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College of Social  
Sciences

**Educational Leadership and the Turn to Empowerment**

**by**

**Abeer Saeed Mesfer Alghamdi**

A Thesis Submitted in fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

School of Education

College of Social Science

University of Glasgow

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## **Abstract**

Modern leadership and management have multiple methods and facets, focusing as a whole on introducing advanced concepts for dealing with the administrative work system. Among these concepts, old in their inception but new in their application, is the concept of empowerment, a concept that a number of organisations have begun to adopt to enhance institutional quality.

This concept is derived from the word ‘power’, and if translated it into Arabic the meaning of empowerment is maintained. In considering empowerment as an administrative concept, most definitions agree that empowerment is concerned with granting employees higher levels of authority related to their work and issues within their job specialisation, liberating them from the control specified by instructions and granting them more freedom to take responsibility for their own opinions, decisions, applications, and actions.

This power takes several forms, according to the specialisation in which it is applied, and in the science of management there are a group of elements that can be considered aspects of strength that enable the employee to perform their work better, such as authority, responsibility, knowledge, appearance, technology, relationships, money, and charisma.

But the process of empowerment is far beyond the process of giving the employee authority, as it covers a wider circle that includes knowledge, technical level and self-confidence, and these self-skills, if put in the right mould, will provide the organisation with the best results in terms of work outcomes. As a result, some countries around the world have tended to reform their educational and administrative systems to improve educational system quality and, in light of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s orientations toward developing education systems, empowerment emerged as one of the most important objectives of the 2030 development plan and vision. Hence the importance of this study, which is in line with the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 and which, according to the researcher’s knowledge, is the first and only study that deals with the concept of empowerment in the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the trend towards decentralisation. This study also opens new horizons for researchers to conduct more studies on the empowerment approach and its effectiveness through its recommendations and results that may support policy and decision- makers in education, whether in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or globally, in order to achieve the desired goals of implementing the empowerment approach in order to achieve greater participation and a role

for all members of society. the educational system in making decisions, solving problems, assuming responsibility, and developing work methods.

Based on the above, the main objective of this study is to explore the concept of empowerment and the possibilities of education system enhancement from the application of an empowerment approach in relation to the revision of school leadership within Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. The research sought to investigate the understanding and perceptions of key stakeholders. In this research the data were collected by quantitative and qualitative methods using three types of research tools: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. These tools were simultaneously applied in order to produce a data set that could be explored in answering the questions driving this project in relation to the concept of empowerment and its potential for improving the educational system. Participants' perspectives were explored using semi-structured interviews (conducted with eight officials from the Ministry of Education and school principals). Focus group discussions were conducted with four groups of teachers from secondary schools in different regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire was distributed electronically to 200 secondary school teachers. The study discovered that there is a widespread belief that the empowerment approach can be of great value in the education system, and that the Ministry of Education must take a strong stance in spreading the culture of empowerment and increasing participation in achieving its implementation measures.

## **Dedication**

To the one who honoured me with his name, he sacrificed the most precious to bring me a high degree and left before he saw the fruit of his planting, but his soul still fluttered in the sky of my life, my father Saeed. To my tender mother who does not know how to read or write, but who reads me with her soul, and she has suffered with me all that I have been through, and I cannot find the words of thanksgiving to you my mother Saliha. To the example of dedication and giving, my sister Deema who supported me with all my steps and who eased all difficulties for me and has had the greatest impact in completing this scientific journey. To those whom I got as a gift from fate, my mother Sarah, Hessah, Fahda, and Hayat. To my dear family who always supports me and to all my friends, I dedicate this humble effort.

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The completion of this thesis was part of my commitment to lifelong learning, and whilst the journey of having attended this Ph.D. programme has been a little difficult, the rewards are inestimable. I have learned a lot that will serve me well both personally and professionally for the rest of my life.

I cannot find words to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Robert Doherty and Professor Margery McMahon, for their great efforts in motivating and helping me, and their professional guidance and commitment to facilitating challenges throughout my academic journey. They provided me with the helpful advice and deep insights I needed to realise my ambition. I cannot thank them enough and feel very fortunate to have had them as moderators.

I would like to thank all the members of King Saud University and the College of Applied Studies and Community Service for giving me the opportunity to obtain this degree, and the members of the Ministry of Education who facilitated the data collection procedures required to complete this study.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone at the University of Glasgow's School of Education and Graduate School for their ongoing efforts to provide a welcoming learning environment.

I also extend my thanks and gratitude to my friends in Glasgow, Mary and Katie, and Hanan who gave me the home I missed and so much time to support me to complete this study. Thanks are also extended to everyone who helped me, even with a word or an invitation from God.

**Author's Declaration**

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Name: Abeer Saeed Alghamdi

Signature:

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## **Abbreviations**

MOE	Ministry of Education
EU	European Union
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nations
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
UK	United Kingdom
KSA	Kingdom Saudi Arabia
CPD	Continuing Professional Development

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Most studies confirm that leadership and management is an important element in the failure or success of any institution. Looking at the educational system in Saudi Arabia, many of its problems are largely due to administrative deficiencies and adherence to centralisation, which emphasises the bureaucracy that prevents progress in an age characterised by rapid change and complexity. Although several studies have highlighted the positive advantages of an empowerment approach (Al-Tarawneh, 2006), some educational leaders do not believe in the importance of change or the benefits of empowerment, because they believe that this is a source of danger that threatens their power and influence (Al-Tarawneh, 2006). Empowerment calls for reviewing systems of administration, the established systems and methods, and the tendency towards decentralisation because participation in decision-making through the application of an empowerment approach is understood to contribute to the achievement of belonging and loyalty, increase productivity, and foster creativity in educational organisations. The education system currently in Saudi Arabia in general, and within schools in particular, has become oriented towards the application of the concept of empowerment, but it is not yet known what should be changed to apply this concept. Does the concept of empowerment have a clear and effective impact on improving the educational system and developing leadership roles for school principals in Saudi Arabia? To answer these questions, and in view of the scarcity of studies that have dealt with the concept of empowerment and its relation to the reform of the educational system, this study was conducted to investigate the application of the concept of empowerment and its role in improving the educational system in the context of Saudi Arabia.

### **1.2 Motivation and Importance of the Study**

The study originated from the experiences of the researcher who, because of their employment currently as a lecturer at King Saud University and formerly as a teacher and school administrator, and because of their connections with some Ministry of Education officials and Riyadh middle school principals, noticed a sense of dissatisfaction with the career progression



and career advancement in the education system. This was despite efforts to achieve this development through encouraging administrative leadership innovations and competencies. These feelings of dissatisfaction stemmed from multiple sources, such as: centralisation and bureaucracy in practice; limited participation in planning and decision-making from the higher authorities; and the literal and formal commitment to the laws, regulations and decisions imposed by higher authorities. Additionally, the need to change the organisational structure to support change and development, the approach of empowerment and accountability, the weakness of communication among members of the educational organisation, and the urgent need for training to achieve and activate the empowerment curriculum at the middle and executive level in educational systems in general.

This study is important for the following reasons:

1. This study is in line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which is concerned with the development and restructuring of government sectors, as well as the simplification of procedures, allowing all sectors to carry out their mandates, enhancing independence with accountability, and demonstrating resilience to new challenges.
2. This study examines the role of applying an empowerment approach in the educational system, a system that has a significant impact on society and a critical part in the lives of people, assisting in shaping their future as well as the future of society. Thus, this study attempts to explore the role of applying the empowerment approach to changing the roles of leaders in schools in Saudi Arabia.
3. This study highlights some of the mechanisms and proposals that can enhance and support the enabling approach in line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which contributes to the support and encouragement of the Ministry of Education to move confidently and smoothly towards adopting this approach.
4. This study explores the views of stakeholders regarding the concept of empowerment and its role in reforming the educational system.
5. As far as the researcher is aware, no similar studies have been conducted so far in Saudi Arabia on the views of stakeholders towards the concept of empowerment, and any previous work covers the relationship of the concept of empowerment with different variables or the reality of application of this term.
6. The researcher hopes that this study will encourage the provision of increased support and attention to the implementation of the empowerment approach in schools, both in

Saudi Arabia and worldwide, in order to achieve the desired goals of the success and quality of the educational system.

7. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will assist policymakers and decision makers in Saudi Arabia when deciding on the best methods for dealing with managing change.

### **1.3 Research Aims**

Empowerment reform is part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's policy towards development, as detailed in the 2030 vision. This study aims to explore the concept of empowerment and its impact or progress on reform within the education system of Saudi Arabia.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the literature from educational leadership and management, the overarching research question is: **What role can the implementation of the empowerment approach play in the educational system in Saudi Arabia?**

Subsidiary questions are:

1. How has empowerment thought been defined and conceptualised within organisations and educational contexts in the post-war period?
2. From a comparative perspective, how has the idea of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?
3. How do current school teachers, principals and system leaders in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?
4. How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the educational systems of Saudi Arabia?

### **1.5 Contribution and Novelty of the Study**

This study is new in terms of its literature review, methodology, and discussions. It may contribute to bridging the gaps in our knowledge about the concept of empowerment as an approach to change in the education system while providing information that is not yet available on the possibilities of applying this approach to the reform of the educational system. To the researcher's knowledge, following from an initial review, there has been very little

research conducted in the field of empowerment as an approach to reforming the educational system, either in Saudi Arabia or globally. As a result, the study aims to contribute to current knowledge by laying the groundwork for future research into educational reform and the role of the enabling approach, particularly in developing countries.

This study's focus is distinctive, by using a thorough, accurate, and detailed research methodology that includes qualitative and quantitative data collection methods that collected in-depth data sets from sizable samples and analysing them systemically in order to generalise and offer suggestions. This study's methodology can be used for further research in this field, whether in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia or in other parts of the world, notably in developing states with similar challenges.

A number of administrative models have been applied to reform the education system and to develop educational leaders in developed countries which, in terms of cultural and political differences, may or may not be appropriate for use in developing countries in general, and specifically in Arab countries. In this regard, the main contribution of this study is that it may provide a clear and comprehensive view for those responsible for education policy and decision makers, as well as academic leaders in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. The potential benefit of the vision stems from the fact that it is based on the views of the educational staff at various levels as well as drawing attention to the educational system's challenges and shortcomings. This can assist in ensuring that key factors and issues in change processes are highlighted, and effective leadership and management can be provided. Thus, the study is linked to academic leaders in educational organisations throughout the region.

## **1.6 Research Limitations**

Even though the study was meticulously carried out, there were some inevitable limitations. First, due to a lack of time, this study included a limited number of schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the results of this research are bound to this context. Even so, they may be generalisable to other contexts with similar conditions. If a prospective study can be undertaken, it would be best for it to take place over an extended period of time and include a number of schools in order to contrast outcomes and create a more comprehensive picture of the concept of empowerment. Second, despite the Ministry of Education's approval to carry out this research, the researcher chose to conceal the names of the schools involved out of

concern that some of the data collected from the participants were potentially sensitive. This is to protect schools and their staff from any repercussions that may harm their reputation, as well as to protect the researcher from any social pressures associated with this data. Third, for cultural considerations, it was difficult to find a sufficient number of male stakeholders to participate in both interviews and focus group sessions, and thus, fewer males participated in these sessions compared to females. Fourth, due to the bombing that occurred at Abha airport while the researcher was present during field research, the researcher was not able to conduct the interviews and group sessions as planned and the researcher tried to cover the area through the questionnaire. Fifth, the study looked into the perspectives of stakeholders who are involved in the management and implementation of the empowerment approach and, thus, the views of students and their parents were not included.

## **1.7 Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into 10 chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the thesis is structured as follows:

- Chapter Two: the introduction addresses both external and internal challenges facing the Ministry of Education, which create the Ministry of Education's need for change.
- Chapter Three: provides a summary of the research context, including political, geographical, historical and economic information about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. An overview of education policy in Saudi Arabia is provided. It also discusses the development of education policy and the organisational structure of education.
- Chapter Four: explores the existing literature on changes in the education system. It discusses various issues that include drivers, concepts, powers, and challenges for change. It explores change approaches, models, and strategies. Then it discusses the role of leadership and the factors that contribute to positive implementation.
- Chapter Five: provides a critical review of previous research work in the field of empowerment, the emergence of the concept of empowerment and its relationship to its emergence in some political, social, and ethical fields, and the history of the concept of empowerment in leadership and management. It also discusses theories and concepts similar to the concept of empowerment in leadership.
- Chapter Six: presents the methodology used to carry out this research. This chapter discusses the research philosophy, research design, data collection and analysis

methods, rationale for research techniques, and the validity of the research approach chosen.

- Chapter Seven: describes the qualitative analysis method and the stages of the data set used in the research and its stages. It presents the qualitative data findings from the semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and open-ended questionnaire questions.
- Chapter Eight: this chapter presents the quantitative data set analysis method used in the study, as well as the test used to examine the differences in stakeholder perceptions. It displays the findings of the quantitative data based on a survey of a large number of stakeholders.
- Chapter Nine: provides the discussion on the main findings emerging from chapters seven and eight. The results of the study are evaluated and underpinned by the research presented in the previous chapters.
- Chapter Ten: key findings linked to the research questions are presented, as well as an outline of the study's recommendations and the scope for future research.

## **Chapter Two: Challenges that Create the Need for the Ministry of Education to Change**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Since the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by King Abdul Aziz in 1928, the education system has seen a number of dramatic developments and changes. To date, the most important tasks that have been completed include, for example: the establishment of the Ministry of Education; the establishment of modern buildings equipped with technology; curriculum development and expansion of academic specialisations, training and rehabilitation of teachers; and the provision of materials and human resources. The Ministry of Education has begun to focus attention on the development and change of the educational system in order to meet the needs of the changing age, and to meet the internal and external challenges of the educational system. This chapter will identify some of the trends and issues that are driving the need for change in Saudi Arabia, such as globalisation and social trends.

### **2.2 External challenges**

The globalisation challenge, with its associated characteristics of enhancing economic, cultural, and political networks of association and affiliation across national borders around the globe, is now clearly developed in Saudi Arabia's education system. Furthermore, the progression of knowledge and technology creates a new challenge in considering the consequences of technology use and widespread knowledge of students' learning achievement and attainment, as well as the need to develop Saudi Arabia's education system to deal with these external challenges.

- **Globalisation**

One of the most visible trends of the third millennium is globalisation. It is a phenomenon with multiple dimensions and levels. Globalisation is a broad and comprehensive term whose definition differs according to the studies that have addressed it. Some studies have focused on economic globalisation (Panic, 2003), whereas others have focused on technological globalisation (Schultz and Kitchen, 2000). Furthermore, some studies have investigated the political factors that shape globalisation processes (Stromquist, 2002; Daun, 2002). In addition,

a few studies have looked at the political and social effects of globalisation on developing countries (Mittelman, 2000). There have also been numerous studies conducted on the impact of globalisation on education (Stromquist, 2002; Carney, 2003; Dale and Robertson, 2002).

Despite the divergence of these studies, however, they are mostly related to the fact that globalisation is a complex and multifaceted, multilevel concept, which cannot be easily defined. The impact of globalisation on political and cultural levels may be a cause for concern at times, for example, concerning the rapid exchange of information, cultures, ideas, and beliefs, which may lead to the emergence of the term global culture in the future, as well as the speed and ease of interdependence between states, organisations, companies, and individuals. Tapp (1999) defined globalisation as a process that seeks to reduce barriers and increase the rate of political, economic, and social interaction among nations. According to Torres (2002), “Globalisation is a concept that contributes to the existence of contradictions within and without the state” (p. 333). Cox (1996) delved even deeper in his analysis of the impact of globalisation on social aspects, arguing that globalisation may result in social divisions and contradictions in the social hierarchy: (1) a layer at the top of the pyramid integrated into the global economy; (2) serving in world affairs directly, and; (3) excluded from global economic participation (Daun, 2002). According to Cox’s classification, globalisation is appropriate for industrialised countries, while posing a threat to developing countries that globalisation will mean economic stagnation. From another point of view some researchers (e.g., Panic, 2003; Carney, 2003) found that there are a number of positive outcomes of globalisation. Globalisation provides opportunities for the exchange of social and behavioural values and norms, promotes development at the individual and community level, and promotes development in industrial and developing nations. Globalisation also contributes to the development and exchange of constructive experiences between states, societies, and individuals (Cheng, 2002). Prasad et.al.(2003) argued in an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on the impact of financial globalisation on developing countries that globalisation may contribute to the rate of growth of third world countries via a number of actual factors like technology transfer from developed to developing countries, increased domestic savings, low cost of capital, and the development of domestic financial sectors. Indirect factors are the privatisation of production in economic policies and institutions resulting from pressures and competitive effects. Prasad et.al (2003) also observed that average annual incomes rise more rapidly in countries with higher economic growth than in countries with economically closed economies (Woods, 2000). In other words, globalisation could enable developed countries to

control developing countries, and even widen the gap between rich and poor countries (Chan, 2001). It can be said that globalisation includes both positive and negative aspects depending on how this phenomenon is dealt with and harnessed to achieve growth and positive development of the state.

Looking at the impact of globalisation on the Arab world, especially with regard to economic growth, there is intense global competition in economic aspects. Managing Director Camdessus (1996) argued at the Union of Arab Banks' annual meeting that Arab countries had attracted little private capital that had recently reached developing countries. Their estimated annual growth rate of 1.5 percent over the previous five years was comparable to the annual export growth rate of about 10% achieved by developing trade.

The situation in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is always affected by oil prices because it depends on oil resources in a fundamental way. Therefore, the educational system is affected by its objectives and policies, dependent on any increase or decrease in oil revenues. Consequently, the educational system needs to take benefits from the globalisation phenomenon and turn it into a method used to support development and look at other sources of income for the economy, instead of a total dependence on oil. Economic globalisation contributes to the provision of labour forces, and educational policy makers should respond to labour market needs through the educational system. Thus, education in Saudi Arabia has become a critical component of economic development in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis have received considerable attention in the five-year development plan aligned with Vision 2030, that aims to improve the Saudi labour force's contribution to the labour market (Ministry of Economy, 2018). Providing students with the necessary knowledge to adapt to the trend of changes while preserving the Islamic and national identity, linking the curricula and activities of education to the developmental goals in their global dimension, leads to the employment of several concepts such as human resource development, human development, and sustainable development (Ministry of Economy, 2018). The phenomenon of globalisation is a real challenge that contributes to providing a theoretical framework for the reform of the education system. Therefore, decision makers and educational policy makers have a responsibility to recognise these forces and consider their implications when restructuring and reforming the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In furthering this study, the development of education in Saudi Arabia will be considered in this globalised context.



- **Knowledge and Technology**

At present, there is rapid growth in knowledge and technology as a result of remarkable progress in various branches of science, economics, healthcare, education, social studies, and so forth. This could also be attributed to the increased contribution of technology and its innovations, which have contributed to the diversity of means of communication, transport, production, ease, and speed of access to information and knowledge at the lowest material and moral costs, through various means of transport, social media, and smart devices such as computers and others. That change, rapid growth and rapid economic change requires knowledge of a range of skills (Dearing, 2001) to aid the development of the educational system at the academic and administrative level.

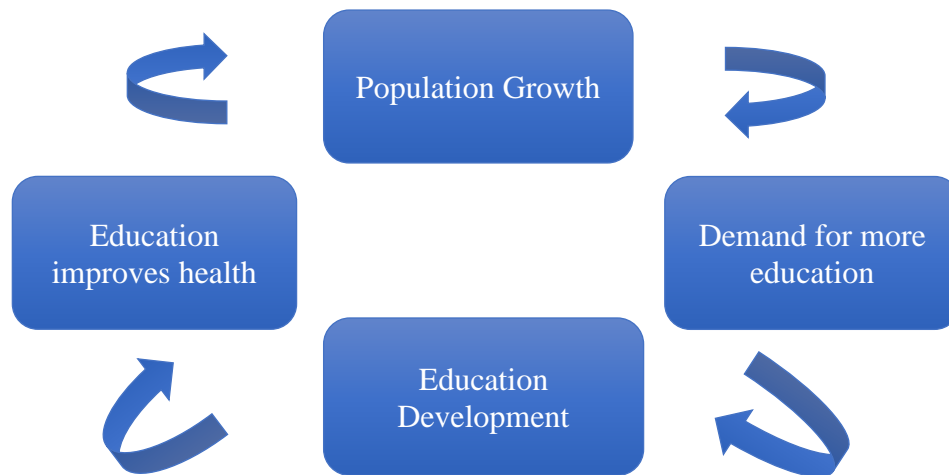
### **2.3 Internal Challenges**

Despite the significant role played by external challenges in the educational system, internal challenges are no less important. There are a number of internal challenges that require the development of the educational system in Saudi Arabia. These can be divided into social factors such as population growth and factors associated with the educational organisation such as the desire to develop an education system that supports the state's development and global competition.

- **Population Growth and Structure**

Education and population growth correlate with overall health quality (McMahon, 2002). Education affects health by reducing mortality and increasing longevity because educated parents have the knowledge and skills of good healthcare compared to the uneducated. Parental education is also related to children's health status (World Bank, 1995). Thus, progress in education and health quality lead to high rates of population growth. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between education and population growth. There is evidence in the literature (Simmons, 1980; World Bank, 1996; McMahon, 2002) that population growth has an impact on education. Increases in the number of children mean an increase in the demand for education, which requires the expansion of educational institutions and resources: buildings, curricula, teaching aids, teachers, and administrators, and so on. This, in turn, requires the creation of a number of modern management systems and approaches that seek to improve the

educational system. The Ministry of Education is also facing another challenge, as the need to have modern schools increases the demands on the Ministry's budget. This brings us to the next challenge: funding.



**Figure 2.1: The financial relationship between education development and population growth**

- **Funding**

The Saudi government is concerned with providing education for every citizen. This requires the provision of a high material budget to cover the education system and its components. Moreover, the reform of the educational system is considered another financial challenge that requires the introduction and development of educational curricula, financial resources, material and human resources, training, and rehabilitation of all members of the educational organisation with the necessary skills (Ministry of Education, 2018).

- **Remote Areas**

Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula. The geography of its regions and the needs of its citizens differ from one region to another. For example, some tribes tend to live in the desert or mountains and, despite the roughness of these areas and the difficulty of reaching them, the Saudi government does its best to provide education to the people of those areas with the highest acceptable standards (Aleisa, 2013).

- **Ambition for Development**

Through globalisation, the age of information and technology and international competitions, Saudi society is keen to achieve quality at different levels by focusing on education. Education contributes significantly to overcoming social, economic, and educational issues such as poverty, ignorance, unemployment, equality and many more. According to Gregory (2001), the primary goal of education planners' targets in developing countries was initially to raise enrolment, but the higher goal now focuses on raising the quality of education. This has become a major goal of the Kingdom's education strategy in Saudi Arabia.

In 2016, a conference entitled "Sustainable Development 2030" under the patronage of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman argued that the country is seeking to achieve the following objectives by 2030:

- The state should enjoy a diversified dynamic global economy.
- Training, qualifying, and achieving adequate human resources.
- Sustainable development in a stable macroeconomic framework.

The conference report was adopted, and its goals became part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's education policy (Ministry of Education, 2018).

## **2.4 The Importance of Change Management in Education**

In response to the above-mentioned challenges, the government has already begun to change the traditional ways and methods used by setting a new vision for the state, formulating policies and planning strategies that aim to achieve the goals of its vision in order to enable the state to achieve global competition in development. The Ministry of Education has adopted the approach of change and has been keen to reform the culture in Saudi society in line with the values of the Islamic religion. It has also adopted new curricula and strategies that may reform the educational system (Alhadi, 2013). This requires knowledge and skills to empower organisations to achieve successful adaptations to modern requirements. Because of the complexities of educational systems, the term "educational change" may be ambiguous. According to Oliver's view (1996), change in education is not only related to the development of new goals, policies, and procedures, but also to the fact that all members of the educational

system have to be empowered to participate in the development of these policies and be familiar with different aspects of the educational system. In Oliver's view (1996), the participation of all members of the system in decision-making generates the sense that each member is important in the process of change, which generates commitment to these policies.

There are numerous perspectives on change and change management, but an appropriate approach to change management may help resolve some educational issues and enable the Ministry of Education to address the internal and external challenges discussed in this chapter.

A survey of the empowerment literature revealed that several educational institutions around the world have successfully embraced the concept of empowerment in the development and improvement of the education system. For example, Abbas (2016) described how administrative empowerment succeeded in raising the efficiency of performance in public education schools in Egypt. Similarly, the study by Al-Hammouri and Al-Saud (2010) mentioned that application of the concept of administrative empowerment of faculty members in government universities in Jordan helped to achieve organisational commitment and job satisfaction, which was reflected in the improvement of educational outputs.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia faces a number of dramatic changes in order to meet the needs of the times. This requires the Ministry of Education to adopt new strategies and curricula to develop the education system. As a result, the main objective of this research is to explore the meaning and role of the concept of empowerment as a factor in reforming the education system in Saudi Arabia in line with Vision 2030 by answering the research questions posed in the overview.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Saudi Arabia has embarked on a remarkable development of its educational system in order to meet external challenges like globalisation and to promote knowledge and technology, which have been covered in this chapter. Population growth, remote school locations, finance, and development are internal challenges faced in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This necessitates different ways of thinking about introducing a new approach to educational leadership and management. However, before discussing the various methods of managing change, it is critical that we have a general understanding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including its

geography, economy, and history. The chapters that follow will shed light on the context of Saudi Arabia, its education, and the current issues confronting the Ministry of Education.

## **Chapter Three: The Saudi Arabia Context and Culture**

### **Section 1: The Role of Culture in an Empowerment Approach**

#### **3.1.1 Introduction**

Most of the literature dealing with the concept of culture has focused on its importance in shaping the context or environment in which change occurs (Al-Tuwaijr, 2012) as it may represent obstacles to change towards progress and development or it may provide positive values to bring about change towards progress and development successfully when applied (Emad, 2016).

Ghaith (2006) stated that in many studies related to the culture and change approach, cultural determinants are used as independent determinants, while the effect of a change approach plays the role of the dependent variable.

Building on this principle, this chapter will explore a general understanding of culture in society, including social theory, anthropological understandings, political culture, Arab culture, then Saudi culture and history, including educational history (Section II) and finally how it is understood in relation to organisational theory.

#### **3. 1.2 Definition of Culture**

The concept of culture has a prominent role and is a great influence in many of the human sciences, in particular the social sciences, management, and psychology. Edward Taylor was among the first to define the concept of culture in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1871); he defined it as the whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, customs, morals, laws, rules, and other components that overlap with the concept of civilisation. The first appearance of the concept of culture in anthropology is also due to him. He defined cultural anthropology as the field that studies the different ways of life of individuals in human societies, the influence of mixing, and cultural change on life, through studies on the nature of common and different cultures between societies, which contribute to reaching a clear explanation of the nature of the cultural life of humans. The matter evolved until hundreds of definitions of culture appeared in the social sciences, with some definitions focused on social customs and behaviours, while others focused on the historical, intangible, or psychological dimensions of the concept. For example, Kroeber and Parsons (1958) used the concept of culture in the sense of values, ideas, and symbols rather than forms of human behaviour, while Lasswell (1948) studied the relationship

between culture and personality and the link between national personality and culture. Kluckhohn and Cropper (1952) provided definitions of culture from a different perspective, as Kluckhohn viewed it as a collective identity while Cropper expressed culture in a narrower perspective (as an artistic expression) such as music, painting, architecture, and dance.

Cassirer's definition of culture (1950) included language, myth, religion, art, science, and history. He then followed this by using culture as a synonym for the perceptual system, the world view, the method, and the nature of the vision of what is around the person, thus providing a perceptual map, a logical model and the idea of the world and its components affecting the behaviour of everyone. In the light of the literature of sociology, anthropology and psychology, the importance of Max Weber's (1904) writings emerged with a distinction between rational and traditional behaviour and its relationship to the problem of meaning. Weber also highlighted the importance of ideas and values in the process of social change. He considered culture to be the "filter" through which we experience the world. As for Durkheim (1895), he gave priority to the social structure in human behaviour and building meaning. He emphasised the importance of norms and collective values that keep members of society together and exclude social disintegration, considering culture as a phenomenon of collective consciousness that rises from the normative dimensions and general feeling of the community group, and here culture represents the model of action and a value system capable of correcting human forms of action.

Pitirim Sorokin (1937) held a different view of culture as a set of meanings and supports, contrasting with Hannah Arendt (1958), who drew attention to the necessity of distinguishing between two worlds: a world imposed by life and survival, and a world in which a person belongs to those around them, in which they find their roots and direction. Accordingly, culture gives meaning to what is around a human being, as cultures shape a person's relationship with the world around them. Frederic Jameson (1991) on the other hand, viewed them as symbolic expressions produced and communicated through societies. Huntington (1945) used the term culture in a more specific sense as the values, behaviours, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions prevalent of people in a society. This is consistent with the definition from Amad (2016), who defined culture as the values in the environment created by the person, including material products passed down from generation to generation. This includes visible and subtle patterns of learning and behaviour, through symbols that are formed in a specific society in science, beliefs, arts, values, laws, customs, and traditions affected from one generation to the next (Al-

Zunaidi, 2009). It follows that there is general consensus that culture is a set of beliefs, values and standards that arise from a group of people, that are accepted and understood by members of society and are linked through the existence of common systems. This contributes to maintaining the correct foundations of cultural norms and are transmitted from generation to generation (Al-Tuwaijri, 2015).

### **3.1.3 Culture and Society**

The previous definitions indicated the existence of a relationship between culture and society and showed that there is difficulty in separating between culture and society as they are complementary, so culture would cease to exist without the existence of the societies that adopt it, and there is no existence of societies without a culture that organises it (Wtfah, 2006). The simplest example of this is language, as it is considered the first component of societies, and the most important cultural legacy of any society; without the existence of language, communication between people in society would not happen.

Researchers interested in social studies stress the relationship between culture and society, as culture is a way for people to lead and manage their lives and because culture builds society (Wtfah, 2006). This means that culture is a part of every society, and it affects how people interact with the changes and ideas that occur in a society (Al-Hashemi, 2003). Abu Lubda (2005) also argued that culture is a human invention that was created to understand the surrounding symbols of life, and for humans to be aware of their existence as people who have a role in advancing life. This view was supported by Al-Khazraji (2004), who considered culture in any country as the theoretical framework for the beliefs of individuals and the society to which they belong and live. It is also what we observe in ethical, religious, and political behaviour, which is closely related to culture.

### **3.1.4 Types of Culture**

There are five main types of culture in societies, which are: social, religious, historical, economic and political. The focus in this thesis will be on political culture, which is based on political life, public opinion issues, elections, democracy, and other political issues that may be local or global (Al-Hashemi, 2003) because of their close relationship to the empowerment approach that is the subject of the current study.



### **3.1.5 Components of Culture**

Culture consists of a group of main elements, which differ and change from one society to another, and change or grow with the development of that society. Bin Nabi (2011) summarised those elements as follows:

- Physical culture: technical material matters such as communication, transportation, and energy, and where the availability of (or lack of) leads to desired or unwanted changes in the culture of any society.
- Aesthetics: beauty and taste within a culture, such as music, art, dance, the prevailing drama in a society, and other matters.
- Religion: the prevailing religion within any culture in each community helps to explain the behaviours of individuals who live in it, and it is the best way to help answer why people behave with certain behaviours rather than answering how they behave.
- Education: refers to ideas, skills, and attitudes that are transferred to individuals, in addition to training in specific areas. Education aims to make a difference in society, and the level of education differs from one society to another.
- Language: some countries have more than one language and/or several dialects that need to be considered. Lack of understanding of language or of dialects may lead to problems in communication (Sami, 2010).
- Values and attitudes: values often arise from a religious basis, and attitudes denote the social heritage of human behaviour that helped shape culture (Halabi, 1984).
- Customs and traditions: customs are norms passed down through generations to become part of beliefs and continue as they relate to beliefs as a cultural heritage. (Fazula, 2016). Traditions are sets of rules of behaviour that result from the agreement of a group of people and they derive strength from society. They indicate older past actions that extend through time and the accumulated wisdom that society passes down through the generations. They are social customs that have lasted for long periods and are quoted from the past to the present and then to the future, becoming an internal system for a particular society (Al-Thaoudi, 2006).

### **3.1.6 Political Culture**

It has been stated in several writings in the field of public opinion that experts in developed societies study the cultures of societies that are influenced by them. They are interested in the weight and trends of public opinion that exist or are expected to exist in society towards a

specific event or direction, as well as the behaviour of individuals in response to this event (Edward, 1972). The importance of political culture is not limited to being directed towards the political behaviour of members of a society or being a decisive factor in the nature of the individual's relationship with authority and his/her direction towards this authority. It also explains the reactions of individuals towards some phenomena or practices and changes that take place in society (Fadla, 2016).

Based on the above, and in the context of this research, political culture has a large and important role in individuals' attitudes and opinions towards the term empowerment because it contributes to the formation of individuals' attitudes and responses to various events and changes.

### **3.1.7 Concept of Political Culture**

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world witnessed a series of transformations with intense shadows over the political, economic, and social situations in various countries around the world, regardless of their different systems. Among the most prominent of these changes was the fall of communist regimes and the dawn of a new era based on democratic values, enabling people to obtain their rights and participate effectively in political life and support the role of civil society (Wolfgang, 2011).

If political rights differ from one society to another and from one political system to another, then they are an indication of the culture of democracy and empowerment, and the extent to which the political system is convinced of them (Bar-Ilan, 1996). Evidence for this is that the concept of empowerment has entered the political agenda of many actors and institutions, such as governments, civil society organisations, international agencies, and development banks, as mentioned by Horochovski (2006).

The term political culture is briefly defined as a group of values and principles that direct society's cultural affairs. The term policy, in its simplest form, means a decision made by an individual / body, but this term is more complex than that, as it includes organised values, decision-making criteria, a system of interim goals and end goals, and a process of defining and drawing plans to achieve these goals and the follow-up of their implementation by a group of individuals or institutions (Amad, 2016).

Political culture refers to the system of values and beliefs prevailing among members of a particular society, which determines their attitudes towards power, politics, and development and its symbols within society, which also determine their behaviour. Political culture is formed as a reflection of the social existence of individuals, as it reflects the characteristics of the prevailing social and economic structure in society during a specific period, and culture determines the nature of individuals' attitudes towards power and its policies related to their conditions of life and contributes to the formation of public opinion stances towards various phenomena (Bin Nabi, 2011). This indicates, as mentioned by Coyle and Ellis (1994), that there is a close relationship between culture and politics, and that both influence and affect the other. Political culture represents a tool of power to control the minds and culture of peoples, through which it can control the form and behaviour of society (Kristy, 2009). When the goals that drive cultural policies differ with the political goal, the process of developing society and the individual is affected (Wolfgang, 2011).

### **3.1.8 The Arabic Culture**

The starting point for the emergence and formation of Arabic culture is in a desert environment hostile to life. The greatest achievement of the Sahrawi people was to maintain their survival with a scarcity of food and water (Al-Zaid, 2012). Al-Ghraibeh (2002) argued that the extreme poverty faced in the natural desert environment, and alongside the social and cultural factors that emerged out of that environment, led to the deprivation of the Arab individual from the fertility of life and the richness of thought. Additionally, it also led to a reduction of the elements of culture and limitations to values until only one value remained – victory and sovereignty – which facilitated the desire to use any means to achieve material and moral victory which, in turn, led to the emergence of wars between tribes for self-preservation (Al-Zyoud, 2016). Amid these conflicts, the Holy Qur'an appeared, addressing to the individual their responsibility for themselves and their rehabilitation and value, and showed individuals that they were following incorrect perceptions and principles that were not subject to examination, review, or analysis (Alshukri, 2016). This great discovery led to a transformation, with the individual moving from a state of disintegration to a state of vigilance and independence. Thus the Holy Qur'an represents the dividing line for anything that prevails from ignorance, intolerance, and disintegration in society (Fazula, 2016). From another point of view, Al-Saqr (2005) argued that the Arab culture, being based on the love of power,

intolerance, conflict, and the division of the individual into a tribe or sect which did not allow the great teachings of Islam to be transformed into a way of life, was the foundation of a new Arabic culture. This opinion was confirmed by Al-Zaid (2012), where he mentioned the reasons for the Arabs' adherence to the culture of intolerance and love of control and power, conflict, and the consolidation of the principle of complete submission to a leader, may be due to social, political, or economic purposes. For example, a tribe does not convert to Islam unless the leader of the tribe declares his own conversion to Islam, and the rest of the tribe then follows him. A clan chieftain gains power based on his social or economic status.

This reflects the theory of the scientist Hofstede (1980), who studied dozens of countries, including the Arab countries, and came up with four cultural dimensions that reflect the observed differences between human cultures. He found noticeable differences in Arabic culture compared to Western culture, including power distance, an indicator that measures the extent to which people in the Arab region accept any authority over them, or where someone in their community holds a high position, they do not deserve. It is remarkable that less powerful individuals in Arab society accept any authority over them even if there is an authoritarian tendency, but they admit that those who lead derive their authority by virtue of their position in the hierarchical structure of the institution in which they are. And vice versa, in Western societies there was an aversion and unwillingness to be led by the incompetent. Their relationships are based on their expectations and their acceptance that power relations in their community will be based on counselling or democracy (Al-Naghimish, 2019). Suleiman (2013) contradicted that view, arguing that the culture in Arab society has changed in recent years compared to the past, and that cultural change means a change in material and immaterial elements and occurs through invention, quotation or borrowing from other cultures. It is the result of intercultural contact made easy through technological development and globalisation, as discussed in Chapter Two (the challenges that create the need for change). Despite this change, people still face changes in culture with some caution, which may be a fear of failure or other reasons related to the type and direction of the change (Al-Zaid, 2012). This coincides with the theory of change that will be mentioned in the upcoming chapters on change discussed in Chapter Four, where people usually face change with some resistance to a fear of failure or a loss of their identity, status, or authority (Al-Awartani, 2019).

Wafh (2013) believed that people are usually more willing to accept material changes than non-physical changes. Material changes may be beneficial to them, while non-material change

means, for them, a change to customs and traditions that have been instilled in them since childhood. Therefore, state institutions and organisations, especially educational organisations under conditions of rapid technological and social change, need to work towards achieving a balance between implanting the traditional culture of society and developing the capacity for renewal and change in their youth (Al-Saghir, 2015).

Considering recent developments in the education system, it can be said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been keen to highlight its national identity through a number of means, the most important of which are educational curricula, with an emphasis on instilling and disseminating principles of acceptance of global cultural diversity, and that the Kingdom's Vision 2030 considers culture to be an essential part of the ambitious national transformation to enrich the lifestyle of individuals, contribute to strengthening national identity, and to encourage cultural dialogues with the world. In the following section, the culture in Saudi society will be reviewed.

### **3.1.9 Saudi Culture**

The modern Saudi state was established in 1932 by King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud (Ibn Saud) and by the 1970s the country had transformed from an agricultural society into a modern, educated country, divided into 13 regions, that took its place in discussing and tackling global issues (Al-Rasheed, 2008; 2010; 2003). Saudi Arabia is the largest state on the Arabian Peninsula. It has one of the largest reserves of petroleum in the world and has the world's largest crude oil production capacity (Al-Qahtani, 2016).

The Kingdom is culturally rich, with centuries-old customs linked to the Islamic heritage and Bedouin traditions. Saudi culture is characterised by the presence of a number of cultures associated with population diversity, customs, and traditions, several different dialects, tribalism, and sectarian and intellectual diversity (Al-Blaihi, 2006). The society has evolved radically over the years, and it has adapted its values, customs, and traditions to modern life (Al-Qafari, 2007). However, although some customs have become subject to change and development, adhering to the authenticity of ancient traditions is important to preserve Arab roots. This may make empowerment more difficult to implement because empowerment, from the point of view of some researchers, is a kind of waiver or assignment of the power and

authority granted to them through their position in society and which is reflected in their self-esteem.

The Muslim culture in Saudi Arabia is influenced by several factors, such as religion, a tribal system, geographical regions, and its management and modernisation (Al-Farsy, 2003). Islam is not only a religious ideology but a comprehensive system that includes a detailed description of the entire way of life throughout the ages (Ibrahim, 2011). Therefore, it plays a central role in determining the customs, patterns, traditions, and social practices that characterise Saudi society. The culture of Saudi Arabia combines Islamic heritage, the historical role of the country as a primitive trading centre, and its Bedouin traditions. Islamic culture means practising the ethics of Islam, such as: tolerance, peace, generosity, hospitality, the giving of gifts, and good dealings with others.

