

Administrative Empowerment in Public Organizations: A Proposed Model

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Abstract:

The study focuses on developing a proposed model of administrative empowerment in public organizations, considering it as a strategic approach to enhancing organizational performance, based on an extensive review of the relevant literature and a critical analysis of previous administrative empowerment models, with the aim of identifying the conceptual and organizational dimensions and determinants that influence its implementation in public organizations. Based on this analysis, a theoretical model is proposed that integrates the essential dimensions derived from earlier frameworks while considering the specific organizational characteristics of public institutions.

The study also addresses the main challenges facing the implementation of administrative empowerment, such as weak organizational culture, resistance to change, and lack of motivation, and proposes a set of conceptual solutions and measurement indicators to support the evaluation of administrative empowerment effectiveness.

Introduction:

Effective management within organizations has a significant impact on an organization's ability to grow and thrive. By paying greater attention to employees and motivating them to engage actively in their roles, organizations can ensure that staff fulfill their responsibilities and maximize their potential. This can be achieved by adopting the appropriate approach, exemplified by administrative empowerment, which is considered one of the most important modern administrative processes and organizational strategies. Administrative empowerment is also recognized as one of the most prominent contemporary concepts in modern administrative thought, based on the principle that employees' performance directly contributes to organizational strength and competitive advantage, ultimately enabling the organization to achieve its objectives.

The concept of administrative empowerment originates from a well-known theory in organizational behavior: the structural theory of organizational power proposed by Harvard Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her book *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977–1993). According to Kanter (1977), an employee's position within the organizational structure plays a critical and pivotal role in acquiring power and influence, often more so than the individual's personal attributes or characteristics. In other words, employee behavior represents a dynamic response to workplace conditions and organizational context rather than merely reflecting personal traits, emphasizing the activation of human resources.

Despite the increasing importance of this concept, public institutions in developing countries, including Algeria, continue to face challenges in adopting administrative empowerment practices. This is largely due to prevailing managerial perceptions associating employee empowerment with a potential reduction in senior management authority.

Public institutions face several challenges, including weak organizational culture, resistance to change, and lack of motivation. In response, some Algerian public institutions have sought practical solutions to overcome these barriers, including the development of conceptual frameworks and measurement indicators to ensure the evaluation of administrative empowerment effectiveness as a key strategy for institutional development and the achievement of organizational objectives through the effective utilization of human resources. Nevertheless, Algerian public institutions, like many in developing countries, still struggle with the practical application of this concept due to the widespread belief that empowering employees could diminish the authority of top management.

In light of the above, the current study aims to develop a proposed model for enhancing administrative empowerment in Algerian public institutions. Accordingly, the research problem is articulated through the following main question:

- What is the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in Algerian public institutions?

This main question is further divided into the following sub-questions:

- What are the principles and foundations of the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?
- What are the objectives of the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?
- What are the stages of implementing the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?

- What methods and means can be employed to implement the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?
- What obstacles may hinder the implementation of the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?
- What are the proposed solutions to overcome the challenges of implementing the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions?

Research Objectives

- To identify the concept of administrative empowerment, along with its objectives and key determinants.
- To examine the main justifications for emphasizing administrative empowerment in public institutions.
- To determine the requirements for developing administrative empowerment in Algerian public institutions.
- To propose a model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions, encompassing its foundations, objectives, stages of implementation, implementation methods and mechanisms, potential obstacles, and proposed solutions.

Research Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the current study is defined by its focus on the concept of administrative empowerment, its objectives, and its significance in public institutions. The study also examines the requirements for developing administrative empowerment and ultimately seeks to propose a model for enhancing administrative empowerment in Algerian public institutions.

Research Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive–analytical approach to examine the determinants of administrative empowerment and explore the mechanisms for its development in public institutions. This approach enables a systematic analysis of the phenomenon under investigation and supports the formulation of evidence-based conclusions, ultimately leading to the development of a proposed model for administrative empowerment.

To achieve the study objectives, the researchers relied on relevant prior literature and previous studies, given their suitability for the descriptive–analytical approach and their contribution to building the theoretical framework and analytical dimensions of the proposed model.

