

Gender Equity in Jordanian Higher Education System: Yarmouk University as a Case Study

*Anjad Abdullah Mahasneh, Batoul Mujahed Al-Muhaisen **

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate practices of gender equity in relation to women in Jordanian higher education system, specifically in the case of Yarmouk University. Despite the progress that has been made at raising awareness of gender-related issues in different areas, especially education, and due to the decline of Jordan's rank on world gender index, more efforts are still needed to increase participation of women in the educational sector in Jordan. In this evaluation study, quantitative data have been collected through a questionnaire consisting of 29 closed-ended items that has been distributed to female academics at Yarmouk University. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and Kruskal–Wallis analysis are used to analyze the data. The results reveal that most of female academics at Yarmouk University agree that gender equity is neither widely available nor well practiced at the university. Furthermore, gender equity is not part of the university policies, documents or regulations. Therefore, more integration of female instructors is needed, especially in senior positions.

Keywords: Gender equity; higher education; female academics; Yarmouk University; Jordan.

Introduction

During the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995, representatives of 189 governments gathered in Beijing and produced the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing women's rights under 12 critical areas of concern, Women and the environment, Women in power and decision-making, the girl child, women and the economy, Women and poverty, Violence against women, Human rights of women, Education and training of women, Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, Women and health, Women and the media, and Women and armed conflict (Beijing Platform 1995).

Furthermore, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) was established by decree of the Council of Ministers in 1992, and a year later Jordan drew up its first National Strategy for Women. The Strategy focuses on legislative changes, greater participation by women in public and political life, access to and control of economic resources, and equal opportunity in the areas of education, social life and health. Following the Beijing Platform, this strategy was updated to include a chapter under the theme "Human and Social Security" to achieve the following objectives: (1) development of the education system and raising its internal efficiency, with respect to the gender concept; (2) development of informal education programs, with respect to gender, and focus on the various aspects of eradicating illiteracy in all its forms (total illiteracy, functional illiteracy and computer illiteracy); (3) raising enrolment rates for education, upgrading and vocational training programs, and (4) changing prevalent social attitudes that restrict women's educational choices (Jordan Report on Beijing Platform 2005: 8).

This study aims at investigating the practices of gender related issues at the academic level in Yarmouk University. Because gender equity and equality are very important issues in the development of any given society as stated by the Global Gender Gap Report 2014:

"Multiple studies have shown that healthy and educated women are more likely to have healthier and more educated children, creating a positive, virtuous cycle for the broader population. Research also shows the benefits of gender

* Yarmouk University, Jordan. Received on 8/1/2018 and Accepted for Publication on 26/6/2018.

equality in politics: when women are more involved in decision-making, they make different decisions—not necessarily better or worse—but decisions that reflect the needs of more members of society" (3)

In 2006, the World Economic Forum introduced the Global Gender Gap Index as a framework for capturing the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress (Global Gender Gap Report 2014:3). This global index is highly important as it shows the progress or the decline of gender participation in sectors such as economy, politics, health care and most importantly, education in a given country. This indication is essential in creating awareness among population in order to reduce any possible gender gap.

In 2014, Jordan ranked 134 among 142 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, compared to previous reports, dropping from 93rd in 2006 to 134th in 2014 and scored (.597 where 0.00 = inequality, 1.00 = equality). According to the report, Jordan ranked 140th in economic participation and opportunity among world countries, 127th in health and survival index, 119th in political participation, and 74th in educational attainment. Jordan ranked 69th in literacy rate, with 97% for female and 98% for males. In primary education enrolment it ranked 104 out of 142, while it ranked 1st in the secondary education enrolment with 89% for female and 86% for males. In the tertiary education enrolment, Jordan also ranked 1 with 50% for female, and 43 % for males.

It should be noted that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with a population of 7,930,491 million people, of which 48.97% are female. The median age is 21.8 years, the population growth rate is 3.86%, and a GDP of USD 18.44 million in 2014 (Jordan Demographics Profile 2014). Gender gaps in various areas constitute a fundamental challenge to the task of achieving equity, complete equality or parity between men and women in Jordan. Despite improving levels of educational attainment, Jordan is one of the Arab countries with the lowest employment rates for both men (58%) and women (11%). Employment rates rise with educational level, especially among women. Only less than 5% of women with less than secondary education and 49% of women with first degrees are employed. The female unemployment rate is less than 30%, and for young women is as high as 56% (Jordan in figures 2012).