Prominent in Saudi society is the tribal system, which is reflected in the relationship with the brotherhood or tribe. This may affect, to a lesser or greater extent, the role and status of the individual in society (Vassiliev, 2000) and is related to part of the current study because it indicates the effects of culture when applying the concept of empowerment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in terms of the multiplicity and difference of geographical regions, age groups, as well as gender. They generally differ in their adherence to tribalism and their cultural patterns, as will be shown in the next chapter, as well as in the chapter on data collection and analysis. The next part of this section will present the general context of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and will include a description of the context in which the research is located (its history, geographic information, government structure, economy, and culture)

- **Demographics**

Situated in southwest Asia, Saudi Arabia occupies about 2,240,000 square kilometres of area (Saudi Census, 2020) and accounts for four fifths of the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Census, 2020). It occupies a geographically strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa (Al-Rushaid, 2010) and shares its borders with Yemen, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait.



**Figure 3.1 Location of Saudi Arabia at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa**  
(Source: UNDP, 2010)

Riyadh is the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the cities of Mecca and Medina are holy to Muslims across the world, with millions of Muslims visiting each year to visit the holy mosques. In addition, all Muslims face the Qibla towards the Sacred Mosque in Mecca five times a day for prayer (Al-Qahtani, 2016).



**Figure 3.2 Map of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Source: GCS, 2020)**

It can be said that the Kingdom's medium geographical location for the Gulf states, overlooking the Red Sea and controlling important seaports, makes it a major political power in the region.

- **Population**

The population of the Kingdom was estimated to be 32,552,336 according to the results of population characteristics in 2017, with a rate of growth of 2.52%. In 2018, the population was divided into 57.48 percent males and 42.52 percent females. Saudi citizens account for approximately 20.5 million (63%) of the total population while the non-Saudi population is approximately 12.2 million, (37% of total population) (Saudi Census, 2020).

- **The Climate**

The climate of the Kingdom differs from one region to another because of its different terrain, though it is predominately tropical. In general, its climate is hot in the summer and cold and rainy in the winter. The climate is moderate on the western and southwestern highlands. The central regions are hot and dry, and their winters are cold and dry. The coastal areas have high



humidity (Al-Qahtani, 2016). Because of the high temperatures in the summer, the educational system was keen to reduce the time of lessons because the climate temperature leads to a feeling of fatigue and a general decrease in mental and physical performance, especially during school hours. School buildings are also equipped with a number of air conditioners in order to provide a suitable study environment for learning.

- **Oil Discovery and Political Development**

Oil exploration began in the Kingdom in 1923 with oil being discovered in 1936. The country very quickly turned into an oil state with oil exports accounting for 90% of the country's income. Prior to the discovery of oil, the country's income was dependent on commerce and a nomadic lifestyle.

After King Abdul Aziz's death in 1953, his eldest son Saud took power for 11 years. The interest of King Saud was directed first and foremost in spreading education. During this time the first university in the Arabian Peninsula, King Saud University, was established in the capital of Riyadh in 1957. In 1975, under the new monarch King Khalid, oil production greatly increased. This led to the creation of three new universities in the Kingdom and the expansion of higher education for girls, along with other infrastructure developments.

In 1980, the Iran-Iraq war caused major changes in world oil production. Between 1980 and 2000 the price of oil per barrel fluctuated considerably with a high in 1981 of \$37 and a low of \$10 in 1998. This, in turn, had a dramatic effect and resulted in a sharp decline in the Saudi state budget.

In 2005, on the death of King Fahd, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz assumed power. During his reign he gave great support to the scholarship programmes abroad, increased student salaries by a large percentage and launched his project to develop public education. This project was a qualitative leap in the general education process in the Kingdom and differed from any of the educational projects implemented by the Ministry of Education in previous years. The years of rule under King Abdullah flourished with increases in income from oil resources, especially in more recent years, which saw the average price of a barrel of oil reach more than \$100, the public debt to the state reduced from 610 billion riyals in 2004 to 60 billion and the country's GDP rise by 2.8 trillion riyals (Al-Rasheed, 2008, 2010). King Abdullah died in 2015 and was succeeded by King Salman.

The adoption of the new general budget, which aims to develop the Saudi national economy without relying primarily on oil as the sole source of national income, is the most important change in the history of the Kingdom's economy and is creating an unprecedented economic transformation. Additionally, King Salman is making radical changes in the state structure to suit the needs of the times, through simplification of government bureaucracy. He has also created Vision 2030, a package of unprecedented reforms for the Kingdom, which began with the decision to allow women to drive in 2018 and continues with a package of political, educational, and economic reforms.

A significant number of these reforms introduced some concept of empowerment. These include empowering women of their rights, such as travelling without a patron and working and obtaining education, also without permission from a patron. There has also been an increased focus on the most vulnerable groups in society, highlighting the issues they face by providing loans, training, facilitating job opportunities, and bridging the gap between academic and work life through numerous programmes which are compatible with the needs of young people in the workplace regardless of social level, health, or gender.

- **Government Structure**

The Government of Saudi Arabia is based on the Islamic religion. The King appoints the Crown Prince, who becomes the next successor. The King also creates a cabinet of 22 ministers. The Advisory Council is the parliamentary body of the country. Finally, the judicial system is based on Islamic law and the official religion of the state is Islam. The King derives his power from his commitment to implementing Islamic law, and responsibility for the judicial system rests with the King (Saudi Embassy, 2018).

- **Economy**

The Saudi government is making a major effort in industrial and economic development through the Ministry of Economy and Planning, which develops long-term plans for the country's economic and social development (Saudi Embassy, 2018). The vision of 2030 is to bring about major and varied changes and reforms in the Saudi economy, rather than relying on oil. Examples of this are the development of tourism and the Neume project, which aims to

stimulate economic growth, provide diversification, enable manufacturing processes and innovation and mobilise local industry to work on a global scale by focusing on nine specialised investment sectors: energy and water, mobility, biotechnology, food, science, education, digital technology, advanced manufacturing, and media production. It is hoped these will lead to job creation, contribute to GDP growth, and attract both private and government investment. In March 2018, the Crown Prince signed an Agreement (MoU) with Vision Softbank to establish the “Solar Plan 2030”, which will generate approximately one-third of the world’s solar energy (According to the Ministry of Energy, 2018).

In 2008, about two thirds of the employed workers in Saudi Arabia were expatriates (House, 2012). In 2014, the Saudi government set about lowering this percentage, which has led to a rise in the number of Saudi citizens working (McDowall, 2014).

- **Saudi Tourism**

Until very recently, tourism in Saudi Arabia was either for religious purposes (Hajj and Umrah), business purposes (meetings, exhibitions, and conferences), social purposes (visiting relatives and friends) or for educational, sports or health reasons (STO, 2012).

The core problem with tourism in Arabic society in general, and Saudi in particular, is that culture and social thought could not bear the possibility of its existence as a term and as a practice. Although tourism in its global system does not conflict with values, morals, or culture, tourism still has unwanted meanings for some. Al-Khushiban (2009) argued that by giving the Supreme Commission for Tourism a greater opportunity financially, organisationally, and culturally, the result will be to change the concepts of society about tourism, as tourism is not entertainment but knowledge and formation of the individual and preservation of the history of society and its identity among nations. The Kingdom’s step in promoting religious, social, cultural, and human values by supporting domestic tourism has contributed to social acceptance. Saudi society has come to view tourism with pride, looking back at civilization and the historical places in the Kingdom, in addition to it being an industry that contributes to the pace of civilised development.

The development of tourism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also contributed to the empowerment of women. Tourism has provided better opportunities for women’s labour force

participation, women's entrepreneurship, and women's leadership than other sectors of the economy.

Specifically, the Kingdom has witnessed giant global tourism and entertainment projects that will change the concept of tourism in the Kingdom and aim to positively reflect on the country's economy to achieve the hoped-for development that the country and its citizens seek. Among the most important of these projects is the empowerment programme, which aims to activate the principle of decentralisation in tourism management, transfer many of the roles that the Ministry currently has to local administrations in the region, and stimulate the spirit of competition between them in order to benefit from the resources and ingredients that characterise each region and governorate. The interior of the regions has added values and opportunities for work and investment. In addition, among the ambitious projects is the Red Sea Development Project, which was announced by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and is located along the Red Sea shore between the cities of Umluj and Al-Wajh, the first phase of which will be completed in the last quarter of 2022. The development of this project on more than 50 natural islands is proceeding in cooperation with large international companies in the hospitality and hotel sector and aims to preserve natural resources according to the best international standards. This will enhance the Kingdom's global heritage and cultural presence and will make it an integrated centre for everything related to entertainment, health, and relaxation.

- **Social and Cultural Reform**

It is worth noting that Saudi Arabia has been a highly conservative country since 1979, when nearly 400 extremists besieged the Grand Mosque in response to the spread of cinema, TV, and the employment of women in the workplace. The two-week conflict resulted in the deaths of dozens on both sides.

When King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz assumed power in 2005, he undertook several reforms in various sectors of the state, the most important of which was the education sector (as will be explained later). These included the dismissal of some controversial and hard-line officials. He encouraged education, scientific research, external scholarship, and a qualitative shift in the history of Saudi women by giving them the right to vote and be nominated for seats in the Saudi Shura Council, whose responsibility it is to advise the king on important issues relating

to the country (Al-Mizer, 2017). The ban on female athletes competing internationally was removed in time for the 2012 Olympic Games (Vasiliev, 2000).

On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, under the authority of Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, a ministerial amendment was issued that focused on cultural and religious issues within the framework of a package of social and economic reforms for Saudi Arabia. Stephen Hertog of the London School of Economics said the move was an attempt to rebuild confidence in the business community, which was frustrated by the rapid pace of some economic reforms and sparked by an anti-corruption campaign in 2017 (Al-Mizer, 2017).

The reformist crown prince has led a series of shifts in the conservative kingdom's politics, and in a televised speech in October 2017 vowed to lead a moderate kingdom, free from militant ideas, saying during an international investment forum, "We want to live a normal life" (Al-Mizer, 2017).

He is trying to diversify the largest economy in the Arab world away from oil exports and seeks to open the prevailing lifestyles in Saudi Arabia by easing strict social and cultural rules that were previously promoted in the conservative kingdom. Although these reforms were widely appreciated by most Saudi citizens, they also sparked intense opposition from the conservative camp in Saudi Arabia. The researcher Saeed Al-Suraih (2015) justified the change that is taking place today as a kind of coup against an ideology that established a trend that limited its ability to bridge the civilisational gap.

- **Saudi Leader Style**

The organisational structure is the backbone on which policies of governmental and private institutions and bodies are based. The kingdom is one of the most competitive countries in the world, and the leadership has experienced great rivalry (Khan and Varshney, 2013). As organisations in Saudi Arabia tend to adopt hierarchical structures as part of their culture and the fact that power is concentrated at the top, qualified leaders are required who can change that culture in relation to current age variables and challenges. Power is high in the hierarchical administrative structure, and information flows from top to bottom, encouraging a work culture focused on the application of rules and standards and the completion of work according to existing practices and standards (World Business Culture, 2014). Bureaucracy and a larger

number of structural levels may hinder the progress of work commensurate with the situation, when compared with institutions operating in a simplified administrative system. The values, ethics, and practices of managers in Saudi Arabia are often influenced by the Islamic heritage, the dominant culture of society and the tribal system of the country (Al-Twaijri, 1989).

These values contrast with the ideas of empowerment that require abandoning the traditional model of leadership and moving towards a leadership style that believes in participation and consultation. This, in turn, requires a radical change in the work roles and the relationship between the manager and subordinates. For the manager, there is a requirement to shift from control towards a direction of trust and full delegation. For the subordinates, it requires a shift from following instructions and rules to participating in decision-making. This is considered one of the objectives of this study, which is to compare the role of empowerment with the roles of educational leaders.

#### • **Development Plan**

Since 1970, Saudi Arabia has significantly developed projects that have responded to the needs and challenges of the times. It has focused on developing its educational system to enable it to become more effective by building qualified national institutes capable of imparting appropriate knowledge, skills, values, and positive attitudes (Al-Abdul Karim, 2010). The introduction of these educational projects will enable education in Saudi Arabia to compete with educational systems in the rest of the world.

In the tenth development plan from the Ministry of Education, eight main goals were identified to be achieved between 2015-2019. This development plan is closely related to the current study's topic, aiming to reform the educational system through:

- 1- restructuring and focusing on reducing bureaucracy, empowering educational leaders.
- 2- overhauling the elements of the educational system in proportion to their needs, supporting participation in decision-making and developing educational curricula.
- 3- developing criteria for selecting educational leaders by raising the percentage of those with higher qualifications and experience.
- 4- providing teachers with continual professional development in line with the requirements of the times, as they represent the Ministry's main asset.

It can be considered, from the researcher's point of view, that these goals are considered the main engine for the development of the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The aim is to develop a wide range of cultural, social, sports and entertainment activities in cooperation with the private and non-profit sectors to have more inventive activities and services. These developments will contribute to strengthening educational partnerships, improving the quality of teachers and educational leaders, and designing curricula to align education with the various interests and needs of society and requirements of the labour market. Included in this development is the transformation of the national economy's reliance on a single source of income (petroleum) to an economy that relies on highly skilled minds and creative and productive human energies.

What the vision presents with regard to education is a repetition of broad, unspecified, ambitious goals that were earlier referred to in previous development plans. This could be considered by some as a shortcoming in the vision, however, the vision, in its general sense, is the perspective of progress that leads the decision-making processes and the general perception of what we want to reach in a particular field.

Vision 2030 sets an approved general framework for all development areas to move towards, and prompted everyone involved to think about formulating plans and goals to achieve them. This directive has increased motivation for development plans and has helped to ensure that only those plans in line with the vision can be adopted. In fact, the Ministry of Education is currently working according to existing strategic plans, but it requires a review and development of those plans and programmes to ensure that they are compatible with the new vision. The Ministry of Education has made a distinguished effort and a good start in this field. One area of evidence to support this was when the Minister of Education issued a decision to form a working group whose mission is to supervise the implementation of everything related to education in Vision 2030 with the participation of education departments and universities. The Ministry also gave an instruction that all school children should receive specific classes aimed at educating them on the content and purpose of the vision.

These actions, to date, have ignited a spark of genuine hope and excitement about the future in the hearts and minds of students, teachers, and communicators in education towards the vision and towards organised thinking and forward planning, which represents another achievement of the vision. This is particularly important as the youngest of these students will be on the

verge of graduating from university by 2030 and will be the first generation to fully face the results and outputs in their working lives.

- **Culture and Administration**

Culture plays a dual role in influencing the phenomenon of managerial and organisational behaviour and its interactions (Richard, 2013). On one hand, and through what culture produces in terms of perceptions, standards, symbols, meanings, values, concepts and connotations, culture contributes to the formation of patterns of thinking directed to managerial and organisational behaviour and its models. On the other hand, it represents the reference culture that explains programmes, rules, policies, instructions, permissions, rituals, and considerations restricting the behaviour of individuals in organisations (Fatehi, 1996).

Leadership is the ability to influence others to achieve common goals (Hofstede, 1980). Evidence indicates that leadership is found in every culture. However, leadership varies from country to country and from period to period. These differences can be explained by differences in assumptions and values across cultures. Assumptions based on the environment, human nature, time, and context seem to have the most influence on leadership (Gannon, 2010).

Cultures which view human nature as needing an authoritarian approach and to be controlled prefer the style of Theory X. This theory is based on the belief that members of this society choose not to work freely, need to be coerced, and have to be closely supervised. Leaders who adopt Theory Y prefer to believe people can motivate themselves and adopt this theory as it focuses on rewards and recognition (Brislin, 1993).

Culture is a product of the needs that Maslow (1943) expressed in the hierarchy of needs, beginning with the need for security to the need for self-realisation. The need for security led to the development of patterns of languages for communication, forms of jobs and professions, the division of resources and the regulation of property (Seyed and Hossein, 2013). Social needs have led to the features that characterise societies, the ways in which they express their aspirations, fears, celebrations, and the nature and characteristics of social relations. The needs for appreciation and self-realisation are the needs that drive scientific and technological development, the emergence of various sciences, as well as the process of exploring the



universe, the interpretation of nature and philosophy, and the emergence of art in all its forms (Gallagher, 1995).

Culture includes every activity carried out by people in this era and has influences from past ages. It is difficult to imagine its absence in a society (Sami, 2010), for its lack of existence means the absence of all that people have developed, innovated, and invented, and the loss of the scientific, technological, artistic, and social progress we live in, because the absence of culture means the absence of the existence of society (Flourish, 2013).

Culture should be linked to freedom (Alrashydi, 2013). There is no cultural product that is preserved and distinguished except with a great deal of freedom (Fukuda-Parr, 2004). The optimal cultural policy is one that aims for a person to grow their mind and use it fully, and that only happens when a person leaves what is called Kantian ethics, developed by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, and based on the idea that “there is absolutely nothing in this world that can be considered good in itself unconditionally but goodwill” (Mustafa, 2012: p.33). This means that a person should use their consciousness without leadership, there should be no pattern that a cultural policy seeks to remove from individuals (Al-Shirazi, 2015). Rather, it should encourage individuals to use their own understanding and provide the means and resources available to use that special understanding to its best advantage (An-Naim, 1992). Where the goal is for individuals to do things only for their own desire, express themselves without restrictions and enjoy their life and social relationships without accounts, it is considered one of the definitions of empowerment (Marzouk, 2017).

- **The Concept of Cultural Diversity**

The term cultural diversity refers to a group of different cultures and multiple types (Muslim, 2001), in contrast to the concept of monoculture (Sami, 2010). The term cultural diversity refers to the presence of different and diverse cultures (Halabi, 1984) and the concept of cultural diversity often refers to the diversity of human societies and cultures around the world. It is often indicated that the concept of globalisation has impacted on cultural diversity in different ways in different countries (Emad, 2016). In addition, the concept of cultural diversity is an important indicator used to denote the features that are owned by members of the community to prove themselves in front of others. These features include demographic factors which indicate age, gender, and family name, as well as diverse cultural norms and other

science groups. This is supported by Ghaith (2006), who said that community members are characterised by prevalent and clear cultural differences such as cultural differences in language, customs, and values. Additionally, cultural differences also include how individuals and societies organise their various behaviours that include understanding and joint application of the concept of morality and religious belief, and interactive methods in terms of scientific analogy. Emad (2016) pointed out that it is possible to liken diverse cultures to the concept of diverse biology, and it is possible to indicate through this analogy that the existence of cultural diversity is a basis for the continuation of life, because maintaining diverse indigenous cultures in different environments may be as important as the existence of the human race, and even as far as the importance of preserving different species and ecosystems.

- **The Effects of Cultural Diversity**

Cultures are formed through languages. In the United States of America, for example, the majority of the population shares a common language, English, regardless of the number of different cultures and nationalities that communicate in it (Al-Samarria, 2003). In addition to history and some basic values such as freedom of the individual and the right to work, there is always a set of shared values that bring everyone together because of cultural diversity, values and systems of traditions, community, and an understanding of each other (Al-Thaoudi, 2006). Emad (2006) said this link facilitates cooperation and easy communication in social, educational, and economic environments.

The concept of cultural diversity is not a modern concept but rather an old one that was first applied 1,400 years ago when, during the battle of Alahzab, Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, consulted his companions about what could be done about the progress of the polytheists to Medina. Salman Al-Farsi presented his suggestion of digging a trench around the Medina which both the Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace, and the remaining companions agreed to, and they did not object that Al- Farsi was not from the people of the country or that he was not from the Quraysh tribe. They dug the trench and were able to defeat the polytheists (Al-Thaoudi, 2006). Yaakobi and Ramle (2017) explained this position is what is claimed as cultural diversity. They also knew that it is the possibility of coexistence among diverse cultures based on justice and mutual respect, free from the concerns of cultural hegemony that may be practiced by the wider culture. Ibn Nabi (2011) stressed the

need to take account of religion, race, gender, social and economic status, age, psychological capabilities, or other ideologies that are part of the culture. They must be respected and accepted. The modern concept of this has been formulated within the framework of the business, as Al-Rashydi (2013) explained, the success of organisations depends on their ability to manage and respect cultural diversity and recognise its value. Some researchers, such as Al-Zunaidi (2009), who are interested in development, see in its comprehensive concept that cultural diversity is the main engine for sustainable development for individuals and local communities. Setting a comprehensive vision for achieving sustainable development at the level of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requires not ignoring aspects of cultural diversity but respecting them in the present and the future.

This can be observed in the texts of Vision 2030, which provided answers to many questions that have revolved around this topic. It stated the following:

In order to achieve the desired economic growth rate at a faster pace, we seek to create an attractive environment for the required competencies through facilitating livelihoods and work in our homeland and this will be achieved by providing opportunities for non-Saudis, by creating an attractive business environment through which human resources can be invested, to attract the best minds in the world, and to provide all the needs that contribute to supporting the development and attracting more investments (Vision 2030).

Since leadership has a very significant role in achieving the sustainable development of any country, the following section presents the relationship between culture and leadership and its role in the empowerment approach.

- **The Relationship Between Culture and Leadership**

Preserving culture is considered a collective “spontaneous movement” practised involuntarily by the community to preserve their existence (Muslim, 2001). When this resistance becomes an organised and planned action it turns into resistance to change rather than cultural resistance (Ibrahim, 1998) as it is within the nature of a person to protect their culture and lifestyle because it is one of the reasons for existence. Even if the one who intentionally undertakes this protection emerges and represents the community in protecting the culture, then this will lead

to a “cultural resistance” which here means “rational resistance of cultural retreat” which represents a buildable framework from which societies can build cultural security without the need for permanent isolation that separates them from other cultures (Qurayyah, 2007).

Al-Zunaidi (2009) mentioned that there is a very big difference between the spontaneous resistance stemming from society through the “trial and error” practised by members of society and their nomination of the most important components of culture and trying to maintain them and those who define these components and impose them on society and claim that they are the constants that should not be changed or subject to change.

Marzouk (2017) argued that comprehensive thought is a way of “resisting change” because it aims primarily to absent society from “action” or from participating in making culture. This means that only the elite become dominant in shaping culture and holistic thought, which excludes other classes from participating in building the desired cultural image, which, in turn, contradicts the concept of empowerment.

There are societies that encourage “resistance to change” at the expense of cultural enrichment. Within such societies, the control, including the conditions, visions and perceptions of the world, is decided for all by a group of individuals (Yaakobi and Ramle, 2017), so we find this society has the ability to accept everything without question and bear all without complaint (Abdel Moneim, 1972). Al-Ta’i and Al-Falahi (2006) argued that this society has an unparalleled desire to justify “resisting change” and link it to higher cultural images that are reflected even in everyday details, freezing development and cooling the engines of change and reform every time they try to turn and move. Explaining that, Al-Saati (1983) believed that these societies were able, over the years, to neutralise the active societal culture and transform members of society into “recipients,” so they had the initiative and could no longer “resist” the resistance to change practised by the dominant elite in dictatorships. Evidence for this was observed by Yacobi and Ramla (2017) who stated that Arab society, especially Saudi Arabia, lived for a period of time in a stage called “resistance to change,” where change could rarely be observed.

Marzouk (2017) believed that this has nothing to do with cultural resistance, but rather the confusion between what is cultural and what is related to domination, and trying to keep things as they are under the pretext of “cultural security” is what makes “change” almost impossible.

The shortest way to attack any reformist idea is to link it to cultural security, which has become an argument that pushes a number of projects and reforms to a dead end (Al-Taie and Al-Falahi, 2006).

Each authority, be it the governing body of a country, a regime, a hierarchy in a company, a community, tribe, or a family unit creates its own culture. The authority here is of multiple shapes and sizes. Every environment is represented by authority and every authority constitutes the “cultural environment”, within which it grows and defines the rational features of the “cultural resistance” that arises in that environment (Al-Tamimi, 2001). There is an open authority that opens every door to rational culture and there is a closed authority that opens every door to resist change (Qaddah and Al-Zahrani, 2016). However, Marzouk (2017) mentioned that the aforementioned does not mean that power stands in front of culture, or that culture reduces the presence of power, but rather the opposite is true, as it is known that “every authority is culture” and that “every culture is authority”, and the degree of acceptance of power by the new cultural bearer is what creates the new culture and guides any resistance to change. The relationship of power with culture is a fundamental issue, as the survival and prosperity of culture depends primarily on the authority’s “openness” to change and its acceptance of the new (Qaddah and Al-Zahrani, 2016).

One sensitive idea is change. Al-Tai and Al-Falahi (2006) emphasised that the problem lies with those who resist change trying to impose their opinion by force or by recounting illogical justifications to keep things as they are. This is what may be called cases of civilisational convulsion, experienced by many Arab societies, a love of domination, self-esteem, and an unwillingness to open up to the other (Al-Zunaidi, 2009). Therefore, Al-Tamimi (2001) confirmed that culture and traditions play an extremely authoritarian and dominant role in shaping social reality and how individuals perceive and interpret situations in some societies. They may even amount to a kind of unwritten law that guides patterns of thinking in the lives of these societies.

The Arabic political culture faced a major decline in its structure before the Arab Spring, when the culture of surrender replaced the culture of resistance, the culture of fear replaced the culture of confrontation, and the culture of indifference replaced the culture of active political participation. It was mentioned by Al-Zahrani (2016) that the culture in the Arab world focused on absolute loyalty to the authority of Arab politics and regimes and the justification of their

legitimacy and existence instead of loyalty to the country and society. That is why the Arabic political culture before the Arab Spring was considered a narrow and limited culture (Almond and Verba, 1980).

Since 2011, countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have witnessed the outbreak of popular revolutions and protests that have continued until the present day and affect cultural, political, and social rhythms (Lundberg, 2018). These fluctuations at the level of social and political systems, which were brought about by the so-called Arab Spring, in which the people raised demands for freedom, democracy, and the empowerment of social justice and dignity, reflect the nature of the crisis that remained inherent in the legitimacy of power and governance in the region (Victor, 2011). Therefore, Makdisi (2017) saw the wave of change in the Arab world demanding the democratisation of political systems, the just distribution of wealth and the establishment of the state of citizenship and freedoms, as a watershed moment in Arab political and social history. Despite the ups and downs of the Arab Spring, it brought legitimate paths of power and governance systems into the fore, so it was no longer a matter of actors and elites only, but became a societal affair embodied in a discourse whose divisions were united among the peoples of the region, united by common characteristics in culture, history and civilisation, and then by the extent of their suffering of similar issues, irrespective of the degree of suffering, rather than gender – their spirit unified expressing itself in prolonged revolutions and protests, with the diversity of the paths that each experience took (Rózsa, 2012). This allows us to see how democratisation is a movement that is not only political but also cultural, which takes shape in political activism, education, and social life (Lundberg, 2018). The government of Saudi Arabia identified that within the Saudi culture there was a resistance to change in some quarters, namely from those already with authority or from those members of society for whom changes to lifestyle and the hierarchal structure meant breaking away from old traditions, traditions they wanted to maintain. However, the government also recognised the desire for change among citizens and when drafting the Kingdom's Vision 2030 they were respectful of incorporating both views. This comprehensive economic, political, and social reform programme has been designed to be implemented gradually to gain acceptance from each member of society, allowing them the opportunity to adapt to each phase before the introduction of new stages. By doing this, and by clearly communicating each phase, people have felt part of the process which has made the introduction more successful. Part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 is to remove bureaucratic and social obstacles to the restructuring of many of the Kingdom's systems, allowing the development of a prosperous country with a

vibrant society working towards a better future. By making people feel part of the process, this form of empowerment is making radical changes more likely to be accepted and therefore successful.

- **The Role of the Cultural Background to Understanding the Concept of Empowerment**

Hammadi (2013) supported what was previously mentioned and added that the prevailing societal culture plays an important role in how community members perceive and interpret any term as having the same role in accepting and rejecting change. Here, it is important to highlight that the traditional culture common in organisations in Arab countries in general, and in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia specifically, calls for stability and continuity and encourages routine and inertia according to the rule of implementation and is not discussed first (Melhem, 2006). This is similar to what Al-Rashoudi (2009) mentioned, that the culture in Arab countries established the concept of authority and subordination, and decisions circulated in the hands of those at the top of the pyramid for a long period of time, which led to obstruction or misapplication of a number of modern concepts and approaches, and the term empowerment may be one of the most important, though it is a term that has been mentioned in the Arab Islamic culture for hundreds of years.

Due, however, to a lack of knowledge and the consolidation of culture where power is associated with position, the application of empowerment has been hindered. This is supported by Tariq (2013), that the concept of power and social standing is linked to the power of influence and position, particularly in Arab cultures. Siraj al-Din (2008) also confirmed that Ibn Khaldun, the Arab sociologist, mentioned in his writings that the Arab seeks leadership and yearns for it and considers it to be an honour rather than a mandate. Despite the entrenchment of bureaucratic culture, in recent years due to technological progress, cultural expansion (globalisation), increased knowledge and the urgent need to keep pace with global developments and achieve sustainable development, there have been several successful attempts to move towards participation and democracy, at the family, tribe, and community levels and its institutions.

Evidence for this comes the shift from the marginalisation of women to them participating in education and work (Al-Mizar, 2015). Several countries have also turned to modern methods and approaches that support participation and the trend towards decentralisation. However,

when comparing what some developing countries have achieved regarding decentralisation against developed countries, we find that there is a clear difference between how to understand concepts and how to apply them, and culture plays a significant role in the understanding and applying of concepts (Al-Rashidi, 2013). Tarawa (2013) supported this, as he indicated that some Arab countries started to follow the approach of empowerment and put it within their strategy to achieve their vision, but the majority of studies commented that the reality of empowerment in some Arab countries is still limited or almost non-existent. Empowerment is indeed limited by sexual discrimination and the dominant society is the male community, and the male attitude towards the role of women in leadership remains limited. It is necessary to know that cultural and social factors were the main players in the inequality of women with men being able to exercise their rights and roles (Marzouk, 2017). This may reflect negatively on any development in the state, if half of society is stalled or marginalised (Al-Rashoudi, 2009). Saudi Arabia is one of the key countries facing the many challenges necessary in order to adapt from a society that is dominated by racism, discrimination, and governed by customs and traditions more than the law, into a society which includes social justice and participation in advancing the development of its society (Ali, 2007).

These difficulties may be attributed to the unwillingness to change for fear of failure or the desire to adhere to routine procedures (Al-Rashoudi, 2009). Melhem (2006) also indicated that a dearth of skills and knowledge is one of the factors impeding the movement towards progress and reform in various fields. Al-Qahtani (2016) stressed the role of cultural background in supporting any change in society. This was supported by both Al-Shaalan and Kaki (2013) who mentioned that the stage of cultural modification in any society or organisation is the most important stage and may even be the basis for any change society desires to achieve. This is similar to Peter Drucker's saying that culture absorbs strategy (Whitzman, 2016). This means that no matter how powerful your development plan is, its effectiveness will be hampered if members of the team do not share the appropriate culture (Al-Qahtani, 2011). Therefore, a change in culture is based on internal conviction, not coercion (Sami, 2006). The change that seeks progress, reform, and the liberalisation of positive mental energies lies in the interest in the cultural dimension, courage in describing its conditions, criticising its components, and identifying shortcomings so that it becomes a necessary action that represents the true guarantee of the success of reform and progress projects (Al-Zunaidi, 2009). Therefore, spreading a culture of empowerment in all sectors and institutions, education and media, and resisting the tendencies of male and dictatorial hegemony in power in societies, especially Arab



societies, is considered one of the basic starting points to liberate the positive energies of each member of society, encourage creative initiatives and develop free creative thought (Al-Tai and Al-Falahi, 2006). Empowerment here refers to the process of giving people an opportunity to control their attitudes and lives. This differs from authorisation, which indicates an individual's ability to make decisions within a specified scope and for a specific period (Al-Zahrani, 2020).

One of the obstacles facing widespread empowerment within Saudi society is for citizens to understand they have it. For certain people, possibly of an older generation or from more traditional regions of the country, this will be the first hurdle (Al-Zahrani, 2020). However, with a very dynamic demographic where over 70% of citizens are under the age of 40, it is anticipated that this concept will be embraced.

## **Section II: Education in Saudi Arabia**

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

Due to global developments, the demand for the importance of reviewing the development of the educational system has increased. Past years have witnessed several reform attempts on a number of educational issues. This section reviews these issues in addition to the structure of the educational system in Saudi Arabia.

### **3.2.2 Historical background of education**

Education in Saudi Arabia officially began in 1344 AH and before that it was restricted to mosques and so-called “katatib”. Education before the start of formal education in the Kingdom were through four stages:

- Traditional education: teaching the Qur'an and Prophet tradition in mosques, with the duration of the study ranging from five to six years. This spread in the Hijaz as well as in Najdn, and the north and southern areas.
- Government education: This can be called regular education in the Turkish language in Mecca and Medina, and was under the supervision of the Ottoman government, especially in the Hijaz until this system was replaced by Sharif Hussein bin Ali Arab schools.

- Private education: This type of education was managed and largely funded privately, and is very close to traditional education in its methods and teaching methods.
- The first educational system in Saudi Arabia emerged with the establishment of the Ministry of Knowledge in 1925, when education was limited to boys only. The first girls' school was established in 1956 and the first school run by the state opened in 1960. In addition, during the reign of King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the General Presidency for Girls' Education was established in 1960 and included 15 primary schools and one institute. In 2002, it merged with the Ministry of Knowledge, which changed its name to the Ministry of Education in 2003.

General education in Saudi Arabia starts with primary to intermediate then on to secondary education and is available to every citizen and resident of any nationality. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also been keen to instil and spread the culture of education.

The Minister of Education oversees the government's education policy, and university education has received generous assistance in the form of new universities, scientific and applied colleges, and financial allocations with large budgets. There are now 25 government universities and nine private universities in the Kingdom, as well as 34 private colleges that offer scientific and applied disciplines in a variety of fields. In 2014, the Ministry of Higher Education merged into the Ministry of Education.

Since the establishment of the Ministry of Knowledge in 1925 and the decision to eradicate illiteracy there have been significant achievements, such as:

- The provision of free education for all at every stage.
- The increase in the enrolment rate in primary school to 99% of the target group.
- Gender equality in available educational opportunities.
- Low illiteracy levels among men and women.
- It has also made achievements in curriculum development, adopting policies to assess student learning, focusing on core competencies, expanding state-of-the-art school buildings, equipment for teaching, and improving methods of teacher selection.

Despite Saudi Arabia's focus on education, over time problems have emerged in the education system, such as a lack of development in the education system, an increase in the burden on teachers, and a lack of curriculum development (Al-Ghamdi, 2010). At the same time there have been signs of shortcomings and imbalances in the system and a failure to keep pace with and meet development needs (Al-Mousa, 2010). Additionally, the failure in the style and layout of school buildings to create an attractive educational environment, overcrowding of students in the classroom (Al-Abd al-Karim, 2010), and the bureaucratic system that oversees schools can mean it is limited to implementing instructions with minimal efficiency. School principals have very little authority and their role, whilst generally reserved to running the day-to-day routines at school, still holds them accountable for any violations of the system (Al-Ghamdi, 2016; 2010).

School principals also suffer from a lack of teaching staff, so there is seldom a principal whose sole purpose is purely as an educational leader within their school. Under this type of administration, the pattern of development depends on the projects and programmes that come from further up in the hierarchy (the Ministry), and the school has no direct responsibility for any development work unless directed by the Ministry. Educational programmes and projects tend to be of a general nature (one-size-fits-all), so they do not meet the individual needs of teachers and are not meaningful to members of the educational institution's staff (Al-Balawi, 2008).

Globalisation, the transformation of the knowledge society, the knowledge economy, the information and communication technology revolution, and the intensification of global competition have resulted in a number of major changes and developments on a global scale (Al-Mousa, 2010).

At a national level, there has been great development within the Kingdom, which has resulted in increased status at the regional, Islamic, and global levels within the G20. On the other hand, population growth in the Kingdom is among the world's highest. According to 2017 statistics, with a population of approximately 32.6 million, 79% are under 39 years of age, 33% 0-14 and 46% 15-39 (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2017). Whilst these figures have positive aspects, particularly in relation to investment and tasks related to advancing development, there remains within the Kingdom a need to strengthen efforts and accelerate the process of development within the education system. This would enable it to become more effective. The political

leadership has recognised the requirement for change and considered education as the basis for achieving sustainable human development and its importance in enabling young people to possess the tools to generate knowledge for a variety of necessary purposes. The new focus is on qualitative development, not just on providing education to all but on providing quality education with teaching standards, resources, leadership, and buildings being nationally monitored (Al-Shahrani, 2010). The King Abdullah Education Development Project was launched in response to the above and a strategy was developed. This strategy aims to gradually replace the old educational system with a new one, phasing it in in five-year periods, which started in 2009. This development is in addition to the requirement for the implementation of a modern approach to change management (Al-Mousa, 2010).

Since 2009, with the implementation of the King Abdullah Education Development Project, the education system has initiated many important changes and the objectives of the educational system have been reviewed. As a result, a number of new targets have been identified:

- Developing educational curricula to respond to modern scientific and technical developments.
- Preparing leaders and teachers to perform their educational tasks to achieve the objectives of the developed curriculum.
- Improving the educational environment, qualifying, and preparing for the integration of technology and digital models from the curriculum.
- Enhancing the abilities of self-awareness and creativity of students to develop their talents and hobbies.
- Deepening national and social concepts and linkages through non-class activities of various types.
- Building standards that measure the efficiency of the learning process, which can be used in the targeted development processes. This will be discussed later in this section.

In 2016, a conference on economic development was held in Saudi Arabia under the title ‘Achieving the Education System Strategy of Vision 2030’. This led to the continuation of the objectives set out within the King Abdullah project for the development of education and to the expansion of the strategy of the educational system in order to achieve the objectives of Vision 2030.

This brief history of education in Saudi Arabia aims to provide a clear context for the rapid development of education; thus, the history of education in Saudi Arabia can be divided into three major stages:

- The stage of strengthening the society's conviction in education, as previously discussed, in the importance of spreading the culture of the learning, especially women's education, policymaking, and the educational system.
- The stage of spreading and expanding education, establishing more schools, providing more educational opportunities with equality for both sexes and striving to eradicate illiteracy.
- The stage of achieving quality in educational institutions and a focus on raising the levels of student achievement to high standards. King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz confirmed this stage in various forums and events (Al-Mousa, 2010).

However, there have been challenges. Al-Ghamdi (2010) said that although the educational system in Saudi Arabia has undergone changes and innovations, as Al-Sulmi (2010) has also noted, many educational reforms have failed to articulate the goals and purpose of change, which has led to several problems in the implementation of these reforms. There has been considerable resistance to the implementation of these programmes by workers in the education sector (Al-Roqi, 2016). It is therefore necessary to obtain a more comprehensive and visible picture that can be used by people involved in the process of educational change and reform (Fullan, 1991).

Because the clarity and comprehensiveness of the overall goals of development and change are a prerequisite for the success of any project, reform in Saudi Arabia's educational system has challenges in terms of defining the vision and philosophy of these goals. As Al-Sulmi (2010) pointed out, there is no correlation between education outcomes and labour market requirements. Similarly, Al-Mousa (2010) pointed out that one of the challenges facing the Saudi education system is the lack of equivalence of educational outputs with market requirements. This issue stems from a lack of preparation among graduates, who lack the skills required to meet the demands of the labour market. The aforementioned challenges will be discussed in greater depth later in this thesis. Another important issue that is closely related to the subject of the current study is the structure of the Saudi educational system, which will be discussed in the next section in some detail.

### **3.2.3 Education Policy**

Education policy refers to the general framework that includes the official objectives and guidelines upon which the education system is based (Al-Minqash, 2006). According to Trowler (2002), “education policy is the definition of principles and procedures related to educational issues that should be followed in order to achieve the desired objectives” (p. 95). These policy perspectives, however, may not be sufficient. For Trowler (2002), current education policy is a dynamic policy because it changes depending on the objectives, challenges, issues, and stakeholders’ perspectives.