Previous Studies:

- **Kanter's Structural Empowerment Model (Kanter, 1977):** This model focuses on strengthening the organization as a whole rather than focusing solely on the individual. Its beliefs align with the saying, "A rising tide lifts all boats" (Chevalier, 1995, P. 22).
- **Fox's Model (Fox, 1998):** This model consists of three key steps: planning, implementation, and empowerment evaluation. These steps create a closed loop that results in continuous improvement.
- **Adnan's Model (Adnan, 2003):** According to this model, in order to create a sustainable empowered organization, it is necessary to empower management, the work environment, and individuals. This requires continuous interaction between the three elements.

Based on the shared vision of Kanter (1977), Cornel (1989), Randolph (1995), and Dalfe (2001), administrative empowerment is seen as a "**strategy**" that is implemented by management, provided that the appropriate factors and systems are in place to support it. These factors include: motivating and training individuals, instilling values and building trust, and developing structures that support administrative empowerment.

Theoretical Background:

Organizational Structure Development: Stoner defined the organizational structure as the means through which the activities of the organization are divided, organized, and coordinated. He suggests that the organizational structure results in organizational decisions related to four dimensions, which include the division of labor, the foundations for forming administrative units, the scope of supervision, and the delegation of authority (Ben Zaim, 2014).

Developing Individuals: Individuals are the most beneficial asset, and the institution must focus on selection, development, division, and reinforcement to achieve the full potential of the workforce to serve and enrich the institution's goals and performance. Change in individuals can be achieved through education and training, encouraging job enrichment, delegating authority, expanding job responsibilities, and implementing an incentive system (Khalaf, Hamadi, & Hussein, 2019, p. 400).

The key factors for the success of individual change for empowerment include:

- Management being **sensitive and aware of its role** in creating work environments that allow employees to act freely.
- Management needs to **adopt commitment and ownership** at all levels, while also being **tolerant of failure**, as allowing failure and learning from it is essential for successful and effective management.

- Employees fear change and try to protect their positions. Therefore, management at all levels must work to reduce this fear and inform employees that their jobs are secure while the change occurs to solve the existing problem (Arvis, 2018, p. 19). Once the institution has all the individuals it needs to achieve this goal, the next priority should be ensuring that these individuals remain in the organization long enough for their presence to have an impact and for their performance level to remain high during that period.

Technology Development: The business world has undergone radical transformations thanks to rapid technological advancement, and no sector remains untouched by this profound impact. Technology has become a key partner in managing daily operations and developing new strategies. The purpose of shifting administrative work from a traditional approach to a technological one is to enhance efficiency and quality in order to perform administrative tasks in the best possible way (Al-Shoubaki, 2023, p. 998).

Leadership Development: The role of leadership within the organizational context goes beyond merely issuing orders and ensuring that administrative activities are carried out within their defined boundaries. The primary and most important role of a leader is to provide subordinates with everything that motivates them, energizes them, and maintains high morale. This fosters a spirit of teamwork and cooperation among them.

Harber (1998) believes that leadership change involves igniting a new spark, formulating a new vision, and continuously driving its achievement (Al-Otaibi, 2020). Therefore, a leader must acquire specific leadership skills and qualities, including:

- **Charisma (Idealized Influence):** This refers to the leader's behavior that earns the admiration, respect, and appreciation of followers. It requires the leader to take part in risks, prioritize the needs of followers over personal interests, and act with moral integrity.
- **Inspirational Motivation:** These are the actions and behaviors of the leader that inspire followers to embrace challenges.
- **Intellectual Stimulation:** This involves encouraging followers to solve problems, explore new ideas, and support innovative and creative models for performing work.
- **Individualized Consideration:** This means listening attentively and showing special attention to the needs of followers

Resistance to change: Comprehensive change is, in most cases, not an easy matter—it is often met with skepticism and hesitation. Peter (1999) stated that *“most of us realize from the outset that change programs tend to fail; we’ve seen many initiatives roll down from top management only to remain stagnant indefinitely”* (Donald, 2018).

Lotun, author of *“Radical Change,”* observed that almost everyone resists change, especially those who are required to implement the majority of it. Interestingly, this resistance is not limited to harmful or negative change—it can also occur even when the change serves the collective good or aligns with the personal interests of those resisting it (Hammad, 2017).