This study aims to shed more light at practices regarding women in academia in the higher education system at Yarmouk University in order to raise awareness about this issue in an attempt to improve any possible gap. Despite the progress that has been made at raising awareness of gender related issues in Jordan in different areas especially education, more efforts are still needed to increase the participation of women in the educational sector as it constitutes a basic pillar in the development in Jordan. A few studies have been conducted concerning the participation of women (Alsawalqah, 2016, Al-Rawashdeh, & Al-A'rab, 2016, Abumelhim, 2018). In addition, the decline of the Jordanian rank on the gender index necessitates more efforts to improve this situation.

Research Questions

1. To what extent the practices of Gender Equity are available in Yarmouk University from the perspective of its female academic employees?
2. What is the correlation of Gender Equity practices together in Yarmouk University?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between demographic factors (age, academic rank, Major, experience) on the perception of gender equity in Yarmouk University?

Literature Review

What is Gender

Before talking about gender studies, one must differentiate between gender and sex. Sex refers to the biological characteristics between men and women, which are universal and do not change for example race, class, and ethnic group. Meanwhile, gender refers to the socially given attributes, roles, practices, responsibilities and needs connected to being men (masculine) and women (feminine) in a given society at a given time, and as a member of a specific community within that society (Christodoulou and Zobniana 2005: 1).

Moreover, Gender Studies is the field which studies “the process of assessing the implications for women and men

of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" (Miller and King 2005: 37).

Gender Studies came into existence at the beginning of the 1970s to fill the knowledge gap of women's rights and to respond to inequality towards women in both personal and social aspects, "The main subject of women's studies was the past and present position of women in society, i.e. not only the situation of women, but also their social relationships, including relationships between men and women...Historically and culturally determined conceptions of sex, or gender, proved to be important for people's understanding of other people and the organization of social relationships" (Swedish Research Council 2014: 3).

Moreover, Gender Studies examines the roles, the image, and the structure of gender in a specific society, i.e. it studies the social role of gender (males or female) in society. It includes many sub studies like, women studies, feminist research, gender system, queer studies among others.

Gender studies is a generic term for the field as a whole and it includes specific sub-areas such as gender equality studies (with a focus on perceived injustices and/or measures taken to remedy what are defined as injustices), women's studies (with a focus on women or femininity, i.e. a narrower interpretation than in the early days of gender studies when this term represented the whole field), men's studies (with a focus on men or masculinity), queer studies (with a focus on cross-gender identities, especially of a sexual nature). (Swedish Research Council 2014: 5).

Gender Equality and Equity

Gender equality is always accompanied by gender equity which implies that both concepts have the same notion. However, there is a slight difference between them. Gender equality is considered "the broad concept that is best understood within the wider context of social exclusion such as ethnicity, race, sex, and economic status, place of residence, language, or health status" (USAID 2008:3-5). In other words, it implies that males and female have the same opportunities and rights despite of their demographic differences which enable them to help and develop their society.

Meanwhile, Gender equity is concerned with "strategies and processes that provide fair and equal chances for all to pursue and benefit from educational opportunities" (USAID 2008:2). Thus, gender equity ensures and sets the appropriate strategies and procedures to achieve equality in the educational stream between males and female. Therefore, gender equity is very important when we talk about equality. For example, if girls are to be given the right of education the same as boys then this right will be achieved through gender equity.

Gender Equity in the International Development Agencies

Gender equity and empowering women in the educational sector have been encouraged by many international initiatives and actions such as; (1) Article 4 of the World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century 1998, which called for the elimination of all gender stereotyping in higher education at all levels and in all disciplines in which women are underrepresented. Women's active involvement in decision making in higher education was emphasized. The participants at the UNESCO conference recommended that by the year 2010, university chairs, professors, and heads of department posts should be filled by men and women on equal basis. (2) The Dakar Framework for Action which represents the most important international political commitment towards promoting Education for All. It contains two gender-based goals, one to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, And the second to achieve gender equality in education by 2015. (3) The eight Millennium Development goals which address poverty in its many dimensions-income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter, and exclusion-while promoting gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability. It was officially established following the Millennium Summit of the UN in 2000. (Onsongo 2011 and Subrahmanian 2005).

Gender laws, regulations and issues in Jordan, and the Arab World

Recently, the issue of Gender has caught a lot of attention in the Arab world especially in Jordan. This attention was

shown in setting laws, regulations and issues related to gender to provide both males and females in Jordan with the rights that offer them freedom and the best quality of life.

Labor laws were amended to keep up with the development and gender equality between the members of the society. According to the labor laws, women in Jordan are given the right to work in both public and private sectors and are given rights that enables them to work productively. For example, Jordanian labor code allows pregnant women to have employment leave for paid maternity leave. They also provide unpaid leave for up to two years to accompany their spouse to another location. Women are also given health insurance and social security payments and they can have their children with them if they so desire.