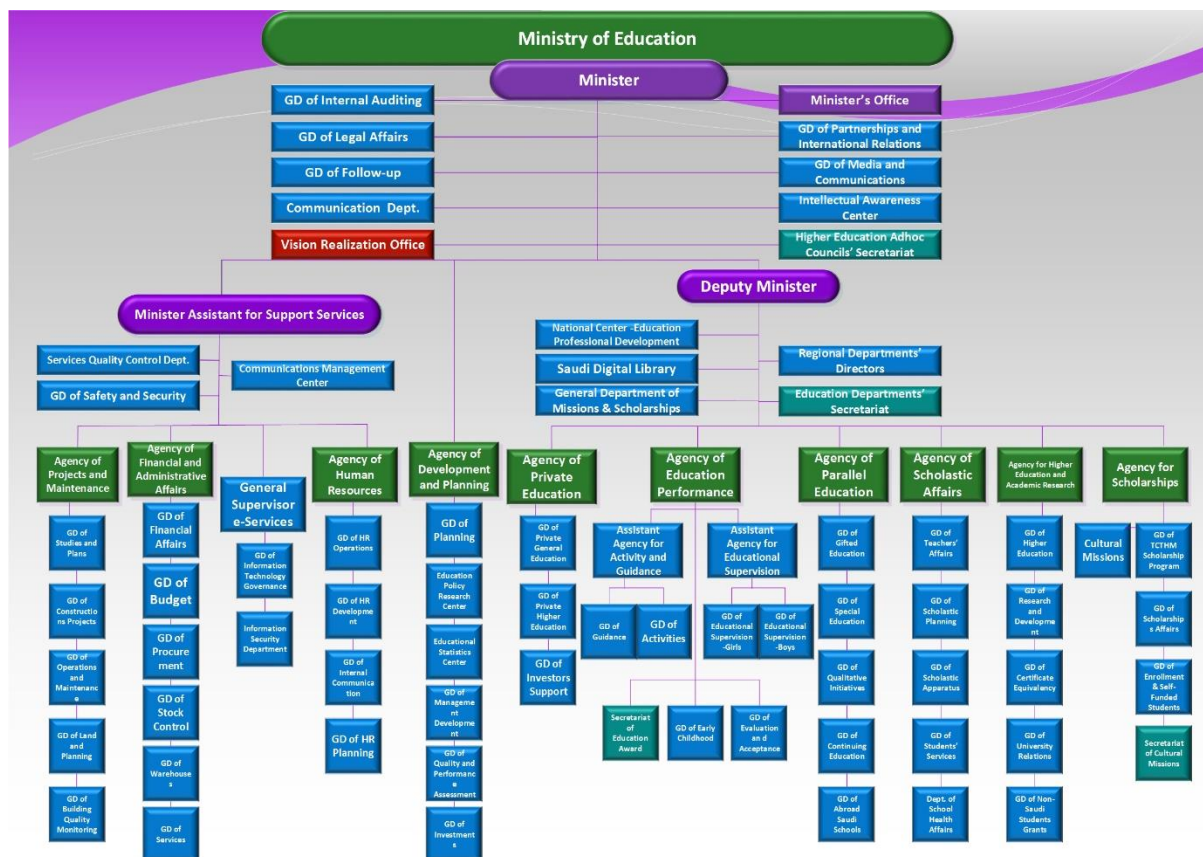
Modern policy is built in accordance with Islamic philosophy and principles, guidelines based on global best practices and national and international experiences, such as: building an integrated system of educational standards, evaluation, accounting and continuing professional development of education personnel. Curriculum development, the use of information technology to improve learning, construction and maintenance of school buildings, comprehensive participation, and benefitting from the experiences of others all deepen and spread the culture of decentralisation in departments and raise expectations to the top level (Bin, 2017).

### **3.2.4 Structure of the Educational System**

Dr. Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al Isa, Minister of Education, endorsed the Ministry of Education’s organisational structure and its implementation from its publication in 2018. The structure included the consolidation, termination and creation of several agencies, aimed at more integrative work processes and the streamlining of duties the Ministry is tasked with, in accordance with the scope of these duties and in alignment with Saudi Vision 2030. Furthermore, the Minister issued Decisions of Assignments of Deputies as per the new organisational structure. The structuring included the merger of the Two Deputies of the Male and Female education into a Single Deputy under the name Agency of Education Performance. It also included naming the education agency tasked with university affairs as the Agency of Higher Education and Academic Research, and the creation of the Agency of Parallel Education, that is involved with the education of gifted and special education children, the Qualitative Initiatives Centre, lifelong education and Saudi schools abroad. Additionally, the

restructuring saw the creation of the Agency of Human Resources and Agency of Financial and Administrative Affairs.

The total number of agencies included in the structure is 10, with two sub agencies and 54 general departments. In the same context, the organisational structure included renaming a number of general departments affiliated with His Excellency the Minister, as detailed in the figure below (Ministry of Education 2018).



**Figure 3.3 The Ministry of Education Framework (Ministry of Education, 2018)**

The main education policy includes objectives for the educational system in Saudi Arabia:

1. Empowering schools and departments of education to manage and guide the development process. This goal sets out a set of procedures and processes to enable schools and education departments to become an educational institution capable of assuming self-leadership.
2. Strengthening the capacity of schools and education departments to plan and manage the development process.

3. Introducing a system of incentives and accountability that rewards innovation and promotes development at the level of the department of education and school.

### **3.2.5 Education System**

As noted previously, the Saudi educational system includes about 25 government universities, nine private universities, numerous private colleges and institutes, and more than 33,500 schools distributed across the Kingdom. This system allows for the enrolment of children from age 3 – 5 years in kindergarten as an optional stage for the family. Children begin to enrol in primary education at the age of five years and six months for those who have already enrolled in the kindergarten stage. If not, they can enrol in primary education at the age of six. The student receives the basics, such as: reading and writing, religious matters, Qur'an, and Prophet's tradition. Primary education continues for six years, followed by three years in the intermediate education level where students receive a greater amount of information about various religious, scientific, literary, and economic topics. The three years of secondary education is divided into two systems (traditional and courses). The students choose one of the branches or tracks to be followed, either literary or scientific. The first focuses on subjects such as history, poetry and human sciences in general and the other on chemistry, biology, and other sciences. Secondary education students can pursue their studies in technical and vocational institutes, or they can continue their studies in public or private universities, vocational education institutes and colleges. Anyone who cannot complete secondary education can attend evening or industrial secondary schools. The Government of Saudi Arabia provides free education across the four stages: primary, intermediate, secondary and university education. Students are given books and free transportation, and for university students and those enrolled in professional institutes there is also a financial payment (Ministry of Education, 2018). This means that the Saudi government is keen to encourage and spread education.

### **3.2.6 Key Issues of Education**

This chapter makes it clear that there are several issues affecting education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that require fundamental change:

- All aspects of life, including education, are expanding at a breakneck pace. These expansions present educational challenges in a variety of ways.



- Economic growth and diversification necessitate more efficient human resources. In addition, curricula focusing on religion are being phased out in favour of broader curricula focusing on science and technology.
- Geographical spread and remote areas pose a challenge to education. Furthermore, it is not always simple to provide good education for different cultures and traditional lifestyles, such as Bedouins.
- The proportion of people of a school age is very high, putting additional pressure on the Ministry of Education to provide more educational facilities.

### **3.2.7 Conclusion**

Culture is a combination of political, social, intellectual, cognitive, and other factors. It is one of the pillars of civilisation, as it forms the cornerstone of it, and includes all non-material aspects represented by beliefs, values, ideas, customs, traditions, ethics, tastes, language, and other aspects that are specific to a particular nation. Culture always extends the character of every nation with its distinctiveness, while giving it strength, survival, and continuity. The idea of reforming the culture seems difficult and arduous, but at the same time it is not new or impossible, because the transformations that have occurred in societies since the beginning of the renaissance are nothing but successive links in the project of cultural reform that target change by moving the mind behind it and defining the new goals it seeks. The cultural issue today is the basis from which we need to proceed, as culturally preparing the Arab person to be able to move forward with the reform project is a necessary condition to its success, and this includes the definition of the role of religion and its social function – because of its clear and tangible impact on the vocabulary of social and political life.

The Kingdom's Vision 2030 is a step towards the beginning of the transformation of society in Saudi Arabia into a globally active society with economic, political, military, cultural, and environmental knowledge. Introducing the concept of empowerment into this context could be very problematic if awareness of this transformation is weak and society does not participate in it. If this is the case, it will not achieve what is required, even if some changes take place. Key mechanisms contributing to the administrative shift necessary to achieve Vision 2030 are the administrative restructuring of the governmental and private sectors, preparing and training administrative leaders at various levels of upper, middle, and lower management, and the use

of creative tools in developing work methods, improving productivity, building a work climate and overcoming deeply embedded cultures and practices

## **Chapter Four: Change in the General Education System**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Human societies have always sought change to improve their living conditions and meet the challenges and requirements of the times, but who has the ability to change? What laws govern change? How does change happen? Several questions arise if we are to address the concept of change.

Contemporary theories of change have found that change must begin from within. This means that the motivation for change stems from a genuine internal desire, whether individual or collective, to contribute to improving living conditions and meeting the demands of the times (Morrison, 1998; Carnall, 1999). It is worth noting here that the Holy Qur'an referred to this 1,400 years ago when God mentioned in the Qur'an that change cannot be achieved unless it starts from an internal desire to move the individual or group towards change and then God helps us to achieve this change (Holy Qur'an).

Change is an essential feature of development in each area and sector of political, economic, social, cultural, and educational life. This is because the system of the universe is a variable system that requires internal and external interactions with those changes. Education is one of the most important areas in which change has become more than a necessity because of several factors, for example, through globalisation and global competition (Al-Adli, 2013). Hamadat (2007) added some additional factors, such as the transformation in information and communication technology that has led to a knowledge society, virtual learning, and a knowledge economy. A shift in the skills required for the third millennium is needed, such as in communication, computing, teamwork, self-learning, critical thinking, innovation, decision-making, lifelong learning, and a shift in educational thought. As a result of different views in education and different perspectives of how individuals learn there should be a fundamental shift in the roles of parent, leader, principal, teacher, student, and in the role technology.

The empowerment approach is regarded as a change issue in the education system in this study. Addressing the issue of change is a necessary first step in developing a clear concept of an empowerment approach. This will be accomplished by addressing the concept of change in public institutions, particularly in the public education sector, as well as the global trend

towards change, change strategies, models and lessons learned. It highlights the key processes and components relevant to the education field as seen through the eyes of scholars and researchers in the fields of public administration and education. Further consideration is given to changing circumstances in Arab states and developing countries, with a focus on Saudi Arabia as the research context.

## **4.2 The Concept and Demands of Change Management**

As a result of the large number of changes that have occurred in various sectors and political, economic, and social fields in recent decades, change management has become a topic of interest for research and study (Al-Nimri, 2014). The term ‘change’ may be difficult to define because it is a comprehensive term related to a number of reform concepts (Sengupta, Chandra and Sinha, 2006). According to Marris (1975: p.121), “no invention can be absorbed except if the interpretation is shared.” Change contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of the institution in terms of achieving goals, through organisational change aimed at making several changes to the organisational structure of the institution or introducing new concepts and behaviours.

According to Kanter (1997) the term change includes new policies, behaviours, methodologies, ideas, and products based on the organisation’s perceived patterns. It also includes the creation of new trends, as well as the redesign of old patterns to make them more efficient. In the following sections, the meaning of educational change and its various dimensions are discussed.

Morrison defined educational change in his book “Theories of Management for Educational Change” (1998, p.13):

... a dynamic process of continuous development involves reorganising how to respond to needs and requirements. It is a transformation from one state to the next, as a result of various factors and forces, that includes all groups and individuals of institutions, and is going to lead to a reorganisation of values, practices, and anticipated outcomes.

He points out in his definition that educational change is a process of continuous evolution, as transformation is the possible outcome of this evolution, and the system of education is constantly changing.

According to Fullan (1991), educational change has several aspects, including the use of new resources, the use of new approaches, and the change of ideas and beliefs. This requires changing and developing the beliefs and thinking strategies of individuals to deal with organisational change. This is very challenging because it is related to the social and functional status of the person in the educational system. Oliver (1996) emphasised that the makers of change policies in the education sector must have a positive attitude towards change and make an active contribution to change. Involving all members of the educational system in the process of making this change strategy may be a basic requirement, because involving everyone means that everyone is an important part of the decision-making process for change, not just as implementers of the decision, leading to functional commitment and ensuring effective change to obtain more positive results.

As per Anderson and Anderson (2001), there seem to be three types of organisational change. First, a developmental change aimed at improving skill sets, techniques, performance targets, or states that do not appear to be consistent with present or prospective requirements. Second, transitional change, which is a complicated sort of change that begins when leaders or staff recognise a problem that needs to be addressed in the current operation and when there is no other option, change is necessary for improvement to achieve current and future requirements. The third type of change that organisations have recently faced is transformational change, which is a revolutionary transition from one existing condition to another. To be successful, this type of change necessitates a significant shift in the culture, behaviour, and potential of stakeholders.

According to French and Bell (1999), change has many facets. It can be large or small, planned, or unplanned. It can also be comprehensive and reach all or only some parts of an organisation. Change can be quick and revolutionary, or it can move slowly and gradually. It can fundamentally alter a condition or only involve minor changes. As a result, leaders and practitioners need to be aware that each category and shift necessarily requires unique planning and action.

Bush and Coleman (2000) argued that educational organisations develop in a specific political, economic, and social context, because educational institutions are social organisations and so they are vulnerable to rapid changes in their surroundings. They will sometimes have to enact new regulations and other times adjust in response to community changes (Johnson and Christensen, 2007). Every country in the world is concerned about the development of education (Madani, 2002). Nonetheless, Al-Zahrani (2020) believed that change in the educational system is unavoidable, and the goal of this change is determined by the type, magnitude, location, moment, and circumstances leading to it.

Decision makers in the Saudi Arabian government, the study's focus, have recognised the importance of developing the education system to meet world standards of excellence and the Kingdom's Vision 2030. They believe that such a redevelopment will have a direct impact on the nation's economic and social development. Saudi Arabia's economy and development projects are heavily reliant on oil. In view of the current trend of decreasing oil dependence, there seem to be political patterns both within and beyond the Kingdom to conduct additional development and implement new plans and tactics for the Kingdom's current political, social, and economic prospects. Each of these trends have drawn academic and business leaders' attention in terms of capitalising on available opportunities (Smith and Abouammoh, 2013).

This necessitates a review of many systems, including the very important one of education, in order to cater to the requirements of a technologically based economy and to provide the proper research, skilled workforce, and the knowledge to meet national needs and compete on a global scale.

#### **4.3 The Importance of Change Management**

Whitaker (1993) noted that the increase in education-related legislation is a direct outcome of the obstacles that education systems face in a fast-evolving environment due to globalisation, the requirements for qualified workers, and technological advancements affecting life and education. These changes require constant adjustment in educational institutions. Bennett, Crawford and Riches (1992) asserted that since the early 1980s, schools and colleges around the world have had to deal with a rapidly changing and evolving set of expectations, responsibilities, and roles. They went on to say that the majority of the changes are radical and have unexpected effects. It is obvious that the way these changes are managed, as well as the

suitability of the methods, have important consequences for how people experience change as well as their conceptions of the results (Burnes, 2004). They also asserted that a significant number of managers seem to be sceptical about both the methods and the findings, arguing that organisations can struggle to manage change effectively. There is no doubt that change management is a vital activity within each level of the educational system in order to successfully integrate transformation into daily practice and increase competitiveness and results.

#### **4.4 Managing Change in Educational Administration**

According to Fullan (1995) and others, education leaders should understand the educational change management process in order to improve and successfully manage effective change management initiatives. Educational officials should work out how to deal with and overcome the obstacles that arise during the change process, because educated and informed educational management is critical to the success of education reform.

Burnes (2004) emphasised the importance of management and managers' duties in development; managers play an important and key role in providing opportunities for advancement, which is reflected in the evolution of the organisation. Effective organisational change, as discussed in previous sections of this chapter, will not occur unless it is properly managed. There is no doubt that change in the educational system leads to a number of radical changes in the roles of education managers at every level and in all fields. The process of change must also, therefore, be accompanied by a change in procedures and administrative methods. Morrison (1998) identified managers' two key roles in change management, as follows: first, the practice of leadership to change and develop the institution, which means managers should determine the direction of developments and changes. Second, to support the changes that have been initiated in the organisation and to balance the change process.

#### **4.5 Change, Challenges and Causes of Failure**

Change planning can sometimes fail and result in unfavourable outcomes. To avoid this, organisations need to be able to adapt effectively so that they can achieve the desired results of change. Rapid and complex change is a difficult adaptability test for leaders and members of the organisation. It is therefore essential for stakeholders to understand the requirements for change and the expected outcomes (Hellriegel and Slocum, 2010). Several researchers,

including Al-Khudairi (2003) and Hussein (2004), have pointed to a number of challenges that may arise in an organisation during the process of change. Some of them may be broad while others may be the stages of change for part of the organisation. This section will focus on reviewing the literature and perspectives on the challenges of organisational change that can have an impact on the efficacy of change processes.

According to Newman (2006), organisational change may fail if it does not receive sufficient support from leaders, particularly if there are concerns about results and responsibility, sluggish responses to hurdles, and continued loyalty to traditional ways. Other disadvantages mentioned by Harris (2003) include misconceptions, insufficient resources, and an absence of clarity for evaluative criteria.

Kotter (1998) identified eight important reasons for the failure of organisations in the change initiative after considering more than 100 organisations in the process of change: (1) there is no pressing motive for change; (2) lack of strength and adequate support; (3) lack of reasonable vision; (4) lack of reliable communication for dissemination of vision; (5) Not dealing with barriers to a new vision; (6) lack of plan design for short-term achievements; (7) announcing success before achieving radical change in organisational culture; and (8) lack of an established culture of change in the organisation (pp. 60-67). In addition, Longenecker, Neubert and Fink (2007), during their study of over 100 companies in the United States, identified the following reasons for the failure to achieve the desired results from change: lack of integrity and confidence, lack of clarity, lack of support in encouraging teamwork, failure to drive, lack of planning, lack of follow-up on performance and feedback, inability to deal with impediments to change, hiring individuals not qualified for development and change, and finally mismanagement of resources. This means that change is not limited to developing new policies and procedures to implement external requirements, but is also linked to developing individual personal strategies to respond to and influence structural and cultural change, indicating that change is both personal and organisational (Bennett et al., 1992).

Change is a type of pressure and tension on those who lead and support change because they face several internal and external challenges (Carnall, 1999). Some people see organisational change as a threat rather than a chance for development (Kanter, 1999). There are four reasons for rejecting change, according to Cotter and Schlesinger (2008): (1) apprehension about having lost something valuable; (2) a lack of faith in the outcome of change; (3) lack of faith



in the value of change; and (4) lack of confidence in the ability to develop the skills needed for change.

Kiristis (2009) offered several more examples of resistance. He explained that the refusal of individuals to change is due to their belief that change is a threat to them because it may lead to the loss of their position or power. The lack of clarity of the causes of change, its objectives, and expected benefits lead to resistance and challenges to the change. Moreover, some employees' lack of knowledge and qualification reduces their desire to participate in the change process. Deal, Purinton and Vaetjen (2008) shared the same perspective. They argued that change in strategies or work procedures, especially routine tasks, makes the employee feel anxious and confused when they are asked to do a new job and they may often refuse to participate because of a lack of skills. This means they refuse to participate in change. Moreover, if forced to change, they will behave superficially. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare individuals before implementing the change in order to achieve the desired results.

Perlmutter (2005) cited several important points relating to the education community. One reason for resistance to change is that a large number of teachers have been accustomed to performing routine tasks in their work with the same procedures for many years, and this leads them to prefer to follow this routine and makes them not ready for change as it may cause them chaos and create a lack of trust in their own abilities. In addition, educators may feel reluctant to change if the change is imposed from the top. Therefore, it is important to involve everyone in the decisions of change. This has been confirmed by Olson (2006), who pointed out that poor trust among faculty staff and administrators leads to the promotion and creation of an atmosphere of obstinacy and challenge among parties, which leads to a failure of change in any educational organisation. So, managers should work with academics to promote and encourage contributions from all to ensure the success of change in an organisation. Carnall (2007) further emphasised that change may increase financial and psychological stresses. Therefore, to achieve the desired change goals, it is therefore necessary to develop a vision agreed-upon by all sides, identify practical steps to be taken, and, finally, promote the importance of involvement (Smyth and Van der Vegt, 1993).

Application is one of the more critical stages of change because it involves a larger number of participants than in the planning phase (Law and Glover, 2000). Smyth and Van der Vegt (1993) considered four kinds of pressure that can stymie change implementation:

- Centralised power in the operations of the change implementation.
- The desire of executives for more autonomy and authority in the operation of strategy implementation and the involvement of staff in new behaviours.
- The pressure that arises within ways to promote a unified response to the external environment and to carve out a new acceptable societal niche.
- Pressure for a differentiated response to the concept of change's incentives and disincentives.

From a psychological point of view, Cameron and Green (2009) considered that developing appropriate structures and strategies, having an environment that fosters communication, and an evaluation of individual success create an atmosphere conducive to continuous growth and development. Also, the continuous evaluation of the change process and the methods of implementation contribute to knowing whether the change is working or not, and this helps people to respond to the change. Therefore, appropriate strategies have to be chosen to manage the change process and address its challenges, and the factors affecting the stages of change, both within and outside the organisation, should be considered to ensure the highest level of success.

## **4.6 Change Management Approaches, Models, and Strategies**

Because change is a natural cycle of life within organisations, regardless of their purpose, the change literature covers a wide range of topics. Profitability and prosperity are critical in business organisations that want to succeed. As a result, business professionals have been interested in expanding the literature on change and developing models and strategies to aid in the success of change. These efforts assist all organisations, including education organisations, in achieving their objectives. The section that follows illustrates the main approaches to change, important models, strategies, and roles of change engines.

### **4.6.1 Change Methods**

Context and surrounding circumstances affect the change management approach. Therefore, stakeholders' attitudes, culture and organisational components should each be considered when determining the best approach to change (Priestley, 2011). There are two types of change:

budding change and planned change (Burnes, 2004). Kennedy (2004) and Wilson (1992) mentioned that planned changes are those strategies and processes where a flexible and gradual transition from a predefined strategic vision to a desired vision in the future occurs.

Kennedy (2004), on the other hand, argued that the emerging approach to change is based on the belief that it is impossible to plan for change, and so those driving change must be aware of the factors which affect the organisation, adapt rapidly, and then implement the necessary changes. According to Burnes (2004), “the focus of emerging change is continuous, synergistic, and interdependent change that, although mediocre or small in nature, affects the organisation and its major subsystems” (p, 397).

El-Naggar (2019) mentioned two important reasons for developing a well-structured approach to change in educational institutions: firstly, ignoring the factors that may affect change could result in a faulty analysis of the institution’s position in selecting appropriate strategies. The second reason is to use familiar concepts about the academic community’s values and concepts aiding in collaboration by persuading stakeholders to contribute to the procedure for change.

As explained earlier, this study explores the concept of empowerment and its role in reforming the educational system, which in turn is reflected in the development of educational leadership. This issue is the core concern of change in the education system because it has a significant effect over the relevant components and necessitates a shared vision and clear strategy among all members of the education organisation. The following section will discuss and review several known models of change management that may be applicable to the concept of empowerment as a change project.

#### **4.6.2 Change Models**

According to Lewin (1945), “there is nothing more pragmatic than a good theory” (p. 129). Goshal (2005) stated that “nothing really is as harmful as a poor theory” (p. 86). This indicates that poor organisational structures are more likely to demolish good management practices. Models that cannot be described and implemented are thus not models, but rather wishes, hopes, or sermons.

Tichy (1983: p. 38) defined the model as “a set of assumptions and beliefs that represent the truth and the direction of action.” In the field of organisational change, a variety of theoretical and practical models have been developed. Some leaders and managers are successful in adapting to, learning from, and working with change, while others seek to manage and reduce the change wave. As a result, it is critical that the change leader selects an effective and appropriate model to assist the organisation in staying active and continuing to grow (Pryor et al., 2008).

Kezar (2001) mentioned several key considerations that must be considered once trying to develop or implement a change model in an educational system or institution, or when thinking about change in a systematic manner. These are: the perception that the change process is a turbulent process, the need to understand the culture of the organisation, creating an organisational balance between the internal and external environment of the organisation, enhancing interactions between members of the organisation, identifying social, cultural and political influences, enhancing participation in governance and decision-making, spreading a culture of risks and helping individuals to adopt new beliefs, realising that every type of change and each part of the organisation may require different change models.

The following section will concentrate on different approaches to developing and implementing the changes required to achieve, or shape, specific goals in organisations. For change, five models will be discussed and compared. According to Al-Saffar (2004), these models are appropriate for use in leading some types of educational change initiatives.

- **Problem-Solving Approach**

Because of its widespread use, the problem-solving approach is a prevalent method of dealing with change. Problem solving is an essential part of human action. Before delving into problem-solving terminology, it is critical to first define the problem. Harris (1998) presented a number of different interpretations to explain the meaning of the problem, referring to the different meanings of “problem” as follows: the problem may be seen as an opportunity for improvement; it may improve the condition of some situations or organisations. A problem arises when recognising a deficit in the present situation and believing that it can be improved for the better in the future. This means that the hopes that there are goals to address the deficit or shortage in an organisation cause a challenge and therefore a problem (Harris, 1998).

Johnstone (1993) defined the problem as the current situation for which you do not have an answer.

Given the definitions cited by Harris and Johnston, it can be seen that the problem arises when an ideal goal or condition has been identified but not been achieved. Furthermore, looking for a better situation can be a problem. The issue also arises when there is a desire to achieve a certain goal, but the current circumstances impede this achievement.

In addition, Shibata (2004) emphasised that the problem is determined through purposes. He added that if the purpose is different among managers, their outlook is also different. As a result, in order to implement change management through a problem-solving policy, change leaders, such as organisational leaders, have to define and clarify the organisation's goals and problems.

It can be deduced from the above that problem solving is a variable process. The issue is that the problem is used to solve the previous knowledge of the transition to the next stage without knowing how to move in the beginning. Problem solving is also the invention of new rules or the combination of rules already learned to solve a problem. An individual can employ a variety of strategies to arrive at a solution, as will be explained in the following paragraphs. The majority of the literature in this field is devoted to the problem-solving approach and the models that it employs. Bank (1992) identified a six-stage problem-solving model:

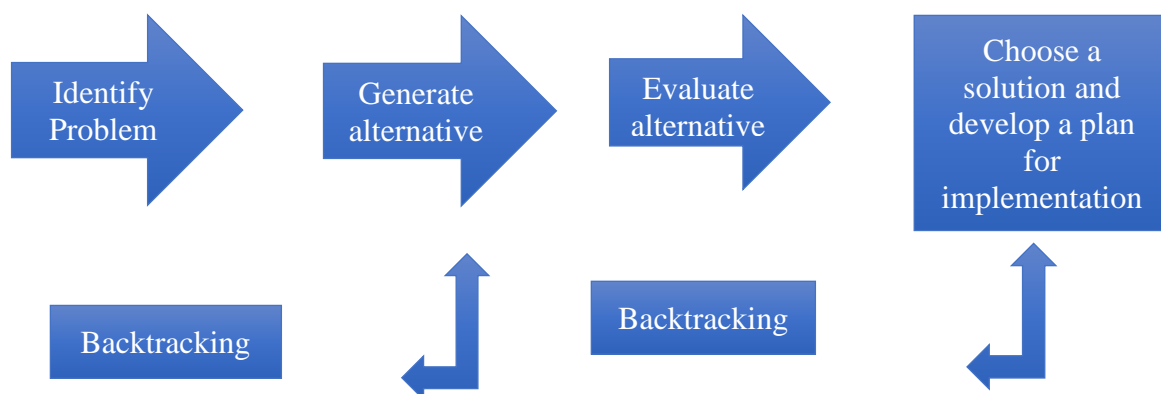
- Stage 1: identify the problem accurately (a much more important issue when there is more than one).
- Stage 2: identify the source of the problem.
- Stage 3: generate and prioritise potential problem-solving solutions.
- Stage 4: choose and translate the best appropriate solution into an action plan.
- Stage 5: implement the most appropriate solution and ensure commitment and control of the application.
- Stage 6: evaluate the results to see how successful the solution is.

Bank's model assumes that sufficient time should be allocated to the initial phases to ensure that the problem is properly understood and that the effective approach is chosen. In addition,

the solution's implementation and contingency planning are critical to the model's success. Fisher (2005) assumed a four-step model that is simple to implement:

- Phase 1: identify the issue. The issues are extremely complex and interconnected. One of most significant things is to identify the primary issue which, if resolved, will aid in the resolution of other issues.
- Phase 2: generate alternatives. During this stage, alternatives are proposed as possible or tentative solutions.
- Phase 3: evaluation of alternatives. At this step, most alternative solutions are identified and considered in order to make decisions.
- Phase 4: choosing the solution and developing an implementation plan. This is the stage of decision-making and the actual start of implementation.

Change agents should be involved in identifying problems and choosing alternatives to a high level of commitment to implementation when using Fisher's Model in Change Management.



**Figure 4.1 The Four-step Problem Solving Model**

In view of the likelihood of numerous possibilities for potential solutions within Fisher's Model of Change Management, the system operates backtracking (at phase 2 and phase 4). This algorithmic technique, which repeats itself indefinitely, retrieves the possible solutions and chooses the most appropriate.

In conclusion, the problem-solving approach focuses on goals and ideals. When the goal is reached, the problem must be resolved. Awareness of problems or weaknesses increases the likelihood of enhancement in this approach, therefore change agents would be problem-seekers instead of problem-avoiders. Consequently, the majority of the organisation's problems would be resolved, and change will be achieved. Problem-solving methods do provide the basic structure and procedures that underpin schools' development and are widely used in several education systems, including the United Kingdom and Australia (Abdel-Hamid, 1999).

Nevertheless, while a problem-solving approach is useful for managing change, the contextual effects are a significant limitation of its use at the Ministry of Education's head office. The Ministry of Education's central head office continues to operate in full rather than in a timeless theory which provides a reason to transfer through stages so that, as one moves through problem solving more towards the target, the problems change dramatically and, as a result, the objectives need to be modified and refined. Problem-solving approaches outline a practical order that you are progressively moving through. Change, on the other hand, is a much more complicated process. It is hard to keep goals focused on existing and emerging issues. In other words, a few causal environmental factors are not part of the problem but can have an impact on the problem-solving procedure. For instance, perception issues or an inability to understand the perspectives of others may exist. Emotional issues, such as a fear of taking risks or an inability to accept criticism, could stymie the implementation of a problem-solving method. There are some impediments that might well be caused by a lack of management support or the use of wrong information.

- **Organisation for Learning**

Argyris and Schon (1996) presented the concept of organisational learning and how to use it as a change management approach in their book *Organisational Learning: Theory, Method, and Practice*. They explained organisations as learning in the sense that each organisation learns if they are constructive and effective as organisations obtaining insight (knowledge, understanding, techniques, or practices) from any other source or any other way. Nevertheless, Argyris and Schon explained that constructive learning may be seen in terms of the value that the organisation may assign to increased efficiency and effectiveness.

It is critical to remember that interactions exist between organisational and individual learning. Argyris and Schon (1996) discussed these in detail: individual learning from interactions with one another is critical to organisational learning, which feeds directly on learning activities. The emphasis is on how the organisation will motivate people to share their information, thereby enriching the organisation's information. The flow of knowledge through the organisation is likely to be stymied by the organisation's hierarchical structure or by the boundaries between individuals, as is frequently the case in education.

Organisation inquiry is one of the basic theories of organisation learning. Organisational investigation often depends on a potentially problematic condition as a result of discrepancies between the actual and expected outcome. Argyris and Schon (1996) argued that the investigation becomes an institutional investigation once it is carried out by individuals acting as operatives for the institution in accordance with the established roles and rules. For instance, in an educational institution, the desire of individuals is to keep going to obtain quality, that is their motivation or individual habit, but when the employees of the organisation are involved in discussing quality, for example, they will have to inquire and identify a number of different opinions.

Argyris and Schon (1996) suggested that members of staff be able to learn tactically in order to build a workplace structure for strategic learning. Managers also should learn to foster an organisational environment in which developers are motivated to express their ideas and members are encouraged to express their concerns about design and development, and both developers and implementers are assisted in understanding and realising the value of their roles in organisational learning.

- **A Three-Step Model (Lewin, 1947)**

This model proposes three major steps to bring about change: the phase of unfreezing, moving and finally freezing the level (Lewin, 1945). The phase of unfreezing determines the current situation, removes the biases, and then determines the desired goals. The shifting phase is important for change implementation and transformation to the new phase via participation. The freezing stage is the phase of installation, and the new situation is stabilised through new standards, policies, and rewards (Kennedy, 2004). Cameron and Green (2009) mentioned that



this model relies on the idea of freezing after change is implemented; alternatively, it would be a temporary change because people will quickly revert to their old ways. This approach is formulated to change the culture and policies of an organisation, then to preserve and improve that change (Kennedy, 2004; Robbins and Judge, 2013). Pryor et al. (2008) pointed out that this model is appropriate for potential changes and therefore does not react to emergent changes; even so, this might be applicable if some future changes are expected.

- **Garvin's Seven-Step Model (Garvin, 2000)**

This model incorporates Lewin's (1945) change notions of unfreezing, motion, and re-freezing as necessary elements of the change process. It focuses on the role of change leaders in identifying the need for and urgency of change, ensuring employees know the rationale for change, developing a clear vision for change, implementing change, developing a long-term plan for change, assessing, and measuring progress at each stage of change, and then refreezing the change through change processes and institutions (Garvin, 2000; Mento et al., 2002).

- **The Eight-Phase Model (Kotter, 1995)**

As discussed above, Kotter developed a model consisting of eight steps after consultation and verification with a number of organisations of different sizes and type. He outlined eight mistakes that could lead to the change initiative failing. This model has been developed to help organisations avoid these mistakes. It identifies the main stages in implementing change by addressing important issues such as the need for change, understanding the organisational mission, and the importance of effective communication throughout the implementation process (Mento et al., 2002; Cameron and Green, 2009).

According to Pryor et al. (2008), it is preferable to use this model at the tactical level of organisations to modify their perspective and thus obtain an improved process. The Kotter model emphasises two key points: the change process takes a long time because it involves several stages, and a significant mistake at any stage can have disastrous consequences for change (Mento et al., 2002; Pryor et al., 2008).

- **A Ten-Step Model (Jick, 1999)**

This model is a tactical model for implementing a major change in organisations. Jick (1999) developed this model as a way to help change or evaluate actual change that emerged in the organisation (Mento et al., 2002; Pryor et al., 2008). This model provides a helpful outline for organisations seeking change by following 10 specific steps and strategies when implementing the change process (Jick, 1999).

This model recognises that change is a journey of discovery achieved by asking several questions studied at each stage of the change process. According to Mento et al. (2002), application is indeed a procedure of posing questions like: “Do we deal with the real issues of organisations or follow the easiest ways? How do we share the vision of the organisation? How do we preserve past anchors as we move to the future? Is it necessary for everyone to feel the urgency of change?” (Jick, 1999: p. 8). Asking such queries allows the organisation to focus more flexibly and reminds transformational leaders that the stage of implementing change is a process of continuous discovery (Jick, 1999).

A high percentage of change models seem to have similar characteristics because they take the very same paths and benefit from the same actions. Models, overall, provide advice through a number of logical phases to move from one stage to the next. However, because change rarely occurs in a straight line, it is normal for the steps to overlap (Biech, 2007)

S/N	Model of three steps (Lewin, 1947)	Model of eight phases (Kotter, 1995)	Model of ten steps (Jick, 1999)	Model of seven steps (Garvin, 2000)
1	Freezing	Create interest.	Examine the organisation's need for change.	Creating and implementing change.
2	Moving	Creating a strong guiding coalition.	Create a vision and a common course of action.	Creating a common need.
3	Refreezing	Making a vision	Remove oneself from the past.	Creating a vision.
4		Vision communication	Instil a sense of urgency	Commitment mobilisation.
5		Others are empowered to carry out the vision.	Encourage a strong leadership role.	Making Change Happen.
6		Making plans for and achieving short-term victories .	Obtain political support.	Evaluation of Progress.
7		Consolidating gains and bringing about even more change.	Create a plan for implementation.	System and structure changes.
8		Putting new approaches in place.	Create allowing structures.	
9		.	Communicate, involve others, and be truthful.	
10			Strengthen and institutionalise the culture	

**Table 4.1 Summary of the change models**

### 4.6.3 Change Strategies

The strategy is defined as “the lengthy execution strategy of organisations that leads to a benefit in a dynamic world via the creation of capabilities and resources to achieve stakeholders’ goals and expectations” (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008: p. 3). The choice or application of any type of change strategy depends on a number of issues and considerations. In the opinion of Nickols (2010), there are seven factors that could affect strategy selection: the degree of change (drastic or a minor modification), the degree of opposition, the size and variety of the stakeholders, the risk level, the time that is required for change, and the employees. Pre planning is essential as, according to Roberto and Levesque (2005), before launching an action plan, the seeds of a transformational approach should be planted by incorporating prescriptive and behavioural changes into an organisation.

Kezar and Eckel (2002) carried out a case-study in the United States of America in six higher education institutions to establish a theoretical and empirical transformation process that identified the following basic strategies to facilitate the change initiative process:

1. Senior management support for financial support initiatives, incentives, and new structures to support change efforts reflects positively. This helps employees feel appreciated and encourages them to support administrative process improvements and make the best decisions possible.
2. The presence of effective leadership involving all employees in the organisation contributes to the establishment of channels of communication between stakeholders via lectures, skills training, and courses that allow for open debate. Each of these factors contributes to encouraging people to participate in organisational change.
3. Leaders should create a future design which makes change attractive through establishing objectives to make a flexible plan.
4. Employees should be developed and given performance and leadership skills that will enable them to effectively communicate in order to make the necessary changes.
5. The visual integration of the actionable steps should be prioritised because it reflects the progress of work and effort, which reinforces the new sense of awareness brought about by the change and keeps the momentum going.

Nickols (2010) concluded that it cannot be said that there is one better strategy for change than others. Organisational leaders of change should investigate every organisational change strategy to determine which best serves the organisation's goals, and then implement one strategy or a combination of strategy and techniques.

#### **4.7 The Roles of Change Leaders and Managers**

The terms “change leadership” and “change management” are used interchangeably in the literature, creating some confusion. Nevertheless, according to Kotter (2011), there is a significant difference between these terms. Change management refers to the set of organisational structures as well as basic tools designed to protect the process of change under control and reduce alternate points from the process of change, while change leadership concentrates on driving the troops and processes of change overall so it is more intellectual, faster, and more efficient. Change management, according to Moran and Brightman (2001), is “the continuous process renewing an organisation's strategy, framework, and capacities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal clients” (p. 66). Irrespective of jargon, it appears that management or leadership of the process of change bears a lot of responsibility and should play critical roles in achieving long-term success.

Management style is an important element of the successful application of organisational change beginning (Mullins, 2006). It also plays an important role in identifying and assessing the conditions surrounding the organisation, which aids in the development of appropriate processes and approaches to address the change problem and enhance the organisation's performance (Pettigrew, 1985). Both Bush and Coleman (2000) emphasised that appropriate leadership had a positive effect on the level of educational institutions and student outcomes.

Therefore, the leadership role of management teams should be visible and effective throughout the entire change process (Hiatt and Creasey, 2003). Cameron and Green (2009) stated in their book that there are five roles that a change manager could perform, including calculating the adaptability of use, versatility, and achievement, and that there is no one best way. These are the roles:

1. The daring catalyser: is intended to create an uncomfortable environment in the current situation in order to motivate to change.

2. Visual motivation: focuses on individual motivation through participation, support, and incentives.
3. The measured adapter has a clear sense of identity and opens channels of communication within the organisation to make the transition a reality.
4. The determined implementer: means focusing on project planning, setting deadlines to complete the project, and progressing to achieve the desired results.
5. Thoughtful architect: carefully examines frames and styles and incorporates methods and strategies to create a solid foundation for change.

