

THE DEGREE OF PRACTICING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AMONG HEADS OF ACADEMIC 1 DEPARTMENTS AT JORDANIAN UNIVERSITIES AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE LEVEL OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FACULTY MEMBERS

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Abstract:

This study aimed to investigate the degree of strategic leadership practice among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities and to examine the relationship between their strategic leadership and change management from the perspective of faculty members. A descriptive correlational survey approach was employed, utilizing a two-part questionnaire. The first part was dedicated to strategic leadership, and the other measures management change. The sample consisted of 310 faculty members from Jordanian universities during 2023/2024. It was found that the heads of academic departments practice strategic leadership to a moderate level. Their practice of strategic leadership was sequenced as follows: strategy design, analysis of the internal and external environment, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation. Similarly, the level of change management among them was moderate. The most practiced area was preparing for change, followed by planning for change, implementing change, and evaluating change. However, a statistically significant positive correlation was observed between strategic leadership and change management. The study emphasizes the importance of implementing structured awareness programs and training courses for department heads and faculty members to educate them and promote the adoption of strategic leadership as a management approach. It also encourages the development of department leaders' changing management skills to cope with the latest technological advancements and global trends. The study recommends involving department heads and faculty in the creation of strategic plans and visions for their departments.

Keywords: Strategic leadership, change management, faculty member, head of department, Jordanian universities.

Introduction

Universities serve as a fundamental instrument for societal development and the attainment of their aspirations. Universities used to operate in isolation from their communities, but in response to the demands of technological advancement, they have become more integrated with their environment. Today, they typically serve as academic and societal institutions that help shape their surrounding context and, in turn, are influenced by it.

Strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in the development of universities, as it focuses on their long-term vision and strategic goals, enabling them to flexibly adapt to new advances and guide them toward success in a dynamic environment. This actually involves preparing strategic leaders who possess clarity and precision. Strategic leadership refers to a leader's ability to articulate an organization's strategic vision,

motivate employees, and empower them to internalize this vision in order to achieve established goals (Jaloudi & Al-Sharman, 2021).

Strategic leadership is widely regarded as a key driver of an organization's prosperity and long-term sustainability. Strategic leaders are primarily characterized by creativity, innovation, and possess high problem-solving and decision-making skills. They are well-equipped; hence, they manage crises effectively. Given the demands of globalization and its numerous effects, strategic leadership is one of the key strategies that organizations use to sustain a competitive advantage. This is accomplished by their capacity to implement strategic change, which can result in organizational harmony and adaptation (Al-Raqab, 2022).

The researcher deems that strategic leadership in universities enhances their ability to navigate change effectively by shaping the academic vision and facilitating adaptation to ongoing transformations, since explicit and informed leadership is a key factor in the success of change processes.

For institutional progress, change is inevitable. Universities have recognized the significance of human resources in managing change, developing human capital, harnessing creative potential, and driving innovation; therefore, some universities have initiated diverse development projects and enacted strategic, structured reforms (Abu Bakr, 2024).

The concept of strategic leadership was commonly developed within the field of strategic management, and it was firstly referred to as the leader's role in setting strategies. In the early 1980s, the concept of strategic leadership first emerged in academic and business literature, particularly in the writings of renowned business and management experts Philip Kotler and Henry Mintzberg. The term "strategic leadership" at the time referred particularly to the top executive, such as a CEO or company president, who was thought to be primarily responsible for establishing and directing the organization's strategy.

The concept of strategic leadership has gained increasing attention in recent studies, given its support for effective business execution in light of the significant changes imposed on organizations, the complexity of the business environment, and intense competition. Strategic leadership has various definitions; for example, Al-Jaid (2024) views it as leadership that entails managing through others to assist organizations in adapting to the rapid changes that are part of the business environment due to ongoing globalization circumstances. Eid and Al-Nimr (2021) describe it as a comprehensive management of an organization, rather than as a small unit. It also entails fundamental decision-making responsibilities that go beyond the personal and relationship aspects typically associated with leadership.

