

# The level of administrative excellence among Jordanian public-school leaders in light of quality standards



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**Abstract** Effective leadership holds paramount importance in educational contexts, especially within the rapidly evolving landscape of the 21st century. The ability to navigate this dynamic environment requires educational leaders to possess advanced knowledge and exceptional skills to address the constant influx of new information and adapt to ongoing cultural transformations. Recognizing these challenges, this study aims to evaluate the degree of administrative excellence among educational leaders in schools, specifically within the framework of the quality standards established by the Education Evaluation Commission in Jordan. Additionally, it seeks to explore whether statistically significant differences exist in the average levels of administrative excellence based on variables such as academic qualifications, years of experience, and job titles. To achieve these objectives, the study employed a descriptive-analytical methodology. A sample of 782 teachers and administrative personnel from public education institutions in Irbid was selected for the academic year 2024. Data collection was conducted using a comprehensive questionnaire, which included six key criteria for assessing administrative excellence: leadership and management; strategic planning; human resources; material and financial resources; processes and procedures; and community services. The findings revealed a high level of availability for the criteria related to leadership and management, strategic planning, human resources, and processes and procedures. However, the criteria for material and financial resources and community services were found to be moderately available. Moreover, the results indicated no significant differences in the overall quality standards of school leaders based on academic qualifications, job titles, or years of experience. These insights emphasize the need for continued focus on enhancing resources and community engagement to further elevate administrative excellence in education.

**Keywords:** education evaluation commission, educational leaders, quality assurance

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the study

Effective leadership is of utmost importance in educational settings on the fast-changing terrain of the 21st century. Advanced knowledge and high-quality skills are required for efficient management in response to the continuous flow of new information and cultural changes (Bagdasarian et al., 2019). Effective educational administration is crucial in determining the social, economic, and political welfare of countries. The primary objective is to cultivate leaders who possess the ability to effectively manage these transformations, improve the overall performance of educational institutions, and address the numerous obstacles encountered by schools (Naidoo, 2019; Qasimi et al., 2024).

The notion of administrative excellence has gained increasing importance, highlighting the need for adept leadership, strategic planning, human resource management, and strong organizational procedures. The aforementioned components are essential for attaining exceptional performance results in educational environments (Martinez & Wighting, 2023; Taylor, 2021). The administrative excellence model evaluates the professional competence of employees and facilitates the achievement of the organization's strategic objectives by effectively utilizing human and material resources (Muflihin & Fuadi, 2024). Implementing this approach is essential for improving operational strategies and creating a favorable atmosphere for achieving high performance.

### 1.2. Research questions



1. What are the levels of administrative excellence among educational leaders in schools in Jordan?
2. Are there differences in the levels of administrative excellence among educational leaders in schools in Jordan due to academic qualifications?

### 1.3. Significance of the study

Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate the impact of several demographic variables, such as educational credentials, years of professional experience, and job designations, on the degree of administrative excellence. Gaining insight into these connections can facilitate the creation of more focused professional development initiatives and policy interventions that are customized to unique requirements and circumstances within the educational system of Jordan.

## 2. Literature Review

Reevaluating educational practices has become necessary due to global trends such as globalization, the transition to a knowledge-based economy, and breakthroughs in information and communication technology, which aim to harness the potential of its youthful population through educational reform; this is especially relevant for Jordan, which is undergoing rapid developmental strides (Okoko, 2020; Tashtoush et al., 2025). The quality department's renowned excellence model, which is widely respected worldwide, especially in educational institutions, is crucial in this setting. This process enables the attainment of high standards by recognizing deficiencies and suggesting remedies according to a defined set of standards, which include leadership, strategic planning, and community involvement. The inclusion of these elements is crucial in cultivating a climate of ongoing enhancement and systematic control of quality in educational environments (Story, 2023; Akan et al., 2022).

Empirical studies have emphasized the pragmatic use of this paradigm in diverse educational settings. Specifically, research has concentrated on how school administrators oversee and modify the model to conform to current educational goals, highlighting the significance of leadership in promoting enhancements in quality (Hubbard, 2019). Furthermore, studies conducted in northern Jordan and Spain have evaluated the influence of quality management systems in educational environments, revealing notable advantages in terms of operational efficiency and strategy congruence (Komalasari et al., 2020). Notwithstanding these developments, Jordanian educational institutions—public schools in particular—face obstacles that call for additional work to increase standards of performance and improve instruction. To enhance institutional performance and increase quality standards, studies by Al-Kassem (2022) and Frank et al. (2020) highlight the importance of using European models of excellence in educational administration.