As discussed in Section 4.7 resistance is one of the primary causes of the failure of change. Managers and leaders play an important role in coping with differing levels of participation or resistance. Mullins (2006, p.510) asserts that “in some cases, and with some members of educational organisations, it could be required for the administration to benefit from hierarchical authority and the use of coercive and autocratic methods to impose change.”

Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) confirmed that a number of managers are unconcerned about ways to positively influence groups and individuals. This could be due to a lack of awareness of the strengths and drawbacks of commonly used methods. Moreover, they emphasised the significance of perseverance in overcoming resistance by examining the type and severity of resistance, the position of followers, the availability of knowledge to create change, and the power needed to achieve it. Furthermore, they underlined six methods for changing leaders, managers, or agents who can deal with resistance.

#### **4.8 Keys to Successful Change**

The literature on change in organisations has a range of advice, principles and evidence-supported lessons that discuss appropriate steps to ensure successful changes. Leaders of change have to be aware that change is not always successful because it is dependent on several factors, including organisational culture, staff development, and the social, economic, and political environment. This section examines the approaches suggested for successful change by scientists and researchers from different backgrounds and fields of study.

According to Hiatt and Creasey (2003), predicated on Prosci's (2012) scientific studies of over 650 companies, the top seven significant factors important to the development of institutional change are:

1. Consistent and effective support from senior management.
2. Having open communication channels and continuous broadcast messages.
3. Encouraging a culture of change by presenting its causes, objectives, and impact.
4. Implementing an appropriate change management strategy.
5. Ongoing support from leaders within the corporate structure and front-line staff ensures the stability of organisations in improving in every department.
6. Engaging staff in decision-making and taking their views.
7. Support from middle management that have sufficient management skills for change.

Kotter (1995) and Harris (2003) investigated five medical faculties that were committed to and oriented towards change. They discovered that the involvement of department heads was an important factor contributing to faculty members' support for change; open channels of communication between all, facilitating the exchange of information; and finally, classifying supporters within the school in order to promote change. Furthermore, the research highlighted the main factors associated with maintaining change: ongoing education and evaluation and continued support from the senior management team. Individual contributions, accomplishments, and resources are also recognised.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter introduced the approach to change in several sectors, with an emphasis on the education sector. It presented a comprehensive view of change theory by presenting several definitions and reviewing theories and principles in order to understand the motivations for change and change goals, as well as highlighted the challenges that arise during change implementation.

This chapter also included several models, strategies, and lessons that could be useful plans to implement the change process efficiently and flexibly and outlined ways to deal with potential challenges. It follows from the above that whilst no strategy or model is suitable for all places and times the majority do aim to improve the change implementation process and make it more

sustainable. The preference for choosing any model or strategy depends on a number of factors, such as objectives, type of change, time and available resources, emphasising the role and importance of culture, which may represent a critical and important factor. It is critical to select the appropriate model or strategy because each country, society, and organisation has its own culture, needs, conditions, and operating environment. These have to be considered when applying the empowerment approach. Accordingly, the next section will examine empowerment in general and empowerment in education in particular from various perspectives in terms of understanding the variables of this concept and reaching the study's goals.



## **Chapter Five: Empowerment in Education**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In the light of contemporary global challenges, scientific growth and rapid social mobility, educational institutions seek to address these changes and develop themselves by introducing and implementing new or innovative programmes or projects that help reform education. Among the reforms initiated in a number of countries is the so called concept of empowerment (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990). Empowerment here is an organisational strategy which aims to redistribute power from the top of the hierarchy to its workers, granting them freedom and confidence in decision-making by expanding the delegation of authority and increasing participation and self-motivation, emphasising the importance of teamwork, staff development, creative behaviour, and providing the right environment for carrying out tasks assigned to them directly, in their own way, without waiting for permission from top management (Azala, 2016). Empowered individuals have the opportunity to work more creatively when they can work in a practical environment providing them with a sense of confidence and independence and key strategies for reaching a common vision.

Reform of education systems is required to implement the empowerment curriculum (Shaalán and Kaki, 2013) but in KSA, the site for this research, the understandings about empowerment amongst those critical for its adoption appear to be limited. For example, the results of Jaber's (2012) study, which was conducted with a sample of 846 managers and educational supervisors in order to identify the reality of the empowerment of secondary school principals in the Jeddah educational district of KSA and identify the main obstacles and benefits of empowerment, concluded that the reality of administrative empowerment of secondary school principals in Jeddah did not meet the new stage of leadership development to the desired level as required by the educational reform vision for Saudi Arabia for 2030. Most areas which failed to meet the required standards related to formal procedures and the content introduced to achieve the concept of administrative empowerment may need to be reviewed.

This chapter reviews previous studies on the concept of empowerment and will trace the history and evolution of this concept. The literature reviewed focuses on exploring the concept over time, including its emergence in the scholarly literature in 1945. It will trace its evolution within the knowledge framework of organisations until 2020. The aim is to identify recent trends and

developments of the concept by placing them in various contexts but, ultimately, through the educational context comprising leadership, administration, management, and development in order to assess the possibilities of improving the education system in Saudi Arabia using the school leadership empowerment approach in line with the Ministry of Education's reform vision for 2030.

## **5.2 Empowerment: General Background**

### **5.2.1 The Philosophical and Historical Roots of the Term: In the West**

The concept of empowerment has historical and philosophical roots (Evans, 1992). These roots relate to a set of psychological, social, political, and ethical concepts (Gibson, 1991), including the rights of oppressed and marginalised communities such as African Americans to ensure their right to participate, make decisions, gain power and control of hegemony, and promote the rights of disabled, gay and black people (Calvés., 2009). Empowerment also refers to the influence of the Protestant revolution in the 16th and 17th centuries and the emergence of capitalism, democracy, and the concepts of citizenship in the 18th century (Simon, 1994). For example:

- **Democracy**

It is possible to say that modern democracy is a result of the liberal revolutions of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, promoted through acts such as the American Revolution of Independence 1775-83 and the French Declaration on Human Rights in 1789. These revolutions emphasised the necessity of personal and political freedoms by empowering individuals to act in their personal and public lives. This led to partial democracy, as it was limited to a certain group of people, while the majority were excluded from the right to vote. Although it was only partial democracy, it paved the way for full democracy because empowerment encouraged individuals to continue the struggle to obtain democracy, civil rights, and equal opportunities. This means that democracy is inspired from empowerment (Amy and Welzel, 2011).

When democracy began to spread throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and particularly in the 1990s, the concept of empowerment was redefined and became a core part of the development discourse (Van Dam, Martini and Peter, 1992). Simultaneously, international development agencies, influenced by Sen's ideas (see below), adopted the term "empowerment" (1992).

However, a number of Latin American schools of thought continued to associate the empowerment of neoliberalism with the World Bank's sustainable development in the region (Caccia Bava, 2003). Some authors see empowerment as an effort to attract social movements and popular democratic initiatives (Larrea, 2005). Others argue that the adoption of the concept of empowerment by some international NGOs working with social movements has a negative impact on the convergence of democratic systems capable of building consensus.

There is a relationship between citizenship, nationalism, and democracy. In other words, democracy, and the equitable distribution of national wealth, drives citizens to defend national interests. On the other hand, the rule of tyranny and the acquisition of national wealth means the collapse of citizenship, as well as the requirements of defending the homeland. Countries and organisations are facing successive circumstances and variables these days in their quest to achieve their goals efficiently and effectively. The needs and aspirations of citizens have increased, the pace of technological progress and globalisation has accelerated, and competition between countries and organisations has increased, in addition to an increase in the aspirations and expectations of citizens and workers. These challenges are considered the main test of the ability of the administrative apparatus to adapt to these situations, which requires searching for new means to keep pace with these developments.

The appropriate response to face these challenges takes many forms and methods, the most important of which is attention to human resources and the creation of an appropriate living and working environment, considering the citizen and the worker as the basis upon which the growth and success of countries and organisations and their development depends. The concept of empowerment, which is the subject of the current study, emerges as one of the modern administrative methods, whose idea is based on the assumption that citizens and workers are given confidence and participation in the decision and delegated powers and independence in life and work, which generates in them a sense of confidence and motivation to assume responsibility and unleash their latent energies that appear in the form of creativity and suggestions that increase their positive motivation towards the importance of work and its efficient and effective completion. This means that leaders need to pay attention to achieving administrative empowerment, which allows employees to feel the confidence of the management of the institution and constitutes an incentive for them to exert their utmost effort.

- **Capitalism**

Capitalism is an economic system with a social and political philosophy, based on satisfying the essential and perfectionist needs of mankind, developing and preserving individual property, expanding the concept of freedom, and relying on the policy of permanently separating religion from life (Al-Saqqaf, 2020). Capitalism is theoretically and equitably linked to individual freedom, which allows a person to choose their own work, which corresponds to their preparations and the need to earn the required income in accordance with the principle of “let it work”. Capitalists also believe that freedom is necessary for the individual to achieve harmony between them and society, that it is a driving force of production, and a human right that expresses human dignity. In return, there is a call for the non-interference of the state in economic life but to limit its mission to the protection of individuals and funds and to maintain security and defense of the country. Capitalism has faith in the principle of the free market, which is the system of freedom of price and the release of this freedom according to the requirements of supply and demand, and the adoption of the law of low price to promote and sell goods and services.

- **Liberalism**

Liberalism, as a political and moral philosophy, rests on the two main principles of individuality and freedom. Liberalism first places the individual at the heart of society, arguing that the highest social system is evaluated by the value built around the individual, and that the objective of society is to enable individuals to grow and develop if they so desire (Salamah, 2020). Al-Salami (2018) argued that the best way to do this is to give the individual the greatest possible freedom.

- **Suffrage**

Suffrage, or the right to vote, can be considered part of the concept of empowerment. Through the suffrage movement a number of individuals of various faiths, ages, gender, and classes fought for voting rights in the choice of who governs and who determines the laws governing them, such as during the Peterloo massacre of 1819 in Manchester and the Belgian strike of 1893 (Ruth, 2014). It expresses a desire for rights, as well as the attainment of justice, equality, and participation in various aspects of life. As seen in Ahmed (2016), these demands are components of the empowerment concept.

*Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives*, published in 1987 (Sen and Grown, 1987) represented a turning point in the history of the concept of empowerment, with an outline of the development prospects, crises, alternative perspectives, and the perspective of women in the third millennium of development, because it called for the rights of women, the achievement of social justice, and the participation of women in development plans in their fields. However, through the United Nations Conferences on Women the issue of gender was positioned as a global concern, and women's awareness and their evolving agenda increased through three other international conferences, namely Copenhagen, 1980, Nairobi, 1985, and Beijing, 1995. Recent years have witnessed the increasing mobilisation of women around the world and their increased political presence and power throughout the United Nations system and in national political arenas. This development in focus and agenda charts developments in women's analysis of their socio-economic experiences and makes efforts to address the inequalities inherent (Vijayamohan, Asalatha and Ponnuswamy, 2009) in a model for empowerment. In addition, the campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s against psychiatric hospitals organised by groups such as the Union of Psychological and Mental Alternatives, which now lead organisations such as Survivors Speak Out, to empower individuals who survived psychotherapy through advocacy, is reference to the concept of empowerment (Murray, 1999).

In 1993, in Southeast Asia and America a number of publications were printed on Empowerment, Gender and Development, for example, *Taking Power out of Empowerment* in which the Indian researcher and activist Batliwala (2007) mentioned how power relations can be changed through three different aspects: 1. Cause inequality. 2. Change access and control. 3. Retransformation of organisational and institutional structures. However, from another point of view, Calvés (2009) argued that empowerment is not power; it is an imaginative force that can be used to accomplish things, undoing the effects of internal repression. A United Nations conference was held in Cairo in 1994 where the empowerment of women was one of the issues discussed in strengthening power, education, employment, health, ending rape and violence, improving equal rights in the judicial system, income, and labour distribution. In 1995, the Fourth International Convention on Women was organised in Beijing. Another critical moment occurred when the term empowerment was officially introduced into the United Nations speech on women and development. According to the report, "the empowerment and full involvement of women on the basis of social justice throughout the parts of life, which include participation in decision-making and access to power, are necessary for the attainment of equality,

advancement, and peace” (United Nations 1995: p. 8). The concept of women’s empowerment became one of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations at the Millennium Summit in 2000 (Calvés, 2009).

### **5.2.2 The Philosophical and Historical Roots of the Term: In Islam**

Empowerment is a term that is not considered a hadith or an interference in the Islamic culture. The word empowerment was mentioned in the Holy Qur’an on more than one topic, on several occasions and in numerous hadiths more than 1,400 years ago. However, the term “empowerment” in Arab culture was not common, and what was mentioned in the Holy Qur’an refers to the empowerment of God, meaning that God Almighty enables his prophets and their righteousness through their commitment to the profession and its transmission by giving them the ability to protect this call and support this message in a holy way. However, the term mentioned in the context of this research has aspects with similar meanings, although there is a difference between God’s empowerment of His Messenger and the empowerment between humans in life. The Islamic religious ideology extends from the Holy Qur’an and the Noble Sunnah in the Surat Yusuf (peace be upon him), (and thus we established Joseph in the land to settle therein wherever he willed. We touch with Our mercy whom We will, and We do not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good). The Qur’an shows us the importance of empowerment and its components, which are represented by the trust of the king, the possession of our master Joseph for the reasons of science and knowledge, his talent for interpreting dreams, and the information and flow between the king and our master Joseph on the interpretation of dreams, and finally the great prizes given to our master Joseph in this world and the Hereafter, which also contributed to his elevation, empowerment, and great place in this world and the Hereafter.

It follows from the Quranic verses in which the term empowerment is mentioned that empowerment management encourages human thinking, creativity, research, reading, planning, management, economy, consultation, respect, distribution of influence, money, social equality, transparency, and giving to the worker his material and moral rights and solidarity. This is in addition to other things that correspond to the latest findings of the science of management in the West. For example, Total Quality Management, which is consistent with the instructions of Islam in the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) God Almighty stressed the perfection of the individual to his work (Sunnah). However, the Arab and Islamic

contemporary administration did not attempt to benefit from this concept in their management of human resources, and some of these principles have been disrupted for a number of cultural, social and political reasons (Al-Rashidi, 2013):

1. Failure to recognise or make proper use of the available knowledge within the rich concepts of the Islamic heritage and in its people.
2. Non-ideological factors (customs and traditions).

The second factor may be the main causal factor to the contemporary administrative reality of Arab countries, and we also note that the second factor and its results are the natural outcome of the first factor.

However, this may be due to the lack of the first factor's association with doctrines and poor application of religious texts. Adopting a religious-ideological approach cannot be linked to mismanagement, nor can it be responsible for the bureaucratic condition of Arab state institutions, and it is not responsible for the negative practices in management, transactions, and human rights. The concept of empowerment is a comprehensive and multi evident concept in the Qur'an. However, for a number of political, cultural and social purposes, actual application has been avoided, for example, women are reported to have a number of rights in Islam such as learning, work, administration, freedom of choice and responsibility, but their basic right to education was exercised only after a number of attempts, and even after obtaining the right to education, work or trade, this right was governed by a number of conditions, most of which stipulate the necessity of male approval.

### **5.3 The Definitions of Empowerment**

The original meaning of empowerment is authorising or giving power (Tulloch, 1993). The use of power and authority in the various definitions of empowerment seems to have been argued, for example, by Legge (1995), that the term empowerment should be considered in the language of role distribution and that it promotes equality of power for trust and cooperation. Similarly, Conger and Kanungo (1988) focused on power as the central axis of empowerment, "either that the individual's belief in power strengthens or weakens and diminishes it" (p. 474). Muhammad (2016) argued that empowerment is a significant outcome of participation in processes, decisions, and actions among workers. It enhances their intrinsic motivation towards these activities, increases their understanding of the importance of their work and responsibility

in the work environment. Empowerment is the freedom of the employee, a state of mind, and a cognitive context that cannot be developed in a way imposed on the person from the outside overnight: it is an internal state of mind that needs to be adopted and represented by the individual being confident and convinced of what they possess such as knowledge in their abilities to make and select the results that they want to reach (Bowden and Lawler, 1992; 1995).

Hellregel, Jackson and Slocum (1999) explained that the concept of empowerment is the ability to be active, to be independent in work performance and experience, and to have the ability to influence when performing work and achieving goals (John and Peter, 1999). Daft (2005) identified it as empowering people in the region with the power, freedom, and information to make and participate in decisions. Empowerment is the process of giving opportunity to others, thereby increasing their collective abilities and delivering their best. It also invests in the talents of others and their ownership of the job and informs them of their importance to enrich the job (Adaily, 2008).

Empowerment can also be seen as a multidimensional and interrelated process that requires a range of social, political and economic changes that may enable the poor and the oppressed to participate effectively and affect the development and refinement of their skills (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, 2006; Eyben, Kabeer and Cornwall, 2008).

It can also be seen as an organisational strategy aimed at transferring power to workers and granting them freedom and confidence in decision-making by expanding the delegation of authority and increasing participation and self-motivation, emphasising the importance of teamwork, staff development, creative behaviour, and providing the right environment for carrying out tasks in their own way, directly assigned to them by senior management (Azala, 2016).

Aldwibi (2008) summarised from the above that the concept of empowerment is related to the purpose for which it is used and includes the following:

- A guarantee of human rights in a long and healthy life, an adequate standard of living, appropriate education, productive work opportunities, and the expansion of positive choices for people.
- Non-discrimination based on gender and the prevention of any forms of violence and discrimination against women.
- The right of development for everyone.



- Taking advantage of globalisation, which came as a result of people's ability to learn and know, the progress of communication and the flow of capital.
- Empowerment, in its positive and human dimension, means making people a sponsor of effective participation in human development and benefiting from its products, it is the focus and essence of development, not just its tool.

This means that the definition of empowerment varies according to the different perspectives and axes of empowerment and their degrees and levels.

It can be said that empowerment in the context of this study means giving school administrations and workers in educational institutions more power to work independently and participate in decision-making and problem-solving, while increasing the space for freedom in the work context for their performance. In their own way, without feeling direct intervention from higher authorities, empowerment puts confidence in the capabilities of officers at all levels and supports their skills. This approach seeks to provide the appropriate and enabling environment for its activation, motivation, and continuous evaluation within educational institutions. Actors are understood as taking responsibility for the results of their actions and behaviours in order to achieve the best results in line with the goals and vision of the school and the educational system.

#### **5.4 The Concept of Power and its Relationship to Empowerment**

The concept of empowerment is related to the term power through two main areas. First, empowerment requires the presence of a force through which change can be imposed, because implementing empowerment requires change in a number of customs, cultures, and systems, whether at the social, economic, or political level. The second is that power is expandable and not limited to specific persons or centres, and this is related to empowerment because empowerment is a right for everyone without exception (Aisada, 2013). To clarify this relationship further, we must review some definitions of the term power.

There are numerous definitions of the concept of power. There is a traditional definition that refers to the control of material, financial, intellectual, and ideological resources. Max Weber (1864-1920) defined it as "our ability to make others do what we want regardless of their interests or desires". While Karlskar's definition of force as "the ability to execute" is close to

this, Jean Baker Miller (1927-2006) went to a different destination when she defined power as “the ability to move towards or produce change” (Ismail, 2017: p. 22).

These definitions construct power not as a positive or even a neutral concept. Instead, it is presented as one based on conflict, bringing about change based around related concepts such as control, domination, influence, and the addition of power to others. Power is defined as broad and flexible within this literature, and the view that it is a fixed structure is not supported. In this sense, it is a changing process and can change the lives of individuals and societies. Rowland (1995) classified power into four types of power: ability to influence and coerce; change and organising the current hierarchy; the power of teamwork; and power within (the power of individual consciousness).

It can be said that power means the ability to do and to act on something or to gain authority in a particular group or organisation, whether from internal or external power. Power in empowerment refers to the granting and distribution of power (Mehmat, 2016).

Ownership of power cannot be determined because it is related to the contexts and frameworks in which it exists, as Hunjan and Keophilavong (2010) argued that a person can be in a dominant position on one issue and be relatively weak in another matter. Similarly, a person who seems marginalised from making national decisions can be a person who is extremely influential in his local area.

Power has a number of diverse practices. Perhaps the most obvious is so-called dominance, where an individual or organisation controls what others can do. There is also a kind of exercise of power, which is to influence the thoughts and beliefs of others and the ways in which they see themselves through them, their rights, and their abilities (hidden power). The term “power with” is also used to describe the way in which those who face hegemony act in order to obtain their rights and improve their situation, by joining with others, planning and carrying out collective action and building common interests that contribute to enabling everyone to have a decent life. This means that strength may help the individual to gain consciousness and a feeling of trust and self-respect (Al-Najjar, 2019).

Hidden power has increased awareness and changed the way people are viewed, and how their rights and their power are perceived. It has enabled the oppressed classes of women and the

poor to obtain their rights equally with other groups through their ability to strengthen the organisations and movements of the poor, collective leadership, leadership to redefine the political agenda, and to highlight the clarity and legitimacy of the issues, voices and demands that have been silenced (Lord and Hutchison, 1993).

In 2003, Sardenberg (2008) mentioned that Leon in Latin America referred to the meetings of the women's movement in 1987, stating that power could be an exciting cause of change. During this time, the concept of Empodiramiento, advocated by many women's non-governmental organisations in the tradition of Paolo Freire, were dedicated to putting more effort into the education of women in slums and rural areas through awareness-raising workshops in order to promote self-confidence and transform repressive social structures (Sardenberg, 2008).

With increasing economic and political crises and increased political poverty in the global South, towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was an interest in advocating the empowering of the poor by allowing them to participate in political processes and decision-making at local levels. This required that state institutions become more sensitive to the poor via democratisation, the development of poor-serving organisations, and collaboration between communities and local governments (Calvés, 2009).

The civil rights movement that emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in America is an important example of people's power and its attempts to change repressive regimes from the bottom (Simon, 1994). Eventually this led to the emergence of the concept of empowerment because of its association with several basic concepts such as self-realisation, expression, education, and awareness (Harry and Riessman, 2008).

According to Potterfield (1999), Paolo Freire's philosophy and movement in education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is one of the most important transformations of empowerment. A key element of his philosophy was in eradicating illiteracy and helping persecuted people in colonial countries through education (Calvés, 2009) where he relied on the "critical awareness" approach as an educational tool that can help an individual understand what their rights are and how to improve their living conditions. Freire's theory has changed the way teachers perceive the poor and the marginalised. The core concepts of Freire's theory focus on problem-based education using educational literacy to develop political knowledge and interaction between oppressor and

oppressed (Calvés, 2009). In addition, the traditions of theology are considered in the editing and development of alternative concepts which emerged in Brazil in the 1950s, as an essential source of human empowerment by increasing advocacy for critical thinking as a way to work and for social transformation. It led to a challenging of the traditional power structure and hierarchy within the Catholic church, thereby encouraging and growing local resources and engaging in social, political and economic change (Evans, 1992). Paolo Friere focused the basic concepts of his philosophy on critical thinking and awareness raising. In the 1970s, as a result of the increasing differences between the global North and South and the increasing levels of poverty in developing countries, many authors advocated participation in “bottom up” models. They considered that the basis for development was empowering poor communities. Evidence of this was under the title of *Alternative Development Policies*, published in Latin America in 1992. Friedmann supported this and called for the replacement of the dominant classical economic model with a model that focuses on environmental and human elements rather than material elements (Friedmann, 1992), showing he was interested in the psychological empowerment of individuals. According to Friedmann, there was a need to restore the organisational structure of authority so that the state, civil society, and large corporations become more responsible for their actions (Friedmann, 1992).

Others believe that the concept of empowerment was formalised after the World Bank issued a publication in 2002 entitled *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction* by Narayan (Narayan, 2002). Empowerment was defined as “expanding the poor’s resources and capacities to participate in, effect, and retain control of the institutions that impact their lives” (Narayan, 2002).

Subsequently, two other works were published to measure empowerment (Narayan, 2005) and make the concept applicable (Alsop, 2006). This may be the most obvious and formal evidence of the recognition of the term “empowerment,” which is now defined as “the process of enhancing an individual’s or group’s capacity to make conscious decisions and convert some of these options into the desirable performance and results” (Alsop, 2006: p. 120). Although the term “empowerment” is widely used in international development, there is no clear definition of it and the definitions vary according to the areas in which the term is used (Baden and Oxaal, 1997). In the view of some, the absence of a clear definition makes it difficult to achieve (Bebbington et al., 2005), despite its association with the concepts of democracy, decentralisation, and participation (Wong, 2003).

While empowerment has been seen as a strategy against the top-down development model, today it has become a means of increasing efficiency and productivity (Barbara, 2002). This is evident by the World Bank, which has become interested in how to empower the poor to contribute to the growth of development as a solution to poverty (Wong, 2003). Although women and the poor are encouraged to share in society, there has been no real change as women and poverty issues continue to be imposed by higher authorities (Khatib, 2017). This is clear evidence of the persistence and dominance of a top-down approach.

The term “empowerment” in the field of development can be said to be a philosophical vision that prioritizes the perspectives of the oppressed, and criticizes a hierarchical approach as a source of inequality. This view is integrated by the largest institutions in the field of development. The women's movement, which advanced the concept of empowerment in the global South in the 1980s, and defined empowerment as a complex process of transforming the organisational structure from the bottom up. It is also a process that helps to raise awareness of women and the poor about their capabilities and enhance their self-confidence, which could lead to a radical change in the reconstruction of structures in the economic, social, and political fields, with a positive impact on development (Calvés, 2009).

The term “empowerment” emerged in the West in the 1960s. This was linked to social movements that demanded the civil and social rights of citizens. Further, it has different emphases and understandings in different fields, such as economics, social and political. It is defined as an individual process in which the individual is responsible for themselves and controls their life and conditions. Empowerment is a political process to give oppressed groups their rights and achieve social justice. This view is supported by what happened in the 1990s after the Cairo conference of 1994 on social development, and again in 1995 at the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing. Both conferences called for and stressed the removal of obstacles to the economic empowerment of women and the achievement of social justice for all, through empowering women and the poor and opening the door to life for them to advance in society. On the other hand, some see that there are theorists who exaggerated the concept of empowerment and used it as a quick reform in some social, political, and economic fields, and in a number of sectors including the education sector (Elroy and Aletta, 2006). They also see that it has a great role in achieving job satisfaction for workers in various fields, which

will positively affect the skills and abilities of the individual, while some oppose the role of empowerment in achieving job satisfaction. For example, Hofstede's study (1980) on the effect of empowerment on job satisfaction was conducted in three different countries (Mexico, Poland, and India) and concluded that, across three different cultures, there is no statistically significant association between empowerment and job satisfaction. Some believe that empowerment increases workload, which creates tension between leaders, negatively affecting individuals and their skills as well as the work of the organisation (Minyoung et al., 2016). From another point of view, some believe that empowerment of leadership may increase the sense of tension and anxiety of the individual because of the increased effort and responsibility, and therefore the weakness of the tasks performed (Langfred, 2007). Moreover, according to role theory (Kahn et al., 1964), if the behaviour of the individual is disproportionate to the expected role, it is a pressure on the individual, affecting their feeling of satisfaction (Rizzo, House and Lirtzman, 1970) and thus they become less effective at work. Empowerment may also lead to a mixing of the roles of the organisation, leading to increased pressure. Accordingly, some authors such as Gunnarsson (2010), Lunenburg and Ornstein (2010) and Schoenfeld (2011) have argued that participation in decision-making may hinder or delay decision-making because of the difficulty of compatibility between individuals and primary and secondary objectives, which affects the continuity of development and can delay things that may require immediate, rapid implementation. However, the results of these theories may be intertwined with other causes or factors that are not dependent only on empowerment, but rather cultural, personal, or lack of clarity of basic tasks and roles (Al-Ounani, 2011).

## **5.5 The Emergence of Empowerment in Management and Administration**

The concept of empowerment in management emerged as a model to reduce the disadvantages of some traditional theories, such as Taylor's scientific theory of management and the bureaucratic theories found in some organisations that led to a lack of creativity, feelings of dissatisfaction, and a lack of belonging in the labour organisation (Adrian, 1998).

Some assume that empowerment is a universal solution because it fits every organisation's concept of administrative empowerment and has emerged as a result of increased attention to human beings within the organisation (Harahsheh and Al-Hiti, 2006). Some researchers, such as Potterfield (1999), believe that the time of the emergence of the term empowerment in administrative studies is not specific, while Honold (1997) and Lewin (1951) argued that the

use of the concept in management was found in the socio-technical approach, such as the idea of job enrichment (Hirsberg, 1968) and staff participation (Al Sada, 2003).

This means, as Melhem (2006) said, that the empowering of leaders did not appear to be a coincidence but emerged as a result of the development of administrative thought and its theories and concepts in general, especially with regard to the management of human resources and human relations inside and outside the institution, in particular the field of public administration. It was then applied and practised in the field of educational management and theories that influenced their appearance.

From the above it is clear that empowerment has intellectual, theoretical, and philosophical bases. It is linked to a number of administrative theories that paved the way for the emergence of empowerment, which are discussed below.

### **5.5.1 Classical Methods of Management**

Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was almost no systematic study of management, with the practice being based on experience and common sense. Frederick Taylor, however, tried to change this view.

The classical or traditional school of management includes three theories:

- Scientific Management Theory: focuses on the search for the best way to perform work.
- Bureaucratic Theory: focuses on rules, procedures, hierarchy, and a clear division of labour.
- Management Principles Theory: emphasises the flow of information within the organisation (Mostafa and Farouk, 2006).

### **5.5.2 Behavioural Methods in Management**

The focus on the humanitarian aspects of work began in 1920 in reaction to traditional theories of the past, in which the human aspect did not receive attention, and that even when addressing

the human aspect, the aim was of increasing productivity, not for the purpose of the worker or to meet his desires or solve his problems.

### **5.5.3 Hawthorne Studies and Human Relationships (1927-1932)**

The Hawthorne study began by looking at physical factors such as working conditions and light levels on the productivity of workers and then unintentionally turned to the importance of cooperation and working relationships. The study, conducted by Elton Mayo (1880-1949), concluded that productivity was greatly influenced by relationships. This paved the way for the study of organisational behaviour.

### **5.5.4 Douglas McGregor theory**

McGegor was influenced by Maslow's theory of human needs and the Hawthorne studies. In his book, *The Human Side of Enterprise*, he introduced a new addition to the human relations movement through his dual design, called Theory X and Theory Y. For X and Y, certain assumptions are made. The manager who adopts the X theory assumes that the worker is lazy and lacks the spirit of initiative and responsibility, whilst the director who adopts the Y theory has a completely different assumption. They see in employees the engagement they have for their work, entrepreneurship, internal control, creative abilities, and love for excellence (Abdul-Mutaal, 2015).

McGregor (1960) was concerned about human behaviour in his theory because he believed that the behaviour was in line with the expectations of others (self-realisation prophecy). Meaning, that the individual may be affected over time by the expectations of others towards him/her and adapts his/her behaviour to their expectations. X theory managers behave with direct supervision, leaving their subordinates with no room for appreciation or independence at work. This type of leader creates passive and unreliable staff who work just as required. The managers of Y theory are more democratic and provide more space for participation and appreciation, and open the door to employees towards creativity, excellence, self-realisation, and a sense of the real value of their abilities and talents at work. This, in turn, produces employees who are characterised by initiative and participation, discretion and empowerment, in line with the expectations of their managers. This encourages managers who are reluctant to practise



methods such as empowerment and not question the affiliation of their employees because trust in them will make that affiliation and mistrust will lead to otherwise (Richard, 2010).

#### **5.5.5 Chris Argyris**

The call to empower the individual did not always need to use the term empowerment in a literal and specific way. The efforts to undermine traditional theories has, since 1957, been a clear expression of the orientation of the idea of empowerment especially when, in his book, *Personality and Organisation*, Argyris criticised the classical theories, stressing that classical theories and traditional administrative practices do not fit with humans. If we consider an individual as mature and rational then, in his view, scientific management with its specific and restrictive principles prevents the individual from personally achieving, because everything is predetermined and constrained in a specific way in which there is no room for any diligence by the individual.

This also emphasises that the principles of bureaucracy create only a reliable and negative person who feels that they have no control over the elements of work or the environment in which they operate, because of the hierarchical and vertical power and absolute control of various administrative levels and their control over authorities centrally (Argyris, 1973).

#### **5.5.6 Career Enrichment: Core of the Herzberg Theory**

Frederick Herzberg developed the theory of two factors based on the research he conducted on a sample of 200 accountants and engineers aimed at identifying psychological trends. The study produced a set of results published in a book in 1959, including the argument that an individual's unhappiness and dissatisfaction results from the lack of an appropriate work environment. The study also found that the individual's satisfaction with his work is due to the work itself. Accordingly, Herzberg (2003) saw that factors affecting the work environment can be divided into two groups:

- First, preventive or health factors. These are not motivators: rather, their absence is viewed as discouraging and a source of frustration, and providing them makes the worker satisfied rather than motivated. That is, they are things that need to be satisfied, but they alone are not sufficient to motivate. The protective factors are the

organisation's policies and management, supervision style, interpersonal relations, material working conditions, salary, social status, and job security.

- Second, motivational or motive factors. These are related to work and, if they exist, they work to build a high degree of satisfaction among individuals, but they do not cause much dissatisfaction when they are not available. It is represented in the sense of achievement at work, personal awareness of the value of work, the nature and content of the job, responsibility, opportunities for advancement and development, and personal growth and development (Al-Subhi, 2013).

### 5.5.7 Likert's Theory of Leadership

The research centre of the University of Michigan in the United States of America began, in 1974, with a series of studies and research on leaders' leadership style and behaviour. As a result of the research conducted by Likert and his colleagues on administrative leadership, they were able to determine the characteristics of effective leadership in both high productivity and low-productivity groups. Likert found that high-productivity supervisors had a limited input in the actual implementation of the work and were more interested in dealing with the workers in an informal way and allowing them to work by not interfering in practical decisions, giving them the freedom to choose their method of work. Low-productivity supervisors found that their participation in actual implementation to work was high, and their involvement in the affairs of workers' groups while working was also high (Al-Adili, 1995). Likert also distinguished between three systems of leadership:

- **The exploitative system:** the leaders here are highly centralised, have little trust in the employees and are motivated by fear and coercion.
- **The central system:** is similar to the previous system, but is less centralised and sometimes allows the manager to authorise employees to take control but under supervision.
- **Participatory group system:** The leader here gives absolute confidence to their workers, constantly benefiting from their ideas and there is a constant exchange of information between the manager and the employees (Salem, et al., 1998).

### **5.5.8 The Participatory Theory**

The participatory theory of management derives its idea and characteristics from the works of Douglas McGregor, Rensis Licht, Chris Argyris, Warren Pennes, Heller, and others because they focus on the following:

- Each member of the institution has the motivation to participate in decision-making and the ability to influence.
- Members should have the skills to make the right decisions.

Likert said that participatory management takes place in an environment that encourages the participation of the leader, who shares responsibilities with and on behalf of those who work with them (Likert, 1961).

The concept of participation in prosperity in the 1980s began to improve decision-making, boost motivation, and increase organisational satisfaction and commitment (Bell and Mjoli, 2014). It has been defined as the participation of workers in decision-making and the ability of the leader to delegate certain powers to staff, commensurate with their abilities and responsibilities, and concentrates on the decentralisation of leadership and the existence of an effective communication system that allows staff to consult and encourage creative and innovative capacities (Hammoud and Al-Sheikh, 2010). Some argue that participatory leadership is linked to democratic leadership and may not necessarily be a new method, but it focuses on making decisions and allowing others to influence the manager's decisions.

Participatory leadership is defined as the interaction of the individual mentally and emotionally in the group's positions, as well as participation in responsibilities, which is meant in the educational management of the real interaction of society in the issues of education through contributing to the reality of the educational process, through the identification of needs, objectives and priorities, to the participation of workers in administrative responsibilities and decision-making (Al-Harbi, 2008). Abu (2013) defined participatory leadership as the kind that is based on the participation of subordinates in decision-making and joint action.

- **Advantages and Disadvantages of Participatory Leadership**

Participatory leadership has a number of advantages and disadvantages. Some of the positive aspects include:

- Sharing information with subordinates helps to better understand the circumstances of decision making.
- The objectives and plans of the organisation become clearer to employees.
- Developing responsible and confident individuals.
- Improving communication and reducing conflicts among members.

Manar (2015) however noted some of the negative aspects:

- Employees believe that they should be integrated into each decision.
- The quality of decisions may become lower if the employees lack skills and experience.
- Teamwork may reduce the sense of individual responsibility.

### **5.5.9 Distributed Leadership**

Increased attention to leadership is now seen as a result of the earlier expansion of leadership functions and responsibilities, rapid and complex changes in education, and increased pressures and external demands on schools (Harris, 2003). This means increasing the need for diverse expertise and knowledge within the organisation to accommodate these changes and requirements. Distributed leadership differs from participatory leadership because it links leading leadership and expertise, while participatory leadership relies on sharing responsibilities and tasks, which means that the leader allows employees to participate in decision-making through the exchange of information and opinions. Distributed leadership provides an enabling environment for collective action in the organisation, meaning that distributed leadership is broader than the focus of participatory leadership on undivided interactions, rather than actions (Spillane, 2006). Harris (2008) identified distributed leadership as participation in a number of areas while expanding activities to include several leaders within organisations. Mascall et al. (2009) defined them as sharing leadership responsibilities and sharing ideas that were once the responsibility of one person.

In various literature presented on leadership, three reasons were identified for the difference of distributed leadership from other concepts of leadership: first, it is a group and not an individual. Second, it is renewable and adjustable. Third, it contains a variety of experiments, which means that it is quality leadership and not quantity (Obadara, 2013). Spillane (2006) defined distributed leadership as the ability of everyone to lead at some stage even if the degree of participation in the leadership is different. Distributed leadership is primarily concerned with driving practice and its impact on organisational and educational improvement. The model of distributed leadership is seen as the key to empowerment because it depends on creating and transferring responsibility to all and encouraging participation in decision-making (Ismail, 2017) while Bennis and Nanus (1985) pointed out that empowerment does not necessarily mean distributed leadership. Empowerment draws its followers towards the goals set by the leader, rather than working towards specific goals through cooperation. As a result, only persons holding official leadership positions are involved in making meaningful decisions (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). Many researchers see participatory leadership as part of empowerment (Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis, 2013) because it suggests enabling a number of people to lead in one organisation (Spillane, Halverson and Diamond, 2007). According to Gronn (2003), there are different levels of leadership distributed in organisations for multiple reasons arising from collective transactions, goals, and objectives.

There are some arguments which state that distributed leadership is based on activity rather than position or role (Harris, 2008). This means that each member has leadership capabilities, although not necessarily equal capabilities. Distributed leadership can thus mean that everyone is able to lead, but the manner in which that leadership is orchestrated, supported, and organised will be essential to its effectiveness (Harris, 2008). While Torrance's (2013) findings from his study of the distributed perspective of school leadership through three case studies of school principals conducted in Scottish primary schools indicate that it is difficult to imagine all teachers participating in leadership roles consistently throughout their careers, this implies that distributed leadership is more complex and difficult than commonly depicted. In practice, despite the perceived benefits of a distributed leadership perspective.

Distributed leadership is characterised by equal opportunities in leadership: formal and informal management is carried out, expertise is shared, and work is done cooperatively to achieve common goals (Spillane, 2006). Moreover, it improves morale and the motivation of

employees, increasing levels of satisfaction, responsibility and commitment (Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis, 2012).

Despite the advantages of distributed leadership, Lumby (2014) argued that the leader's sense of giving power to another may cause them some instability. Moreover, it could result in a lack of clarity of the roles of the employees because of the negotiation of roles, which affects all workers (Smith and Piele, 1997).

#### **5.5.10 Democratic Leadership**

Democratic leadership shares characteristics of distributed leadership but this differs in that it accepts the principle that leadership is in the hands of one person only, while distributed leadership depends on the principle of a distribution of leadership among the workers (Woods et al., 2004). This means that distributed leadership focuses on the participation of others in experience and leadership to accomplish the tasks and achieve the objectives of the organisation (Timperley, 2005).