Al-Amri and Al-Maqrani (2021) define it as the ability to lead an organization with a clear vision and balanced oversight, build the capabilities and skills of employees toward strategic development, and influence them through a set of processes, behaviors, and procedures that impact their activities and capabilities to achieve the organization's goals. Ahmed, Abdul Aziz, and Al-Sayed (2023) view strategic leadership as a form of leadership that influences employee capabilities and manages human capital across the organizational structure to achieve the strategic vision and allocate resources effectively. According to Qayqab and Al-Amri (2023), it is also defined as a dynamic process that includes strategic planning, thinking, and innovation. It is employed to develop the organization's activities and make efficient and effective use of its capabilities to

accomplish its goals in unconventional ways that depend on shifting systems and procedures tailored to each organization's unique circumstances.

In the higher education context, strategic leaders are distinguished by their strategic foresight, analytical reasoning, intelligence, and ability to overcome institutional stagnation by leveraging their cognitive and creative abilities. The goal of strategic leadership is primarily to achieve strategic balance by developing staff capabilities and attracting administrative expertise to address upcoming challenges with foresight and creative thinking. Additionally, strategic leaders work to influence others, demonstrate initiative and adaptability, and stay current with changes—all of which are considered crucial for ongoing development and progress. Administrative innovation, making decisions in dynamic and uncertain contexts, and promoting organizational learning are further traits that define them (Al-Raqab, 2022).

Strategic leadership typically strives to develop human capital and attract managerial expertise that can navigate forthcoming challenges, employ strategic thinking approaches, and find creative solutions to achieve strategic balance. In addition, they are keen to influence others, take initiative and flexibility, and keep pace with change, which is considered the key to improvement and development, as well as the ability to innovate administratively, make decisions in environments characterized by ambiguity and strategic change, and enhance organizational learning (Al-Raqab, 2022).

Strategic leadership strengthens commitment and cooperation, establishes a moral framework within institutional relationships. It acts as a bridge between the university's internal and the external community. It is crucial to create an organizational culture that is flexible and dynamic, build human resources through training and motivation, and foster a forward-thinking organizational culture that aligns with current needs. However, what distinguishes one institution from another is its practical and prudent strategic leadership. In a highly competitive environment, strategic leadership is a potent source of inspiration and creativity because of its breadth of knowledge, inventiveness, and cultural awareness. Furthermore, strategic leadership places a high priority on attracting academic and administrative expertise, as it believes that effective leadership is crucial for organizing teamwork and harnessing organizational energy. Since leaders play a crucial role in determining an organization's direction and influencing individual behavior, their actions are ultimately seen as a key factor in whether institutions succeed or fail (Jaloudi & Al-Sharman, 2021).

In universities, strategic leadership is crucial for coordinating institutional operations with the complexities of the external world. It encourages a culture of ongoing learning and actively supports the growth of organizational structures. This leadership style has a strong emphasis on systematically achieving goals at the tactical, strategic, and operational levels (Ahmed, Abdul Aziz, & Al-Sayed, 2023). Additionally, strategic leadership ensures the efficient and successful implementation of institutional procedures by reducing inefficiencies and time waste, which improves cooperation (Al-Jaid, 2024).

Regarding the dimensions of strategic leadership, they include determining the strategic direction, exploring core competencies, preserving and developing their source, the intelligent use of power, developing human capital, building and developing an effective organizational culture, ensuring work in light of a set of values to investigate ethical practices, and setting strategic controls (Eid & Al-Nimr, 2021).

Achieving optimal leadership in every situation is a significant challenge. Therefore, leadership roles differ based on various strategic approaches. These roles include participatory strategic leadership, which places a strong emphasis on team decision-making, where senior management actively and clearly develops the organization's mission, strategic objectives, and policies. The transformational strategic leadership style is characterized by inspiration and intellectual stimulation, and sensitivity. This type of leadership encourages individuals to set aside their own interests, adopt a shared organizational vision, and challenge conventional wisdom to foster creativity and drive change (Al-Amri & Al-Maqrami, 2021). Executive strategic leadership is centered on common expectations and well-defined objectives. Performance-based incentives and ongoing feedback are two ways that leaders inspire people, which improves both individual performance and institutional learning (Eid & Al-Nimr, 2021).

