranged between 3.93 and 4.24. These means fall between the third and fourth categories of the five-point gradient scale. The above result indicates a variance among the responses of the study sample members about the ways to develop practicing the skills of decision making by the female school principals in Zarqa Governorate, with an overall mean of 4.09. This indicates agreement among the study sample members on the methods to develop practicing the skills of decision making by the female principals, Zarqa Governorate. The most important methods are as follows: Sending the female school principal to take different courses on the methods of making school decisions; making the principal acquire skills of dialogue management before making the decision; work to grant powers to the female school principal in decision making; the female principal should work for the interest of the school when making a certain decision, and to work as an actual leader of the female teachers and the workers with her upon making the

decision.

The researcher reviewed previous studies by both Arab and foreign researchers, and did not come across a study dealing directly in the ways to develop decision making practices by the school principals.

RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the results of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

- Preparing plans of in-the-field training programs for the female school principals.
- Holding open meetings from time to time.
- Work toward sending the female school principals on courses in the different ways of practicing school decision making processes.
- Female school principals should gain management dialogue skills before making decisions.
- Training the female school principal on mechanisms of authorizing workers' powers in decision making.
- Female principals should participate in leadership workshops as actual leaders of the female

teachers and workers with her, when she takes her decisions.

- Female principals should participate in training courses concerning the design of appropriate decision making.
- Developing the methods of decision making.
- Encouraging the female school principal to take group decisions.
- Insuring that the female school principals take into account the abilities of the workers and teachers, when making decisions concerning them.

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Promulgation of Optimism in Secondary Education

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Abstract

Hopeful and optimistic attitudes affect many aspects of a person's life. Moreover; they are traits which are possible to acquire. A school counselor can achieve this

purpose through various procedures; thank to his / her deep influence upon the adolescent. Indoctrination of optimism should therefore definitely take place, among the miscellaneous functions of a good counselor.

Key words: Psychological counselor; (Course) Teacher; Hope; Optimism; Optimist.

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Figure 1
Optimist *Versus* Pessimist Over a Milk-Bottle (Illustration by the Author)

Capped Student— Alas, the Milk Is Diminishing!
Blond Student— We've Still Got Plenty of Milk, Fine!