#### **5.5.11 Delegation Leadership**

There is also a difference between delegation leadership and distributed leadership. Delegation is a process by which people are assigned tasks by the senior administration to which they are accountable. Delegation is an authority granted to individuals and may be taken from them again. This is where the leader gives some of his employees specific duties and tasks to implement at a given time, while distributed leadership is a collective leadership responsibility (Abu Zer, 2015). The differences between empowerment and delegation are set out in the following table:

<b>Empowerment</b>	<b>Delegation</b>
Provide the opportunity for the employee to determine and decide.	Transfer part of the powers to the employee.
Workers have opportunities to take the lead in a wide range of areas, which are agreed upon.	Delegate authority in specific areas and with specific depth.

Empowerment is attributed to self-leadership.	Delegation is not self-leadership.
Information is available between the manager and the employee.	Information is partially available between the manager and the employee.
Empowerment is a conviction and an ongoing strategic choice.	Delegation may temporarily be revoked or its scope modified.
Success and failure attributed to the employee who is empowered.	Success and failure attributed to the employee who has been delegated.

**Table 5.1 The differences between the concept of delegation and empowerment**

#### **5.5.12. The Learning Organisation**

Senge (1996), one of the early proponents of the ‘learning organisation’, defined it as “the organisation where everyone can participate and intervene in diagnosing and discussing its problems, seeking its solutions, and trying out their abilities and skills to bring about change and improvement to develop their skills, knowledge and experience to achieve their goals.” The educational institution is the institution that encourages education and the exchange of information among its members, as they are always looking for new ideas to adapt to and share through a common vision. Peter Senge (1996) emphasised that it is based on the basic components centred on the culture of the institution, and its values are based on the following elements:

- Information and its importance in learning.
- Team spirit and its importance in collective learning, which multiplies individual learning.
- Empowerment, which frees the worker from any restrictions that prevent them from learning and participation.
- Participation that is the focus of the learning and education process.

- Leadership that carries the vision towards a constantly evolving educational institution.

Modern trends in the management and administration literature currently revolve around the subject of the educated organisation, an important contemporary administrative concept promoting the subject of empowerment which invests in the organisation's continuous renewal and development. In 21<sup>st</sup> century organisations, the process of renewal and change has become unavoidable (Gronn, 2000).

## **5.5 Definition of Leadership**

Despite considerable research and leadership studies, contemporary management thought has not been able to determine the reality of leadership. However, there are several leadership theories, each demanding an interpretation different from the other. If we go back to Greek and Latin as a starting point to define the meaning of leadership, we find that the word derived as in the Greek verb (Archein), the meaning or verb (Agere) begins with the meaning of leadership (Abu Ayed, 2008). We can conclude from this that leadership is an ancient and modern word, but it is famous for its history and is associated with wars and battles where victories in wars were a major reason to show the characteristics of leaders (Al-Mdhouni, 2012). Confucius, a great Chinese thinker who lived 2,500 years ago, said the chief goal of the leader was to serve those around him. Leadership has long been considered a personal quality (Confucius, circa 475 BC). As for Plato, the founder of philosophy, he believed that the leader should be wise (Takala, 1998). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Carlyle stated in his theory of the 'Great Man' that leaders were able to control and influence others through their abilities, skills, and knowledge (Carlyle, 1852). Although Carlyle's ideas dominated for a time, after World War II a new direction began with Stogdill (1950), who stated that leadership was "really to influence the activities of an organised group in its efforts to set goals and achieve goals". This can be seen as the first evidence that leadership depends on influence as well as individual traits. Stogdill (1950) also defined the purpose of this process: "setting goals and achieving goals." Kotter (1988) added a new perspective when he described leadership as "the process of moving a group (or groups) in a particular direction through a tendency other than coercive means." Kellerman disputed Kotter's view and said that exercising power shaped the roles of leader and elements of leadership (Folkman, 2012).



In the 1990s, Bass (1990) noted that leadership is not only an individual's process of influencing others, but a process of interaction between two or more people in a group or institution for improvement. Leadership (Manoj and Shilpa, 2013) has defined the way in which an individual influences others to achieve the goals of the organisation in a coherent manner.

Despite the diversity of definitions of the concept of leadership, most researchers agree that leadership is a process of influencing others to achieve specific goals (Al-Naji, 2016). It is clear from the above that leadership is a constantly evolving concept. Leadership can therefore be defined as the “process of interactive influence between a leader and followers within a particular context in order to achieve common goals”. This means that the elements of leadership are leaders, followers, and context (Volckmann, 2012, p.6).

## **5.6 Leadership in Education**

Leadership is important in organisations. There is a belief that the success or failure of an organisation depends on the success or failure of the leader (Bass, 1990). Leadership may be vital and important in the learning environment because of the challenges facing education, including increasing student numbers, organisational bureaucracy and others (Northhouse, 2007). Leadership in education can be defined as a skill through which the educational leader can influence the direction and thinking of others in order to achieve the desired educational goals (Atwi, 2001). The term ‘school leadership’ is often used interchangeably with ‘school administration’ and whilst there is a similarity between these two concepts some believe that there is a difference between the leader and the manager, in that while the leader does the right thing, the manager performs the instructions correctly (Beatriz et al., 2008). Most leadership definitions agree that leadership is a process in which a person or group of people plan to influence others in order to achieve certain goals.

## **5.7 Empowerment in Education**

England (2012) reported that school leadership plays a role in student learning outcomes, according to a report by the National Association of Secondary School Directors in the United Kingdom. As a result of the rapid changes in our world today, which have occurred due to the

awakening of globalisation and socio-economic and technological progress, the principles and demands have broadened, particularly in education-related issues (Ylimaki, 2013). The change therefore revolves around educational systems, instructional leadership, curriculum and evaluation, accountability, monitoring methods, and a collaborative learning environment that meets the needs of everyone (Spillane, Halverson and Diamond, 2007). Therefore, many studies have shown the importance of the trend towards shared leadership, such as distributed leadership, horizontal leadership and enabling leadership in education.

As discussed earlier, the concept of empowerment in education can be traced back to the classical theory of Paulo Freire (1972/1986) in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Lesley, 2005). The rise in the concept of empowerment in education is due to Paulo Freire when he sought to educate and spread critical awareness among the oppressed class in order to radically change the conditions of the poor, marginalised and vulnerable around the world to empower them (Frymier, 1987). From this point, education empowerment is defined as the process by all school members (principals, teachers, and students) to develop competence and the ability to address or solve problems that hinder the achievement of desired goals (Alrwqi, 2016).

The idea of empowerment is based on shifting from traditional leadership styles to leadership styles that believe in participation and trust. This requires a shift from supervision to trust and delegation (Alrwqi, 2016).

Educational institutions have the aspects, techniques, details, and skills required for the success of the institution. It is therefore necessary to take advantage of everyone's experiences and abilities and the trend towards empowerment in education in order to change the organisation (Abdul Salam, 2016).

Renihan and Renihan (1992) confirmed that empowerment enables teachers and students to make important decisions that may contribute to the school's organisational goals (Hairuddin and Yangaiya, 2015). Ripley and Ripley (1992) also argued that empowerment is the process of changing the way power is used in school rather than handing over power to others. Marks and Louis (1997) suggested that while empowering a teacher is not a sufficient condition for improving student academic performance, it is necessary.

These theories, where they are used interchangeably, often share objectives and functions as they revolve around delegation of tasks, participation, autonomy, group, accountability, leadership and empowerment (Humphreys, 2010). Some consider that education is empowering because it may help people change their lives for the better by acquiring knowledge and skills. Empowerment is the way in which managers are provided with the skills that enable them to be independent in making decisions, as well as providing them with authority, responsibility, and accountability to make those decisions acceptable within the educational institution's environment (Anthony, 2013). Renihan (1992) defined empowerment in school as "giving teachers and students the right to participate in making important organisational decisions that lead to the achievement of the goal" (Anthony, 2013: p.27). Bell and Bolam (2010) argued that empowering teachers is limited to them acquiring specific skills and approaches, though not involving them in leadership. This would appear to contradict the principle of empowerment, which depends on giving everyone the opportunity to participate in leadership that may help in the process of professional and personal development (Boubaker and Bersouli, 2019).

A study commissioned in 2004 by Oxfam and entitled *Empowerment as an Effective Approach to Employee Satisfaction* aimed to identify the reasons why empowering a teacher is not just a slogan. The key finding showed that when teachers were involved in some tasks and asked their opinion there was an increase in their sense of loyalty towards the institution they work in, showing the importance of empowerment in an appropriate environment (Janssen, 2004). Although some researchers found a positive relationship between student achievement and the empowerment of educational leaders, such as principals and teachers, some researchers were unable to identify a direct relationship (Leithwold and Jantzi, 1999). Two such studies were by Anthony (2013) and Martin, Crossland and Johnson (2001). Anthony (2013) looked at five schools in Georgia to determine the relationship between teacher empowerment and student achievement, using the SPES scale and concluded there was no relationship between them. Similarly, Martin, Crossland and Johnson (2001) in Missouri concluded there was no direct link between teacher leadership and the achievements of students who supported it. However, this does not mean that empowerment is not feasible, but that empowerment should be used carefully and not be adopted alone as a solution to reform or solve education problems (Valerie, 2012).

## **5.8 Empowering leadership**

There are few studies on empowering leadership (Hassan, 2010). There could be several reasons for some countries' lack of application of the leadership empowerment approach, including culture. Numerous contexts see empowerment as a product of American culture and the greatest challenge to empowerment is the local culture (Klidas, 2002). This is evidenced by the high rate of empowerment in the United States of America in various fields and its decline in India (Robert et al., 2000). An explanation for this could be the fact that India is a country that views its society as preferring to work under an autocratic leadership (Dimitriadis, 2005), while the United States of America tends towards democracy and participatory leadership. It is therefore necessary to understand the culture of the community in which empowerment will be applied (Eylon and Au, 1999). This supports the great role that the culture of society plays in accepting and applying the empowerment approach (Alriyhan, 2020), as mentioned earlier Chapter Three on culture.

The sense of insecurity on the part of managers may also be another challenge to the implementation of empowerment (Yukl, 2002). Smith (1997) asserted that this may be because of their fear of losing power and control. Some employees also oppose this concept for fear of increasing their burden and responsibility or fear of accountability and blame when errors occur (Ueno, 2008). This can be solved by leaving room for employees to make mistakes when they make decisions in the organisation, which may give them the feeling that they have the power and are a key element in the success of the organisation (Darling, 1996).

Empowering leadership is one of the relatively recent and positive trends of leadership that has emerged on the practical scene recently, and is seen as a pattern of leadership that aims to achieve decentralisation of authority, giving greater responsibility and self-direction to employees, and removing conditions that enhance their feeling of impotence such as bureaucracy. This will allow them a degree of freedom and flexibility as conditions require, in addition to providing a more robust and dynamic basic environment and being able to implement procedures without supervision or direct intervention (Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp, 2005), which leads to increased workers' practices of positive and constructive behaviours.

Researchers have provided multiple definitions of empowering leadership, defined by Ahearne, Mathieu and Rapp (2005) as the behaviour of the leader that contributes to enhancing the meaning of work and the importance of work by participating in decision-making and

supporting independence, showing confidence in the employee. Humborstad, Nerstad and Dysvik (2014) defined it as a type of leadership that aims to transform subordinates into leaders.

Zhang and Zhou (2014) defined it as the extent to which the leader expresses confidence in the ability of subordinates, emphasising the importance of employees' work, offering them participation in decision-making and removing or reducing bureaucratic constraints. According to this definition, empowering leadership has four basic dimensions:

The following is a definition of these dimensions, as cited by Marzouk (2017):

- Enhancing the meaningfulness of work: indicates the extent to which the leader improves the subordinates' awareness of the meaning of their work through the various behaviours of the leader, such as setting goals, explaining the impact of their work, correlating with the overall effectiveness of the organisation, and understanding the consistency of its function in the overall picture of the organisation.
- Enhance opportunities for participation in decision-making: indicates the extent to which the leader encourages subordinates to participate in decision-making and takes care of their initiatives and responsibilities.
- Demonstrating confidence in high performance: indicates the extent to which a leader has demonstrated confidence in the high performance of a subordinate. It also entails the leader's belief in the ability of the subordinate to improve, even when errors occur, and to manage the requirements of his job.
- Providing independence from bureaucratic restrictions: indicates the extent to which the leader subordinates the independence and eliminates bureaucratic restrictions allowing the employee to perform their work in their own way and making important decisions to satisfy the needs of clients.

## **5.9 Participation Leadership School**

Keith and Girling (1991) defined the participatory mode of administration as the administrative pattern, which is based on systematic participation, in order to involve the employees of institutions in decision-making concerning the school's policies, tasks and problems.

According to Boonprasert (2000), taking a participatory approach to school management requires two conditions:

- Providing a high degree of mutual trust between employees in the educational institution, in addition to the self-confidence of managers or employees.
- Providing a high level of conviction of the concept of participatory leadership and decision-making on a cooperative basis.

### **5.10 Administrative Empowerment Dimensions**

Al-Radadi (2012) mentioned that the dimensions of empowerment vary, based on the opinions of researchers. Spreitzer (1995) argued that administrative empowerment has two main dimensions, namely:

- Skills dimension: to provide workers with the skills of teamwork, through training, especially skills of compatibility, conflict resolution, leadership, and confidence building.
- Administrative dimension: to give members of the organisation freedom and authority to make decisions.

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) saw administrative empowerment as having four main dimensions:

- Self-efficacy: the individual's ability to successfully accomplish their work tasks based on their experience, skill, and knowledge.
- Meaning of work: the individual's perception means that the tasks they perform are meaningful and valuable to them, others, and the organisation.
- Impact: an individual's belief that they have an influence on decisions that are taken and the policies that the organisation makes, especially in relation to their work.
- Freedom of choice: the degree of freedom granted to the individual in choosing the ways to carry out their work tasks.

Al-Dawish, (2012) argued that some researchers believe that the Spector dimensions dealt with empowerment from an organisational approach, while the dimensions of Thomas and Velthouse (1990) dealt with empowerment from a psychological entrance. Administrative empowerment is not limited to one of the inputs. It is not just a delegation of authority and training on specific tasks and skills, but rather an interlocking process in its elements intertwined in its components and dimensions. Its success depends primarily on the trust in the workers, and the enhancement of their ability to think alone and encouraging them to come up with new and creative ideas, which makes them feel their value and humanity; therefore, it is necessary to combine the two inputs for the success of empowerment (Al-Radadi, 2012).

Researchers agree that the dimensions of administrative empowerment are giving individuals broad freedom within the organisation to make decisions by expanding delegation of authority, increasing participation in training courses, creating self-motivation, emphasising the importance of teamwork, and using effective communication which in turn produces a creative environment within the organisation:

- The first dimension, freedom and delegation of authority: administrative empowerment is the process of giving leaders freedom and independence in the performance of their duties assigned to them while providing them with important information to perform them in an appropriate manner (Sharar, 2012). This dimension allows for the delegation of part of the powers granted to employees by senior management to perform specific tasks, and the more delegation of power there is the more management approaches to decentralisation, and vice versa (Abdeen, 2001). Several leaders believe that administrative empowerment is the process of enhancing the freedom of individuals and encouraging them to exchange their experiences so that they can work on the issues that confront them during the exercise of their tasks, in addition to the leader being able to influence decisions related to their job performance (Al-Radadi, 2012).
- The second dimension, teamwork with one team spirit: teamwork, meaning a group of individuals who form a system of interconnected entities working together to achieve specific and common goals, complementing their efforts and experiences in order to achieve the desired result (Al-Fadil, 2011). Teamwork also depends on providing a positive leader who can support and encourage members to overcome any difficulties they may encounter at work (Abdeen, 2012). When empowering individuals as required and giving them confidence, they should feel that they are part of the culture of the

organisation, which considers human assets the most important resource. An empowered individual feels that in their administration or unit an important part of the team needs to work together collectively to solve work problems. Al-Omari and Kamal (2011) mentioned that there is a positive effect of administrative empowerment in developing the characteristics of the work team. The researchers recommended that senior management should create a participatory organisational climate in order to enhance the characteristics of work teams.

### **5.11 Obstacles to Implementing Administrative Empowerment**

Organisations face obstacles and challenges that prevent them from applying administrative empowerment, and the most important of these obstacles, as reported by Al-Qathami (2009), Almhairat (2010), Salah (2011), and Al-Radadi (2012) are:

- Hierarchical organisational structure.
- Senior management not being convinced of the importance of empowerment.
- Intense centralisation in decision-making power.
- Senior management's fear of losing power.
- Weak training and self-development programmes.
- Injustice in the rewards and incentives system.
- Lack of job security.
- Inefficiency of the work teams.
- Weak confidence between senior management and workers.
- Abuse of the power granted to workers.
- Decreasing morale among workers.
- The large number of routine burdens placed on workers.
- The lack of sufficient information to perform the work and make decisions.

### **5.12 The Importance of Empowerment**

Effendi (2003) summarised the reasons for resorting to empowerment in the following matters:

- The organisation's need to respond to circumstances and urgent changes.
- Reducing the number of administrative levels in organisational structures.



- Senior management not being concerned with traditional matters and its focus on long-term strategic issues.
- The necessity of making optimal use of available resources, especially human resources, to preserve the development and distinctiveness of the organisation.
- The importance of reducing costs and speeding up decision-making.
- Unlocking the creative capabilities of individuals.
- Strengthening the aspects of contentment, affiliation, and job motivation.
- Giving individuals a greater responsibility and a sense of accomplishment in their work.

Al-Fadil (2011) mentioned that the importance and benefits of empowerment appear to the employee in their work through the tasks assigned to them, so that the process of empowerment is the way for them to develop their capabilities, achieve self-respect and a sense of respect from management, because it includes better development of the organisation, creates greater capabilities, and makes it able to develop and renew to keep pace with the rapidly changing environment (Al-Ma'ani, 2012; 2010). Likewise, Zamili (2013) argued that to enable positive outcomes, customers or merchants wish to interact with employees who have creative, independent, and responsive powers that enable them to answer inquiries without consulting leaders or reviewing instructions.

El-Tayeb (2012) added that the importance of the administrative empowerment of employees also lies in the effectiveness of performance, as well as the effectiveness of utilising human resources optimally, in addition to making work more flexible and stimulating. This view was strengthened by Al-Qathami (2009) as he argued that the process of administrative empowerment has become important in the light of technological progress, because administrative organisations are now working in the same business with fewer individuals, so they need to facilitate opportunities for all team members to contribute more to achieving organisation goals (Melhem, 2006).

### **5.12.1 The Importance of Administrative Empowerment**

Abul-Majd (2008) mentioned that the importance of empowerment lies in the following:

- Supporting knowledge to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- It may be the best intermediary solution to distribute authority between management and employees because it focuses on granting authority and not losing it, which may contribute to supporting the relationship of managers with their subordinates and creating an atmosphere of trust, leading to increased job satisfaction and employee loyalty to the organisation.
- It is considered a means of improving the organisation and developing its competitive position among other organisations.
- It helps spread the values of teamwork and a culture of mastery.
- Empowerment helps reward individual and group abilities, creativities, and skills instead of only rewarding individual performance
- Empowerment is a full-time position for managers on important strategic issues.

### **5.12.2 The Importance of Empowerment for Subordinates / Employees**

Empowerment could be seen as an opportunity for self-expression in relation to their abilities and skills and helps support a sense of job security (Abdul-Hussein, 2012). While the shift from traditional management to the integration of subordinates and their strong participation in solving problems makes subordinates able to explain the mission and goals of the organisation, it is important to be aware of its competitive advantages as well as the subsystems related to their responsibilities.

### **5.13 Ingredients, Properties, and Dimensions of Empowerment**

There are many essential elements and pillars of the empowerment process, the most important of which are the following (Al-Otaibi, 2004):

- Knowledge and skill: knowledge and skill are of great importance, as each of them is a basic ingredient of empowering workers. Through knowledge, workers can be given freedom to act, then share, then empower, so the more an individual experiences the more their skills increase, and the more knowledge is gained, which increases the ability to perform work tasks efficiently, competently, and with greater independence. Information is an important weapon upon which the employee relies in the decision-making process and in solving work problems (Melhem, 2006). The culture of the organisation considers the individual's attitudes and behaviours and, in this way, the

culture of the organisation represents the basic assumptions and patterns that have been invented, discovered or developed by a particular group during the stages of learning how to deal with problems arising in their environment, assumptions and patterns that have proven successful and have come to be considered correct and effective.

- Communication and information flow: Information is an important and reliable aspect of decision-making and in solving business problems. Without it, employees cannot act in the correct way that confidence gives them to act, and effective communication in successful institutions promotes the principle of creativity and innovation and reduces effort.
- Trust between the leader and subordinates: trust and understanding are essentially ingredients of empowerment. Hart and Saunders (1997) argued that trust is the individual's willingness to deal with others, believing their efficacy, honesty, trustworthiness, and interest, and not expecting abuse, which is a mutual feeling between the leader and subordinates. Trust in the leader from the workers is proof of the leader's success and is an important result of empowerment. Confidence is also an important indicator of individuals' satisfaction with their institutions. Kouzes and Posner (2004) argued that when a leader creates an atmosphere of trust, they thereby exclude control and allow workers to take part and contribute, so leaders with confidence gain clarity, engagement, personal satisfaction, and higher levels of commitment to excellence (Kouzes and Posner, 2004).
- Material and moral incentives: Numerous studies indicate that empowerment is a mutual responsibility, just as it includes participation in benefits, as there is also a sharing of risks, accountability for results, and taking responsibility (Al-Mdhouni, 2012), which requires a system of incentives that encourages workers to take responsibility correctly, and these incentives are directly related to the performance of workers. Whoever invests empowerment to achieve superior results in performance gets greater incentives and this leads to competition between those who are able to better bear responsibility and efficiency, creativity and creative thinking (Melhem, 2006).

#### **5.14 Empowerment Measures**

With regard to the steps to implement employee empowerment, Gouda (2014) stated that gradual change is the best way to empower employees. The gradual approach focuses first on

the content of the job, and then the participation of empowered employees in making work-related decisions. There are ten steps to implement the empowerment process for staff (Abu al-Majd, 2008).

- **Determine the Reasons for the Need for Empowerment**

According to Alhassan (2016), the first step is for the organisation and its leaders to determine why the empowerment approach is being used. Adopting empowerment (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011) can be done for various reasons, which may include increasing performance rates in terms of quantity, type, and quality, increasing a sense of job satisfaction, increasing a sense of organisational justice, increasing the sense of confidence in the managers and the organisation, raising the quality level of administrative and information processes, developing the capabilities and skills of subordinates, or reducing the workload of the manager. Other reasons can be explaining and clarifying this to subordinates (Zakia, 2012), because this helps them to know the administration's expectations towards them and what is expected, and officials must also explain the body and the form of empowerment. It also entails providing clear and specific examples to employees of what is involved in the new level of authorities, as those responsible will precisely define the responsibilities that will be entrusted to employees as a result of empowerment (Abdul Salam, 2016).

- **Preparing Managers**

Researchers have indicated that many managers have spent a large number of years obtaining power and are often unwilling to give it up or cede it (Zakia, 2012), thus changing managers' behaviour towards relinquishing some powers to subordinates is an essential step towards implementing empowerment (Harris, 2003).

- **Determining the Decisions that the Subordinates will Participate in**

Determining the type of decisions and powers that managers will relinquish to subordinates is an essential step towards successful career empowerment, and the vision has to be clear regarding routine or daily operational decisions and annual strategic decisions (Abu Ayed, 2008).

- **Choosing the Right Individuals**

Managers should choose individuals who possess the capabilities and skills that qualify them exclusively for empowerment, such as: experience, knowledge in the field of work, negotiation skills with loyal colleagues and competitors at work, skills of training, leadership skills and communication skills (Al-Shaalan and Kaki, 2013).

- **Provide Training and Mentoring**

Training is one of the basic components to support workers' empowerment efforts, as the organisation provides training materials related to problem solving, communication, conflict management, working with work teams, motivating to raise the skill and technical level of workers, monitoring and evaluating performance, and creating the foundations for quality improvement (Anthony, 2013).

- **Effective Communication**

The administration can use a verbal or non-verbal communication plan for each of the managers and empowered staff members which specifies the organisation's vision and mission, the strategic goals, the results to be achieved during that period, the specific performance criteria for measurement, and the means that can be used to achieve those results (Al-Radadi, 2012).

- **Sharing of Information**

In order that subordinates are able to make better decisions for the organisation, they need information about their jobs and tasks and the organisation as a whole. This is to help them manage the business, lay the foundations and criteria for success, and the pathways for improvement and development. The mechanism for providing information lies in the effective use of management information systems and decision support systems (Chen et al., 2007).

- **Forming Work Teams**

Using a team style is one of the successful methods of spreading knowledge and mitigates the negative effects of change. Employees who work collectively in teams have ideas and decisions which are better than the individual who works alone, and thus facilitates the redesign of work in light of the new requirements for job empowerment (Harris, 2009).

- **Empowerment**

At this stage, the voluntary transfer of the authority to complete the work is carried out by a group of individuals who have the ability, skill, and full understanding of the work requirements without the intervention of the administration. The role of the administration is limited to providing resources and information, qualifying the employees technically, psychologically, and behaviourally, and trusting them. In order for the efforts of empowerment to be successful, there needs to be an incentives and rewards program in place that is linked to achieving the goals of the organisation (Zakia, 2012).

- **Evaluating the Results**

The work environment cannot be changed overnight, and for this the empowerment process should be evaluated by considering the work that results from it, such as performance rates, improvement in the quality and quantity of work, improvement in absenteeism, increased staff retention rates, high levels of job satisfaction, and a sense of organisational justice, and therefore it is an error if the administration is in a hurry to obtain quick and reassuring results (Emad, 2016). Empowerment is a comprehensive process that takes time and includes all parties in the organisation (Al-Qathami, 2009).

Much of the research literature and previous studies pointed to the obstacles in implementing empowerment, most notably as mentioned by Al-Otaibi (2005) as follows:

1. Lack of adequate training: where the organisation needs to have renewed skills and behaviours, and this is available with continuous training for each member of the organisation to increase learning by honing their skills and developing their capabilities.
2. Driving inefficiency: This means that the leadership has an important and vital role in implementing empowerment, and that managers are the basis in the proper

application of empowerment, otherwise they will face intense resistance on the part of workers.

3. Bureaucratic supremacy: it does not allow for creativity and subordinates are totally dependent on their superiors, given that there are numerous regulations and rules that define what subordinates do, and for the flow of orders and instructions from top to bottom.
4. Empowerment is an idea that is easy to misunderstand: it can confuse some people with less comprehensive concepts and perceptions, such as participation, delegation, and substitution, and it represents a fundamental change in the behaviour of workers at work, and this may not coincide with the traditional understanding managers and employees have of their roles and functions.
5. Managers fear that their subordinates are more capable and skilled in their business than they themselves are, which, in turn, gives managers the appearance of weakness in front of senior management. Therefore, management resort to relying on those subordinates who display high levels of efficiency, which leads to the loss of authority and influence managers enjoy.
6. Subordinate's fear of taking responsibility, making decisions, and solving problems, for the following reasons: fear of punishment when making a mistake or appearing stupid when making mistakes, or fear of losing work, or their fear of taking responsibility and making decisions and solving problems because they are accustomed to receiving and executing orders, or fear of losing the required support when the error occurs.
7. The misconception by the organisation that the empowering of employees is a quick solution to treat any problem, while empowerment is a slow behavioural process that requires time, support, and commitment on the part of all participating parties.

Melhem (2006) stated that in order to avoid these obstacles, the following should be observed:

1. Using training and learning to raise individual competence, hone skills, and increase abilities.
2. That collective interests prevail over individualism.
3. Considering the differences of individuals, assessing their capabilities, and determining their motives.
4. Providing access to information related to their work.

5. Removing unnecessary restrictions and controls which prove to be unimportant.
6. Ensuring confidence in individuals, encouraging them, supporting initiatives, and solving problems.
7. Recognising important contributions and accomplishments and providing flexible systems.
8. Ensuring that there are rewards commensurate with the responsibilities and tasks assigned to workers.
9. Recognition of the importance of empowerment by senior management.
10. Existence of flexible organisational structures based on self-managed work teams.

### **5.15 Conclusion**

This chapter has looked at the contemporary global trends that have influenced the current developments of the education system, as well as the approach to empowering the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It aimed to provide an overview of empowerment and to consider the factors identified as important in implementing an empowerment approach in education. Definitions of empowerment and leadership have been discussed from a variety of perspectives, taking into account global influences and trends. Different perspectives, on the other hand, may cause confusion, which could impair the effectiveness of the enabling approach.

The literature reviewed indicated several critical issues that ought to be considered when adopting and implementing the empowerment approach in general and in the educational system in particular. Stakeholder participation is a major challenge in achieving empowerment goals. Some see empowerment as a means to grow and enhance the educational system's quality. On the other hand, some argue that if action plans to implement the enabling approach do not reach the levels required by stakeholders, they are insufficient and can lead to complex, time-consuming tasks.

The concept of empowerment originated in organisations developed in the West, along with the development of its concepts and trends in management and leadership. Additionally, since the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the context of this project's study, the concept of empowerment in Islam has also been illustrated. This mapping of understanding is intended to help explain



the context as it appears that there is a similarity in the concept of empowerment and some dimensions of educational leadership across the two contexts.

There are few empirical studies that have explored stakeholder perceptions of an empowerment approach. It is important, as mentioned in the introduction, that the empowerment approach is seen as a major change project, particularly in societies where empowerment is still relatively new. It is anticipated that stakeholders from governments, agencies, and academic leaders may benefit from the theories, change models, and lessons presented in the previous chapter of this study, along with seriously considering how to use the advancement of modern technology to facilitate and accelerate the empowerment culture and improve the quality of the empowerment approach in educational reform. Although the contexts and educational systems of the West and of Saudi Arabia differ, empowerment is today seen as essential in both. Given that the education system operates in an environment characterised by vitality, speed, and change, it needs to be an open system that grows, develops, and interacts with the opportunities and challenges of the environment in which it operates to ensure its stability and development.

## **Chapter Six: Methodology and Research Design**

### **6.1 Introduction**

When planning the research framework, any researcher should consider three major elements: the researcher's typical position (in terms of their assertions towards knowledge), the procedure which links the methods with the results (strategies), and the data collection and data analysis methods (Creswell, 2009).

In this chapter, the researcher will present a critical overview of various research tools and guidelines prevalent in education research. The selection and justification of the research philosophy, research method, research design, sampling procedure, data collection method, and data analysis tool for the current research are also discussed.

This chapter has been organised and separated into the following sections. The first section will describe the choice of an appropriate research strategy and research design for the current research. The second section will introduce the method used for the selection of the sample population, followed by the third section, which will present the data collection approach, such as the semi-structured interviews and survey questionnaire for the collection of qualitative and quantitative data. The fourth section will discuss the data analysis methods used for the quantitative and qualitative data, while the fifth section will present the validity and reliability tools for the data collected in this study. The sixth section will present the ethical considerations observed during the conduct of this study, and the final section will provide an overview of the limitations of this study.

The next section will discuss the aims and objectives of this study.

### **6.2 Aims and Objectives of this Study**

This study has been designed to investigate the understanding leaders hold in relation to the concept of empowerment. The study's goal is to investigate the possibilities of an empowerment approach in reforming the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's current educational system. It aims to consider the changes necessary in the education system to implement an empowerment approach. Leaders and members of the education system workforce are asked

to assess the potential of this approach to reform, to increase the efficiency of system performance. Following the launch by the Saudi government of this significant project to implement an empowerment approach in education, the Ministry of Education adopted this concept to improve and reform the education system. However, according to Asif (2003), little noticeable progress has been made, progress in reform still suffers from bureaucracy and there is a lack of participation in decision-making. Kaynak (2003) argued that while some educational institutions are concerned with implementing good practices towards an empowerment approach, other institutions do not function due to an unequal level of knowledge, training, commitment and desire for change leading to an undermining of efforts.

Al-Badi (2011) argued that when the principles of empowerment are not fully understood or partially implemented across an organisation, it may lead to unstable or unequal empowerment across the education system. Reid et al. (2003) suggested that in order to achieve empowerment in education, it is important that every person working in the education sector contributes to its equal and effective development and in the improvement of the quality of the education process. Based on this analysis, it appears that there are questions to be answered in explaining the lack of significant progress in implementing this new approach in the education sector and the extent to which the Ministry of Education and education institutions are working together effectively to improve the educational system through the adoption of an empowerment approach (Sophia, 2013).

Such findings indicate that, despite the efforts of government agencies, there are still gaps in such efforts, such as the low level of commitment of employees and leaders towards adopting the empowerment approach to reform the educational system. So far, no research effort has been made to understand the role of the empowerment approach as a strategy for reforming the education system in Saudi Arabia. This being the case, there is therefore a need to extend and build knowledge through the implementation of an achievable and systematic research project.

The purpose of this study is to explore the level of awareness of educational managers in the Ministry of Education, principals of schools and teachers in educational institutions about the concept of empowerment and its possibilities. This, in turn, can help direct efforts that can be used to implement the empowerment approach in educational institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Second, the study also includes an investigation of the initiatives taken by the Ministry of Education in applying the empowerment approach through the Development Office

and the Office of the Investigation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030 Ministry of Education. Through this objective, the measures taken by the Ministry of Education to implement the comprehensive empowerment approach will be reviewed. The feasibility of implementing the empowerment approach will be assessed through an illustrative approach, which will form the second stage of this study.

This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology used to achieve the research project's goals and objectives. The following section discusses in detail this research methodology.

### **6.3 Research Design**

Research design can be defined as the comprehensive plan or proposed method that aims to answer specific research questions as clearly as possible, while taking into consideration three main components: research theories or worldviews, research strategies, and research methods (Creswell, 2009).

The research design framework depends on paradigms and viewpoints on two important positions: ontology and epistemology (Scott, 2012). Epistemology is an essential pillar of research, because it is not possible to separate the study that is the subject of research from the epistemology framework in which it resides. Researchers frequently ask questions about how to define a specific piece of knowledge, where to recognise it, and how “truth” differentiates it. In this context, researchers attempt to establish and describe truth by applying a variety of theoretical perspectives to their studies; it is possible that “the broadest of these is ontology” (Morrison, 2012: p. 15). These various perceptions of the nature of existence are important in any research project because they influence the methods used by the researcher. Thus, epistemology and ontology influence the researcher's approach within their study, whereas methodology “is based upon thinking critically about the nature of existence and how we can understand it” (Morrison, 2012: p. 15). The current study's research design is divided into two stages:

1. A review of existing literature on the concept of empowerment, including its history, stages of development, standards, models of practice, and the value of this concept in the educational system. In addition, a review of the literature on

organisational change in the educational system, as well as its theories and models, was included.

2. Data collection using mixed methods through the use of qualitative and quantitative tools is aimed at exploring the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of the participants involved in this study of the application of the concept of empowerment. This approach is aimed at the identification of the main issues that impede or facilitate its implementation, such as the issues mentioned in the empowerment chapter (Five).

The following section discusses research paradigms that are often adopted and presents the chosen paradigm with justifications for its selection in this study.

#### **6.4 Choice of Research Paradigm**

An important aspect in social science research is the definition of the research model for research projects (Creswell and Clark, 2007). By choosing the appropriate research model, the subjectivity or objectivity of the research process is conferred through the selection of a suitable research paradigm, which helps to ensure fairness and the avoidance of biased approaches during the research process, which demands that the researcher come into contact with information and people (Creswell, 2009; Ponterotto, 2005). This is done by defining the assumptions and limitations of research in regard to the research problem, and the model chosen for conducting the research itself (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). This aspect was also argued by Creswell (2013) by suggesting that a research model needs to be adopted based on a social problem being investigated in a different number of settings to clarify and differentiate results that are reported from a similar area of knowledge.

Haverkamp and Young (2007) categorised the underlying assumptions that are considered as existential assumptions. During the research process, these assumptions explain different situations depending on the presence of things in the practical world. Moreover, Ponterotto et al., (2013) explained this concept in a more realistic way by proposing that existential assumptions refer to the real world and people and things are necessarily taken into consideration to describe the representation of reality in the practical and real world.

In the first place, Kuhn (1962) stressed the need for a model. He identified the model as a tool that functions as a disciplinary matrix for the approved research approach to implement the research project. He also stressed that the research model defines the basic values, beliefs and assumptions that cannot be separated from the phenomenon under discussion. McArthur (1992) further revised the concept of the model and introduced the definition to a more general concept: Copernicus' claim that the Earth revolves around the Sun or Darwin's theory of natural selection are two examples of paradigmatic shifts in thought and action which occurred in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (Kuhn, 1962, cited in Burke, 2007: p. 4).

This indicates that research results relate to some core beliefs and values. Based on this, Johnson and Onwigbozi (2016) supported the view of a model as a "set of lenses" for the social science research community through which it sees the field of research within the boundaries of a set of already established beliefs, opinions, and assumptions.

Patton (2005) commented that the abstract world can be integrated into practical aspects and applied to the real world in its aspects of interpreting information i.e., data from the real world. Therefore, it is important for the current research project to choose the appropriate research design. The set of beliefs and assumptions held by other researchers in this field has an important role to help enable me, as a researcher, to design and interpret the consequences in a rigorous and fair manner (Bryman, 2012).

Various experimental research models that are often adopted will be presented, followed by an optional and justified presentation of the model chosen for this study.

#### **6.4.1 The Positivism Paradigm**

The positivism paradigm remained the dominant concept in social science research from 1930 through to 1960 (Creswell, 1994). According to Creswell (1994), the main argument for this model is that the social world is an external reality present in the mind of the researcher and observations need to be made to obtain a full understanding of the various aspects of this world. Many positivist researchers, such as Henri de Saint Simon, Auguste Comte and Wilhelm Delthey, claim the physical world is something outside the researcher and it is impossible to touch, feel, smell, or see it except through limited senses, and thus it can be captured. Therefore, it is difficult to begin investigating the various properties of phenomena except on the basis of

data obtained through the senses rather than the philosophical speculation made by Greek philosophers (Mertens, 1998) or by exploring emotions, feelings, or experiences.

Moreover, positivists conclude that empirical evidence is required to establish the presence or absence of traces of a specific phenomenon in the social world (Creswell and Clarke, 2007). Proponents of the positivist model also believe that the limits of social and natural sciences are incorporated into the theoretical, logical, and common approaches to conducting investigations related to the various aspects of the phenomenon (Krauss, 2005). Existential positivism also assumes that social phenomena are not affected by other factors, whereas exemplary exegesis presupposes those social phenomena are influenced by external factors even if it is only one factor that serves as a catalyst for change in the social context (Berg, 2004; Bailey, 2008). Thus, different researchers may come up with different interpretations and conclusions about change in a social context.

In addition, it is difficult to broaden knowledge unless it is possible to test the facts to which it will be added and substantiated (Gold, 2012). The positivists also support the idea that data relating to solid objects such as shape, size, etc. about objects in the social world may be considered to address inquiries (McQueen and Knussen, 2002). The rigid and finite principle of the natural world also applies to the social world, and laws relating to the social world can be established through empirical research (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). The core principles of positivist research are there will be truth and knowledge regardless of location, time, or researcher nature. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), the truth in natural and social sciences can be captured and reproduced. The sample size is typically large, and the researcher is separated from the research process, implying that he or she has no influence over the research outcomes.

However, while the positivist paradigm is useful for presenting facts, it is thought to be insufficient for capturing social phenomena.

Williams and May (1996: p. 27) stated that the positivist model: “is one of the heroic failures of modern philosophy”. According to Krauss (2005), the main mistake posed by positivism is related to the idea of unclear observations. They argued that proponents of positivism, although they claim to be making observations through meaning, are not making observations, rather they are making theories to perform observations and that some branches of science are entirely

dependent on mathematical calculations rather than observations (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Scherer (2003) argued that the observations made by the positivists are therefore “loaded theory”. Moreover, theory cannot be generated simply by making observations (Ponterotto, 2005). An example against the principles of theory is sufficient to refute it. Positivists only tend to accept or reject the theory. Whereas the social phenomenon is much more complex than is perceived through the senses and recorded in the form of notes (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Therefore, the need arose to build a new paradigm for resolving the problem/issue of the paradigm after the situation failed to explain the existence of complex social phenomena (Newman and Ridenour, 1998). Thus, the explanatory paradigm is presented to capture aspects of these complexities. The interpretivist paradigm will be presented in the following section.