Evaluating the success of administrative empowerment

Evaluating Productive Efficiency: The key elements of production efficiency are: **labor, materials, capital, and organizational and managerial expertise.**

The concept of production efficiency is embodied in the ability to achieve the maximum possible output using limited amounts of these elements. Thus, an increase in production efficiency can be realized through one of the following methods:

- Increasing the value of the final product while keeping the value of resources used constant.
- Increasing the value of the final product with a smaller proportional increase in the resources used.
- Maintaining the same value of final output while reducing the value of resources used.
- Decreasing the value of the final output, but with a greater proportional decrease in the value of resources used.

Evaluating Employee Satisfaction: Hazel Korn (2012) states that creating a healthy work environment is based on three pillars: employee satisfaction, objective follow-up, and fostering team spirit. Undoubtedly, an employee who enjoys job satisfaction will be more committed to sound administrative practices and will be less inclined toward corrupt behaviors (Saad & Ibrahim, 2022).

Evaluating Customer Satisfaction: The ISO 9000 standards of the year 2000 define customer satisfaction as the customer's perception of the extent to which their needs and expectations have been met through the performance of the products and services received. Customer satisfaction is now considered an essential asset of an organization and a foundation for its sustainability in a competitive environment. Organizations cannot survive without customers, as they are both the goal and the means. Therefore, it is the organization's duty to manage its operations in a way that ensures customer satisfaction and retention.

Caring for customers is the key to achieving a competitive advantage, increasing profits, and ensuring continuous growth. Key outcomes of customer satisfaction include increased customer loyalty and trust in the business, sustained and growing sales, and the overall health of the business demonstrated through how well products or services respond to customer requirements (Merazka & Makhoulf, 2017).

Evaluating Customer Satisfaction: The ISO 9000 standards of the year 2000 define customer satisfaction as the customer's perception regarding the extent to which their needs and desires have been met through the performance of the products and services received. Customer satisfaction has come to be viewed as a fundamental asset of an organization and the cornerstone of its sustainability in a competitive environment. Organizations cannot survive without customers, as they represent both the goal and the means. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to manage their operations in a way that ensures customer satisfaction and, consequently, customer retention.

Customer care is considered a key entry point for achieving competitive advantage, increasing profits, and ensuring sustainable growth. Core indicators of customer satisfaction include increased customer loyalty and trust in the business, growth and continuity in sales, and the overall health of the business as reflected in how well its products or services meet customer requirements (Merazka & Makhoulf, 2017).

Stages of the Proposed Model:

1. Principles and Foundations of the Proposed Vision for Administrative Empowerment:

In order to draw a general framework for the proposed vision to apply administrative empowerment, which clarifies how institutions can benefit from this modern management approach as a strategy for organizational and individual development, the researcher extracted its key components within a vision that aligns with the reality of institutions. To achieve this, the researcher took the following steps:

- Studying the concepts and principles of administrative empowerment based on various sources that addressed the topic.
- Reviewing models of administrative empowerment, especially those that have been implemented, as these models contribute significantly and have a clear impact on the development of the concept.

2. Objectives of the Proposed Vision for Administrative Empowerment:

What led us to consider developing a proposed vision for organizational empowerment that aligns with the nature of institutional management and its capabilities are the following objectives:

- Assisting administrators and those in charge of institutions in continuous service development.
- Enhancing the level of quality in processes and increasing work efficiency.
- Achieving administrative goals more effectively, which in turn positively impacts the outputs of the institutions and helps them fulfill their mission.

3. Stages of Implementing the Proposed Vision for Administrative Empowerment:

The proposed vision for applying the administrative empowerment strategy in institutions is based on three main stages:

3.1. Preparation Stage:

In order to implement administrative empowerment and make it a tangible reality that ensures superiority and guarantees survival and continuity in a free economic system that does not recognize boundaries and continuously produces innovations in the field of finance and business, a solid foundation must first be established by making fundamental changes at all organizational levels. Cook (1994) believes that adopting an administrative empowerment strategy requires initially going through two important stages:

- Training individuals to perform new roles.
- Improving processes and giving management a supportive role in this aspect .