Despite of the advantages the labor law provides, it still lacks some rights. For example, "female employees in the public sector are not entitled to receive family allowance if the father of their children is still alive and fit for work" (Macher-Teleon and Slimene 2009:9). Some of the regulations were also ambiguous, such as the working hours in the private sector, where women are not allowed to work during the night, however, there are some exceptions. Women are allowed to work at night if the workplace is a hotel, airport, coffee shop, etc. This discourages women to work and develop their social practices at the same time so they may prefer to stay at home.

The right of education was also considered in the gender laws. In Jordan, males and females are given an equal opportunity to pursue their education in any field of science. However, this right is only equal at the primary and secondary education; at the university level is not so, but it starts to increase, where "females comprise half the student body in many disciplines, including nearly two thirds in natural sciences, medicine, dentistry, paramedical and veterinary medicine combined" (Al-Qazzat, 2003 :6).

Another example of gender regulations in Jordan is related to civil rights of Jordanian mothers whose children are from another nationality, in which case, they are not given any rights. Recently, they were given some of the rights that Jordanians have such as the right to work which caused a lot of commotion in the country. Although laws in Jordan take into consideration gender equality, it needs more attention from the government to amend such laws and regulations in order to fulfill and achieve gender equality in the country.

Importance of Equity in Education

There is a positive relationship between gender equity and educational development in any given society. When we empower women and increase their chances of receiving good education we are improving the economic status and consequently that of their country. "Most economists and international development agencies believe that girls who receive education not only improve their own vocational opportunities, living conditions, and social status, but also promote economic growth and the social development of the entire nation" (Winchester & Browning 2015 :270).

Despite the remarkable progress achieved in empowering women in many countries, there is still a gap favoring men in senior positions in the educational sector. Although the number of women in universities and higher education institutions as staff and students has increased in the recent years, still a small number of them are occupying senior position such as heads of departments and/or deans as stated by recent studies:

International research on gender equity in higher education management shows that men dominate leadership and management of universities...The studies on gender equity in higher education management show that women do not occupy positions that can enable them to influence the policies and direction of their institutions, both at the departmental and at institutional levels. (Onsongo 2011:4)

This fact leads us and other scholars to investigate the reasons behind this poor representation of women in universities. Kearney (2000), for example, argues that "with the increased participation of women in higher education in some countries (as academics and students) researchers should seek answers to questions such as: Why are attitudes towards gender equity not changing fast enough? Why are women prevented from participating fully in decision-making? How does this inequality impact on the challenges facing the higher education sector?" (2).

Consequently, there is an urgent need to define gender equality with its relation to education in order to better measure its development. We need to understand that "Gender inequalities arise from the unequal power relations between women

and men, and hence assessments of gender equality need to capture the relational dimensions of gender inequality...For gender equality to be meaningful, mechanisms for ensuring equality of treatment as well as equality of opportunity for men and women are important" (Subrahmanian 2005: 499).

When it comes to gender equality in education we have three folds to it according to Duncan Wilson (2003); rights to education, rights within education, rights through education. The right to education means "the equal participation of boys and girls in different aspects of education". The rights within education refer to "the right of men and women to nondiscrimination in educational opportunities in each of the following aspects; learning content teaching method and process, subject choice, assessment modes, management of peer relationships, learning outcomes". Rights through education represent gender equity which is defined as "a policy concept which places emphasis on redistribution of resources between women and men in a way that addresses gender-based asymmetries in investment and capacities of women and men" (Subrahmanian 2005: 403 - 406).

Educational System and Higher Education in Jordan

Overall, we can say that in Jordan, higher education plays a key role in the process of comprehensive development in the economy because the government believes that educating larger numbers of people will lead to greater economic growth. Higher education in Jordan witnessed a significant progress in spite of the limited financial and human resources in the kingdom. Higher education lies within the priorities of the State because of the role it plays in promoting the economic, social and knowledge level of the Jordanian citizen.

Moreover, we can say that education is one of the top priorities of the Jordanian government and people. Jordanians believe strongly in education and feel that it is the key to unlock future success. "Education is a key factor in encouraging investment in Jordan's economy since it is the primary mechanism for upgrading labor market quality" (Loveland 18). The education system in Jordan is one of the best systems in the Middle East. It is ranked 18th in the world and first in the Arab world according to UNESCO.

Concerning Education in Jordan, males and females are given equal opportunities. However, the rate females are enrolled in post graduate levels increases significantly; 57% of master degree candidates and 56% PhDs are female (Al-Qazzat, 2003:6).