In the current research project, the meaning of the concept of empowerment and the feasibility of implementing empowerment as an approach to educational reform in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are explored. The mere observations supported by the views of the positivists cannot explain the meaning of the concept of empowerment as an approach to reforming the educational system in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the interpretivist approach is required to help investigate the research problem under study. However, part of the problem requires identifying the role of empowerment in reforming the education system in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, assumptions of this model can help address part of the research issue being investigated in this research project.

#### **6.4.2 Interpretivism**

A number of researchers, such as Max Weber and George Simmel (known as commentators or anti-positivists), have taken a stand against the positivist paradigm, and have tried to solve the problem of the positivist model by searching for explanations “derived from the cultural and social history of life” (Crotty, 1998: p. 67).

Contrary to the position of the positivists, they argue that there is no direct relationship between subjects, the scholar and things when a phenomenon in the social sciences is investigated. Williams and May (1996) argued that the phenomenon and characteristics of the social world are described and understood by constructing schemes of classification and interpretation in the mind.



Becker and Niehaves (2007) referred to a set of assumptions called epistemological assumptions that are the entity of an interpretivist paradigm and relate to knowledge defined through its source site. This indicates that it adopts the procedure of collecting information and then accessing the basis of the source of this knowledge. This process involves looking at individuals' understanding of specific phenomena. People's experiences and interactions with the real world provide them with material that can be used to build research theories and experiences (Frankfort and Nachmias, 2007). It also provides the researcher with knowledge that can be used to build relationships between the various entities surrounding individuals. The resulting knowledge can be used to construct models and a combination of constructive and communicative knowledge (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). These assumptions usually lead the researcher to identify the causes or factors responsible for the occurrence of a particular phenomenon and help explain it in social settings (Seidman, 2013). Moreover, the cognitive assumptions in the interpretivist paradigm differ from those in the positivist model. For example, interpretivists decide whether information is true or false based on subjective knowledge, whereas positivists distinguish between true and false knowledge based on objective data (Berg, 2004).

When the interpretivism paradigm is examined from an epistemological standpoint, a close relationship among positivism and interpretivism is discovered (Paul, 2004). The interpretivist claim is based on the assumption that natural laws and modes of natural inquiry differ from those found in the social world, and thus they should indeed be treated as two distinct paradigms (Paul, 2004; Gold, 2012; Denzin, 2012; Morgan-Ellis et al., 2006). Interpretivist social scientists attempt to explain the actions of individuals in order to comprehend the social world's properties.

“Our interest in the social world tends to focus on aspects that are unique, individual, and qualitative, whereas our interest in the natural world tends to focus on more abstract phenomena, that is, those exhibiting quantifiable, empirical regularities” (Crotty, 1998: p. 68).

Daymon et al. (2002) indicated that an important aspect of the interpretivist paradigm is that it leads to the subjective and socially constructed world in which the researcher works as an observer and the entity that is observer of the social world. The meanings are derived from human social experiences in order to understand the different characteristics of phenomena. As a result, appropriate models and theories have been developed from the available data that

make up the inductive approach (Seidman, 2013). In this, reality is read, details are tracked, variables are monitored, and data is gathered to reach broad conclusions about specific issues, phenomena, numerical or dialectical relationships.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argued that a qualitative approach lacks the capacity to determine the cause-effect relationship, which is the positivism paradigm's exclusive property (Holloway, 2005). This qualitative approach uses small samples and the results of the data obtained cannot be generalised to the wider population. Because of these flaws, the results based on this paradigm are less reliable and have lower validity when compared to the outcomes of other paradigms (Kothari, 2008). Despite these criticisms, this does not mean that the interpretivist paradigm is not a relevant research approach. It can still be appropriate depending on the type of research questions and research issues.

In this study, the researcher adopts an interpretivist paradigm and assumes ontologically that the education system's weakness may be the result of multiple factors in the context of the education sector, and that the implementation of an empowerment approach in Saudi Arabia's education system can improve education quality. For example, the ontological assumptions in this study may contribute to answering the following research question: How do people working in the education sector perceive the concept of empowerment and the importance of the empowerment approach as an approach to reforming the educational system in Saudi Arabia? For the current research topic, the interpretivist paradigm will be used, as it focuses on the views, experiences, and suggestions of the participants in this study. The data obtained in this way can be used to generate the model and theories that can be evaluated and tested. However, it does not measure the feasibility of implementing the empowerment approach on reforming the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is the main objective of this study. Therefore, there is a need to adopt a paradigm in which positivism and interpretivist assumptions can be combined. This model is called triangulation or mixed methods, which will be presented in the next section.

Positivism		Interpretivism.
Basic beliefs	The social world is external to the researcher	The social world is internal to the researcher
	The researcher carried an independent enquiry	Observer is a part of the social world that is being observed.
	Science does not derive from values	Science is derived from the interests of human beings
The researcher should	Concentrate on the facts. Locate relationships between variables. Make and test hypotheses (Deductive approach)	Focus on understanding meanings Construction of models/theories from data (inductive approach)
Methods should include	Application of tools for measuring variables  Results derived from large samples may be generalised to the population.  Use of quantitative methods	Applying multiple methods for understanding the phenomenon Results from large samples cannot be generalised  Qualitative methods are used

**Table 6 .1 Summary of the key features of positivism and interpretivism.**  
**Source: adapted from Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012)**

The next section will present the research process in the context of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Mixing methods of research between qualitative and quantitative traditions has, for some time, been an area of debate for scholars, with many claiming the two are incompatible. This project, whilst acknowledging these debates and claims, takes a realist stance in approaching mixed methods and a constructivist view of knowledge and data gathered. A number of researchers believe that philosophical differences and research methods are not linked primarily to specific philosophical positions, but rather depend primarily on scientific interest (Patton, 2001; Cook

and Reichardt, 1979; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). A hallmark of constructivism is a tendency to deny that we have any objective or specific knowledge of the world and accept the possibility of alternative, valid calculations for any phenomenon (Joseph et al., 2011). This does not mean that realists are dual, postulating two different realms of reality: the material and the mental, but it means that the realism adopted by this is a synthesis of realist ontology (there is an actual world that exists independently of our preconceptions, theories, and structures) and constructivist epistemology (our understanding of this world is inevitably a construct from our viewpoints) (Joseph et al., 2011). In addition, realism recognises the reality of mental phenomena and the value of the perspective of an interpretative study of it (Sayer, 1992).

- **Significance of the Literature Review**

Based on the literature on educational leadership and management, an overarching research question was asked: what role can the implementation of the empowerment approach play in the education system in Saudi Arabia? To inform an answer to the main research question, the current study sought to answer four sub-questions. The sub-questions were in part contextual and took into account the current state of knowledge and were addressed by reviewing the previous literature, making the literature review an essential part of this research.

The sub-questions are:

1. How was the idea of empowerment defined and conceptualised within educational organisations and contexts in the post-war period?
2. From a comparative perspective, how has the idea of empowerment in educational environments been used in government policy in Saudi Arabia?
3. How do current school teachers, school principals, and system leaders in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as a method of reform?
4. How can the concept of empowerment be used to reform education through culture or its formation in the educational systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

Regarding the initial research dimension of the study, the literature review assisted in designing the study methodology, selecting appropriate data collection tools, and in analysing and discussing the research findings. By reviewing the literature related to the topic of the current study, the researcher had an opportunity to follow the sequence of intellectual progress in the

field of research, including the main discussions that took place in the field of the current study. The previous literature also contributed to clarifying the need for additional work in the same field due to the lack of research studies related to the role of empowerment in education reform. The previous literature review also contributed to addressing the main objective of the research in terms of extracting the potential contribution of implementing an empowering approach to reforming the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- **Research Populations and Sampling**

The quality of research is determined not only by the appropriateness of the methodology or tools used, but also by the sampling strategy used. When defining a sample from the population, the researcher should consider four major factors: (1) sample size, (2) sample representativeness, (3) sample accessibility, and (4) sampling strategy (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 100).

The quantitative data were gathered using a “simple random sampling” strategy, in which each teacher was given an equal opportunity to participate (Cohen, Manion and Morrison: p. 110). Secondary school teachers from various regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were included in the sample. The Ministry of Education sent letters to relevant officials to invite participants. Following the invitation, letters and questions were sent to the regional education offices in various regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which comprised four offices. Those offices then sent letters to their affiliated schools with the questionnaire via e-mail to try to make the sample as representative as possible.

The qualitative data were collected using the “stratified random sampling” strategy, which divides the research population into defined homogeneous groups with similar characteristics (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Despite the fact that the qualitative data sample was drawn from specific groups, the participants had an equal chance of participating in the study. Interviews were conducted with members of three elite stakeholder groups: management (decision makers), leaders (educational affairs), and school principals. The main connection between the groups is that they are each responsible for implementing the empowerment approach in Saudi Arabia’s education system.

## **6.5 Qualitative and Quantitative mixed methods**

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2013) in-depth knowledge of people's experiences and opinions leads to a lot of data that can be used to address various issues related to particular phenomena. For example, given the problem addressed in this study, deep knowledge of the experiences and opinions of people about the concept of empowerment as an approach that does or does not fit with the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can produce valuable data that contributes to solving the problems behind the gaps in the quality of the educational system (Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao, 2003). People's opinions and experiences about a particular social phenomenon can be collected using a number of tools, such as interviews and focus groups (Creswell and Clarke, 2007). This method, which enables the collection of data in the form of experiences and opinions directly from people surrounding the problem under investigation, is referred to as a qualitative method, in which the words of individuals or groups are proffered as data (Bryman, 2012). It is important to note here that a qualitative approach is not a methodology but rather a method of presenting data in a textual format that is used to help gain a deep understanding and draw conclusions about the issue under study (Bailey, 2008). Consequently, qualitative methods can be useful for this study to explore the concept of empowerment and the suitability of the empowerment approach to organisational culture in Saudi society to improve the educational system.

Moreover, there are a number of issues related to qualitative data, such as interpretations made by the researcher that are not considered reliable or transferable by some theorists (Beckman and Rogge, 2008). The issue of credibility is often cited as a weakness of the interpretative approach but can be addressed by applying the triangulation approach to data collection (see next section), which supports internal validity (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013; 2003). It is also possible to mediate the transferability of research results through detailed descriptions of the search process, which in return will allow other researchers to know whether data can be extrapolated to different environments that are similar in characteristics to the phenomenon under the current study (Berg, 2004).

When a researcher employs an objective approach to dealing with the world's various factors and variables influencing the occurrence or emergence of a specific phenomenon, the qualitative method fails to answer the objective research questions due to its subjective nature (McQueen and Knussen, 2002). On the other hand, the quantitative method helps in conducting

an investigation that includes multiple factors that affect each other within a society (Tashakkori, 2010). Therefore, it can be said that the aim of the quantitative method is to determine the relationships between different things within the population by using the application of strict statistical tools or data collected through opinion polls and questionnaires (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). The quantitative method also helps in developing models and verifying validity by measuring the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable (Jacob, 2001). The statistical tools used to analyse the data increase the reliability of the results; the inclusion of large numbers of the population means that inferences drawn from the data can be generalised to other population groups with similar characteristics (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). As the current study aims to explore the capabilities of the empowerment approach in reforming the educational system and assessing the reality of empowerment by measuring the impact of the empowerment approach on improving the quality of the educational system, the quantitative method is a useful option that can be used in this study.

Like any other method, the quantitative method has some drawbacks. Gold (2012) commented that the quantitative method does not consider the subjective form of knowledge that may be useful in depicting the complexity of human perceptions and experiences. Through the quantitative method, research questions beginning with “why” and “how” cannot be answered. Creswell and Clark (2007) argued that these shortcomings can be overcome by triangulating the search process described in the next section.

## **6.6 Triangulation in this Study**

Adopting more than one method for acquiring knowledge about a specific phenomenon in social sciences is called triangulation (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). Since this study uses two research methods (qualitative and quantitative), triangulation based on the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches can be the most appropriate for the current study because together both approaches help to answer the research questions described in Chapter One. The data collected about a particular phenomenon can be validated through the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which can be described as a mixed methods approach, often contributing, supporting, and increasing the reliability and validity of the search results if the results are from both methods (Al-Khwaiter et al., 2014). Additionally, triangulation is applied to overcome the disadvantages of the individual method and will collectively give an advantage to the researcher to answer questions more effectively and obtain more reliable results than can

be obtained using either a qualitative or quantitative method (Jacob 2001; Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012).

Triangulation is defined as “the mixing of data or methods so that diverse perspectives shed light on a subject” (Olsen, 2004: p.3). The process in which types of data are mixed is called the data triangle, however, triangulation is not common among social researchers because it only contributes to validating claims from different data sources (Onwuegbuzie, 2007). The triangulation approach relies on the mixing of qualitative and quantitative methods, which is usually used by social researchers and is considered to be a more profound form of triangulation (Olsen, 2004; Denzin, 2012). Morgan Ellis et al., (2006) argued that the most common patterns of mixing methods involve applying the qualitative method first and then the quantitative method. The main advantage of the triangle is to search for agreements and verify the results of the study by using various tools to collect and analyse data (Denzin, 2012). Therefore, based on the approach of researchers such as Morgan-Ellis et al., (2006), Denzin, (2012), Leech and Onwuegbuzie, (2007), and Olsen, (2004), the systematic triangulation sequence (see Section 6.4) in this research involved the use of semi-structured interviews and focus groups as part of the qualitative and surveying method (quantitative method).

Furthermore, Jacob and Furgerson (2012) argued that applying multiple methods of data collection such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations may contribute to reducing the weaknesses and biases associated with any data collection method or theory as explained in Sections 6.5 and 6.6. The triangulation method contributes to the convergence of opinions, observations, and different perspectives to enhance the quality and validity of the results and to enhance the researcher’s ability to interpret those results obtained from specific groups of observations (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The mixed methods approach assists researchers to test the strength of knowledge and its utility for humans by designing quantitative research that helps to identify the relationships between different factors and variables in the fixed world compared to the changing and dynamic world as perceived in interpretivism (Rolfe, 2006; Latimer, 2003). As a result, qualitative and quantitative research methods are combined to effectively address real-world problems (Plack, 2005; Ma and Yu, 2012).



The present study aims to consider both forms of knowledge to explore the concept of empowerment and the possibilities of applying the empowerment approach in reforming the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia within the culture of Saudi, which requires the use of multiple methods. Therefore, the triangulation approach is appropriate for this study to determine how educators understand the empowerment approach and its applicability to improve and develop the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao (2003) indicated that triangulation has value in capturing social values / beliefs and their intrinsic relationship to the phenomenon being studied. For example, the current research is related to implementing the empowerment approach to reforming and improving the education system in Saudi Arabia, and therefore it is not value free from context. Social values are related to this phenomenon, such as the needs of the Saudi government to educate citizens by developing capabilities, knowledge, positive attitudes towards their role in society, and the role of education in the country's economic development. Everyone in society aspires to obtain an education that contributes to raising their standard of living by meeting economic and social needs. Quality education cannot be achieved without acknowledging the interaction of political and social factors (Goetsch and Davis, 2014). The use of the triangle can provide insight to reveal the various aspects of the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In addition to the triangulation that helps provide some confidence for the factors behind the need to reform the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it may also help in building an appropriate theory or model consisting of the factors necessary to improve the quality of the educational system. New models and theories are built by obtaining patterns of new data that enable researchers to build new knowledge. Confusions and complications caused by only quantitative data, for example, can be offset and explained by qualitative data, and vice versa. This contributes to increasing clarity of knowledge and factors that influence the occurrence of some social issues under study. In addition, the strength of these factors was measured as tools to improve the educational system using the qualitative method detailed in the next section. The triangulation approach can give useful knowledge to the scientific community regarding the empowerment approach and the feasibility of implementing it in the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

When quantitative and qualitative research methods are used alone in a research project, they are not without their own weaknesses, as indicated by Saunders, Lewis and Thronhill (2009). For example, the quantitative research method cannot capture the contextual factors that influence the implementation of the empowerment approach in the educational system (Wahyuni, 2012; Atieno, 2009). Likewise, a qualitative research approach may present a bias component during data interpretation (Denzin, 2012). Additionally, qualitative data cannot be subject to statistical data analysis (Friedrichs and Kratochwil, 2009). It is also not possible to generalise the results of the qualitative study (Creswell, 2011). However, using the mixed methods approach may compensate for the weaknesses associated with the qualitative and quantitative methods, as it increases the reliability and validity of the data (Franke and Weber, 2012). The development of a model for implementing an enabling approach to reforming and improving the quality of the education system should be very reliable in providing a comprehensive strategy for improving the education system, which justifies the application of the mixed methods approach to the current study.

Moreover, this study aims to increase understanding of the historical, political, and social contexts of the concept of empowerment and the education system in Saudi Arabia. Triangulation is appropriate because it may provide a broad picture of the various factors that influence the concept of empowerment and the education system in Saudi Arabia. Education management is a complex process that involves a number of changing factors interacting with each other at different organisational levels (Sallis, 2014). Accordingly, there is a need to infer knowledge and data that is reliable and robust. In other words, using any of the qualitative or quantitative methods alone may narrow the researcher's vision to understand the aspects that affect the empowerment approach and educational system reform (Gold, 2012). Therefore, a triangulated approach is appropriate to presenting the detailed plan to build a model for applying the empowerment approach to reforming the education system and improving the quality of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The flexibility of triangulation makes it appropriate for use in this research because it allows for the selection of various types of data collection, the design of a flexible search, and multiple methods of data analysis and system results interpretation (Denzin, 2012). There are, however, some drawbacks and weaknesses. For example, Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) argued that triangulation does not produce effective and satisfactory outcomes in a study that does not adequately focus theoretically on a particular phenomenon. In other words, studies that do not

design the conceptual framework to address research questions will not fully benefit from the application of the triangulation method.

Likewise, Johnson and others (2007) appear to concur with the view of Yeamin and Rahman by indicating that the practical application of the triangulation method is unsuitable for every project due to several factors, such as the time and cost factor involved in implementing this method. Thurmond (2001) concluded in his research that the triangulation technique is not effective in research with a flawed design, therefore it is preferable to use this technique only for research methods with a valid research design based on testable hypotheses and research questions.

Since the current study has taken every measure to design the conceptual framework carefully, qualitative and quantitative methods have been identified to enhance the reliability of data and the steps recommended by previous researchers have been followed. The data were interpreted according to ethical considerations. These procedures also allowed the researcher to overcome the disadvantages relating to triangulation mentioned above.

To conduct the research based on the design outlined above, data collection tools and sampling procedures were developed and are discussed in the following section.

## **6.7 Data Collection Instruments**

### **6.7.1 Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was designed drawing upon a number of previous literature reviews related to the concept of empowerment and educational system reform. This questionnaire is one of the tools used to accomplish the study's objectives, questionnaires being suitable and valuable tools for data collection for surveying and establishing individuals' attitudes (Henerson, Morris and Fitz-Gibbon, 1987). There are a number of advantages in using questionnaires, one of which is that the researcher can obtain a significant amount of information in a short period of time. It can also be a less costly way of collecting information, whether in effort or money spent (Brewerton and Millward, 2001).

- **Constructing the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire in this study included both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions are distinguished by the ease and speed with which they can be answered, as well as the ease with which they can be analysed and compared to other answers (Oppenheim, 2001). Because it does not require the participants' names, this type of questioning can promote a sense of comfort and increase honesty. Each participant is asked to answer the same questions, in order to eliminate bias. The ease of analysing and interpreting the data collected, compared to the data gleaned from the oral responses is noted (Henerson, Morris and Fitz-Gibbon, 1987). Both Wiersma and Jurs (2005) argued that closed data in a questionnaire can reinforce the consistency of responses because scheduling data is clear and does not require time compared to open questions. However, there are some drawbacks to closed questions. For example, they do not give participants an opportunity to express their opinion or add any comments or interpretations (Oppenheim, 2001; Henerson, Morris and Fitz-Gibbon, 1987).

Open questions, on the other hand, allow participants to write and explain their responses without constraints or pre-defined classifications of answers. This may result in an increase in the amount of unnecessary or inappropriate data, which will lengthen the data collection stage and make tasks more difficult (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

As per Robson (2002), the questionnaire questions are “designed to aid in the achievement of the research objectives, and specifically, to address the research questions” (p. 241). Accordingly, the main purpose of the questionnaire is to explore perspectives and meanings on the concept of empowerment, to evaluate the application of the concept, and the application stage it has reached in operations. To achieve these goals, closed questions and open-ended questions were used and the questionnaire was developed in three sections (see Appendix {1} for the English version of the questionnaire and the attached Arabic version of the questionnaire). The first section was concerned with personal information and information on the education region. The second section contained 18 of the basic elements or aspects of the empowerment approach to educational reform. Finally, the third section contained four open-ended questions.

Sections	Dimensions	No. of Items
Section 1: Personal Information	This section's data helped to identify differences in teachers' perspectives on current research based on gender, experience and education region.	3
Section 2:	First Dimension: This section aimed to identify the views of the participants about the educational system.	2
System education reform & principles of empowerment	Second Dimension: to provide the most important principles of empowerment that were developed through the literature review on empowerment. The goal here was to explore the participants' understanding of the empowerment approach and the stage this concept has reached in implementation.	16
Section 3 Open-ended Questions	This section provided four questions designed to obtain the participants' viewpoints on the concept of empowerment, the changes that need to occur in the education system to empower them, and their evaluation of the possibilities of applying the concept.	4

**Table 6.2 The questionnaire sections and dimensions**

The Likert scale was applied to the questionnaire design so that the respondents were asked to choose one of five elements (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree). Rensis Likert, an American psychologist, created the Likert scale in 1932 to improve the level of measurement in social research (Infosurv, 2007). Infosurv (2007) conducted research on online questionnaire specialists and concluded that the majority of modern researchers agreed that the 5-point scale was more prevalent than the 6-point scale and that the neutral score on a 5-point scale was considered necessary with survey questionnaires. Furthermore, Likert questionnaire responses are easier to measure, analyse, and interpret than open-ended question responses (Idea, 2007). For this study, the scale was formatted as follows: there are five levels of agreement, namely, 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 =

Strongly Agree. The participants were asked to draw a symbol (3) of their choice (See Appendix: 1a and b)

- **Piloting the Questionnaire**

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), the phrasing of the questionnaire is critical, and testing it ahead of time is critical to its success. Pilot studies help with several aspects, including question wording, introduction design, question order and sequence, and non-responder rate reduction. It is contended that, while the piloting phase could be expensive and time-consuming, disregarding it will be more expensive (Oppenheim, 2001).

The questionnaire was tested in this study to ensure that it was designed correctly, that the questions and instructions were clear, that it took a reasonable amount of time to complete, and that evaluative comments were requested (Bell, 2005). The experiment was conducted in the following stages:

- After formulating the questionnaire, it was distributed to two experts at King Saud University's Department of Statistics. They were asked to assist in verifying the data's relevance to the research topic, goals, and questions. Based on the feedback, some changes were made to the questionnaire, which helped to enhance its validity. One of the respondents, for example, changed the structure of 16 and 11 to make it more understandable. One of the respondents also suggested that question 4 needed clarification. Furthermore, suggestions for gaining access to the people who held the information I sought were gathered, which aided me in designing the recruitment and sampling strategy for the main large-scale study. The data from the pilot study were only used to refine the data collection instruments and design the survey questionnaire for the current study. One of the respondents expressed the view that two Assistant Directors working in close liaison with the Department of Education could be useful contact to gain in-depth information about the education system.
- The final version of the questionnaire was translated from English to Arabic and sent to three specialists in King Saud University's Arabic Language Department to verify the structure of the data and their meanings, ensuring that the meanings did not change during translation. Minor changes were made following review at this stage.

- The questionnaire was also distributed to volunteer PhD students at the University of Glasgow in both English and Arabic. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide feedback on any aspect. Following this, no changes were required because all volunteers agreed that the questionnaire items were clear and could be understood as designed.
- The questionnaire's final version was then prepared for online distribution. To ensure that the form was ready for online release, the link was sent to volunteer PhD students at the University of Glasgow to check the language, sequence of ideas, and how the pages would flow.

- **Procedures for Collecting Questionnaire Data**

Distribution of the questionnaire followed the stages below:

- Once the questionnaire was developed, permission was sought and acquired from the Ethics Commission of The University of Glasgow's Social Science College, as well as the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who both provided written consent to conduct the study and provide access to necessary resources and services.
- The Chancellorship of Teachers Affairs at the Ministry of Education was contacted to obtain approval to send the questionnaire link to teachers by email. The Ministry was very cooperative, and on approval the link was sent to the teachers' official e-mail.
- The link was randomly sent to more than 300 teachers across each of the regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- The questionnaire was provided in Arabic and English.

- **The Questionnaire Participants**

The total number of online responses received from the education regions of Saudi Arabia was 200. The tables below show the gender, experience, and education region distribution of participants.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Male</b>	84	42.0
<b>Female</b>	116	58.0
<b>Total</b>	200	100.0

**Table 6.3 Distribution of the participants according to gender**

<b>Work Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1-5 Years</b>	35	17.5
<b>5-10 Years</b>	70	35.0
<b>15 Years and above</b>	95	47.5
<b>Total</b>	200	100.0

**Table 6.4 Distribution of the participants according to years of experience**

<b>Educational region:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>South</b>	29	14.5
<b>North</b>	35	17.5
<b>Middle</b>	70	35.0
<b>East</b>	28	14.0
<b>West</b>	38	19.0
<b>Total</b>	200	100.0

**Table 6.5 Distribution of the participants according to education region**

- **Questionnaire: Data Analysis**

The data collected through the questionnaire were analysed using Statistical SPSS (V25), a popular Windows-based software used data analytical tools in education research (Muijs, 2011). In order to evaluate the data, descriptive statistics were applied, the results being differentiated depending on the variation of the participants in gender, experience and education region. Because most responses to the four open-ended questions were in Arabic, they needed to be translated into English and then analysed in the same way as qualitative data.

### **6.7.2 Interviews**



The purpose of interviews can be to collect information from the people being interviewed in order to explore their views and attitudes towards a specific issue and is a significant source of qualitative data collection (Yin, 2014). According to Bush (2012), interpretative researchers frequently use informal or semi-structured interviews because they allow for greater diversity in terms of design, use of research tools, and nature of participant responses. Semi-structured interviews are a common method of gathering data in educational research (Punch and Oancea, 2014). Semi-structured interviews were used in this study to collect qualitative data from leaders, decision makers and school principals.

In a semi-structured interview, the researcher can set a broad framework in advance related to the subject of the study, a framework in which the study problem and the main questions of the study are identified. This gives more leeway in identifying and modifying the details of the interview structure, as well as dealing with any information that may arise during the interview. It allows the researcher to request expansion or clarification from the participant using multiple types of questions, and the participant can reflect on the answers (Drever, 1995). In addition, specific information can be obtained and compared to information from other interviews (Dawson, 2007). Semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, have some potential drawbacks, such as it may take a long time to discuss minor issues, or losing control of participants, and the unstructured method can sometimes be less reliable (Brewerton and Millward, 2001).

A key consideration when conducting an interview is whether it can be recorded. Permission to record allows the researcher to capture data more accurately than when taking notes; however, the recording device can only be used with the participant's full approval, and the researcher should consider a clear strategy to deal with the amount of data generated by such recordings (Yin, 2014).

- **Creating and Testing Interview Questions**

The primary aim of adopting semi-structured interviews in this research was to collect data that provide insight into the views, beliefs and experiences of leaders, decision makers, and school principals in relation to an empowerment approach as a means to reforming and developing the education system.

As mentioned previously, interview questions originate from pre-determined study questions (Coleman, 2012). As a result, the interview schedule for this study was created based on a review of the literature on management, leadership and empowerment. The interview questions consisted of ten main questions that were carefully designed to help achieve the research objectives. Table 6.6 below explains briefly how the interview questions align with the research questions.

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Leaders, decisionmakers, and school principals - questions</b>
1- From a comparative of perspective, how has the concept of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?	<p>1. In the last five years have you noticed or been aware of change in the education system?</p> <p>2. How difficult or how easy has making change or participating in change been in your experience?</p> <p>3. Across management and leadership thinking, was the idea of empowerment already developed, or has the government taken up this idea of empowerment in the 2030 vision?</p>
2- How do current school teachers, principals and system leaders in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?	<p>4. How do you personally understand the idea of empowerment?</p> <p>5. How do you think empowerment could operate in a school education system?</p> <p>6. Had you heard of empowerment before I mentioned it to you? If yes, where did you come across the idea?</p>
3- How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the education systems of Saudi Arabia?	<p>7. What changes would we need to make to allow empowerment to operate or become part of the school of education system culture?</p> <p>8. What do you think a ministry and leaders in the education system would need it to do promote empowerment?</p>

**Table 6.6 Relationship between research questions and interview questions**

Coleman (2012) emphasised the significance of conducting a pilot interview with a sample number of persons to ensure the clarity of questions, their relevance to research goals and questions, and the time period for conducting the interview. Formulating interview questions clearly and simply, and avoiding ambiguity, is a crucial issue that must be taken into account when constructing an interview schedule. The following procedures were used to test the interview structure and schedule:

- After formulating the interview questions, it was presented to three experts – two in the field of educational administration at King Saud University and the third an academic supervisor for the researcher at the University of Glasgow. They were asked to add any necessary comments to ensure that the questions were appropriate for the research objectives and that they were clear. Based on their feedback, which indicated that preference for reducing the number of questions to 10 rather than 16, some changes were made to improve the relevance of interview questions.
- The interview questions were written in English before being translated into Arabic. Improvements to interview questions were made based on feedback from two other Arabic language specialists at King Saud University, which helped ensure meaning clarity during translation.
- In the final stage, interviews were conducted with two volunteer PhD students from the University of Glasgow and two faculty members from King Saud University. The volunteers were asked to provide evaluative feedback at the end of these sessions. The interview schedule was understandable, and the time period was appropriate, according to all volunteers.

- **Data collection procedures for interviews**

A series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight leaders, decision makers, and school principals to collect data that provided insights into their attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives related to the research objectives. The main actions can be defined as follows:

- The University of Glasgow Ethics Committee and the Saudi Ministry of Education approved the conduct of the interviews in this study.
- Twelve stakeholders were invited to participate in a face-to-face interview. They were invited in a variety of ways, through initial contact via email and phone.

- Participants were provided with an overview of the purpose of the research and how the interview process would work, including making clear that they would be recorded if they gave consent.
- Leaders and decision makers who accepted the invitation had senior positions in the Ministry of Education. They represent four major groups. Each participant represents a different department in the Ministry of Education. To protect the participants from recognition, the researcher has decided not to provide specific information, such as the participants' administrative affiliations, from an ethical standpoint (see Table 6.7).

<b>Positions in the Ministry of Education</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Department manager in educational affairs	1	Male
Director General of the Development Department at the Ministry of Education	1	Male
Manager in the school affairs department	1	Male
Director in the Department of Support and Services for School Districts.	1	Male
Headteacher of school in Hail, Northern region	1	Female
Headteacher school in Dammam, Eastern region.	1	Female
Headteacher of school in Riyadh, middle region.	1	Female
Headteacher of school in Jeddah, Western region.	1	Female

**Table 6.7 Number of interview responses by gender**

Participants who accepted an invitation were contacted to set up a meeting place and time. The researcher interviewed male leaders in their offices at the Ministry of Education at the agreed-upon times. Female principals were interviewed in their offices in the schools where they worked.

A brief presentation on the purpose of the research and the objectives was provided in the first five minutes. Participants were asked to inquire about any aspect of the research before the

researcher began asking the interview questions. Furthermore, plain language statements in both Arabic and English were prepared and distributed to participants prior to the start of the interview (Appendix 2a and b).

The consent forms were prepared in Arabic and English and distributed to those participants for signature prior to the start of each interview (Appendix 5a, b). The researcher explained to participants of their right to withdraw from the research at any time during and after the interview.

The interviews were scheduled to last 45 minutes, with the possibility of extending with the permission and consent of the participants. A few interviews were extended from 45 minutes to approximately one hour.

Overall, the interviews were conducted in an atmosphere that the participants indicated was comfortable for them. There was an impression of a high level of confidence between both the researcher and the participants, and the evidence for this is that the participants continued to speak confidently and without hesitation. One of the difficulties encountered during the interview phase was arranging meetings with managers in senior positions because they occupy multiple roles and have multiple demands on their time. Also, the transportation between the regions of the Kingdom was somewhat expensive, and it should be noted that the researcher was unable to conduct an interview with the principal of the southern region school because of a terrorist bombing at Abha airport as the researcher arrived at the airport. There was an attempt to conduct the interview over the phone, but there was no answer because of the bad security situation in the region at that moment. The lack of response by male school principals was a key problem faced by the researcher, despite multiple attempts, and this was most likely due to the absence of a guardian for the female researcher.

### **6.7.3 Focus Groups**

A focus group, also known as a discussion group, is a group of people that meet to discuss a specific issue at a specific location and time. In this method, the researcher serves as a facilitator, asking a series of specific questions to spark debate and allow everyone to make a contribution (Dawson, 2007). The role of the focus group when used alongside other methods of data collection, and on integration with the data from other research methods, is to help in

triangulation, though it is important to mention that focus groups alone do not represent dependable corroboration of other methods' findings (Ramzi, 2009).

Their use as part of an integrated study, on the other hand, provides a useful method of gathering research data and aids in interpreting and critiquing the results of other tools, including such results of the survey (Nabil, 2012). The selection of focus group participants in this study was not "systematic random sampling". Bloor et al. (2001) outlined a number of issues that arise when selecting participants for focus groups:

- The decision to select participants and invite them to join the group is related to the group's purpose, the character traits of its participants, as well as their relationship to the research. This is reflected in the type of data collected and how it will be suited to the research's purpose.
- The number of participants in the group represents the nature of the study subject as well as individual characteristics. Researchers always favour small groups so that they have enough time to discuss and express their ideas.
- It is preferable that the members of the group be consistent and have similar views because in order to obtain in-depth information about the subject there needs to be a comfortable and encouraging environment for the participants (Bloor et al., 2001).

Dawson (2007) noted a number of strengths and weaknesses in conducting focus groups. For the strengths he included the generation of a wide range of data from a single meeting. There is also the possibility of minimising the effect of bias from the researcher because of the exchange of questions among participants. The interaction of participants can be helpful when analysing data. On the other hand, the weaknesses can include the feeling by some participants of a kind of tension, an uneasiness and lack of desire to participate. In addition, arranging the appropriate place for the meeting and recording the meeting may cause a financial cost or introduce several conditions associated with the context of the research (Dawson, 2007).

#### • **Creating and Testing Focus Group Questions**

The focus groups for this study were designed and carried out using a complementary data collection method (Bloor et al., 2001). Using literature searching and a review of a number of studies (Gallab, and Husseini, 2013), nine questions were developed to explore the perceptions,

experiences, and beliefs of stakeholders in the development of the educational system on a variety of educational issues, and empowerment approach including:

- The meaning of the concept of empowerment from the perspective of teachers.
- The suitability of the idea of empowerment in Saudi culture.
- The role of the ministry or government to promote empowerment in the education system.

The pilot phase of the focus groups followed a similar procedure to the interviews. Minor changes were made in response to a number of comments and suggestions from Arabic language specialists. In addition, a focus group session was held at the University of Glasgow with five PhD students to assess the clarification of questions, the amount of time available, and the management experience and structure of the focus group.

#### • **Data Collection Procedures for Focus Groups**

The focus group structure was approved by the College Ethics Committee at the University of Glasgow's College of Social Sciences and the Saudi Ministry of Education. Thirty male and female teachers from various schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were invited to participate in focus group discussions via a variety of methods through initial contact via email and phone. However, only 22 females agreed to join the sessions. The four groups consisted of a number of teachers who were chosen based on the previous criteria. The principals of the school provided a comfortable meeting room in which to undertake the session with the participants.

In each session, the researcher provided a clear presentation on the research's purpose and objectives. Participants were given a plain language statement and enough time to ask questions about any aspect of the focus group coordination. All agreed to the discussions being recorded on the researcher's personal device (Annex 4a and b, Annex 5a, b).

The researcher set out to treat participants with respect and to encourage them to freely express their ideas. During the discussions, the researcher acted as a facilitator, allowing participants to ask each other questions while remaining focused on the research questions. At the end of the focus group, they summarised and reviewed the main points brought up.



#### **6.7.4 Analysing Qualitative Data**

Data analysis planning is heavily influenced by the overall approach of a research project, the expected outcomes, or the purpose of analysis. This study focused on inductive analysis, which is primarily descriptive and exploratory in nature. Before conducting any analysis in an exploratory approach, the researcher carefully reads the data several times, looking for key words, patterns, ideas, and themes that outline the analysis (Guest et al., 2011).

The qualitative data for this study came from three sources: open-ended questionnaire questions, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was used on each of the three types of qualitative data separately. This is among the most popular methods associated with an exploratory approach (Guest et al., 2011). According to Boyatzis (1998), “thematic analysis enables scholars, observers, or practitioners to use a wide variety of kinds of information in a systematic manner that enhances their accuracy or sensitivity in understanding and interpreting observations about people, events, situations, and organisations” (p. 5).

In light of previous literature (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Namey et al., 2008; Boyatzis, 1998), the qualitative data in this study underwent several phases of thematic analysis. The data were initially transcribed into Arabic by the researcher, which was then translated into English and revised by a professional. To become acquainted with the data, the transcriptions were read and re-read, and initial thoughts were jotted down. Following that, the researcher recorded interesting characteristics across the entire data set in a systematic manner, assigning each characteristic a code and collecting data relevant to each code. The relevant codes were collected and organised into potential themes. The themes were double-checked to ensure that the coded extracts produced a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis. Regarding that, analysis refined the actual details of each theme, resulting in clear definitions and names for each theme. The final stage resulted in the creation of a report that included a summary of the majority of issues related to each theme, as well as a selection of compelling representative quotes.

#### **6.8 Validity and reliability**

The validity of qualitative data can be resolved by honesty, profundity, richness, and extent of data obtained, degree of triangulation, sincerity, and experience of the researcher (Fraenkel et

al., 2012; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Likewise, with quantitative data validity can be improved through careful sample selection and the application of appropriate statistical tools and techniques (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

The validity of data collection tools and their suitability for measuring what they were designed to measure were assessed in this study. This means that the tools have been validated by professionals and participants in the research topic. When amending and improving the tools used here, the comments and recommendations of experts in this field were taken into account.

According to Yin (1994), the goal of reliability in a study is to ensure that if a subsequent researcher follows the same procedures that a previous researcher used, the subsequent researcher will arrive at the same results and conclusions (p. 146). Consequently, to reduce errors or potential bias, three multiple data collection tools were used: questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. To ensure more accurate and thorough responses, the questionnaire included both closed and open questions. Furthermore, the study included all members of the research population, which helped with generalisability. The sample included people from various ethnic groups, specialties, geographic regions, and academic roles. Furthermore, the questionnaire's reliability was confirmed by calculating the alpha coefficient and assessing internal consistency. The commonly used metric assesses the homogeneity and extent of association of a set of elements. The questionnaire was internally consistent (Cronbach's Alpha 0.9). The population sample of the qualitative data tools (semi-structured interviews and focus groups) was taken from four distinct geographical groups, which allowed access to different and diverse perspectives on the issues discussed in the study.

## **6.9 Research Ethics**

An ethical approach to the study was undertaken at all times. Punch and Oancea (2014) argued that the researcher should have sufficient awareness and consideration of the ethics of social research before the start of the study, starting from the moment it was prepared and during its development and concluding with its completion. However, when designing research, some ethical issues may arise (Punch and Oancea, 2014). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) and Punch and Oancea (2014) argued that ethical issues could occur at various stages of a research project for a variety of reasons, including the nature and meaning of the research topic, participants' attitude, and the methods for collecting and analysing data.

In the context of this research, during the data collection stage the researcher was eager to collaborate closely with the participants. The interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires were undertaken in natural environments and participants were requested to give their thoughts and views on the concept of empowerment based on their own experiences in the relevant context in which they work. This led to the emergence of a clearer picture and helped the researcher to understand the situation experienced by the participants.