Change management is a structured process that an organization uses to implement changes through a clearly defined plan. It is defined as a systematic approach that guides an organization through transitions, helping individuals recognize their current situation and adapt to new ones while ensuring that changes are successful (Mahdi & Mishel, 2022). It involves planning, implementing, and sustaining changes to enhance organizational effectiveness, whether through the adoption of new technology, processes, or organizational structures. It aims to improve productivity and operational efficiency within the organization (Al-Dhafiri, 2019). It also focuses on monitoring indicators of change in the business environment and categorizing those indicators related to the organization's activities within its management priorities, enabling management to adapt and adjust to expected changes in its performance and behavior (Al-Tarawneh, 2021).

It is crucial to distinguish between change management as an organized, practical strategy based on specific ideas and methods and change as a broader phenomenon. A real-world implementation of decision-making in contemporary administrative theory is change management. Steklan asserts that administrative change is a latent challenge that demands the full attention and innovative thinking of executive leaders. By actively involving stakeholders in the discovery of novel solutions, CEOs are encouraged to employ creative techniques, such as mind mapping, to enhance idea generation and performance (Abu Bakr, 2024).

Change management characteristics typically encompass several key aspects (Mahdi & Mishel, 2022), including goal orientation, clear communication. Compatibility between the change process and the desires, needs, and aspirations of the various forces involved in the change process. Effectiveness and the ability to move and influence others. Stakeholder positive engagement. Legitimacy, reform, and maturity. The ability to develop and innovate. The ability to quickly adapt to events.

In education, change strategies encompass several important methods. The field rationality approach promotes the spread of scientific knowledge as a basis for change, combating ignorance through external missions, research promotion, and rigorous training (Al-Otaibi, 2023). The focused approach to education and awareness tackles opposition that stems from cultural conflict, fear, or personal interest rather than ignorance. To promote acceptance of change in this situation, effective leadership entails directing, instructing, and removing obstacles to facilitate progress. Last but not least, the coercive force approach entails enforcing laws strictly and punishing noncompliance in order to bring about change (Abu Salim & Auf, 2021).

Organizations can apply a change management approach in various contexts, including the following: Goals and strategies: Many organizations tend to modify their strategies and goals to be more responsive to developments and changes in their surrounding environment. Policies and work rules: In response to changes in work systems and conditions, organizations implement change management strategies by introducing new rules or developing existing ones, thereby becoming less centralized and more flexible (Al-Kharabsheh, 2022). Business and activities: This includes developing or modifying methods and approaches to achieve specific goals. Organizational structure (organizational relationships): Most adjustments and developments to organizational structures occur through modifications or developments to the foundations and standards, leading to the creation, deletion, or merger of additional units or departments (Abu Khadouni & Ben Ashour, 2019).

Given the rapid changes in all fields, higher education institutions have adopted multiple change management approaches, including a defensive approach to protect the institution, mitigate damage, and bridge the gaps arising from change and the adverse effects of traditional management (Al-Mashaqbeh, 2022). Some adopt an offensive approach, which involves developing plans and programs to implement structured changes and taking preventive measures to prevent or mitigate the occurrence of expected adverse outcomes. This approach involves anticipating change, preparing to deal with new circumstances, capitalizing on available opportunities, and avoiding anticipated threats and risks. The benchmarking approach is employed in some higher education institutions, emulating universities that have successfully implemented effective change methods. Finally, the Total Quality Management (TQM) approach focuses on changing higher education institutions from a holistic perspective (Al-Jaradat, 2013).

Several investigations have examined strategic leadership. For instance, Abdo (2017) found a high degree of strategic leadership practices among senior management in university colleges in the Gaza Strip. Hamoud (2018) observed an influence of leadership practices through the existence of a distinct organizational culture that the ministry as an organizational structure follows through its senior management, as well as an evident influence of the significance of the ministry's strategic vision and efforts to implement it, since it can keep up with any changes that may arise in the ministry's internal and external environment.