Organizational development is considered one of the most important modern approaches and key applications used to achieve this direction, aimed at renewing organizational processes by focusing on work procedures, methods, and organizational structures. It is also associated with change, as organizational development is a method to increase the effectiveness and productivity of the institution. It is not only used to keep up with current changes and innovations but also to prepare for anticipated changes in the future of the institution.

- **Organizational Structure Development:** A comprehensive change in the structure of public institutions, aimed at simplifying procedures, distributing responsibilities, and expanding communication among different units. The organizational structure of public institutions should be flexible and effective over the long term to support administrative empowerment and improve institutional performance.

- **Personnel Development:** The professional qualification of individuals through continuous training and motivation within public institutions. This represents an essential component of human resource development, aimed at enhancing both individual and collective performance in support of administrative empowerment.
- **Technology Development:** Transforming work processes in public institutions from traditional methods to modern technological approaches through the use of advanced equipment and digital tools to increase efficiency. This also includes the application of advanced software systems in communication and daily administrative operations to support empowered work practices.
- **Leadership Development:** A continuous process of improving leaders' performance in public institutions through training and motivation, with the aim of enhancing their capabilities in planning, decision-making, strengthening relationships with employees, and motivating teams toward participation, creativity, and empowerment.

3.2. Stage of Accepting and Preparing for Change:

One of the most significant challenges facing organizational management is how to deal with resistance to change.

Change today is happening at a very fast pace, and the environment is highly competitive. If management does not understand how to handle resistance and create an appropriate climate to reduce it, this can jeopardize the success of change efforts.

It is wise for management to build strategies and methods to minimize resistance before initiating any change process, as the reasons behind employee resistance vary depending on the organization and its individuals.

The researcher recommends focusing on the following managerial approaches to address resistance to change, as identified by Al-Qusaimi (2008): **the trust-building approach, the participation approach, and the change culture approach.**

These are considered key factors in shifting individuals' attitudes toward the change process in support of empowerment. They also align with the dimensions recommended by **Kanter (1977)** for achieving **structural empowerment**.

- **Trust-Building Approach:** The individual's belief in the integrity, transparency, and ethical conduct of managerial practices within public institutions. Trust represents a fundamental pillar of administrative empowerment, supporting successful change processes, reducing fear, and enhancing cooperation and organizational effectiveness.
- **Participation Approach:** A set of activities and practices adopted in public institutions to integrate employees into organizational processes, thereby fostering innovation, increasing responsibility, strengthening a sense of belonging, and reinforcing administrative empowerment.
- **Culture of Change Approach:** Promoting desired behaviors within public institutions that encourage flexibility and positive responses to organizational change in a healthy work environment, which supports the implementation of administrative empowerment.

3.3. Stage of Change Implementation:

This is considered the final step in the change process, and it receives the main focus because it determines the success or failure of implementing the administrative empowerment strategy. At this stage, those responsible for the process assess whether there has been any improvement in performance, as the ultimate goal of the "administrative empowerment" process is to improve organizational performance. This performance development is reflected within institutions in two prominent forms: **productive efficiency and employee and customer satisfaction.**

- **Performance Evaluation:** The process of comparing actual outcomes with predefined objectives in public institutions to assess the level of success, identify strengths and weaknesses, and evaluate their implications for future performance and empowerment initiatives.
- **Employee Satisfaction Evaluation:** Assessing the extent to which employees in public institutions feel comfortable with and accept their working conditions and organizational environment, with the aim of improving performance, motivation, and the sustainability of administrative empowerment.
- **Customer Satisfaction Evaluation:** Measuring the extent to which the services provided by public institutions meet citizens' expectations and needs, in order to improve service quality, enhance public trust, and evaluate the outcomes of administrative empowerment.