According to Griffiths (1998), bias arises not from having ethical and political positions – this is unavoidable, however it needs to be acknowledged. Not only does acknowledgement help to expose any implicit bias in those views, but it also provides a means of replying critically and sensitively to the studies. The researcher noted that it was difficult to separate herself from the research, meaning her own background and experience could influence the interpretation of the data, so the researcher thought about how her assumptions, culture, and experience in affecting the interpretation of the data (Yin, 2011).

When applying qualitative and quantitative methods in research, a number of classifications of bias types may arise (Oppenheim, 2001; Gray, 2004; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Yin, 2011). Some of the main types of research bias as noted by Norris (1997) and Smith and Noble (2014) include design bias, co-selection bias, collecting data bias, marginal scale, and analysis bias. Norris (1997) stressed the following:

the issue is that, while it is simple to identify potential sources of bias, it is not possible to develop rules for judging the validity of specific studies or domains of inquiry. It is also impossible to define procedures that, when followed, will systematically eliminate bias and error. As a result, we must consider the social processes that can keep research honest and fair while also improving its quality (Norris, 1997, p.174)

For example, when the researcher offered the participants the opportunity to participate, she did not conduct interviews with people who may have similar or opposing views on the issues addressed in this study, but rather they were randomly selected based on their role in implementing the empowerment approach. Furthermore, the researcher tried to avoid bias in this study by not focusing on and using sources that support her opinions and preconceptions. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) researchers investigating sensitive topics

should be acutely aware of the situation. This study delves into a sensitive issue in the Ministry of Education, where the researcher previously worked as an administrator in one of its departments and as a teacher at one of its institutions. The sensitivity is caused by the nature of the concept of empowerment that is related to the culture of power and authority and its role to reforming the education system and because the researcher was asking the participants in this field about their opinions and perceptions in the empowerment approach. The main goal was to make sense of their perspectives on the issues at hand. The researcher had been aware of the importance of treating participants equally, of remaining objective, and of making sure that the dialogue and the relationship with the participants had as little effect as possible at each of the stages of the data collection, analysis or interpretation procedure. Or on the participants themselves.

Another bias challenge caused by social culture that could not be avoided during the data collection stage was in not using the exact same approach in conducting the qualitative methods. It was difficult to meet some of the male participants face-to-face due to cultural constraints. To reduce bias and any kind of impact, the participants were given complete freedom to participate or not, as well as to choose the mode of communication. The vast majority of the procedures were the same for both genders (see Sections 6.11.1.3, 6.11.2.2 and 6.11.3.2). The wording and sequencing of the questions were planned ahead of time and participants in both qualitative and quantitative methods were asked the same questions (Gray, 2004; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Yin, 2011). Although non-verbal communication may be crucial in interviews (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) the researcher was conscious of not implying any judgment, support, or conviction about the issues under discussion and exploration to participants. There was a risk that some overly chatty participants would influence the more reserved participants in the focus groups. Nonetheless, the session's procedures were controlled in a polite but firm manner. This was used to avoid influencing and biasing group discussions (Yin, 2011). Furthermore, participants were encouraged to question one another in order to reduce the impact of the researcher's bias (Dawson, 2007). The researcher was ready to intervene immediately if the group's questions did not help keep the discussion focused on the issue, in order to return the discussion to the focus of the research (Yin, 2011).

In order to reduce bias in data analysis and reporting, the researcher has tried to deliberately keep with what the data outlined and avoided deliberately searching for data that supported my

own personal experiences or belief systems. This study's findings were also based on various data sources. To avoid or reduce bias, the triangulation design was used.

This study also used several procedures, both formal and personal, to protect the rights of participants while adhering to regulations and ethical requirements in order to address ethical issues. It is necessary to apply for ethical approval, according to the procedures followed at the University of Glasgow School of Social Sciences. Approval was obtained from the College Ethics Committee to conduct this study (23.4.2019). Permission was given to conduct the study at the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and some of its schools. For this, the regulations require the approval of several application documents, such as a research proposal, a field work timeline, and supervision arrangements necessary to obtain approval for the purposes of conducting research and collecting data. The Ministry of Education granted permission for the researcher to connect with members of the study community and collect data.

Two copies of simple language data were prepared to explain the objectives of the study; one accompanied an invitation to participate in the interviews and focus groups, and another one for survey participants. Simple data included information about the study's purpose, the reasons for the volunteer's participation, the ways in which the participant could give information, and assurances that personal information would be kept private (Appendix 4. a, b and 5. a, b). Participants in the study needed to provide explicit informed consent. It was confirmed in the letter of approval, which was read and signed by all participants, that participation was voluntary, and that any participant had the right to withdraw at any time (Appendix 4. a, b and 5. a, b).

Participants in the interviews and focus groups were told that their conversations would be audio-recorded with a personal device (phone). The registration was approved by the focus group participants and the majority of interviewees (Annex 5 a and b).

The names of those who took part were not documented. Individuals were identified using codes and numbers, so that no one could determine the identity of any participant except the researcher. Furthermore, the data were organised using numerical and alphabetic codes (the key to which is password protected and stored along with the data on a computer drive at the University of Glasgow). This data will be erased upon completion of the thesis and after the University's required period.

## **6.10 Method Limitations**

Despite the fact that the study was as meticulously carried out as possible, there were some unavoidable limitations to the research methods in the design.

First, due to time constraints, this study included a limited number of Saudi Arabian schools. As a result, the findings of this study are relevant in this context. However, it is possible that it is generalisable to other contexts with similar conditions. If a future study could be conducted, it would be preferable to conduct it over a longer period of time and include a larger number of schools so that the results could be compared and a more comprehensive picture of the concept of empowerment could be created.

Second, despite taking the approval and permission from the relevant authorities and respondents and not revealing their identity, the interviews provide less anonymity, which was a major concern for respondents when answering.

Third, the interviews require a sufficient number of participants to draw conclusions and make comparisons; however, due to cultural considerations, it was difficult to find enough male stakeholders to participate in both the interviews and focus group sessions; as a result, fewer males than females participated in these sessions.

Fourth, questionnaire responses may express trends or attitudes, but may fail to explain the reasons behind the results. Therefore, the researcher used a mixed methods approach, in which the researcher combines questionnaires with interviews to explain the results.

Fifth, the researcher hoped to get informed responses, but there is no way in the questionnaire to know whether the respondent really understood the question or read it accurately before answering. As a result, the researcher checked the questionnaire on a subset of the sample to ensure that it was clear, simple and direct, and finally formulated the questionnaire in preparation for its final form.

## 6.11 Conclusion

The explanation and justification of the research philosophy and research design have been presented in this chapter. There are various research approaches, such as interpretivism, positivism, and pragmatism, so each philosophy addresses specific to different research questions. Pragmatism was chosen based on the current study's goals and objectives.

This approach enabled for the triangulation of data collected – the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods – to resolve the goal of exploring the concept of empowerment and the possibilities of implementing the empowerment approach in reforming the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The research design was based on a mixed methods approach and included qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as data collection and analysis.

A questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument for the quantitative method and data were collected from 200 respondents working in educational institutions. The sample was selected using a random sampling strategy, and the questionnaire was distributed to respondents via online software (Office 365 forms survey). The University of Glasgow provided ethical approval for the data collection. In addition, semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data from eight leaders and principals at the Ministry of Education and other educational institutions in Saudi Arabia. A pilot study was carried out in order to fine-tune the design and structure of the semi-structured questionnaire and interviews.

The quantitative data's validity was ensured by using the face-to-face validation method, in which experts provided feedback to improve the questionnaire's structure and design.

The reliability of the quantitative data was determined by measuring the Cronbach alpha, which was 0.91, which is greater than the acceptable value of 0.75. The credibility measure was used to ensure the reliability of the qualitative data. Member checks (pilot study data), expert checks (face validation), and triangulation using various methods were used to establish credibility. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data, while SPSS was used to analyse the quantitative data (V25)

The results of the data analysis from the qualitative data collection stage will be presented in the following chapter.



## **Chapter Seven: Analysis of Qualitative Data**

### **7.1 Introduction**

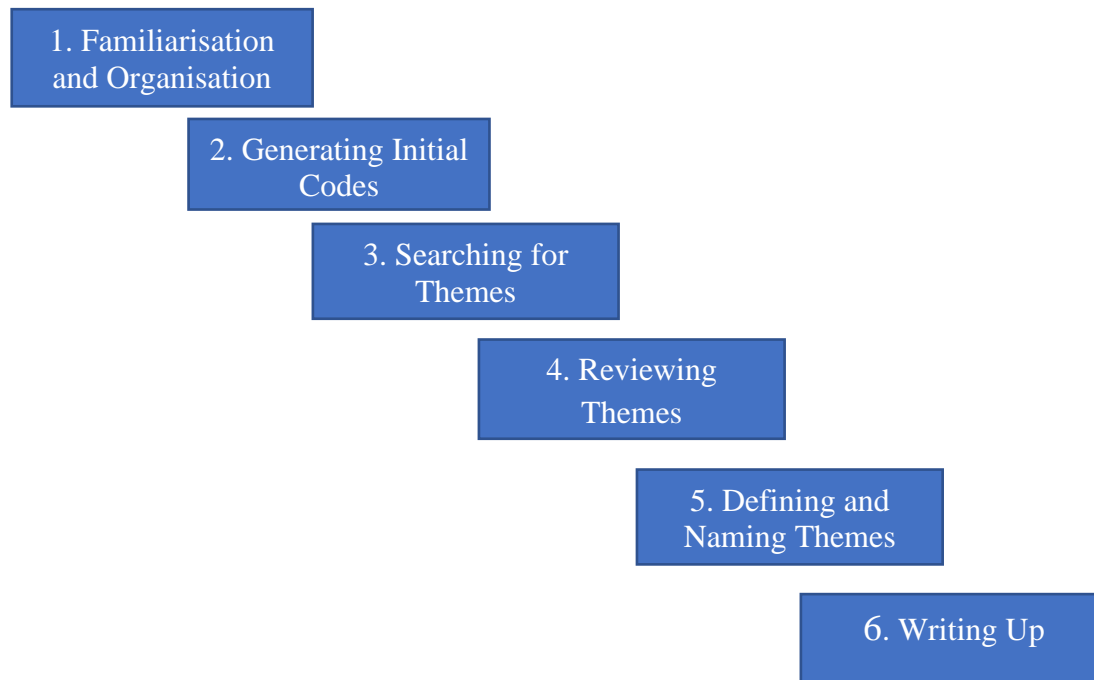
This chapter reports on the analysis of qualitative data obtained through various methods. Separate sections were created within each type of information source (interviews, focus groups, and open questions from the questionnaire), and the primary issues were identified for each section, along with selected explanatory quotes from the data presented. Throughout, an identifier (for example: Interview; Respondent: M11; Q. N.) is used for each respondent, in order to determine the distribution of responses and accurately represent the views of various participants. To answer the following research questions, data were collected from the Ministry of Education and its institutions in various regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

1. From a comparative of perspective, how has the concept of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?
2. How do current school teachers, principals and system leaders in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?
3. How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the educational systems of Saudi Arabia?

### **7.2 Stages of Analysis**

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. This method necessitates more participation and interpretation on the part of the researcher. It goes beyond counting words and phrases to identifying and describing thoughts in the data set, whether expressed or implied, and is concerned with the identification of themes (Namey et al., 2008). Braun and Clarke said: “A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (2006, p. 82).

Based on previous relevant literature (such as Braun and Clarke, 2006; Namey et al., 2008; Boyatzis, 1998), the following chart identifies the primary stages involved in qualitative analysis data from three different sources:



**Figure 7. 1 Phases of qualitative data analysis**

These phases are as follows (Braun and Clarke, 2006):

1. Knowledge and organisation: the researcher listened to the audio recordings and read the collected notes and written data. The oral and written data were in Arabic, and they were transcribed into Arabic before being translated into English by the researcher. This enabled the researcher to collect data and gain a thorough understanding of the participants' perceptions. After reading and re-reading the transcriptions several times, the initial ideas were noted down. For each data collection method, the raw data were first divided into answers to the questions. Following completion, tables were used to organise the answers to the questions based on the type of group of participants, allowing for the data to be compared later.
2. Initial code generation: interesting features across the entire data set that may be relevant to answering research questions were coded.

3. Searching for themes: codes were collated into potential themes, gathering the data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Theme search: codes were then grouped into meaningful categories and all data relevant to each potential theme were collected.
5. Theme review: a thematic “map” of the analysis was created and the themes’ significance was assessed in relation to coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2).
6. Reviewing themes: Themes were reviewed to ensure that the coded extracts produced a thematic map of the analysis. Themes were refined during this phase, which sometimes resulted in themes being separated, combined, or disposed.
7. Theme definition and naming: ongoing analysis to fine-tune the specific details within each theme and the overall message the analysis tells was undertaken, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
8. Creating the report: the researcher selected vivid, compelling exemplar extracts, with a final analysis of selected examples, relating the analysis directly to the research question and literature, and produced a complete report of the analysis.

### **7.3 Analysis of Interviews**

This section provides an analysis of the data obtained via semi-structured interviews with eight Ministry of Education participants from two groups: administrators in senior positions within the educational system, and headteachers. The emphasis in the interviews was on an exploration of their attitudes, beliefs and experiences related to the research issues, with ten main topics identified from the literature review and outlined in the interview framework (See Appendix 2.a, b).

Before considering the reality of empowerment in the education system, it is necessary to identify how these interview participants perceived the concept of empowerment. At first, respondents shared their general perspectives on, and definitions of, empowerment in the education field. The responses of the participants were analysed and organised into the following categories:

#### **7.3.1 General Perspectives on Empowerment**

Several participating educational leaders, whether in the Ministry of Education or its institutions, asserted the importance of empowerment within the education system and those participants at a managerial level in the Ministry of Education believe that “empowerment helps in creativity and innovation of the educational organisation” (Interview; Respondent: A; 1,2,3,4 Q. No. 6; Male). However, the application of the concept of empowerment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is still new, although it is an Islamic value. Two respondents (school principals) commented that “The Ministry of Education should develop plans and strategies to support the implementation of the concept of empowerment” (Interview; respondents: H2 and H4, Q. No. 8, Females).

Furthermore, another education administrator emphasised the Ministry of Education’s critical role in establishing the concept of empowerment in society, saying, “The educational system is considered to be the biggest model for development, professionalism and quality in the society through the application of the concept of empowerment” (Interview; respondent: A3; Q. No. 1; Male).

Respondents at the administrative level have differing views regarding the contribution of empowerment to reform the education system. Some participants mentioned that “Empowerment helps create a flexible and renewed educational system, capable of keeping pace with the requirements and developments” (Interview; respondents: A2 and A4; Q. No. 6; Males). Another said that the main purpose of implementing empowerment is “through what has been learned from the experiences and models presented in some countries that have implemented the empowerment approach, empowerment contributes to improving the quality of the educational system with all its components” (Interview; respondent: A3; Q. No. 6; Male).

Regarding both the possibility of implementing empowerment within the culture of Saudi society and the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in introducing and promoting the empowerment approach within Vision 2030, one of the leaders of the education system stated that “the Saudi government has taken an initiative to put in place systems that support the empowerment of education administrations in line with Vision 2030 and the culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia” (Interview; respondent: A1; Q. No. 4; Male). However, there are those who believe that the implementation of empowerment is linked to the goals of achieving the Kingdom’s vision, and one participant said, “The implementation of empowerment is imperative to achieving the 2030 vision” (Interview; respondent: H; 3 Q. No. 10; Female). On

the other hand, one school principal did not have a clear or decisive view on the role of the government in incorporating the concept of empowerment within the 2030 vision, as she answered, “It is a complex process that involves many challenges, it may be a problem” (Interview; respondent: H; 1 Q. No. 4; Female). A group of female managers were more explicit however about realising the role of the Saudi government in setting the empowerment approach within the goals of the Kingdom’s 2030 Vision.

The participating educational leaders had a strong belief in applying the empowerment approach. One of the interviewees believed that “empowerment leads to a quality of education outcomes and their suitability with the labour market, through the improvement and development of the education system”. (Interview; respondent: H; 1 Q. No. 6; Female)

### 7.3.2 Definitions of Empowerment

The respondents’ understanding of empowerment varied between general and basic knowledge and some respondents indicated some definitions of empowerment mentioned in the literature. The following table (7.1) shows some of the definitions mentioned by respondents.

<b>Leaders in the Ministry of Education</b>	<b>School Leaders</b>
Empowerment is to give employees the independence and powers to give them the ability to make decisions, which is reflected in improving performance and raising productivity (Interview; Respondent; A1; Q. No. 5; Male).	Empowerment means the authority, or is the leader’s ability to do their work (Interview; Respondent; H1; Q. No. 5; female).
It is the absolute authority and power with the existence of responsibility and accountability (Interview; Respondent; A2; Q. No. 5; Male).	Empowerment means the ability to make and implement decisions. (Interview; Respondent; H3; Q. No. 5; female).

It is power, competence, strength, and creativity (Interview; Respondent; A4; Q. No. 5; Male).	Empowerment means distributing leadership (Interview; Respondent; H4; Q. No. 5; female).
It is participation and the replacement of bureaucracy with democracy (Interview; Respondent; A3; Q. No. 5; Male).	It is the achievement of the organisation's goals (Interview; Respondent; H2; Q. No. 5; female).

**Table 7. 1 Definitions based on the perspectives of participants**

By summarising the respondents' answers (Table 7.1), it is clear that the definitions of educational leaders focused on the terms of independence, powers and delegation in order to contribute to improving performance, quality of productivity, and the ability to be creative and innovative in the education system with all its elements and institutions. As shown by the definitions of respondents, there is no deep understanding of the concept of empowerment.

### **7.3.3 Reality of the Empowerment Approach**

Exploring the reality of the empowerment approach is critical for understanding the existence of the change process and the empowerment techniques used in the current educational system. The views of educational leaders in the Ministry and schools, their understanding of their roles and responsibilities, combined with their understanding of the meaning of empowerment, create an image of the reality of empowerment. In this regard, the responses of participants were analysed and are presented in the sub-topics listed below:

- **Awareness and Understanding Empowerment**

The data showed an awareness and understanding of educational leaders. According to some administrators, there has been an increase in awareness and understanding of the term empowerment. One said: "Awareness and understanding the meaning of empowerment has improved and increased through reading, knowing and exchanging experiences with international leaders" (Interview; respondent: A4; Q. No. 7; male).

The responses of the educational leaders participating in the study revealed that a number of them had extensive experience and good knowledge in the field of education, which contributed to an observation of the change in the level of awareness, and evidence for this is as shown in one participant's answer: "I have considerable experience in the field of education and I have noticed over the years a big difference in the evolution of leaders' understanding of the meaning of empowerment" (Interview, respondent: H 3; Q. No. 3; Female). In addition, respondents emphasised an increasing awareness of understanding the meaning of empowerment in recent years. One of the interviewees believed that "most education leaders have a clear understanding of empowerment and I think the Ministry of Education has spread a culture of empowerment concept" (Interview; responses: 2; Q. No. 4; Female). A possible explanation for this may be the availability of training programmes that support the empowerment approach. This was confirmed by a school principal, who said: "The Saudi government, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, has become keen on holding periodic and international courses and forums to spread the culture of empowerment and place it as a basic component of the developed education policy" (Interview; responses: 4; Q. No. 4; Female).

#### • **Administrators' and Headteachers' Roles and Responsibilities**

Based on their relationship with the educational system, most interviewees in two groups stated their roles and responsibilities clearly. This demonstrates that they are aware of the requirements, and as some respondents debated, it could be assumed that they know how to carry them out. Table 7.2 below summarises the roles and responsibilities of the respondents.

<b>Education Administrators</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing the strategic and evaluation plans for the educational system in line with Vision 2030.</li> <li>2. Coordinating and following up the implementation of empowerment requirements</li> <li>3. Helping to resolve the challenges that education staff face when</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Spreading the culture of the concept of empowerment.</li> <li>2. Engaging teachers in explaining the concept of an empowerment approach and its mechanisms for achieving its goals.</li> </ol>

<p>implementing an empowerment approach.</p> <p>4. Supporting the education department offices in various regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to implement an empowerment approach.</p> <p>5. Monitoring the education department offices to ensure that everything is going according to the Education Plan.</p> <p>6. Developing incentives and rewards system.</p>	<p>3. Maintaining and meeting the requirements of the empowerment approach.</p> <p>4. Involving faculty members in training courses to achieve the requirements of enabling empowerment.</p> <p>5. Opening channels of communication with those involved in the educational organisation in order to understand their needs, to solve their problems, and to exchange experiences and knowledge</p> <p>6. Developing incentives and rewards system.</p>
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**Table 7. 2 Administrators' and Headteachers' Roles and Responsibilities**

According to the table above management stakeholders' roles and responsibilities are focused on Vision 2030 development projects, involved in planning and monitoring empowerment applications, and providing support for education institution staff. The majority are concerned with spreading the empowerment culture and ensuring the upkeep of empowerment standards. In contrast, education administrators were involved in a wide range of roles, including empowerment application management and coordination, counselling and instructing staff via training programmes.

#### **7.3.4 Empowerment**

At first, the responses of the two groups of interviewees painted a broad picture of the current reality of the empowerment approach in the educational system, which can be summarised in the following points:

1. Adopting a decentralised administrative approach and granting powers to education departments and schools to serve the educational system.



2. The Deanship of Development was established as an organisation concerned with developing the necessary proposals for the modification and development of regulations, instructions and decisions related to the education system in line with the needs of the times and emerging changes, and to support the education system's independence and effectiveness.
3. Encouraging the participation of the private sector in investment in learning – one of the leading features of empowerment in Vision 2030.
4. Sending several educational leaders to a number of developed countries specialising in the field of educational leadership and management, such as Finland, America, Britain and Malaysia, in order to increase knowledge and gain the skills and expertise necessary for the development of the education sector and its administration.

### **7.3.5 Changes Needed to Implement the Empowerment Approach**

Participants were asked about the necessary changes that contribute to the implementation of the empowerment approach. They pointed out a number of different measures that have been implemented, some of them based on their roles, and they pointed to a number of procedures that were important to the implementation of the empowerment approach in the educational system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The changes based on the responses of the participants are set out below.

- **Development of the Education system**

There was agreement from the majority of the two groups interviewed regarding the three educational system criteria needing to change in order to achieve the goals of Vision 2030:

- Restructuring of the education sector.
- Development of education policy and strategies to achieve Vision 2030 in line with the culture of Saudi society.
- Professional development and training for education staff.

Respondents indicated that there has been a change in the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the last five years, and this change stemmed from a change in culture as well. One stated that “the education sector has been restructured, and the two ministries of

education with the Ministry of Higher Education have already been merged into one ministry, to be in line with the education policy and strategies to achieve Vision 2030” (Interview; respondent: A1; Q. No. 2; Male). Previously, there were two ministries of education, one for males and one for females, because the culture of Saudi society prevents integration. Within the development of education policy, the criteria for appointing leaders and teachers has also changed, as one of the administrators pointed out that “The Ministry was keen to review and update the mechanisms for appointing leaders and teachers within its modern plans and strategies” (Interview; respondent: A 2; Q. No. 2; Male). Another commented on the question of the concept of empowerment, saying: “There has been hard work on projects to shift from central to decentralisation in the educational system during the past three years” (Interview; Respondent: A 2; Q. No. 8; Male). This is because for years society got accustomed to the bureaucratic culture.

It is interesting that the data showed that there was a difference in views on the changes in the educational system and the trend towards empowerment within the Vision 2030 between those with years of education experience and those with more recent experience. Indeed, the majority of those interviewed believed that those with recent experience had better practices than those with longer experience. They believed that it was easier for the educational system to achieve an empowerment approach for one main reason. They pointed out that “those with newer experience were able to consider new educational trends, developments and modern management concepts, such as the trend towards decentralisation. However, those with more years of experience see change as a major challenge” (Interview; respondent: H; 1. No. 2; Female). Another participant added: “Since the nomination of the new leaders was coincident with the development of the education system, those leaders adopted modern systems and changes according to the criteria of decentralisation” (Interview: A 2/3; Q. No. 3; Male). It seems that the population distribution of the participants has a role in the application of the empowerment approach, and evidence of this is that one of the directors of education in the northern region stated, “implementation of empowerment is easier in the central region, because it includes a number of cultures and knowledge from different regions of the Kingdom and from outside the Kingdom, which facilitates the process. Acceptance Exchange and Change Unlike the northern and southern regions that have a particular community, it is strict about culture and customs” (Interview; respondent: H; 1. No. 2; Male).

Participants mentioned some aspects of empowerment in the new policies, which could be considered indicators of continuous improvement. The following points summarise the much more prominent practices referenced in the data:

1. Reformulating the education policy in line with the requirements of global competition and the culture of Saudi society.
2. Formulating a clear plan to achieve the requirements of empowerment, which is one of the main goals of Vision 2030.
3. Abandoning the centralisation of management in many departments of the Ministry.
4. Developing a strategy to spread the empowerment concept culture in the education system.
5. Revising and updating the mechanisms for the appointment of leaders and teachers.
6. Drafting a modern formulation for the system of rules, regulations and instructions, as well as executive procedures regulating curriculum development, paying special attention to, and participating in, international examinations, focusing on students inside the classroom, and developing new teaching methods based on innovative strategies.
7. Some schools gaining full independence over some of their academic programmes.
8. All faculty members are required to deliver a presentation demonstrating what has been established to identify their strengths, weaknesses and challenges facing them, then to receive comments from the Development Department and the Vision Achievement Office, at the Ministry of Education.

Professional development and training appears to be a recurring theme and the changes related to this are now discussed below.

- **Employee Development**

According to the data, there is an immediate need for workshops and training programmes to spread the culture of empowerment and recruit educational system members to increase awareness, understanding and participation in educational system improvement. To investigate this further, respondents' responses were analysed and are organised into the following categories.

- **The Importance of Staff Development**

Most participants believe that training and workshops are very important and that every member should participate in the training. One emphasised, “workshops and training are essential in developing members of the education system to be empowerment experts, and this can help them make a point of reference along with educational institutions in terms of their role in assisting colleagues” (Interview; respondent: H 4; Q. No. 8; Female). Another added that “workshops, training and lectures seem to be effective methods to spread the concepts of empowerment” (Interview, respondent: A 4; Q. No. 8; Male). Whilst another emphasised that “attending one or two workshops will not provide an understanding of empowerment. Many aspects of academic life are linked to empowerment. Members of the educational system must attend numerous workshops in a variety of fields” (Interview, respondent: A 2; Q. No. 9; Male).

A large number of those interviewed emphasised the importance of providing training opportunities to all members of the educational system, and one commented, “staff development in how the empowerment approach is applied is always required and should continue without limitations” (Interview; respondent: H; Q. No. 8; Female).

- **Staff Development Programmes are Available**

Participants of both groups raised the following issues about the availability of training programmes and workshops in the field of empowerment implementation:

- The Directorate of Development and the Vision 2030 department at the Ministry of Education offer internships in a variety of empowerment-related fields throughout the year.
- The Ministry of Education is cooperating with the Educational Leadership Training Centre at King Saud University to provide training programmes and workshops for members of the educational system throughout the year in the field of empowering educational leaders. These training programmes and workshops could be held both within and without the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in countries like the United Kingdom and the United States of America.
- The Deanship of Development and the Vision 2030 department encourages members of the educational system at every level to attend training and workshops on empowerment.

- Training courses and workshops seem to be available in Arabic and English.

A number of the respondents from both groups confirmed that the accessible programmes may not address the needs of educational system members, however not everyone has equal access to appropriate opportunities. One respondent said, “training programmes are insufficient. We need more to make sure everyone has the same opportunity to train and understand the empowerment approach” (Interview; respondent: H 3; Q No. 8; Female). Another respondent stated, “training opportunities are usually available for those who work in senior departments of the Ministry of Education” (Interview; respondent: H 1; Q. No. 9; Female).

According to some participants, the available educational leadership empowerment training programmes tend to put more emphasis on empowerment concepts instead of how to execute the empowerment requirements. Furthermore, a school principal criticised the quality of some empowerment training programmes, comparing them to meetings rather than workshops. She said, “there has not been any in-depth training yet!” (Interviewer, Respondent: H 1; Q. No. 8; Female). Several respondents, however, demonstrated that there are some workshops that clarify the course specifications, empowerment concepts, empowerment criteria, and how to implement its needs (Interview; respondent: H 2 /3; Q No. 8; Females).

### **7.3.6. The Potential Role of Empowerment in the Development of the Education System**

A number of respondents believed strongly in the potential importance of supporting empowerment in the development of the education system. They believed that it had become an indicator of educational development. An official in the Department of Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education stated that, "empowerment provides great opportunities for creativity, innovation and performance proficiency within educational organisations, and it has grown to be one of the most significant trends in modern educational administration” (Interview; respondent: A 1; Q. No. 6; Male). A number of interviewees in this study believe that empowerment may provide solutions to the obstacles that the education system faces towards development. One participant emphasised that, “empowerment would contribute to expedite the necessary changes through raising awareness and focusing the interest of senior administrative levels on strategic educational issues and leaving less important matters to the lower administrative levels” (Interview; respondent: A 1; Q. No. 6; Male). In relation to this, one of the participants also said, “I think empowerment is a very important trend. We are

supposed to emphasise its application in the educational system to get rid of distortions and delays in information and procedures” (Interview; respondent: H 2; Q. No. 6; Female).

Furthermore, the majority of participants emphasised the role that empowerment can play in improving performance, accelerating achievement, achieving job satisfaction and desire for creativity.

A number of officials at the Ministry of Education stated, “with the empowerment of educational leaders, no one has an opportunity to postpone tasks, it contributes to increasing achievement and speeding up performance, which leads to the quality of the educational system in all of its components” (Interview; respondent: A 2; Q. No. 6; Male).

The two groups agreed that empowerment could provide a number of roles that contribute to improving the educational system. Table 7.3 below summarises the interviewees’ expectations and perceptions of the empowerment possibility in the development of the educational system.

<b>Education Administrators</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
It will relieve strain on the management structure, reduce dispersion, and organise the work transformation function.	It will offer easy access to required information.
Helps innovation and creativity.	Helps innovation and creativity.
Keep pace with the global competition stream in the quality of the educational system	Open channels of effective communication between members of the educational organisations.
	Encourages teamwork and participation in decision-making and problem solving.

**Table 7. 3 The potential role of empowerment in the development of the Education System**

## **7.4 Summary**

The section above provided a detailed report on the qualitative data gathered via the semi-structured interviews. The following is a synopsis of the main points raised.

- **Understanding the Concepts of Empowerment**

This topic was divided into two sub-topics: The first gives an overview of respondents' perspectives on the process of integrating the approach to empowering educational leaders. Furthermore, there were differing perspectives on the role of empowerment in improving the educational system, for example, some participants believed that it would lead to a quality education system. While the second sub-topic provided some definitions of respondents to the concept of empowerment.

- **The Reality of empowerment**

This topic includes three sub-themes. Initially, respondents' perceptions of awareness and comprehension of the empowerment approach have been reviewed. The second section focused on the roles that participants played in implementing the empowerment approach, revealing the extent to which they were aware of their responsibilities. The third sub-topic summarised the participants' responses to a number of points regarding the reality of implementing empowerment in the educational system.

- **Staff Development**

In relation to staff development, two sub-themes were generated. First, the importance of training courses and workshops in spreading the empowerment culture and training employees in empowerment execution. The second sub-theme gives an outline of obtainable training courses for the empowerment approach's implementation.

As a further means of gathering insights of awareness and understanding empowerment, focus groups were also held. The analysis of the qualitative data gathered through these is now reported.

## **7.5 Analysis of Focus Groups**

Four focus groups were used as a data collection method in this study to clarify and expand on the information gathered through other methods (see Appendix 3a and b)

Several critical issues emerged in the discussion groups, which can be reflected in four themes:

1. Understanding the meaning of the concept of empowerment.
2. The reality of empowering educational leaders.
3. Procedures for implementing empowerment in the education system.
4. The suitability of the empowerment approach within Saudi society and culture.

The first topic is based on a summary of the concept of empowerment in the education system, while the remainder of the topics focus on the procedures necessary to implement the concept of empowerment in a manner consistent with the culture of Saudi society.

### **7.5.1 Overview of the Definitions of Empowerment**

Regarding the definitions of empowerment in the education system, two groups of respondents responded similarly. They focused on the authority and delegation to make decisions, as they stated, “the concept of empowerment is to provide opportunities for authority and assume responsibility for making decisions” (Focus group; Respondent: T 2/3/4; Q. No. 1; Females). Another group stated that empowerment means “providing the individual with the skills and information that enables them to do their job”. (Focus group; Respondent: T 1; Q. No. 1; Females). Another group stated that their concept of empowerment is not clear: “Empowerment may be the ability to fulfil the requirements of teaching” (focus group; respondent: T 3; Q: No: 1; female).

### **7.5.2 Reality of Empowerment**

With regard to the reality of empowering educational leaders in educational institutions, two groups unanimously agreed that they are only somewhat empowered as teachers because they are still bound by some inappropriate instructions, “we are still following a number of instructions and laws that are not appropriate for modern educational developments and needs” (Focus group; Respondent: T 2/3; Q. No. 3; Females). However, in one of the discussion sessions, a group of teachers confirmed that they are empowered teachers, “We have a great deal of experience in educational issues, which contributes to increasing efficiency in



participating in decision-making and problem solving in line with modern education system policy without consulting the higher authorities” (Focus group; Respondent: T 1; Q. No. 3; Females). This may be because this school is one of the schools covered by the Self-Management Project, which recently appeared in Saudi Arabia in 2019 within Vision 2030. The fourth group, made up of teachers from the north region, each agreed that they were not empowered, “We are executors of instructions and not participants” (Focus group; Respondent: T 4; Q. No. 3; Females) and this was reported as having led to a sense of frustration among a number of members of the educational staff.

### **7.5.3 Changes Needed to Implement the Empowerment Approach**

Participants were asked about the necessary changes that can contribute to the implementation of the empowerment approach. They pointed out a number of different measures that they considered important to implement the empowerment approach in the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which are now discussed.

- **Development of Educational Regulations, Systems, and Policies**

Whereas most of the participants stressed the need to develop educational regulations and policies in line with the requirements of the modern era to improve the quality of education, a group of the participants said that, “the development of education systems and policy was an important pillar for improving the quality of education” (Focus group; Respondent: T 2/3; Q. No. 6; Females). Some also pointed to the need for clarity of tasks for everyone so that there is no confusion in responsibilities, as is currently the case. A group of the participants commented, saying, “there must be clear lines of tasks and responsibilities for all members of the educational institution in modern politics” (Focus group; Respondent: T 1/4; Q. No. 6; Females). Some of participants commented that there is an interactive relationship between politics and culture, which means that politics is a practice and its ideas are part of a society’s culture. A group of participants stated, “it is necessary to formulate new cultural policies that fit the transformation process that the Kingdom seeks to adopt an approach to empowerment” (focus group; respondent: T 2/4; Q. No. 6; Females).

- **Developing a Leadership Style**

The participants unanimously agreed that the requirements to accomplish the goals of Vision 2030 are not commensurate with the centralisation of leadership. Rather, modern approaches to leadership that support participation among all members of the educational system at every level have to be followed. Participants in the focus groups also praised the “need to abandon traditional and centralised management, following a modern approach to leadership that combines participation, teamwork, and distributed leadership” (Focus group; Respondent: T 2/3/4; Q. No. 6; Females). Moreover, the development of criteria for appointing and appropriately selecting leaders in line with the requirements for change is one of the most important requirements for implementing the empowerment approach, and the participants commented that, “choosing the right person, whose specialty and experience are appropriate to the task is one of the most important positive change requirements” (Focus Group; Respondent: (T 1/2/4; Q: No. 6; Females). Others added, “leaders must be given real and effective power and authority, and not just be ink on paper” (T 1/2/4; Q: No. 2; Females). This is needed so they have the ability to meet the requirements of all members of the educational organisation.

- **Encouraging Participation**

Effective participation among members is considered to be a success factor for lots of organisations, where participants called for the need to participate in solving problems, taking decisions and taking constructive views to develop the educational process. A number of participants from the focus groups said “holding regular meetings of students, teachers, and parents to participate in problem solving, decision-making, and an exchange of views are among the most important requirements of the empowerment approach” (T 1/2/3/4; Q: No. 6/4 Females). Participation contributes to creating innovation and creativity. Therefore, the participants called for “a review of the incentives and rewards system that contributes to creativity and innovation” (T 1/3/; Q: No. 6/4 Females).

#### **7.5.4 The Concept of Empowerment in the Culture of Saudi society**

A number of participants believed that “the empowerment approach is commensurate with the current culture in Saudi society due to the “existence of a rapid trend towards change and development and keeping pace with modern societies, with the need to master the knowledge and skills required by that approach” (T 1/2/3/4; Q: No. 5; Females). Others commented, “the empowerment approach is a necessary requirement, especially since the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia is now passing through an era of change, development and openness, and because, it is an Islamic value that has existed since ancient times.” (T 1/2/4/3; Q: No. T 1/3/; Q: No. 6/4 Females).

## **7.6 Summary**

The section above provides a detailed report on the qualitative data collected through the focus group discussions. The following is a summary of the main themes:

- **Empowerment Concept**

This topic provides an overview of respondents’ opinions and perspectives on some definitions of the concept of empowerment, and there appears to be some similarity in some definitions while others lack the deeper dimension of the concept of empowerment.

- **Changes Needed to Implement the Empowerment Approach**

The data indicate the need for a number of changes that can contribute to the implementation of the empowerment approach, including the need to develop educational regulations, regulations and policies. The presence of support from higher administrations, the need to open channels of communication between educational administrations, and the style of the leader were all cited as important. While the third sub-topic summed up encouraging participation, spreading a culture of change and empowerment among the members of the educational organisation are also needed. There is a need to reconsider the prevailing culture in society and reform it by heading towards a culture that supports decentralisation and democracy.

- **Empowerment in the Culture of Saudi Society**

This part provided a brief overview of the appropriateness of the empowerment approach within Saudi culture, which currently seems to be compatible with Vision 2030, which calls for the adoption of the empowerment approach with the need for cultural change that preserves the national identity and contributes to development.

A third, qualitative element of the study was the inclusion of open-ended questions on the questionnaires. The following section reports analysis of the qualitative data from these.

## **7.7 Open-Ended Question Analysis**

The third part of the questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions regarding the status of empowerment, the changes needed to implement the empowerment, and the capabilities needed to improve job performance (see Annex 1a and b). These questions were answered by 200 participants. They represent different genders, professions, and areas of special expertise. The answers were analysed and can be grouped into the following topics:

1. The reality of empowerment for school principals.
2. The changes necessary in the education system to empower teachers.
3. The reality of the empowerment of teachers.
4. The role of empowerment to improve job performance.

### **7.7.1 The reality of Empowerment for School Principals**

Respondents indicated that school principals do not have empowerment based on their average response rate (48.5%), which is the highest percentage in the ranking of responses. Notably, the study participants justified this by saying that “no” was based on a number of possible reasons, including, for example, “most school principals suffer from a large number of ongoing traditional restrictions due to the concentration of power in higher positions.” Another stated that, “the fear of losing power entrenched the concept of centralisation and bureaucracy.” Another participant mentioned how the “lack of skills, knowledge and experience causes school principals to fear taking responsibility, making decisions and solving problems.”

### **7.7.2 Necessary Changes in the Education System to Empower Teachers**

The data indicate that there is a great diversity among the study participants in their views regarding what needs to be changed in the Saudi education system to empower teachers. Respondents suggested some changes were needed in the educational system to achieve the empowerment of teachers, as summarised in the following points:

- The requirement of restructuring the education system and changing policies in line with the requirements of the modern period. A number of participants stated that the current educational system does not fit the requirements of the concept of empowerment, which is part of the Kingdom's approach to Vision 2030 for education development.
- The need to develop new cultural policies that are commensurate with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's transformation process in order to keep up with development, with the need to open up to global cultures, interact with them, accept and benefit from them, spread the culture of decentralisation, and contribute to the consolidation of democratic values. Some participants stated that "culture plays a role in shaping society's features, identity, and cohesion".
- Reconsidering the system of courses and programmes offered to teachers, where a number of participants stated that "they have very few programmes that meet the development needs and the quality of education." Others added that "the need to train teachers before and during service with basic skills appropriate to their roles was vital."
- We need to adopt a system with more independence in school management because every school is aware of its problems and needs. Work is needed to spread and consolidate the principle of participation in decision-making among members of each institution, with the need for every school to transition to self-management.
- Renewing criteria for selecting and employing educational staff: many respondents pointed out that "we need to attract ambitious leaders seeking positive change, as some leaders working in the educational system now reject the process of change."
- Adopting distributed leadership, some respondents believed that teachers have no opportunity to participate in making decisions or expressing opinions. Others added that "it must be within the education policy to lay down a provision for the necessity of involving teachers in decisions, solving problems, and distributing leadership roles."