Al-Zahrani (2018) concluded that Umm Al-Qura University in Saudi Arabia had a high level of strategic leadership practice, and that the development of generative and adaptive organizational learning capabilities was positively correlated with the strategic leadership dimensions. The findings of Flatah's (2018) research demonstrated that female leaders of public kindergartens in Makkah Al-Mukarramah have a high degree of practice.

Notably, Ismail et al (2018) concluded that teacher cooperation is a partial mediator of the independent variable of strategic leadership and the dependent variable of teaching quality. School leaders plan and develop a more effective program to enable cooperation between teachers, thereby improving the quality of teaching. With the presence of cooperation between teachers, the quality of teaching is expected to increase compared to practicing strategic leadership alone.

Al-Raqqad (2020) found an association between the level of strategic leadership and competitiveness practiced by public secondary school principals in the Amman Governorate, attributed to the educational qualification. Jaloudi and Al-Sharman's (2021)

findings reported a moderate level of adherence to strategic leadership principles among university administrations. Similarly, organizational excellence was moderate among participants. The results also revealed a positive correlation between the practice of strategic leadership principles and the level of organizational excellence at the university. Eid and Al-Nimr (2021) found a significant overall difference in the perceptions of strategic leadership practices among Egyptian university employees. They also observed an inverse relationship between strategic leadership practices and organizational climate dimensions, as well as the potential for reducing the organizational climate by focusing on strategic leadership practices.

In the same context, Al-Amri and Al-Maqrami (2021) also found that strategic leadership has a beneficial effect on fostering intellectual capital in Yemeni private universities. Private universities in Yemen are very interested in strategic leadership in all of its forms. Core competences were the most available, followed by strategic orientation, and human capital development was the least available. Since it is the foundation of their establishment, the core of their emergence, and their strategic orientation, intellectual capital is a topic of significant interest in Yemeni private colleges. Al-Mazrouei and Hamza's (2022) study demonstrated that female administrators of public secondary schools in Jeddah practiced strategic leadership to a high degree.

Al-Safrati's (2022) study also revealed a moderate strategic leadership practice among private school principals in Madaba. Al-Raqab's (2022) results reported a statistically significant influence of strategic leadership in its various dimensions on organizational agility and strategic intelligence, as well as an effect of strategic intelligence on organizational agility. It also revealed an indirect effect of strategic intelligence as a moderate variable in the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational agility. Ahmed, Abdul Aziz, and Al-Sayed's (2023) study recommended that universities become increasingly aware of the obstacles to developing strategic leadership performance in crisis management at Egyptian universities as a contemporary approach to increasing university competitiveness. They also recommended leveraging the experiences of leading international universities in the field of strategic leadership, which possess highly competitive advantages, and transferring them to universities in a manner that is consistent with each university's environment and values.

Recent studies, such as Qayqab and Al-Amri (2023), reported a high degree of strategic leadership practice among the subjects. The results also revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between the dimensions of strategic leadership and organizational justice in Yemeni private universities. Al-Shalabi and Qaddour's (2023) results revealed a high practice of strategic leadership and the application of digital governance, with no statistically significant differences in demographic variables. The results also revealed a strong positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that the role of strategic leadership is significant in implementing digital governance. However, strategic leadership contributes positively to building smart universities through core capabilities and human capital, as noted in Al-Jaid's (2024) study, along with the availability of an organizational culture and ethical work practices. Furthermore, the study results showed that strategic intelligence enhances the positive relationship between strategic leadership and the development of smart universities.

Change management has received significant attention from researchers. For example, Abu Aqlin (2015) revealed a high degree of implementation of change management

strategies among secondary school principals in Zarqa Governorate, and similarly, leadership effectiveness was also high. A significant and positive correlation was found between change management strategies and their level of leadership effectiveness. The most significant finding in Al-Otaibi (2015) was that the degree of educational leaders' practice of change leadership was moderate among all leaders and employees in the education departments (both boys and girls) in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The most significant findings of Al-Al-Zyoud's (2017) research revealed a high level of change management and administrative creativity among school principals in Zarqa Governorate, with a strong relationship between the degree of change management practice and the level of administrative creativity. Al-Zoubi (2019) found a high degree of change management practice. The study also showed a statistically significant positive relationship between the degree of change management practice and the level of administrative performance in all areas. The results of Al-Tarawneh (2021) showed high levels of both change management and job performance variables among deans of faculties of physical education in Jordanian universities, as perceived by faculty members. A study by Al-Aqili and Al-Badri (2022) also found that the overall level of change management in the college under study was average. The study also revealed that the overall level of sustainable development in the college under study was average. The study also demonstrated a statistically significant effect of the dimensions of change management on sustainable development at the University of Benghazi.