The objective of this study is to assess the degree of administrative proficiency among school education principals in Jordan, with a specific emphasis on leadership, strategic planning, and resource management. Furthermore, it aims to examine whether notable disparities in administrative proficiency exist depending on factors such as educational credentials, years of professional experience, and job designations.

Moreover, the examination underscores the need for strategic planning, which entails establishing explicit visions, missions, and goals that facilitate the transformation of the organization from its present condition to a coveted future condition. This strategy considers both internal and external environmental challenges that may affect institutions (Webster & Litchka, 2020; Tashtoush et al., 2023). Human resource management is emphasized as a critical field that aims to optimize the capabilities of individuals and teams by efficiently implementing management strategies that align with the strategic objectives of the firm. This encompasses the strategic assessment of human resource requirements, the improvement of staff competencies, and the establishment of efficient communication and collaboration (Ruben et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the research investigates the administration of material and financial resources, emphasizing the need to effectively oversee the diverse resources accessible to an organization. The effective allocation and organization of these resources enhance the stability and expansion of the institution, facilitating the attainment of its strategic goals (Bøje & Frederiksen, 2021). Ultimately, attaining administrative leadership of high quality is not just a reaction to external factors but also a crucial necessity to promote Jordan's educational goals and international reputation. The results of this study are anticipated to direct future research and assist educational leaders in enhancing their methods, producing a culture of high quality and excellence in education, which is essential for attaining educational goals and visions.

The changing field of worldwide education highlights the crucial need for competent leadership in promoting institutional achievement and creativity. The rapid socioeconomic changes and ambitious vision of educational goals in Jordan necessitate a strong educational system that can adequately equip a youthful and expanding population to fulfill the requirements of a knowledge-based economy (Kumar et al., 2020; Hussein et al., 2024; Aloufi et al., 2024). Administrative excellence is of utmost importance in the leadership of educational institutions, especially public schools, as it plays a crucial role in molding future generations. There is a significant lack of rigorous evaluations of administrative excellence implementation and efficacy in Jordan, even though it is acknowledged as a foundational factor for educational success. Several internationally recognized models of educational excellence, including those developed by the Quality Department and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), have been successfully implemented in countries worldwide.

Leadership, strategic planning, HRM, and community involvement are some of the all-encompassing aspects highlighted by these models (Nasir, 2021). However, there is a lack of documentation regarding the adaptability and influence of these models in the specific cultural, economic, and regulatory contexts of Jordan. Additionally, empirical research in this area is still in its early stages of development (Sawalhi & Sellami, 2024; Tashtoush et al., 2024a).

Furthermore, although various efforts have been made to improve the quality of education in Jordan, the results have been inconclusive. Academic research conducted by Al-Attari and Essa (2024) and Hammad et al. (2024) emphasized the capacity of European models of excellence to improve administrative procedures and institutional effectiveness. Nevertheless, the use of these models frequently faces obstacles such as cultural incongruities, reluctance to embrace change, and varying levels of leadership competence, all of which can greatly impact their efficacy. In light of this context, it is imperative to assess the present level of administrative proficiency among school administrators in Jordan (AL Khateeb et al. (2023)). It is imperative to assess the extent to which these leaders satisfy the prescribed quality criteria of the Education Evaluation Commission and to pinpoint critical areas that require enhancements. Conducting such an evaluation is crucial to guarantee that school leadership is not only sufficiently prepared to handle the intricacies of current educational requirements but also to promote ongoing enhancement and originality (Ellen Kelly, 2022; Shirawia et al., 2024).

### 3. Materials and Methods

This study used a cross-sectional survey design to obtain a momentary measure of administrative excellence. The cross-sectional approach is selected for its effectiveness in collecting data from a substantial sample within a restricted period, thus offering a comprehensive depiction of the administrative procedures presently implemented in public schools in Jordan.

The participants included 782 educators and support personnel from public schools in Irbid, Jordan. To ensure that the sample is representative of the many job titles and experience levels within the school administration, the participants are chosen via a stratified random selection technique. The criteria for stratification include academic qualifications (bachelor's degree, higher diploma, master's degree), years of experience (less than five years, five to ten years, or more than ten years), and job title (administrative roles, such as administrative assistants, and academic roles, such as teachers). This methodological decision improves the generalizability of the study results and reduces sampling bias.