Higher education institutions in Jordan, both public and private, provide equal rights and opportunities for both male and female (staff or students), such as the right to work for all and the same average payments for similar jobs. However, it is often associated with obstacles and difficulties. Thus, the educational system is accompanied with regulations and legislations to provide gender equality and equity. One of these challenges is "the social practices and convictions especially in some remote or rural areas, sometimes reflect negatively on the extent to which educational services are utilized, such as the case of women's education" (Masri 2009:135). In other words, some fathers do not allow their daughters to pursue their education either because universities are far away or because they only want them to get married.

Gender sensitive teaching

The term 'gender sensitivity' means the ability to recognize gender issues; it is the beginning of gender awareness" (Mlana, et al 2005: 2-3). It became introduced due to its relation with gender; it has been developed "to reduce obstacles to development created by sexism and to help generate respect for the individual regardless of sex" (UNESCO 1997). After conducting studies about education in Jordan, gender sensitive teaching is considered to be the best education "which can help create a learning atmosphere that is fair and sustainable for all" (Aksornkool 1997:15).

However, this strategy meets a lot of constraints (cultural, social, and economical constraints). For example, women in most societies are only considered to be taking care of the household, therefore, some of them are obliged to leave their schools and universities to get married and have kids. Some women also face economic constraints, when their families do not have enough money to pay for school fees, uniforms, lunch, etc. This is the reason that low income parents prefer paying for the boys' education over the girls'.

Thus, teachers and other educators must be trained to meet their needs and overcome these constraints. Raising awareness

in the society helps also in overcoming these constraints, “it will create support systems that will nurture both women and men in a world where equal partnership between the sexes is not only possible but desirable” (Aksornkool 1997: 1).

To conclude, gender studies is a relatively a new field of study which is concerned with studying the social roles of women in a particular society in order to fill any possible gap or any possible inequality with men. Gender studies in Jordan is also recent, it is concerned with many issues including gender equity at the educational level which is highly important aspect in increasing the economical development as it plays a crucial role in the development of any given country. This study poses questions in the area of gender equity in the higher education system in Jordan particularly among female academics in all departments but especially in Translation and modern languages departments at Yarmouk University.

Methodology:

This research is quantitative and descriptive. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and Kruskal–Wallis analysis were used to analyze the data. Beyond a thorough investigation of the literature and careful formulation of research objectives. The study is consisted of a questionnaire distributed to female academics at Yarmouk University. The methodology used is analyzing descriptively the results of this questionnaire following the literature review and following Pearson correlation, and Kruskal–Wallis analysis.

The Questionnaire

The researchers had developed questionnaire to evaluate the practices of gender equity at Yarmouk University. The questionnaire is divided into 6 dimensions and consists of 29 questions.

Validity

Validity refers to the ability of the scale to measure what is intended to measure (Sekaran, 2010). To examine the face validity, the questionnaire of this study was developed and pre-tested by expert academic members in Yarmouk University.

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to indicate how well the questions are positively correlated to one another. Table (1) below shows the reliability coefficient of the research dimensions.

Table (1) Reliability of the study

Dimension	No. of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Formal system	7	0.912
Leadership	5	0.885
Education	7	0.872
Recruitment	3	0.804
Communication	4	0.834
Access	3	0.825

Table (1) above shows that Cronbach's alpha items analysis, within the six dimensions are more than 80%. Thus, the internal consistency reliability of the measures, used in this research, can be considered reliable and consistent (Sekaran, 2010).

Population Sampling and Data Collection

The population of this study consists of 206 female academic members in Yarmouk University. The sample of this study included 100 females working in the University. A total of 100 questionnaires were delivered by hand to respondents out of which 79 were returned, analyzed.

Data Collection Method

In this study we used quantitative methods through a questionnaire consisted of 29 closed-ended items to collect data from the female academic. Descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation, and Kruskal–Wallis analysis were used to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire.

Data Collection Instruments

The researchers borrowed and modified an organizational assessment questionnaire on gender equity designed by the Department of Health and Wellness in Nova Scotia Canada to increase the participation of girls and women in physical activity, sport, and recreation as part of gender equity policies and practices and to assess any organization’s progress towards gender-equity goals (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire consists of two parts, along with gathering instructors’ demographic information. The questionnaire purpose was to find out the degree of satisfaction of female academics in all departments and their perceptions a number of gender equity practices in Yarmouk University.

Part 1 (Demographic Information): This part of the questionnaire aimed to obtain information on the instructors age, academic rank, major, and years of experience in Yarmouk University.