The findings of Al-Mashaqbeh's (2022) study showed that organizational excellence and change management were statistically significantly correlated, and that academic and administrative leaders at Al al-Bayt University practiced change management to a high degree. Al-Kharabsheh (2022) revealed that Jordanian public universities applied the change management strategy (maturity strategy, relearning strategy, power and coercion strategy) at a medium level in administrative development, with its components (continuous formation, training and development, performance evaluation, and moral needs). The findings also demonstrated that the change management strategy, which includes the following dimensions: maturity, relearning, power, and coercion, has a statistically significant impact on administrative development, which includes the following dimensions: ongoing formation, training and development, performance evaluation, and moral needs, in Jordanian public universities.

According to Mahdi and Mashal's (2022) research, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test based on statistically significant changes in the average ranks of change management and cognitive disorder scores. The study's findings also showed statistically significant differences in the experimental group's average scores on the pre- and post-tests for cognitive dysfunction and change management, favoring the post-test. A sample of female university students reported that the program continued to improve change management and reduce cognitive disorders in light of the digital transformation. The results also showed no statistically significant differences between the average ranks of change management and cognitive disorder scores among members of the experimental group in the post- and follow-up tests.

A recent study by Sahweil (2023) found an average level of change management at Hashemite University. The results also exhibited a positive, direct, and statistically significant correlation between all areas of adaptive leadership and the level of change management.

Al-Otaibi's (2023) results yielded a high impact of change management on organizational performance at Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University across both axes. A statistically significant positive relationship was observed between change management and organizational performance. Abu Bakr (2024) examined how change management affects the development of human resources using Omdurman Ahlia University as an example. This is because life will inevitably change, and effective institutions must aim for leadership, distinction, and quality. Since universities are influential organizations in society that work to improve things, this is the goal that all universities, whether public or private, aim for. Thus, they focused on the concept of human resource development. The university develops its strategy to fulfil its future aspirations, according to one of the study's many conclusions. It is also concluded that Al-Ahlia University should make significant and ongoing adjustments.

Problem Statement

The researcher observed, through her work at universities, that department heads who demonstrate excellence in their roles, particularly in their support for administrative change, employ clear strategies for developing a vision and mission, as well as staying up-to-date with new developments. She also observed that the administrative procedures of department heads varied significantly in quality, which led to varying degrees of administrative change at different universities. The importance of leadership lies in its ability to achieve the institution's goals. However, leadership styles have diversified, including strategic leadership, an influential style that enables individuals and institutions, such as educational institutions, to adapt to changing circumstances.

Furthermore, previous investigations have highlighted the importance of conducting more research on strategic leadership (Ahmed, Abdul Aziz, & Al-Sayed, 2023; Al-Shalabi & Qaddour, 2023; Qayqab & Al-Amri, 2023) about other variables. Studies related to change management have also recommended the need for further research on change management and its connection to other variables (Al-Kharabsheh, 2022; Al-Otaibi, 2023; Abu Bakr, 2024). Based on these recommendations, this study seeks to address the following central question: To what extent do heads of academic departments at Jordanian universities practice strategic leadership, and what is its relationship to the level of change management, from the perspective of faculty members?

Study Questions:

1. What is the degree of strategic leadership practiced by heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities, from the perspective of faculty members?
2. What is the level of change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities, from the perspective of faculty members?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ between the degree of strategic leadership practiced by heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities and the level of change management?

Methodology:

Research Approach:

The descriptive correlational approach was relied on in this study as it facilitates the accurate description of variables or phenomena' current states as they arise naturally, without intervention. Researchers can use this method to investigate the strength and

direction of any relationship, whether positive, negative, or nonexistent, between two or more variables.