The principal instrument employed in this study is a well-organized questionnaire that was created using the scale of school leadership quality requirements established by the Education Evaluation Commission. Forty-three items are included in the questionnaire, which is divided into six categories: leadership and management; strategic planning; human resources; material and financial resources; processes and procedures; and services offered to the community. The Likert scale used to score each item ranges from 1 (indicating strong disagreement) to 5 (indicating strong agreement), enabling participants to indicate the level of agreement with each assertion.

Experienced teachers and administrators analyze the questionnaire to ensure its validity by evaluating the items' relevance and clarity. Twenty-five school administrators who were not included in the main study participated in a pilot trial that established the instrument's dependability. To evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha is computed; a threshold of 0.70 is deemed appropriate for research purposes.

The data collection activities are carried out throughout a three-month timeframe at the commencement of the academic year 2024. The researchers collaborate with the school administrations to implement the distribution of questionnaires during staff meetings, thereby ensuring a substantial level of participation. Before being distributed, the participants were carefully briefed on the objective of the study, and their informed consent was acquired. Confidentiality is rigorously upheld, as no personal identifying information is gathered in the survey forms. For optimal response rates, the questionnaires are sent in paper format and collected on the same day.

After being collected, the survey materials are encoded and input into a statistical software program for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including measures such as the means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, are employed to provide a description of the features of a sample and the general degrees of agreement with certain aspects of administrative excellence.

The study uses inferential statistics to investigate the variations in levels of administrative excellence depending on demographic factors. Analytical variance (ANOVA) tests are performed to detect any statistically significant variations in the average scores of administrative excellence among several groups categorized by academic credentials, years of experience, and job titles.

Furthermore, regression analysis is conducted to determine the impact of demographic factors on the degree of administrative excellence. The present methodology facilitates the identification of the most influential predictors of administrative excellence within the demographic variables under investigation.

### 4. Results

A detailed summary of the demographics of the 782 participants in the study evaluating administrative competence among school administrators in Jordan is presented in Table 1. The academic credentials of the participants vary, with a substantial majority (80.0%) possessing a bachelor's degree. These findings suggest that the sample is well educated, which is essential for obtaining dependable insights into administrative processes in education. The relatively modest percentages of participants with an advanced diploma (13.4%) and a master's degree (6.6%) may indicate prevailing qualification patterns in the educational sector in the region, where bachelor's degrees are generally adequate for most teaching and administrative positions.

In terms of experience, the report indicated that a significant majority of the participants (65.0%) had over 10 years of experience. This underscores the fact that the findings of the study are based on experienced viewpoints, which is very valuable for analyzing established administrative procedures and their efficacy. The smaller cohorts covering individuals with less than 5 years (5.5%) and between 5 and 10 years (29.5%) of experience serve as a juxtaposition, reflecting recent participants in the industry whose experiences and perspectives may vary from those with more extensive tenures.

The categorized analysis of job titles indicates that the majority of the participants held academic positions, particularly teachers (58.2%), whereas a notable minority held administrative roles (41.8%). This distribution is advantageous for the research, as it encompasses perspectives from both individuals directly engaged in pedagogy and those principally concerned with the administrative elements of school operations. This combination enhances the data, offering a comprehensive perspective on superior administrative performance from many aspects of the educational system.

**Table 1** Profile of the respondents.

The variable	Categories	N	%
Academic certifications	Bachelor's degree	628	80.0
	Higher Diploma	102	13.4
	Master's degree	52	6.6
Experience years	Less than 5 years	43	5.5
	5-10 years	231	29.5
	More than 10 years	508	65.0
Job title	Academic (Teachers)	455	58.2
	Administrative	327	41.8

A comprehensive summary of the perceived levels of administrative excellence across many categories, as reported by the survey participants from public schools in Irbid, Jordan, is provided in Table 2. The data indicate that the category of 'Leadership and Management' obtained the highest average score of 4.15, accompanied by a comparatively low standard deviation of 0.45. This suggests significant agreement among participants on the efficacy of leadership and management strategies. Furthermore, the category of 'strategic planning' also achieved a commendable score of 4.10, with a standard deviation of 0.48. This finding indicates that strategic initiatives are well regarded and receive a rather consistent evaluation among the participants.

In contrast, the category of 'Services Provided to the Community' obtained the lowest average score of 3.55, accompanied by the largest level of variability, or standard deviation, of 0.72. The observed variety suggests a broader spectrum of viewpoints and potentially identifies crucial aspects that require enhancements. The category of 'Material and Financial Resources' had a somewhat low score of 3.63, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.61. This indicates a certain level of lack of satisfaction or consistency in the provision or administration of these resources.