Part 2 (the degree of instructors' satisfaction): This part was designed in order to find out the female *academic* degree of satisfaction and their perceptions on six areas of gender equity practices; Formal System, Leadership, Recruitment, Education, Communication, and Access(details on the questionnaire on appendix 1). The answers to questionnaire consist of five-point Likert Scale or "Summative" values ranging from 1-5 where five (5) is the highest degree of agreement with the statements and one (1) is the lowest degree of agreement with the statements.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were compiled and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS] 22.0 program was employed to analyze the data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through descriptive and Pearson correlation, and Kruskal-Wallis analysis.

Discussion

- General Characteristics of the study sample

The study consisted of seventy-nine female academic working in Yarmouk university; their ages is between 25 to 55, their academic ranks ranges from instructors to full professors, their majors were in five main faculties: Science, Arts, Education, and Information Technology. Finally, their experience in the university ranges between one 1 to 20 years, as shows in table (2):

Table (2) General Characteristics of the study sample

Age	No.	Academic rank	No.	Major	No.	Experience	
25-30	1	Instructors	41	Science	14	Below 5	11
31-35	20	Assist Prof	28	Art	37	6-10	32
36-40	24	Assoc Prof	6	Education	19	11-15	17
41 & above	34	Prof	4	IT	2	16& above	11
				Others	5		
	79		79		79		79
							79

- Overall perceptions of the respondents to the questionnaire on Gender Equity practices

Formal Systems practices; 60% of the 79 participants disagreed with seven statements included in this dimension, while 15% agreed, and 25% moderately agreed.

Leadership practices; 60% of the 79 participants disagreed with five statements included in this dimension, while 19% agreed, and 21% moderately agreed.

Recruitment practices; 60% of the 79 participants disagreed with three statements included in this dimension, while 22% agreed, and 18% moderately agreed.

Education practices; 63% of the 79 participants disagreed with seven statements included in this dimension, while 18% agreed, and 19% moderately agreed.

Communication practices; 62% of the 79 participants disagreed with four statements included in this dimension, while 19% agreed, and 19% moderately agreed.

Access practices; 59% of the 79 participants disagreed with three statements included in this dimension, while 19% agreed, and 22% moderately agreed.

Overall, 60% the 79 participants disagreed with all the statements included in the six dimensions, while 18, agreed, and 22% moderately agreed.

Research Questions Analysis:

First Research Question: To what extent the practices of **Gender Equity** are available in **Yarmouk University** from the perspective of its female's academic employees?

To answer this question, Table (3) below summarizes the results of this question as follows:

Table (3) Means and Standard Deviation

(N=79)

Dimensions of Study	Mean	SD
Formal Systems	2.32	1.01
Leadership	2.35	1.05
Recruitment	2.38	1.07
Education	2.26	.88
Communication	2.27	1.04
Access	2.31	1.08
Gender Equity	2.33	.90

Table (3) above shows the descriptive statistics of the dimensions of gender equity in Yarmouk University according to the mean and standard deviation. It is seen from the table that the practicing level for all dimensions is very weak. This means that gender equity practices in the six dimensions is not satisfactory a fact affirmed by two prior studies, one by Probert 2005 and another by Winchester & Browning 2015 in which they state that the weak and the poor representation of gender equity practices is a common practice because of cultural reasons.

Analysis of the respondents' answers of the standard deviations also revealed that it is below (1) for education and Gender Equity dimensions which indicates an overall agreement among the respondents of the significant of education and Gender Equity dimensions in Yarmouk University.

Second Research Question: What is the correlation of Gender Equity practices together in Yarmouk University?

To answer this question, Pearson's correlation was used. Table (4) below shows Pearson Correlation among gender equity practices

Table (4) Pearson Correlation among gender equity practices

(N=79)

	Formal Systems	Leadership	Recruitment	Education	Communication	Access
Formal Systems	1					
Leadership	.728** .000	1				
Recruitment	.661** .000	.823** .000	1			
Education	.775** .000	.838** .000	.826** .000	1		

	Formal Systems	Leadership	Recruitment	Education	Communication	Access
Communication	.764** .000	.785** .000	.730** .000	.864** .000	1	
Access	.718** .000	.716** .000	.748** .000	.816** .000	.816** .000	1

Table (4) above shows correlation at the level of ($p \leq 0.01$) among gender equity practices. The results reveal that there is a positive correlation among all dimensions where the highest degree of correlation is between education and communication reached (0.864) at the level of ($p = 0.000$). The results also show the lowest degree of correlation is between formal system and recruitment reached (0.661) at the level of ($p = 0.000$).