Population and Sample:

The study population consisted of 3,210 faculty members in Jordanian universities, with a total of 310 faculty members during the academic year 2023/2024, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Higher Education (2024). A representative sample was selected using the stratified random method ($n=335$). The study tool was applied to them, and 322 questionnaires were collected. However, 12 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses to the questionnaire items, resulting in an actual study sample of 310 questionnaires, which accounted for 9% of the total population.

Instrument:

The researcher developed a two-part questionnaire after conducting a comprehensive review of the studies (Jaloudi & Al-Sharman, 2021; Eid & Al-Nimr, 2021; Al-Raqab, 2022; Al-Shalabi & Qaddour, 2023). The first part aims to measure the degree of strategic leadership practice among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities. In contrast, the second part measures the level of change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities, drawing on several studies (Al-Tarawneh, 2021; Al-Aqili & Al-Badri, 2022; Al-Mashaqbeh, 2022; Al-Kharabsheh, 2022). The questionnaire adopted a five-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree). A classification plan was used based on the average computerized scores of the scale, yielding three categories: low (1-2.33), medium (2.34-3.67), and high (3.68-5).

Instrument Validity

The validity of the questionnaire was established using the face validity method, and the internal consistency validity indicators as follows:

1- face validity

The face validity of the two study tools, strategic leadership practice and the level of change management among heads of academic departments at Jordanian universities, was assessed by presenting them to a panel of 14 faculty members from Jordanian universities specializing in educational sciences. Some linguistic and typographical modifications and corrections were made considering their suggestions.

2 -Internal consistency validity

The Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between each item and the overall tool to establish internal consistency validity. The results of the strategic leadership domains are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table(1)
Internal consistency coefficients between the items of the strategic leadership domains
and the overall score

Strategy design		Internal and external environment analysis		Strategy implementation		Strategy evaluation	
Item	coefficients	Item	coefficients	Item	coefficients	Item	coefficients
1	**0.81	10	**0.80	18	**0.85	26	**0.81
2	**0.84	11	**0.80	19	**0.88	27	**0.86
3	**0.75	12	**0.81	20	**0.84	28	**0.86
4	**0.85	13	**0.83	21	**0.83	29	**0.85
5	**0.79	14	**0.82	22	**0.83	30	**0.84
6	**0.83	15	**0.83	23	**0.85	31	**0.84
7	**0.59	16	**0.82	24	**0.84	32	**0.82
8	**0.85	17	**0.78	25	**0.82		
9	**0.85						

**Statistically significant at 0.01

All consistency coefficient values (between each item and its respective domain) were statistically significant at the level $\alpha = 0.01$, establishing the validity of the instrument. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency validity of the domains and their correlation with the total score of the instrument, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table(2)
Internal consistency coefficients between each domain of strategic leadership and the
overall score

Domain	coefficients
Strategy design	0.96**
Environment analysis	0.96**
Strategy implementation	0.97**
Strategy evaluation	0.95**

Statistically significant at **0.01

All strategic leadership domains were statistically significant at the $\alpha = 0.01$ level, with consistency coefficients ranging from 0.95 to 0.97, indicating the validity of the instrument. The Pearson correlation coefficient was assessed between each item and the total score of the instrument “the change management”, as presented in Table 3.

Table (3) Internal consistency coefficients between the paragraphs of the change management domains and the overall score

Preparing for change		Planning for change		Implementing & Evaluating change	
Item	coefficients	Item	coefficients	Item	coefficients
1	0.86**	10	0.80**	21	0.85**
2	0.86**	11	0.80**	22	0.84**
3	0.86**	12	0.81**	23	0.86**
4	0.85**	13	0.84**	24	0.83**
5	0.86**	14	0.81**	25	0.87**
6	0.86**	15	0.80**	26	0.84**
7	0.85**	16	0.87**		
8	0.87**	17	0.83**		
9	0.87**	18	0.81**		
		19	0.80**		
		20	0.80**		

** Statistically significant at 0.01

Likewise, all consistency coefficients (between each item and its respective domain) were statistically significant at the $\alpha = 0.01$ level, emphasizing the validity of the instrument. Additionally, the researcher computed the internal consistency validity of the domains and their correlation with the tool as a whole using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results are displayed in Table 4.