Significantly lower scores were obtained in the areas of 'Material and Financial Resources' and 'Services Provided to the Community', indicating possible difficulties in allocating resources and engaging with the community that could impact the perception of administrative excellence. These observations might guide future endeavors to improve these particular domains, perhaps enhancing the overall administrative effectiveness at the educational institutions included in this research.

**Table 2** Assessment of administrative excellence.

Dimensions	M	SD
Management and leadership	4.15	0.45
Planning of strategic	4.10	0.48
Human resources	3.75	0.55
Material and Financial Resources	3.63	0.61
Procedures and processes	3.86	0.52
Public services offered to the community	3.55	0.72
Total	3.84	0.32



The ANOVA results for how school administrators in Irbid, Jordan, perceived administrative excellence concerning their academic background are shown in Table 3. Three groups with different academic backgrounds—those with a higher diploma, a bachelor's degree, and a master's degree—were compared in this structure of study. The comparatively low "between groups" sum of squares of 27.40 indicates that the perceived levels of administrative excellence among the academic degree groups are not significantly different from one another. This is further supported by the fact that there are only two degrees of freedom (dfs) across groups—that is, the number of groups minus one. The mean square, calculated as the total number of squares divided by the degree of freedom, is 13.70 for groups that differ from one another.

With a calculated F value of 1.17, the intergroup variance is significantly lower than the intragroup variance. The p value, which is derived from this result and stands at 0.185, is higher than the standard alpha threshold of 0.05. The p value demonstrates that perceptions of administrative excellence do not significantly differ across academic qualifications. The "Within Groups" sum of squares, which is significantly greater at 3884.40 with a matching df of 780, reflects the variation inside each group. The denominator used to calculate the F value is 4.98, which is the mean square for within-groups.

Table 3 shows that participants' evaluations of administrative excellence are unaffected by academic qualifications. This research implies that conventional academic degrees are not the most important component in shaping these beliefs. Other factors, such as professional growth, experience, or institutional culture, may be more important. Policies and educational leaders should take note of these findings because they highlight the value of on-the-job experience and ongoing professional development in school leadership positions rather than relying solely on academic degrees.

**Table 3** Results of ANOVA.

Variation source	Squares sum	df	M	F value	P value
Between groups	27.40	2	13.70	1.17	0.185
Within groups	3884.40	780	4.98		
Total	3911.80	782			

The results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) that examined the effect of school leaders' years of experience on their views of administrative excellence are detailed in Table 4. With an F value of 1.21 and a p value of 0.173, the research confirms that years of experience do not significantly impact views of administrative excellence school

There is little to no difference in the perceived levels of administrative excellence across the academic degree categories, as reflected by the relatively low "between groups" sum of squares of 25.80. The fact that the number of groups is exactly equal to two minus one (df) across all groups lends credence to this idea. When we divide the sum of all the squares by the number of degrees of freedom, we obtain the mean square, which for different groups is 12.90. The computed F value of 1.21 demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the intragroup and intergroup variances. A p value of 0.173, determined from this result, is greater than the conventional alpha criterion of 0.05. The p value demonstrates that perceptions of administrative excellence do not significantly differ across academic backgrounds. The variety inside each group is reflected in the "Within Groups" sum of squares, which is 3978.0 with a matching DF of 780, a substantially greater value. The F value is 1.21, with 5.10 being the mean square for within-groups as the denominator.

**Table 4** Results of ANOVA.

Variation source	Squares sum	df	M	F value	P value
Between groups	25.80	2	12.90	1.21	0.173
Within groups	3978.0	780	5.10		
Total	4003.80	782			

To determine the statistical significance of the impact of job title on the crucial role of quality assurance at Jordanian schools, the study used an independent sample t test.

**Table 5** Independent samples t test.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig
Academic (Teachers)	455	4.12	0.45	780	0.865	0.110
Administrative	327	4.17	0.43			

Table 5 indicates that the average score for academic participants (teachers) regarding the significance of quality assurance was 4.12. The average score for administrative participants was slightly elevated, at 4.17. The statistically significant (Sig) value of 0.110, derived from the comparison of two groups on the basis of job title, indicates that neither group significantly influences the essential function of quality assurance.