Furthermore, the above results show that the educational dimension is highly affecting the communication dimension in a way that if the university recognizes the services of female volunteers in a good way, and if the university adopts a comprehensive orientation process for new staff, and new employees, that includes training on gender equity, diversity, and social inclusion, and if the developmental opportunities are available for female academic to foster their interest in participating a program, or activity, and if there are development initiatives to cater to the learning and scheduling needs of female, and if there is a mentor program available to female instructors/female head of departments, and if there are opportunities for female instructors to apprentice with experienced individuals and if there is a vehicle through which female instructors can network with other female. All this will lead to integrate the perspectives of female into its documentation, and policies, and consequently attributes such as power, confidence, decisiveness, generosity, and courage among other will be attributed equally to males and female, and there will be awareness campaigns to increase female academic participation in practices and therefore the university will outreach to parents, families, and communities to support the participation of female academic.

Further, the effectiveness relation between formal system dimension and that of recruitment is somehow weak, which means that even if university adopts gender equity strategy as a part of the University's foundational documents, policies and procedures to encourage and support the participation of females, and even if the university appoints a specific board or staff person responsible for identifying and addressing barriers to female academic participation, examining the impact of its policies and procedures on the participation of female academic, and tracking the participation rates by sex and to evaluate its practices to determine if it reached all the people it intended to reach and if changes are required to its policies, programs, or services- that would affect very slightly the gender balance on the selection committee for instructors and head of departments, the available incentives to attract and retain female academics and administrators, and the equal recognition of the historic contributions of both males and female in the university.

Third Research Question: Is there a statistically significant relationship between demographic factors (age, academic rank, Major, experience) on respondents' perception of gender equity in Yarmouk University.

To answer this question, Table (5) below summarizes the results of this question as follows:

Table (5) results of Kruskal -Wallis test
(N= 79)

Dimensions of Study	Demographic /organizational factors			
	Age	Academic rank	Major	Experience
Formal system	.217	(.010) *	(.000) *	.076
Leadership	.111	(.013) **	(.002) **	.084
Recruitment	.354	.245	(.001) **	.079
Education	.319	.119	(.000) *	.129
Communication	.178	.109	(.000) *	(.015) **
Access	.215	.227	(.000) **	(.002) *

* Significant at ($P \leq 0.01$)

** Significant at ($P \leq 0.05$)

Table (5) above reveals that Age has no significant impact at ($p \leq .05$) on respondents' perceptions toward gender equity dimensions. Moreover, the above table reveals that Academic rank has a significant impact at ($p \leq .05$) on respondents' perceptions toward only formal system and leadership dimensions. The results of formal system show that (chi square= 11.356) at the level of ($p = .010$), based on the means clarified by Kruskal-Wallis test, was (47.12) for the instructors group. The results of leadership show that (chi square= 10.783) at the level of ($p = .013$), based on the means clarified by Kruskal-Wallis test, was (47.12) for the instructors group.

Moreover, Table (5) reveals that major has a significant impact at ($p \leq .01$) on respondents' perceptions toward all gender equity dimensions. The results show that (chi square= 30.502) at the level of ($p \leq .01$), based on the means rank clarified by Kruskal-Wallis test, was (51.85) for the Art college group.

Finally, Table (5) reveals that experience has a significant impact at ($p \leq .01$) on respondents' perceptions toward all gender equity dimensions. The results show that (chi square= 11.359) at the level of ($p \leq .01$), based on the means rank clarified by Kruskal-Wallis test was (41.17) for the (6-10) years group.

Conclusion

Overall, 60% the 79 participants disagreed with all the statements included in the six dimensions, while 18%, agreed, and 22% moderately agreed. The above results show that most of the female academic in Yarmouk University agree that gender equity practices are not available and not well practiced in the university. Furthermore, gender equity is not part of the university policies, documents or regulations, there is no action plan to address issues related to female academic nor to trace their participation in different sectors, the university does not evaluate regularly its practices in order to determine whether it reaches all people including females.

Moreover, there is neither equitable representation of males and female as decision makers, nor is there a balance representation on board of directors or committees between males and female. These results are supported by the findings of two previous studies one by Probert 2005 and another Winchester & Browning 2015 which showed that "the underrepresentation of women in senior positions in Australian universities is not a result of poor policy or erratic implementation but is a deep-seated cultural issue" (Winchester & Browning 2015: 280).

Moreover, the university has relatively no effective means of identifying and addressing conflicts between male and females which consequently do not provide a respectful working environment where female academics can participate in planning programs or evaluating university's practices.

Along the same line in recruitment and selection of female academics, the results of the questionnaire show that the gender balance on selection committee for instructors and head of departments is not high because of the absence of incentives to attract them to participate and the lack of recognition for their contributions in the university.