4. Requirements for Implementing Administrative Empowerment:

Implementing administrative empowerment requires laying a solid foundation for its success, as it must be practiced in an organized manner involving both performance and responsibility. The basic requirements for applying administrative empowerment within institutions include:

- Preparing a solid ground by making fundamental changes at all organizational levels. This includes radical change and complete restructuring of the organizational structure, administrative processes, development of the technology used, job content, and effective leadership that delivers distinguished performance and better achievement.
- Building strategies and methods to reduce resistance to change through mutual trust, which serves as the emotional link achieving integration and unity among members of the organization. This trust is not limited to mutual trust among employees but also extends to trust in the organization's core values, shared vision, and trust in the system itself.
- Involving employees in decision-making that affects them and their work to ensure clarity of vision and exchange of opinions, guarantee their cooperation, and reach more accurate and less erroneous decisions. This is one of the applied strategies to improve and develop performance.
- Providing a system of work values that help and encourage change, as these values form the foundation upon which situations and problems faced by the institution are dealt with, whether by leaders or employees. Therefore, the structure of work values affects the solutions and capabilities reached regarding these situations and problems.

7. Obstacles to Implementing Administrative Empowerment:

Despite the importance of administrative empowerment in raising the spirit of service, its implementation faces many challenges in institutions. The following are the main obstacles that hinder its successful application:

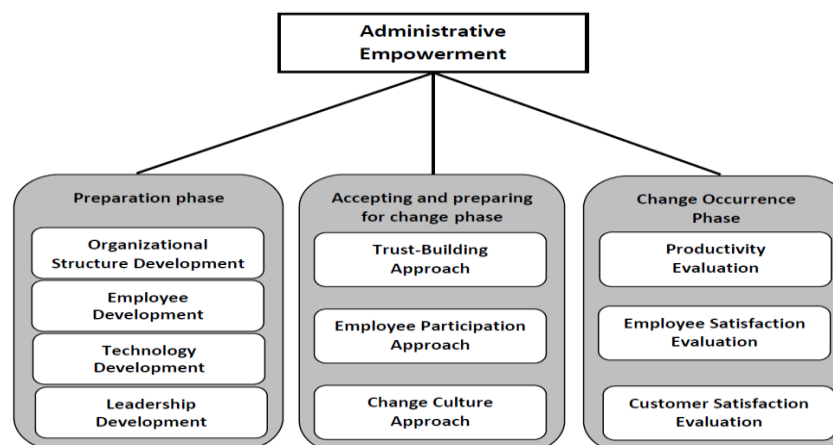
- **Lack of clear goals and vision**, which results in a lot of effort spent on activities that do not contribute to the progress of the institution, leading to wasted time, money, and energy.
- **A hierarchical multi-level organizational structure** that leaves no room for initiative and creativity, with subordinates completely dependent on their supervisors due to the many regulations and governing rules that determine what subordinates do, and the flow of orders and instructions from top to bottom.
- **Resistance to change** in implementing administrative empowerment, which is the unwillingness or unreadiness to accept greater responsibilities. This includes resistance to changing the organization's goals and strategy, resistance to changing technology, resistance to changing the organizational structure, and resistance to changing the culture.
- **Leaders' fear of losing their positions**: If employees are empowered, leaders may lose their leadership roles. If employees can make their own decisions and put more effort into their work, managerial positions might be consolidated or even eliminated entirely.
- **Lack of information** about the impact of these strategies and the benefits organizations can gain from them.
- **Failure to involve all stakeholders** in implementing administrative empowerment strategies: Relevant partners and all concerned parties must be able to participate in the reforms.

6. Methods and means of applying the proposed model for developing administrative empowerment in public institutions:

The scales used to measure administrative empowerment have varied, as have opinions regarding the number of dimensions through which it is assessed. Some have defined it through two dimensions, while others have identified more.

Administrative Empowerment Scale:

The Proposed Conceptual Framework for Administrative Empowerment:



Operational definition of scale dimensions:

- **Organizational Structure Development:** The distribution of roles and responsibilities and the improvement of work procedures and communication within the organization. Organizational structure development is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Employee Development:** The development of employees' skills and abilities and increasing their efficiency through training and motivation, positively impacting their work. Employee development is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Technology Development:** The application of new technological solutions and the updating of existing electronics within the institution. Technology development is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Leadership Development:** The development of innovation skills in leaders through training and motivation, enhancing their ability to influence and guide workers toward set goals. Leadership development is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Trust-Building Approach:** The administrative policies that reflect the integrity, respect, and reliability of management and its dealings with employees. The trust-building approach is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Employee Participation Approach:** The contribution of individuals in development processes, problem-solving, and decision-making. The employee participation approach is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Change Culture Approach:** The values and practices promoted within the organization to encourage employee acceptance of change. The change culture approach is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Production Evaluation:** Measuring productive efficiency by producing the maximum possible output of the best possible quality using a specified quantity or type of inputs, or producing a specified amount of output using the least possible amount of inputs. Production evaluation is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Employee Satisfaction Evaluation:** Measuring individuals' feelings towards their work and its conditions; the greater the employee's happiness and stability in the job, the more they can be described as satisfied. Employee satisfaction evaluation is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.
- **Customer Satisfaction Evaluation:** Measuring the extent to which the company's products and services meet customer expectations; the more positive the customers' attitudes, the more they can be described as satisfied. Customer satisfaction evaluation is measured through a questionnaire containing clear statements.

Likert Scale Response Method

The respondent answers the scale by choosing one of five alternatives on the **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from "**Strongly Agree**" to "**Strongly Disagree**." The respondent receives a score of **(5)** if they select "**Strongly Agree**", a score of **(4)** for "**Agree**", **(3)** for "**Somewhat Agree**", **(2)** for "**Disagree**", and **(1)** for "**Strongly Disagree**." All the items are **positively worded**, and the total score is obtained by summing the individual item scores. Therefore, the **theoretical total score** on the scale ranges from **40 to 200 points**.

Scale Design:

The scale designed by the researcher, based on the proposed model, consists of **40 items** divided across **10 dimensions**, which are:

Dimension (1): Organizational Structure Development	1. We exchange information easily. 2. My tasks are clearly defined. 3. I complete my work on time. 4. There is good follow-up on work to quickly correct errors.
Dimension (2): Personnel Development	1. My job matches my qualifications. 2. I perform my work correctly. 3. My skills are continuously improving. 4. My ideas improve the way I work.
Dimension (3): Technology Development	1. There is a strong and stable internet connection. 2. Work has become easier and more accurate with new software.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The organization relies on digital marketing.4. Devices and software are regularly maintained and updated.
Dimension (4): Leadership Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The leader is fair in his dealings with all members.2. My leader stands up for me when I face injustice.3. My leader helps me solve the problems I face.4. The leader always strives to promote team spirit.
Dimension (5): Trust-Building Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone who works hard is rewarded.2. Anyone who falls short in their duties is held accountable.3. Promotion opportunities are available to all individuals.4. Evaluation is based on performance and competence.
Dimension (6): Employee Participation Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Management informs us when planning to implement changes.2. I understand the expected benefits of the change process.3. I feel encouraged to contribute to the change process.4. I do not face problems in the new work environment.
Dimension (7): Change Culture Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I believe that change and improvement are a duty.2. The work environment is characterized by cooperation and respect.3. I enjoy teamwork.4. I do not think about changing my workplace.
Dimension (8): Production Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Everyone prefers our products.2. Training is necessary in the production department.3. Products are inspected continuously.4. We reduce material consumption by recycling.
Dimension (9): Employee Satisfaction Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I have the necessary authority to complete my work.2. My suggestions are taken into consideration.3. I receive rewards for my outstanding performance.4. I like commitment and discipline at work.
Dimension (10): Customer Satisfaction Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We listen to customers' opinions to improve the product.2. Our customers are continuously increasing.3. We rarely receive complaints from our customers about the service.4. We provide quick and effective solutions to gain customer satisfaction.

Conclusion:

In light of what has been presented and discussed in this study regarding the proposed framework for implementing administrative empowerment, it has become clear that administrative empowerment represents one of the fundamental pillars for improving institutional performance and enhancing the culture of responsibility and initiative within the work environment. The analysis showed that implementing administrative empowerment is not limited to merely delegating authority, but rather extends to building a supportive organizational environment, providing appropriate training, and achieving mutual trust between management and employees.

Through the proposed framework, the importance of integration between organizational, human, and technological dimensions was emphasized to apply empowerment effectively and sustainably. The study also concluded that the success of this approach largely depends on the conviction of senior leadership and clarity of vision. In conclusion, we recommend adopting this proposed framework as a strategic guide to enhance administrative empowerment practices, thereby contributing to comprehensive administrative development and simultaneously raising job satisfaction and productivity levels.

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