**5. Discussion**



The absence of notable distinctions in judgments of administrative quality according to job title highlights the specialized functions of administrative and academic personnel within educational institutions. Administrative personnel, who often navigate the complexities of policy execution, strategic planning, and comprehensive resource management, typically possess elevated recognition and appreciation for administrative excellence. This is likely due to their daily responsibilities necessitating a comprehensive understanding of the school's operational requirements and strategic goals, closely coinciding with the competencies and insights essential for achieving administrative excellence. Effective administrators play a vital role in indirectly impacting student achievement through their decision-making and policy execution, as highlighted by Al-Dhuwaih and Maamari (2020) in their comprehensive review of school leadership. Their distinctive role in the school hierarchy provides them with a pragmatic comprehension of how administrative actions influence educational results and institutional efficacy.

Academic personnel, who are primarily dedicated to curriculum implementation and student involvement, may perceive administrative excellence with clarity. For these educators, greatness may be more strongly linked to educational outcomes, teacher support, and the incorporation of innovative pedagogical techniques. Their direct engagement with students positions them centrally in educational delivery, influencing their understanding of administrative excellence—typically prioritizing support for teaching and learning over wider strategic management concerns. Additionally, Bud et al. (2021) asserted that academic leadership is closely linked to school effectiveness, especially in terms of curriculum management and teacher motivation.

Considering these varied viewpoints, professional development programs need to be tailored to address the unique requirements of different roles within educational institutions. Customizing training programs guarantees that all staff, irrespective of their primary duties, obtains the requisite support and development opportunities to refine their skills in ways that directly enhance their professional roles and further the institution's overarching objectives. Programmes for administrative staff may emphasize advanced strategic management, financial planning, and policy analysis, following the competencies specified by Al-Azmi (2021) for effective school management. Workshops on pedagogical methodologies, curricular integration, and student engagement techniques would be more relevant for academic staff. This specialized training improves job performance and guarantees the acknowledgment and cultivation of all aspects of administrative excellence across different areas in educational environments.

The evolution of leadership roles in schools indicates a transition toward more collaborative and transformational leadership styles, which are commonly linked to female leaders but are valuable and effectively practiced by males (Tashtoush et al., 2024b; Qawasmeh, 2021; Rasheed & Tashtoush, 2023). This movement signifies a wider societal shift, with an increasing emphasis on the qualities that individuals contribute to leadership positions. This perspective not only improves the quality of educational leadership but also exemplifies for future generations that leadership encompasses competence and vision, surpassing conventional gender roles. Educational institutions can leverage the expertise of seasoned leaders by establishing organized mentorship programs that promote knowledge transfer between experienced and novice administrators (Aldreabi & Jaradat, 2022). These programs increase the competencies of novice leaders while fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaborative learning in educational institutions. Furthermore, acknowledging the significance of experience in administrative proficiency highlights the necessity for policies that promote career sustainability in educational leadership to ensure the retention and effective utilization of invaluable practical knowledge within the education system. Such efforts can enhance leadership inside schools, fostering a continuous dedication to excellence and innovation in education (Darwish, 2023; Shirawia et al., 2023).

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusions of this study highlight important variables affecting Jordanian school administrators' opinions of administrative excellence. Comprehending these variables is crucial in customizing leadership development initiatives that cater to particular requirements and augment the general efficacy of school administration. A progressive tendency in educational leadership is supported by a lack of employment experience, academic degree categories, and job title disparities in perceptions of administrative excellence. This means that all leaders have equal prospects for improvement. These findings emphasize how important it is to include mentorship and experience learning in professional development programs. Educational institutions can cultivate a culture of continual growth and flexibility, which is crucial in the ever-changing sector of education, by utilizing insights and information.

This study adds to the ongoing discourse in Jordan on educational leadership and lays the groundwork for future research projects that will improve administrative procedures to better align with the objectives of Vision. To meet its national education targets and guarantee that the following generation is educated to the highest standards under the guidance of exceptional leaders, Jordan must continue to prioritize the development of administrative excellence.

Although several shortcomings point to potential areas for further investigation, overall, this study offers insightful information on how Jordanian school administrators see administrative excellence. Future research should consider incorporating a more heterogeneous cohort of participants, encompassing numerous geographic locations and public and

private school types throughout Jordan. By doing so, the results would be more representative and offer a more thorough picture of the administrative excellence landscape within the larger educational system.

## 7. Limitations

This study was limited by its purpose, which was to assess the degree of administrative excellence among educational leaders in schools, following the quality standards established by the Education Evaluation Commission in Jordan. The results were limited by the instrument used to collect data and the objectivity of the responses from the participants. The sample's narrow demographic focus, which comprised solely administrators and instructors from Irbid's public schools, is one of the main limitations. This constraint limits the applicability of the findings to other geographical areas.

## Ethical Considerations

The authors state that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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