Further, gender equity practices related to education and training are also weak, because of the insufficient orientation process for the new staff, absence of adequate recognition of female volunteers, lack of developmental and initiatives opportunities for female participation in programs and practices, insufficient number of mentor programs for female instructors and head of departments, lack of practicing opportunities with experienced individuals, weakness of networking among female academic and officials.

Additionally, communication practices are available in a small degree because the university does not integrate in a good way the perspectives of female academic into its policies, does not attribute good qualities equally between males and female, does not initiate enough awareness campaigns to increase female academic participation in practices nor it does reach for local community to support this participation.

Finally, gender equity practices related to access and participation is also somehow weak in Yarmouk University, because it does not offer female-only practices, nor it does promote female academic as role models to participate in these practices.

To conclude, despite the existence of gender equity practices in Yarmouk university to a relatively good degree, there is still a need to increase the availability and the practicality of these practices in order to increase the participation of

female academic in the different practices held by the university through a number of strategies and procedures, integrating gender equity policies in different documents and regulations of the university, promoting and encouraging female academic to participate in these practices, creating effective networks to better communication among the female academic, creating a balance in the opportunities offered among males and female academic, offering more developmental incentives and initiatives to promote female academic participation, recognizing the efforts offered by female academic in a good way, founding a strategic plan to address gender inequality at all levels, evaluating regularly all practices offered by the university to insure that these practices are reached by female academic and to make the required changes or modifications, and finally outreaching the local community to support the participation of female academic. All these mentioned goals could be achieved if we follow a comprehensive approach "only a combination of various gender equality measures and initiatives can make an effective and target-oriented contribution in order to establish gender equality and parity at the university level. Gender equity interventions should not be left to a specific unit but is should be integrated within all areas of the university (teaching, research, personnel and budget issues, leadership/management and steering/controlling levels) (Onsongo 2011:20).

Drawing on this study, the researchers suggest the following; to publish the results of study and distribute them to the policy and decision makers of Yarmouk university to shed some light on the existing gap in gender equity practices practiced in the university. To Initiate an awareness camping of female rights adopted by the Jordanian government adopting the Beijing platform. To hold awareness training shops on female academic rights in participating equally with males academic in the university. A fact heightened before by a study conducted by Al Majali 2018 which "recommends that the Ministries of Jordan of Health to give greater importance to the problems facing working women and increasing their participation in decision-making, and the holding of training and educational courses, which lead them towards to alleviate these problems" (25). To create a platform/association network for female academics in Yarmouk for better communication among the female academic. To Imitate the Australian experience in the gender field and form a Senior Women Executives in Higher Education association which will initiate an action plan to encourage all universities to integrate equity strategies and performance indicators into their institutional plans; to improve significantly the representation of women in senior roles; to monitor the patterns of entry of women into academia; to improve the monitoring of gender equity in workforce data; and to identify and engage universities with critical matters through research on gender equity issues and dissemination of good practice. (Winchester & Browning 2015: 279). To initiate gender equity campaigns to encourage the increased recruitment of women as students and staff into higher education.

REFERENCES

- Abumelhim, Mohammad H. 2018. The Social Consequences of Jordanian Women's Employment as Viewed by Employed Women in Jerash Governorate. *DIRASAT*. (1) 45, NA.
- Aksornkool, Namtip. 1997. "Gender-Sensitive Education for a better world". Background paper for the international conference on adult education, Hamburg, Germany, July.
- Al Majali, Amal. 2018. Problems Facing Working Women in the Karak Governance in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. *Dirasat* (2) 45. 1-25.
- Al-Rawashdeh, A'la & Al-A'rab, Asma. 2016. Difficulties Prevent Jordanian Women Participation in Political Life in Light of some Social Variables. A Field Study on Pioneer Women Sample in North Region. *Dirasat*. (3) 43. 1353- 1373.
- Alsawalqah, Rola. 2016. Social Change and Values Conflict of the Educated Women in The Jordanian Society "A Comparative Study". *DIRASAT*. 5 (43). 2067 – 2093.
- Al-Qazzat, Ayad. 2003. Education of women in the Arab world. Retrieved from:
<https://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/awomeduc.htm>
- Declaration Beijing Platform for Action. 1995. Retrieved from:
http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf
- Jordan. 2014. Jordan Demographics Profile. Retrieved from:

- http://www.indexmundi.com/jordan/demographics_profile.html .
- Jordan. 2012. Jordan in Figures. Retrieved from:
http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_a/jorfig/2012/index_e.htm
- Jordan. 2005. Jordan report on Beijing Platform. retrieved from:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/responses/JORDAN-English.pdf>
- Josie Christodoulou.2005. Glossary of Gender-related Terms. Mediterranean institute of gender studies. Retrieved from:
http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/AdvocacyEducationTools/genderglossary_migs_aug2005.pdf
- Hilary P.M. Winchester & Lynette Browning. 2015. Gender equality in academia: a critical reflection, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 37:3, 269-281
- Kearney, M. L. (2000): Overview: From Rhetoric to Reality in M. L. Kearney (ed) *Women Power and the Academy- From Rhetoric to Reality*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing/ Berghahn Books pp 1-19.
- Loveland, Elaina.2007. "A Sea Change in Jordan an Interview with the Jordanian Minister of Education." *International Education* 18-22.
- Onsongo, Jane Kerubo. 2011. Promoting Gender Equity in Selected public Universities in Kenya. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
- Probert, B. (2005). I just couldn't fit it in: Gender and unequal outcomes in academic careers. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 12(1), 50–72. doi:10.1111/gwao.2005.12.issue-1
- Majcher-Teleon, Agnieszka, and Olfa Ben Slimene. 2009. "Women and work in Jordan: case study of tourism and ICT sectors." Retrieved from:
<http://www.silviacambie.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/womenwork-in-jordan.pdf>
- Masri, Mohammad.2009. "Policy process and education reform in the Arab world." *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies* 14(1) :129-144.
- Miller, Christopher Allan, and Mary E. King. 2005. A glossary of terms and concepts in peace and conflict studies. Retrieved from:
<https://www.upeace.org/pdf/glossaryv2.pdf>
- Mlama, Penina, MaremaDioum, Herbert Makoye, Lornah Murage, Margaret Wagah, and Rose Washika. 2005. *Gender Responsive Pedagogy: A Teacher's Handbook*. FAWE House: Nairobi Kenya.
- Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. (2010). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach* (5th ed.). Chichester: John Willey & Sons Ltd
- Subrahmanian, Ramya. 2005."Gender equality in education: Definitions and measurements." *International Journal of Educational Development* 25, no. 4:395-407.
- Swedish Research Council.(2014) *Gender Studies- A summary*, retrieved from:
https://www.vr.se/download/18.6a9398491107cea06a580003155/1340207556565/Gender_Studies.pdf
- UNESCO, 1997. UNESCO report 1997-1997 retrieved from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001062/106215e.pdf>
- USAID. 2008. Gender equality framework. USA.USAID
- World Economic Forum. 2014. Gender Gap Report 2014. retrieved from:
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GGGR14/GGGR_CompleteReport_2014.pdf
- Wilson, Duncan. 2003. Human Rights: Promoting gender equality in and through education. Background paper for EFA GMR 2003/4.
- Zeng, Junxia, Xiaopeng Pang, Linxiu Zhang, Alexis Medina, and Scott Rozelle. 2014. "Gender Inequality in Education in China: A Meta-Regression Analysis." *Contemporary Economic Policy* 32, no. 2: 474-491.

المساواة بين الجنسين في نظام التعليم العالي الأردني: دراسة حالة جامعة اليرموك

أنجاد عبد الله محاسنة، بتول مجاهد المحيسن*

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة ممارسات المساواة في النوع الاجتماعي في نظام التعليم العالي في جامعة اليرموك من أجل زيادة الوعي في هذا الموضوع في محاولة لتقليل أية فجوات متوقعة. لأنه على الرغم من التقدم الحاصل في زيادة الوعي بالقضايا المتعلقة بالنوع الاجتماعي في مختلف المجالات وخاصة التعليم، ونظراً لتراجع ترتيب الأردن في مؤشر النوع الاجتماعي، إلا أن ما زالت هناك حاجة لتكثيف مزيد من الجهود من أجل رفع مشاركة المرأة في قطاع التعليم في الأردن. تم جمع معطيات كمية في هذه الدراسة التقييمية من خلال استبيان مكون من 29 فقرة تم توزيعها على الأكاديميات في جامعة اليرموك، وتم تحليلها إحصائياً وفقاً لمعامل ارتباط بيرسون وتحليل كرسكال ويليس. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن غالبية الأكاديميات يتفقن على أن ممارسات المساواة في النوع الاجتماعي إما غير موجودة أو غير مطبقة، وأن هذه الممارسات غير موجودة في سياسات الجامعة أو وثائقها أو تعليماتها. ولذلك لا بد من زيادة مشاركة الأكاديميات وخاصة في الوظائف الإدارية العليا.

الكلمات الدالة: مساواة النوع الاجتماعي، التعليم العالي، النساء الأكاديميات، جامعة اليرموك، الأردن.

* جامعة اليرموك، الأردن. تاريخ استلام البحث 2018/1/8، وتاريخ قبوله 2018/6/26.