Table (4)

Internal consistency coefficients between each domain of organizational trust and the overall score

Domain	coefficients
Preparing for change	0.97**
Planning for change	0.98**
Implementing & Evaluating change	0.96**

** Statistically significant at 0.01

Table 4 demonstrates that every aspect of change management was statistically significant at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$), as seen by the consistency coefficient values ranging from 0.96 to 0.98, indicating the tool's validity.

Instruments Reliability:

Table 5 presents the findings of the reliability coefficient, as assessed by Cronbach's Alpha, to evaluate the study tool's degree of reliability.

Table(5)
Reliability coefficients for the strategic leadership domains, the combined domains, and the level of change management

Domain	coefficients
Strategy design	0.92
Environment analysis	0.92
Strategy implementation	0.94
Strategy evaluation	0.93
Strategic leadership	0.98
Preparing for change	0.95
Planning for change	0.95
Implementing & evaluating change	0.92
Change management	0.98

The results in Table 5 present the reliability coefficients for strategic leadership and change management. Comparably, strategic leadership fields ranged between 0.92-0.94, and the overall reliability coefficient was 0.98; the reliability coefficient for the change management fields ranged between 0.92-0.95, and the overall reliability coefficient was 0.988. These results demonstrate that the scale has high reliability indicators.

Findings:

1. Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the degree of strategic leadership practiced by heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities. Results are presented in Table 6 below.

Table(6)
Results of descriptive analysis of respondents' responses on strategic leadership according to each area and the areas combined in descending order

Areas	Rank	Domains	Mean	Std	N	Level
4	1	Strategy design	3.58	0.93	7	moderate
3	2	Environment analysis	3.49	0.93	8	moderate
1	3	Strategy implementation	3.45	0.90	9	moderate
2	4	Strategy evaluation	3.41	0.92	8	moderate
Overall mean			3.48	0.88	32	moderate

Descriptive analysis (means and standard deviations) in Table 6 exhibited a moderate degree of practicing strategic leadership among heads of academic departments in

Jordanian universities, from the perspective of faculty members. The overall mean score was 3.48 with a standard deviation of 0.88. Similarly, all its domains obtained a moderate level. Strategy design was the most prevalent practice (mean 3.58, SD of 0.93). Analysis of the internal and external environment ranked second place (mean 3.49, SD 0.93), followed by strategy implementation (mean 3.45, SD 0.90) and strategy evaluation (mean 3.41, SD 0.92, which was the least practiced domain).

This result can be explained by a set of facts, including the formation of an administrative team of department heads to discuss departmental demands and development plans, as well as the various courses and lectures offered by the university administration on the overall quality of departments and keeping up with the latest developments. These elements primarily enable department heads to predict and anticipate the future, thereby allowing them to develop a clear, flexible, and adaptable strategic vision for their departments. The findings are also ascribed to department heads' expertise in design, execution, and evaluation, as well as their conviction in the value of establishing a sense of identity inside the institution and exercising strategic leadership.

Faculty members and department heads collaborate to establish a strategy that is built on adaptability and clarity, with a measurable and practical plan. Along with taking an organizational oversight stance, the department head also develops a plan to address issues and emergencies that impede workflow, maintaining a global perspective, building human capital, and exploring specialized competencies, such as fostering creativity (Jaloudi & Al-Sharman, 2021).

The results of this study were consistent with those of Eid and Al-Nimr (2021), Adham (2021), Jaloudi and Al-Sharman (2021), Al-Safrati (2022), Al-Raqab (2022), and Al-Jaid (2024), which found a moderate degree of strategic leadership practice among participants. The results of this study differed from the results of Abdo (2017), Hamoud (2018), Al-Zahrani (2018), Flatah (2018), Al-Amri and Al-Maqrami (2021), Al-Mazrouei and Hamza (2022), Qayqab and Al-Amri (2023), and Al-Shalabi and Qaddour (2023), which reported a high degree of strategic leadership practice.

2. Descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the level of change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities, as perceived by faculty members. Results are presented in Table 7 below.

Table (7)

Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses on the areas of change management according to each location and the areas combined.

	Rank	Domains	Mean	Std	N	Level
1	1	Preparing for change	3.50	0.97	9	moderate
3	2	Planning for change	3.48	0.93	6	moderate
2	3	Implementing & evaluating change	3.44	0.91	11	moderate
Overall score			3.47	0.91	26	moderate

Descriptive analysis (mean and standard deviation) yielded an overall moderate level of change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities (mean 3.47, SD 0.91). The most prevalent field was preparing for change (mean 3.50, SD 0.97), followed by planning for change (mean 3.48, SD 0.93), and implementing and evaluating change (mean 3.44, SD 0.91).

The result can be attributed to the department heads' ability to adjust their management style in response to changes, aligning with the university's strategic approach. To accomplish this, the institution must offer the required change-making capacities and train qualified staff through specialized courses. A clear change plan must be implemented before the change is implemented, along with a precise timeline for its implementation. Clarifying the goals and extent of the change is how management accomplishes this. It distributes duties and responsibilities among workers. Along with establishing channels of communication and delegating authority during the change implementation process, management also monitors the change process through department heads. It also teaches them how to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. The change process is periodically evaluated, and any identified problems are addressed. An alternative plan for change is also in place. All of this is intended to enable universities to keep pace with change and establish themselves among local and international universities. This cannot be achieved without leaders who have strategic plans and a commitment to classification and quality requirements (Mahdi & Mishel, 2022).

The findings are consistent with those of Al-Otaibi (2015), Al-Aqili and Al-Badri (2022), Al-Kharabsheh (2022), Mahdi and Mishel (2022), Sahweil (2023), and Abu Bakr (2024), who also found a moderate level of change management. However, the results of this study differed from those of Abu Aqlin (2015), Al-Zyoud (2017), Al-Zoubi (2019), Al-Tarawneh (2021), Al-Mashqbeh (2022), and Al-Otaibi (2023), who observed a high level of change management.

- 3 To determine whether there is a statistically significant correlation at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level between the degree of strategic leadership practiced by heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities and the level of change management, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated. Results are presented in detail in Table 8.

Table(8)

Results of the Pearson correlation coefficient between the degree of strategic leadership practice and the level of change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities.

Variables		Strategy design	Environment analysis	Strategy implementation	Strategy evaluation	Strategy leadership
Preparing for change	R	**0.88	**0.89	**0.91	**0.90	**0.93
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Planning for change	R	**0.86	**0.87	**0.90	**0.88	**0.91
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Implementing & evaluating change	R	**0.87	**0.88	**0.90	**0.89	**0.92
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Change management	R	**0.89	**0.90	**0.93	**0.91	**0.94
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table 8 presents the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient regarding the relationship between strategic leadership practice and change management among heads of academic departments in Jordanian universities. The results reveal a statistically significant positive correlation between all areas of strategic leadership and areas of change management. Furthermore, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between all areas of strategic leadership combined and areas of change management, with the overall correlation coefficient 0.94.

The direct positive relationship shown by the results can be attributed to the heads of academic departments' positive attitude towards the application of strategic leadership in universities, as evidenced by their change management. Additionally, there is a reciprocal relationship between the degree of change management at universities and the strategic leadership practices of department heads. The degree to which department heads employ strategic leadership is directly related to the efforts made to promote change and adapt to current global shifts, especially in light of growing competition between domestic and foreign universities. Practical strategic leadership approaches are mainly responsible for the education sector's high degree of change management in response to global transformations.

In light of these results, the researcher suggests holding awareness programs and training courses for department heads and faculty members on the importance of adopting a strategic leadership approach as a management style in the workplace and providing department heads with training programs to assist them in adapting to the changing landscape of technology and globalization, as well as attempting to include department heads and faculty in the creation of departmental strategic plans and visions at Jordanian institutions. It is also recommended that awareness seminars and lectures be provided to raise the knowledge of department heads and academic leaders about the significance of change.

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