### **7.7.3 The Reality of the Empowerment of Teachers**

The participants agreed that they do not have the freedom to do their work, they are only the executors of what is required of them. A number of respondents commented that "they are not free to do anything because they are bound by regulations that limit their freedom."

### **7.7.4 The Role of Empowerment to Improve Job Performance**

Participants saw that empowerment has a role in improving job performance and they mentioned a number of points, including:

- Improving and developing the process with all its components.
- Encouraging participation, creativity, and increased efficiency.
- Creating a sense of responsibility.
- Encouraging teamwork and loyalty to the educational institution.

Some indicated that “empowerment increases the confidence of the teacher himself, which encourages creativity and innovation.” Others added that “empowerment contributes to a sense of loyalty, which increases their professionalism”, while some respondents felt that “empowerment is difficult to implement because there are leaders who do not want change”. However, the number reporting this represented only (5.5%) of the total responses (94.5%).

## **7.8 Summary**

This section presented an analysis of the qualitative data collected through the four open questions in the questionnaire. The four themes that were identified focused on the reality of empowerment for both school principals and teachers, the changes needed in the educational system to implement the empowerment curriculum and finally the role of empowerment in improving job performance. A detailed analysis of each topic was provided, with illustrative excerpts from the participants’ responses.

## **7.9 Conclusion**

The qualitative data analysed in this chapter were collected using three methods. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used for three main groups: Ministry of Education officials, school principals, and teacher officials. While the open questionnaire questions, which are the third source of qualitative data, were utilised to extract data from a large number of teachers in different regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Objective analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data collected through these three methods. The analysis followed six main phases: (1) definition and organisation; (2) initial symbol generation; (3) search for themes. (4) review the topics; (5) identify and name the topics and (6) write up. The data in

these three sections were presented in detailed discussion, supported by illustrative tables of comparisons and extracts from the participants' responses.

The following table (7.4) presents the main axes included in the qualitative data collection methods.

	<b>Instruments</b>		
	<b>Interviews</b>	<b>Focus Groups</b>	<b>Open ended questions</b>
<b>Themes</b>	The concept of empowerment. The reality of the application of empowerment. The necessary changes in the educational system. The development of the educational system . The development of employee.	The concept of empowerment, the reality of implementing empowerment. The changes required in the educational system. The development of the educational system. The development of employee.	The reality of empowerment for both school principals and teachers. The necessary changes in the educational system. The role of empowerment in improving job performance.

**Table 7.4 The main data collection methods**

In conclusion, it was noted that qualitative data from three sources agreed on a number of aspects related to the research issues, although differences existed in some other respects. In order to understand the role of empowerment in improving the educational system, it is necessary for the researcher to take into account the issues arising from the data, whether qualitative or quantitative. The discussion chapter, Chapter Nine, will discuss the data generated by the study and provide a summary of the results in order to provide appropriate answers to the research questions.

The next chapter, Chapter Eight, will provide an analysis of the quantitative data collected by the questionnaire.

## **Chapter Eight: Quantitative Data Analysis**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on reporting on the quantitative data analysis. The views of a number of teachers on the concept of empowerment and the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were explored, assessing the reality of empowerment using a questionnaire with a large sample ( $n = 200$ ). The questionnaires were implemented simultaneously with other data collection methods. This was useful in creating a comprehensive overview of the concept of empowerment from the perspective of participants and in creating a broad impression of their attitudes towards the potential of implementing an empowerment approach. The results of the quantitative data set, as well as those resulting from qualitative data sets, will be discussed in the next chapter (Nine).

### **8.2 Questionnaire**

As detailed in Chapter Seven, the questionnaire was created by reviewing the relevant, existing literature. It was designed to collect data from a group of administrators and teachers from different regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to answer the following research question:

1. How do school teachers in Saudi Arabia understand the concept of empowerment and value it as an approach to reform?

To answer this question, the questionnaire given to the participants in this study consists of three main sections:

Section One: Personal information (gender, region, years of experience).



Section Two: Teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the education system and the concept of empowerment. This section contained 18 items, two related to the educational system and the other 16 related to the concept of empowerment divided into three domains – motivation, authority/delegation and training.

Section Three: Open Questions (four questions) – As discussed in Chapter Seven, this section provided participants with an opportunity to record and expand on their views on the reality of empowerment and its potential in improving job performance. The data obtained in this section were analysed in Chapter Seven based on thematic analyses and they were treated like the other qualitative research data set.

For the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale was used to measure the attitudes of respondents towards particular statements. The participants marked their agreement in five categories. The higher the category chosen, the greater the strength of agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A) and 5 = Strongly Agree (SA). The participants drew a tick symbol (✓) on their choices.

Data management and analyses were performed using SPSS software (Version 25). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the sample to check and to summarise the data set by using numbers or graphs, addressing specific research questions (Pallant, 2010; Brace, Kemp and Sneglar, 2012). To analyse section one of the questionnaire, the researcher adopted the descriptive statistics method, using frequencies and percentages to describe the sample based on gender, region and occupation and experience in the education field. In addition, based upon the ratings given by participants, the frequency and percentage for each statement was determined, and a rank order was assigned to each statement according to its agreement values. This procedure was applied to each dimension in section one.

In this chapter, the demographic data of the full sample is represented by a bar chart. The rest of the data analysed are presented in several tables containing various grouped items to explore the responses of participants to each dimension of the questionnaire. The order of the numbers of items in the tables were kept as they were in the applied questionnaire (see Appendix 6.a, b).

### **8.3 Demographic Information**

This first section of the questionnaire requested personal information to determine the characteristics and distribution of participants based on their gender, educational region, and years of experience in education. As reported in Chapter Seven, the total number of respondents to the questionnaire was 200. Participants included the distribution of their gender as males:  $n = 84$  (42.0 %) and  $n = 116$  (58.0%) females. In terms of experience,  $n = 97$  (32.2%) of the participants had more than 15 years of experience. As for the educational region  $n=70$  (35.0%) were from central Saudi Arabia. Table 8.1 shows a summary of the demographic profile of the survey participants.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>42.0</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>58.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8.1 The distribution of the participants according to gender**

It can be concluded that there was a statistically significant difference in participation in answering the questionnaire depending on the gender of the participants. Participation was significantly statistically higher for female (116) than male participants (48).

<b>Work Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1-5 Years</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>5-10 Years</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>15 Years and above</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>47.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8.2 The distribution of the participants according to years of experience**

It can be said that there are differences among the participants in the questionnaire based on experience. Data show that participation noticeably leaned towards those with longer previous teaching experience ( $n=95$ ) than for those with less experience ( $n=35$ )

<b>Educational Zone</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
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<b>South</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14.5</b>
<b>North</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>Middle</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>East</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>West</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8.3 The distribution of the participants according to educational region**

The table indicates that there are differences between the participants in the questionnaire on the basis of the educational region. The data show that participation was more noticeable for those who live in the central region (70) than those who lived in the east (28).

In summary, the results of the questions show that a higher number of teachers who participated in the questionnaire were female with more career experience and from the central region. It should be noted that this pattern was largely consistent with the results of the qualitative data. These results will be discussed in the next chapter.

- **The Teacher's View of the Education System**

This section shows the results of the first dimension of the second section of the questionnaire, which focused on exploring the participants' views on the education system reforms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The data were identified in this dimension by the researcher from the guide to the education system (Ministry of Education, 2018). The data provide the participants' position on the education system. The following table, Table 8.4, shows distribution statistics, including percentages and frequencies for complete sample responses to the data, and their order, based on agreement frequencies (A + SA) to determine which elements have the highest or lowest occurrence of agreement within the study.

Responses		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Statements									
1. There have been significant changes in the education system in preparation for Vision 2030	F	7	14	32	104	43	3.81	0.97	2
	%	3.5	7.0	16.0	52.0	21.5			
2. Today's policies in the education system encourage the participation of principals and teachers	F	12	18	25	83	62	3.83	1.14	1
	%	6.0	9.0	12.5	41.5	31.0			
Overall Mean							3.82		

**Table 8.4 Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses towards system reform domain**

Question 1 and 2 were linked as encouragement towards participation forms part of the 2030 Vision for Education. The Table 8.4 results show that there was a stronger response of people agreeing that there was change and there was more encouragement to participate.

- **Empowerment Aspect**

The second dimension in the second part of the questionnaire contained 16 items of data related to the empowerment aspects. The purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to explore the teachers' views on the concept of empowerment and the reality of its implementation. The following table, Table 8.5, shows distribution statistics, including percentages and frequencies of responses for the complete sample of phrases and their ranking based on frequency of agreement (A + SA). It is displayed relating to the dimensions of empowerment:

- **Motivation domain**

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
1. I would like more responsibility and decision-	F	0	12	18	108	62	4.10	0.80	1

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
making concerning the work I do.	%	0	6.0	9.0	54.0	31.0			
2.I do not want to have more responsibility for making decisions in my school.	F	21	84	34	50	11	2.73	1.12	2
	%	10.5	42.0	17.0	25.0	5.5			
Mean							3.41		

**Table 8. 5: Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses towards motivation**

The above data appears to show, through the two questions, that most of the participants are neutral and ambivalent towards greater autonomy over their work.

- Delegation and Authority domain**

Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses towards Delegation and Authority domain

Responses		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Statements									
5. I am held accountable for my work.	F	1	11	20	91	77	4.16	0.85	1
	%	.5	5.5	10.0	45.5	38.5			
6.The administrative structure of the school is characterised by authority and accountability.	F	6	33	39	111	11	3.44	0.93	5
	%	3.0	16.5	19.5	55.5	5.5			
7.The school administration gives me sufficient authority to carry out the tasks assigned to me.	F	11	28	44	87	30	3.49	1.08	3
	%	5.5	14.0	22.0	43.5	15.0			
8.The school administration	F	14	55	41	74	16	3.12	1.11	8
	%	7.0	27.5	20.5	37.0	8.0			

Responses		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Statements									
provides me with opportunities to make decisions. Independently									
9.The school principal has strong views on the methods to be used by teachers.	F	11	69	65	36	19	2.92	1.06	9
	%	5.5	34.5	32.5	18.0	9.5			
10. The work of the school is characterised by teamwork, consensus, and participation.	F	13	43	40	76	28	3.32	1.15	7
	%	6.5	21.5	20.0	38.0	14.0			
11. I am involved in the processes of improving and developing my school.	F	4	9	26	117	44	3.94	0.84	2
	%	2.0	4.5	13.0	58.5	22.0			
12. I have opportunities to participate in the self-evaluation processes of my school.	F	7	28	60	86	17	3.39	0.95	6
	%	3.5	14.0	30.0	43.0	8.5			
13. The school administration is interested in the ideas and opinions offered by teachers.	F	8	29	50	89	23	3.45	1.01	4
	%	4.0	14.5	25.0	44.5	11.5			
Overall Mean							3.47		

**Table 8.6 Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses towards delegation and authority domain**

The delegation and authority domain consisted of nine statements, and it is clear from the results of the data (Q5, 6, 11, 13) that the respondents have opportunities to participate, to assume responsibility and to obtain the necessary authority to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

On the other hand, it appears from the results of the other four questions (Q8, 9, 10, 12) that the respondents are neutral of their opportunities for participation, opinion, and empowerment. The overall arithmetic means of the delegation and authority domain (3.47) indicates that the respondents generally agreed with the statements of the domain.

- **Training domain**

Responses		strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Statements									
14. I have had training opportunities to help me participate in decision making or teamwork.	F	18	47	45	74	16	3.12	1.13	1.5
	%	9.0	23.5	22.5	37.0	8.0			
15. I understand the idea of empowerment in the vision 2030	F	18	33	69	67	13	3.12	1.05	1.5
	%	9.0	16.5	34.5	33.5	6.5			
Overall Mean							3.12		

**Table 8.7 Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses towards training domain**

The participant's responses show that there is neutrality towards training and knowledge development programmes, which are part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 for the development of education.

- **Teamwork domain**

Responses		strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
Statements									
16. The school administration holds regular meetings with teachers to allow collaboration.	F	15	31	43	87	24	3.37	1.11	2
	%	7.5	15.5	21.5	43.5	12.0			
17. There is open communication between my school principal and the teachers.	F	6	14	36	95	48	3.83	0.97	1
	%	3.0	7.0	18.0	47.5	24.0			
18. I do the majority of my work on my own without the involvement of other teachers.	F	6	75	36	61	22	3.09	1.11	3
	%	3.0	37.5	18.0	30.5	11.0			
Overall Mean							3.43		

**Table 8.8 Descriptive Statistics: participants' responses to the empowerment scale**

The data clearly show that there is a variation in the respondents' responses between neutrality and agreement on phrases that measure the scope of teamwork that is part of empowerment.

#### 8.4 Summary

The data analysed in this chapter were gathered by questionnaires given to workers in the education sector, including teachers and administrators. The first section of the questionnaire asked the research population to provide personal information in relation to their gender, years of experience and education region, to properly understand the research population characteristics and, furthermore, to figure out whether there is a statistically significant difference between group perceptions of the concept of empowerment in each of the four categories. The second section of the questionnaire asked participants to agree or disagree on a 1-5 Likert scale, with 18 closed items related to the two dimensions of education system reform, and 16 dimensions of the concept of empowerment: perceptions and attitudes towards the potential of implementation. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and the results have been presented in the above tables.

Overall, the results indicate that there is high and positive agreement towards an empowerment approach. To be precise, participants agreed mostly with items that described the attitudes



towards the engagement at an individual level and agreed least with items which described practices that may need support from the Ministry of Education. The results of the variance tests revealed that there are statistically significant differences between the participants' responses, depending on their gender, years of experience, and education region. The data indicate that a lot of the groups who engaged in the questionnaire were females with more experience from the central education region. The results also show that a high percentage of participants said that there was change and there was more encouragement to participate in the education system. In addition, the results indicate that although new policies and decisions in the Ministry of Education support participation in decision-making, the majority of participants are neutral and hesitant towards wanting more autonomy and responsibility in their work and an orientation towards teamwork, which is part of empowerment.

On the other hand, the results in this chapter indicate that the participants' responses show that there is neutrality towards training and knowledge development programmes, which are part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 for the development of education

The next chapter discusses the results from the qualitative and quantitative data sets. This will address the research questions from different angles to establish a comprehensive vision of empowerment in this study context.

## **Chapter Nine: Discussion and Findings**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a critical analysis and discussion of the findings that have emerged from this study and the key themes drawn from the data. This includes the data collected using the qualitative instruments (Chapter Seven: interviews, focus groups, open-ended questions), where the data was analysed using thematic analysis and the quantitative instrument (Chapter Eight: questionnaire), where the data was analysed descriptively, with consideration given to the characteristics of the participants. In this chapter, the findings are considered and synthesised, alongside the findings of previous studies, with a view to answering the research questions listed below.

This study was carried out due to a lack of evidence on the potential of the empowerment approach in the current educational system. Despite the establishment of a development directorate at the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE), there were no empirical data related to the measures and steps taken by the Saudi Ministry of Education and their impact on the education reform system. Furthermore, despite the efforts of the MOE, several studies, as discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Two, revealed the existence of a number of major issues that require reform in the education system, such as problems related to Saudi society's culture, the leadership and administrative style followed, education policy, and the need for teacher and principal development curricula. These findings suggest that one of the change models previously mentioned in the chapter on change should be used, as well as a reconsideration of the significance of Saudi society's culture and the administrative methods used in the education system in order to reform and improve the educational system across its elements.

To address the aforementioned goal, this study was divided into two phases based on the nature of the data: qualitative and quantitative phases. For the qualitative phase, the population under consideration was the senior leadership at the Ministry of Education and the principals of schools, while for the quantitative phase the population under consideration was teaching staff at education institutions.

- **Research questions**

1. How has empowerment thought been defined and conceptualised within organisations and educational contexts in the post-war period?
2. From a comparative perspective, how has the idea of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?
3. How do current school principals in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?
4. How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the educational systems of Saudi Arabia?

The use of mixed methods in this study was central to gathering a comprehensive set of robust data. Yin (2014) emphasised that obtaining data from multiple sources is a major opportunity to increase the quality of data. In this study, a range of methods were applied simultaneously to obtain a comprehensive overview of the relevant issues from a range of perspectives, in order to solve the problem of generalisation within qualitative research and to build a better understanding of the relationship between variables.

It is worth mentioning that an awareness of differing perceptions gives a researcher an opportunity to confront the perspectives of participants on the issues within a study. These perceptions are very important and could make a significant contribution to drawing a complete picture of current practice, along with exploring the factors and conditions that create this reality. However, one of the main issues to be overcome within this study was in gathering responses from stakeholders, ensuring impartiality and clarity when exploring their perceptions and attitudes. Because of external pressures and bias, it is important to ensure the conditions in which any responses given are respondents' honest perceptions, particularly in developing countries where participation in decision-making may be non-existent (Al-Tamimi, 2021). Stakeholders may refuse or avoid open participation on issues such as education system quality and government approaches to education system reform. Surprisingly, the participants in this study showed great enthusiasm to participate, to provide information and perceptions of the issues raised and demonstrated a high level of desire for change and reform. It appeared almost

as if the stakeholders had been waiting for a study of this nature in order to express their views on the issues under investigation.

Although the participants felt the issues undertaken were sensitive in KSA, they believed this is what makes this study important. One of the administrators from the Ministry of Education said, “the research has original ideas, it will be really helpful in educational management. It will reduce the bureaucracy that is killing the development plans” (Interview; Respondent: A2; Male).

This chapter will be presented in two parts. The initial part summarises the results in relation to the general issues from the participants’ views on the concept of empowerment and the reality of the empowerment approach in the education system. The second part discusses the findings in relation to the main research questions.

## **Section 1:**

### **9.2 The Reality of Empowerment in the Education System**

Initially, the data were collected from education stakeholders about changes in the education system and the concept of empowerment in order to form a broad picture of empowerment in education institutions and to explore the attitudes, awareness and understandings of participants about the concept of empowerment. This was useful for understanding and interpreting the findings and in attempting to discuss the research questions.

#### **9.2.1 Understanding the Concept of Empowerment**

The data indicated that there is a common belief among participants that empowerment in the education system is extremely important. Some participants pointed out that a large part of this interest stems from a religious perspective in a society where religious belief has a broad impact on the attitudes of individuals and their working style. At the same time, the participants perceived empowerment as a new approach in the education system. Further, they believed that the Ministry of Education has a major responsibility to establish and disseminate a culture of empowerment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This is related to what has been discussed in the literature connected to empowerment and education (Alriyhan, 2020; Alrwaqi, 2016).

This study revealed a number of interesting factors that may have an impact on the nature of stakeholder participation in the potential of the empowerment approach, such as the understanding of its core concepts. The findings reveal various concepts of empowerment and its potential on the one hand, as well as confusion and uncertainty about these concepts on the other.

The perspectives of the participants in this study in relation to empowerment, in terms of how the concept of empowerment is linked to its purpose, are associated with what has been discussed in the wider literature (Al-Duwaibi, 2008; Baden and Oxaal, 1997). The participants at managerial levels also reported that empowerment helps in shaping the organisation's vision, achieving their goals, and monitoring the quality of the education process. Thus, it seems that empowerment is associated with all academic and management tasks at education institutions. However, some administrators offered a different perspective, seeing the goal of empowerment as a means to obtain academic accreditation, which has become an important indicator of the quality within the education system of the Kingdom.

The empowerment approach in the education system necessitates the fulfilment of a number of prerequisites and standards, previously discussed in the chapter on empowerment (Al-Otaibi, 2004). In the education system, these standards are generally regarded as good practice. It is worth noting that a majority of participants in the current study agreed on the importance of empowerment in the education system and the need to follow the new procedures for its implementation. A smaller percentage of the participants were not ready to apply this approach mandated by the government on the Ministry of Education with the aim of reforming the education system because, in their view, this approach is based on cooperation with international experts and, therefore, they believe that its procedures do not fit well with the local culture. For example, one participant emphasised the need for action and the implementation of enabling standards appropriate to the culture, goals, and identity of the community: "Each educational institution has its own culture, goals, priorities, needs, and programmes. Therefore, this data must be taken into consideration when introducing any new approach or program" (Interview; Respondent: A3; Male). This could also be seen as a positive in terms of emphasising the importance of context in which a new approach to reform takes place. This view is supported by what emerged from previous studies discussed in the chapters on change and culture in terms of emphasising the need to take into account the circumstances, requirements, and culture of the context in which a new approach to reform will be adopted

and implemented (Al-Shaalan and Kaki, 2013). As with the focus groups participating in this study, participants stressed the importance of empowerment in the education system, adding the necessity of taking advantage of the potential to enhance the empowerment approach, such as spreading the culture of empowerment and providing appropriate training and continuous evaluation.

The current study revealed, through the analysis of data, that the concept of empowerment for a large number of the participants was focused on the following terms: authority, decentralisation, delegation, participation, (see Section 7.3.2).

It is interesting that the participants did not show a deep understanding of the concept of empowerment, but instead some pointed out uncertainty in the concept that could lead to a weakness in the effectiveness of empowerment reforms and which could lead to the disruption of implementation.

In fact, the participants' definitions of the concept of empowerment are supported by previous studies, such as Al-Munwari and Al-Jaraida (2014). It was found that employees at the Education Institute in Jordan understood the concept of empowerment in terms of, "a concept related to extending the authority and powers of school principals to achieve the goals of their educational institutions" (p. 44).

The results of the data collected from the interviews conducted by the officials indicated a general improvement in awareness and understanding of empowerment and its requirements, with a clear variation in the level of participants' understanding and experience of achieving such requirements. Interestingly, the group of officials demonstrated a broad knowledge and a clear understanding of empowerment. The responses suggest that this capacity came as a result of reading, the exchange of global experiences, and through training programmes and workshops from international experts to prepare these individuals to be qualified to work in development offices. However, there is concern among the Ministry of Education participants that these experts are non-Saudis, which poses a challenge in terms of finding suitable local alternatives.

Regarding participants' knowledge of their roles in applying an empowerment approach, the results revealed that most participants are aware of their roles and know what they need to do.

Among the prominent roles referred to by the participants, some concerned the focus on promoting participation in decision-making and problem solving, opening communication channels between the Ministry and educational institutions and spreading the culture of empowerment (see Section 7.3.2.2).

### **9.2.2 The Difference in the Level of Awareness**

The results suggest that there is a difference in the level of awareness between members of senior management in the Ministry, school administrators and teachers in educational institutions. The higher level of awareness appears to be linked to an understanding of the basic philosophy of the empowerment strategy, its principles and goals in academic institutions. The average ranking from the analysis of data showed that the members of the senior management in the Ministry and the principals have more understanding and awareness of the concept of empowerment compared to participants at other levels, which is evident because the leaders within the Ministry of Education and educational institutions have closer links with government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the Agency for Educational Leadership of the subsidiary to King Saud University Riyadh. Since the Ministry of Education is the main body responsible for strategically implementing the empowerment approach, it bears the main responsibility to support all educational institutions (Smith and Abu Maamouh, 2013; Alkhazim, 2003). However, the low level of awareness among the teachers in educational institutions may reflect a weakness in communication strategy between senior management and teachers, as researchers have argued (Goetsch and Davis, 2014; Spanbauer, 1995). This means that the teachers' curricula and directors' preparation programmes must be reviewed to provide them with knowledge and skills related to the empowerment approach and how to implement it.

Deficient communication channels can jeopardise an implementation plan or any change strategies in favour of unlocking the potential of an enabling approach to developing the education system and improving the quality of education (Powell, 1995; Allen and Brady, 1997). Chin and Kit-Fai (2002) demonstrated that a lack of understanding between top management and internal stakeholders can hinder system change efforts. As a result, some members of the organisation may offer more resistance to changing plans if they are not trusted by senior management (Demirbag et al., 2006). Other researchers endorsed the results of this study and highlighted the importance of reforming communication channels between senior

management and internal (school) stakeholders (Dale, 2015; Chin and Kit-Fai, 2002; Powell, 1995).

The reality of communication between administrative levels and teachers can also be considered an administrative challenge. The results indicate that the bureaucratic management of work procedures negatively affects communication between the members of the education system, which slows the pace of work. For example, one of the participants explained how communication occurred in any of the quick action plans:

.....The Deanship of Development and the 2030 Vision Achieving Office cannot contact schools directly. They should contact the principal of the school district first, after which they will contact the supervision office, then the director of the supervision office will contact the school director, then the school director will contact the teachers, then the response will be returned via the same communication chain (Interview, Respondent: QA10; Female).

The example above illustrates how bureaucracy impedes communication and how difficult it is for teachers to communicate with education development officials to seek support when facing challenges. This may lead to process delays, or performance of procedures without validation. This of course makes the results unreliable.

Weakness in communication becomes a major challenge, for example, in communication between development offices and the Office of the Realization of the Kingdom 2030, with sections for men and women, as reported in one of the focus groups: “There is a disconnect between the Office of Achieving the Kingdom’s 2030 Vision in the men’s and women’s sections regarding implementing the empowerment approach. This leads to poor follow-up of operations and delaying achievements” (Focus group; respondent: Females).

This is likely due to the adherence on the part of some officials to cultural customs and traditions that have nothing to do with the Islamic religion, a culture that rejects communication between the sexes and reinforces the concept of bureaucracy for the benefit of the men in society.

### **9.2.3 The Reality of Empowerment**



In terms of adopting an empowerment approach, the data collected from qualitative and quantitative methods revealed that the Ministry of Education has a number of main paths: adopting a decentralised administrative approach, encouraging the participation of the private sector in investing in education and developing systems and procedures in the educational system to ensure effectiveness, participation and competence. The Ministry of Education took steps to establish a number of departments and committees to manage the approach to promoting empowerment. However, although these efforts have been made since the government adoption of the empowerment approach, the results still indicate that there has only been a small improvement in the spread of a culture of empowerment. In addition, some participants in this study reported feeling frustrated because after approximately three years the Ministry of Education has not achieved its goals and there seems to be a decline in implementing the empowerment approach. Possible evidence for this conclusion is that most of the participants were unanimous in the need for more power sharing along with accountability, and some participants commented that until now only some of the basic aspects of the term empowerment have been applied.

What is curious are the reasons given for what is seen as a lack of progress. The respondents from the expert group indicated that empowerment takes a long time because of bureaucratic reasons. This means that the data and evidence collected at the beginning and during the work of implementation becomes out of date before it can be used and is therefore unreliable. Thus, it is necessary to go back and start the process again. Some of the issues emerging from this study relate specifically to what was discussed in the literature around the conditions for success in empowerment in the context of developing countries. Al-Omar (2016) argued that trying to implement the empowerment approach in developing countries was important and beneficial, even if not all the success factors were achieved. However, the formulation of mechanisms and procedures in light of the conditions of developing countries should be simple, and expectations should be given based on the available resources.

In addition to the disadvantages of bureaucracy, the slow response of some decision makers can contribute to not progressing plans for implementing empowerment strategies. This finding is supported by the results of Al-Museelm's (2012) study, where a number of decision makers in the Ministry of Education in Kuwait postponed the implementation of the empowerment approach because they did not want it and in the hope that the system would be abandoned before they had to implement it.

One of the unexpected results revealed in this study is the interesting difference between those with years of work experience in contrast to those with less experience regarding the implementation of the empowerment approach. Staff newer to their roles seem to seek to do their best to implement the empowerment approach much more than those with greater years of experience. Participants believed that this difference occurred for several reasons, such as that they were trained and equipped with knowledge and skills according to teacher curricula and principal preparation programmes, which include modern teaching and management methods, especially in the field of empowerment, such as the Empowerment of Leaders Program prepared by the Ministry of Education. Importantly, these contemporary leaders are set in accordance with new global development trends for education, particularly in the field of empowerment. This makes them sensitive to change, development, improvement and the application of new methods and strategies, such as the empowerment approach. Moreover, there are other factors, such as workload, and the limited support available from senior management.

Having considered a general overview of the reality of empowerment in the education system, operational research questions are now addressed.

## **Section 2:**

### **9.3 Discussion and Key Findings for the Research Questions**

Q4. What are the changes that must be made in order to implement the empowerment approach in the organisational culture of the educational system?

#### **9.3.1 Reforming the Culture of Society**

Major political transformations in societies always call for the need to formulate new cultural policies in organisations that fit with the transformation process and come within its context, and that major transformations also pave the way for cultural changes in society. Some of the participants mentioned that the relationship between culture on the one hand and politics on the other hand is an interactive one, and it can even be said that politics is a practice and its ideas are part of the culture of society. A significant number of the participants in the qualitative stage of this project also stressed the need to open up to global cultures, interact with them,

accept them, and benefit from them. This is because members of society in general and members of the educational system have a major role in spreading a culture of decentralisation and contributing to the consolidation of democratic values, as democracy grows and it is entrenched in people's belief that diversity is a legitimate right, and that the challenges that Saudi Arabia is going through require everyone's opinions and ideas. Empowerment in all sectors, especially in the educational system under study, is part of the political and cultural transformation, so participants focused on the necessity of spreading a culture of empowerment and its concepts and consolidating the principle of participation in decision-making for every member of the educational organisation. Furthermore, the results of the qualitative stage revealed that participants at each level agreed that they had a significant role in implementing the empowerment approach. They believed that achieving the requirements of empowerment is now an essential part of their professional obligations, such as engaging themselves in empowerment committees and disseminating an empowerment culture among members of the educational system and its institutions. However, participants agreed that not all members of the educational system accept change, especially with regard to the empowerment approach. They believed that achieving the requirements of empowerment is now an essential part of their professional obligations, such as engaging themselves in empowerment committees and disseminating an empowerment culture among members of the educational system and its institutions. There are those who support implementation and actively participate and those who totally reject the idea for numerous reasons, such as uncertainty or a lack of a clear understanding of the concepts and criteria for success in any empowerment approach, as noted earlier in the chapter on approaching change (Chapter Four).

One important finding revealed by this study is that there is broad agreement on the availability of clear guidelines for implementing empowerment as an influencing factor towards ensuring a high level of implementation. In this regard, the results indicate two points of view. First, there were participants who pointed out that there is no clear evidence of how the empowerment approach is being implemented. However, a large group of participants agreed that there were criteria for effective participation and a clear guide to implementing the empowerment approach. The opinions of this group can also be divided into two perspectives: The first represents a small group of participants, who believed that there is a need for evidence and criteria because the procedures for implementation are unclear, leading to a negative impact on their participation in the application of the approach, and therefore they demand to be provided with clear guidelines. On the other hand, a large group of participants considered that they can

fulfil the empowerment requirements if they follow the continuous guidance that come regularly from the Deanship of Development at the Ministry of Education. Surprisingly, the difference in participants' understanding of the criteria and requirements for an empowerment approach may not only lead to a dysfunction in the implementation of the empowerment approach, but also sometimes risk a conflict between members of educational organisations, where everyone seeks to implement the actions as they understand them. One director emphasised, "If there are clear criteria for participation in the implementation of the empowerment approach, then everyone will participate in change and empowerment will lead to success in achieving goals" (interview; respondent: H1; Female). Some participants mentioned that this may be due to the geographical distribution. For example, activities and events such as courses, workshops, and conferences are concentrated in the Riyadh region, which affects other regions of the Kingdom (interview; respondent: H 1/3/7; Females). In view of this, it is necessary to implement the slogan of decentralisation of activities, and to reconsider its expansion to include each region and governate.

Another aspect of the findings revealed that conviction and acceptance are critical factors in increasing participation in implementing the empowerment approach. For example, the results indicate that new leaders with limited experience believe in the importance of empowerment, accept its benefits, and have knowledge of how to participate effectively in implementation and a desire to implement this approach. As for those with more years of experience, their desire is more volatile, and they see it as additional work that is exhausting for them given that the culture and concept of empowerment is not clear.

### **9.3.2 Development of the Educational System**

The data suggest that there are some issues related to the education system that may present persistent challenges when starting any change process. Participants argued that the senior management responsible for setting the goals for the education sector are responsible for the success or failure in achieving the goals of the empowerment approach within the educational system. This is because adopting a new system to implement the empowerment approach requires consideration of the appropriateness of any structure and concepts to ensure the effectiveness of the application. Also, depending on the readiness of the educational sector, full or partial structural reform may be necessary to fit the new system.

From this research, it can be concluded that the leadership and officers at the higher administrative levels of the Ministry of Education play an important role in bringing about positive change towards best practices in developing the education system to implement an empowerment approach. They can obtain an overview of educational institutions and their needs in terms of human, financial and technological resources and what their requirements and problems are. Therefore, the administration is ultimately responsible for building, reviewing, and developing plans for the education system to ensure the implementation of any empowerment approach, and to ensure its connection with the culture of Saudi society and the organisation's culture and goals (see Section 3).

There emerged a concern from some participants to exclude bureaucratic procedures from the education system and to replace them with modern administrative methods that support change, development, and empowerment. Notwithstanding this, senior management is also responsible for committing to spreading a culture of organisational empowerment that is able to respond to change, empowering every member, in each education institute, in addition to providing appropriate and fair training opportunities for all.

### **9.3.3 Staff Development**

The findings from this study give an endorsement to spreading the culture of empowerment in all training programmes and workshops. This approach is seen as an effective way to increase the level of participation from education leaders and members of education organisations in the orientation towards implementing empowerment. Participants in this study believed that training and workshops offer them more expertise and they can then provide support to their colleagues in their departments and institutions. They also believed that the concept of empowerment is linked to each aspect of education and that all professionals in the education system must be encouraged to attend the range of training that can help improve their practical skills.

Participants indicated that the Ministry of Education currently provides a lot of opportunities for training and workshops in coordination with internal and external parties concerned in developing the quality of the educational system. These programmes are offered in two languages, Arabic and English. Attending such programmes is not mandatory and only a few education professionals are encouraged to attend.

In order to enhance participation in spreading the culture of empowerment, the Deanship of Development and the Office of Achieving the Kingdom's Vision 2030 has been active in encouraging and supporting all qualified employees and experts in the Ministry to provide training programmes and workshops. However, this study discovered some critical issues in relation to professional development. The views of the participants indicated that the available development programmes are insufficient and do not meet their needs. Also, development opportunities are not distributed equitably and are mostly available to administrators and individuals working in the offices of the Ministry of Education. The available development programmes provide a theoretical explanation of the concept of empowerment but do not provide useful practical activities in identifying implementation plans for the empowerment approach. In fact, it was described by some of the participants as role distribution meetings. So that empowerment is conflated with other models of leadership, such as distributed or delegated leadership. These issues may contribute to the reluctance of some members of education organisations to attend training programmes and workshops.

#### **9.3.4 Understandings of School Teachers, School Administrators and System Leaders**

A number of interesting issues emerged from the data regarding the importance of empowerment and its potential use in the reform of the education system. There was partial agreement among the participants. The findings of this study indicate that there is a widespread belief that the use of the empowerment approach has become a new trend in the Ministry of Education and in the general approach to managing education institutions. It is worth mentioning that the majority of participants emphasised the importance of the role that can be played by this approach in making a significant and positive change in the education system and in the quality of education. For example, a participant from the education ministry observed that: "empowerment is an international trend and I think the Ministry of Education is delayed in earning its benefits, compared to other ministries of education" (Interview; respondent: H2; Female).

The results from the questionnaire indicate that a significant number of the participants in the survey had positive perceptions and attitudes towards the potential of the empowerment approach to enhance the education system and the development of job performance and that there is an urgent need to develop a strategy to apply it in practice. This result supports the conclusion of Zaki and Hammad (2011), who suggested that constructing a system for

managing the empowerment approach is needed to ensure the quality of education is being maintained and enhanced.

The participants in this study argued that the empowerment approach can provide radical solutions to a number of problems, such as bureaucracy, participation in decision-making, problem solving, ease of communication and access to information, performance development, and education environment development. Some of these results mirror those of previous studies that have examined the expected contributions of empowerment applications in education systems (McLean, 2003; Kefalas et al., 2003; Salmi, 2006; Amara and Buaichh, 2010; Kandel et al., 2010; Ashour and Shoran, 2015; 2010; Kahveci et al., 2012).

The potential benefits of empowerment in the education system based on the participants' perspectives are illustrated and summarised in Table (9.1).

<b>Administration:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empowerment reduces bureaucracy and contributes to restructuring the education system to become more effective.</li> <li>- Improves and speeds up the decision-making process, problem solving and achievement of performance.</li> <li>- Facilitates communication and transactions between education institutions and stakeholders in the educational process at various levels and in different roles.</li> <li>- Clarifies and distributes tasks and roles fairly.</li> <li>- Encourages teamwork and open communication between all levels of the organisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Encouragement and support:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourages innovation, creativity and positive competition, whether at the local or international level.</li> <li>- Encourages responsibility and accountability.</li> <li>- Provides direct and prompt support when facing any problems during the implementation of the empowerment approach.</li> <li>- Enhances confidence.</li> <li>- Encourages teamwork and open communication between all levels of the organisation.</li> </ul>

<b>Information management:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Speeds up communication between members of education institutions to exchange information and experiences.</li> <li>- Facilitates access to information and statistics to help inform decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Control and evaluation:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitors the performance of development offices that follow the implementation of the empowerment approach and discovers their strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>- Facilitates periodic reviews and evaluations and improves the educational process</li> </ul>

**Table 9.1 The potential of the empowerment approach in the education system according to participants' perspectives**

The participants found it was unlikely to experience many of these positive perceptions about the potential of the empowerment approach due to the entrenchment of the bureaucratic culture and the non-acceptance of change in the culture of Saudi society. In addition, these results can be considered as a positive indicator of the willingness of the participants to move towards change and to adopt an approach to empowerment in the educational system.

Despite these potential benefits, this study revealed that there are a number of potential challenges that require consideration before the education system can take full advantage of applying the empowerment approach. The next section presents some of these challenges.

### **9.3.5 Potential Challenges of Applying Empowerment in the Education System**

A number of studies indicated that developing countries face many challenges in the implementation of empowerment in their education systems. These challenges can be related to the lack of effective development approaches and a lack of qualified individuals (Tariq, 2013).



Selvaratnam (2004) and Al-Tamam (2007) argued that empowerment implementation requires a convincing and effective leadership team who are highly aware of its importance. In this study, the data indicated that the most critical challenge that could affect empowerment in the education system is when the senior management are unconvinced by it. There is a strong belief that leaders and decision makers have the power to pass a decision requiring all members to apply any approach that contributes to the development of work. Moreover, they have the power to provide financial and human support to ensure the success of any approach. The presence of resistance to change in order to take advantage of the empowerment approach in the education system may obstruct its implementation. The results indicate that there are a number of reasons behind potential resistance. Some participants perceived the change as a threat; it might limit their power or monitor their performance. In addition, the work of the empowerment approach may collide with the bureaucratic approach that individuals are accustomed to following in order to accomplish tasks. Such attitudes have links with issues of power shift and fear of losing positions Vassilakis et al. (2005).

A second management challenge is the extent of the effectiveness of the current education administrative structure. Participants in the quantitative and qualitative study believed that the education system's administrative structure is not suitable for using empowerment applications. The qualitative results emphasised that the education departments and education institutions need to qualitatively enhance good communication and cooperation. This discrepancy is not consistent with the principles of the concept of empowerment. In this case, participants emphasised the need to review the structure of the education system and activate communication between every department and education institution to exchange information and expertise, to ensure its suitability for the application of empowerment. These results echo the recommendations from Alzamil (2014) on requirements for applying empowerment in education systems. Alzamil suggested that the success of an empowerment approach depends on the availability of an integrated infrastructure which connects every department and institution through a network.

Several potential challenges arose from the data in terms of participation in any new approach to reshaping the education system. One of these challenges is an urgent need for qualified personnel in the education system to work on the next system. This finding is consistent with the inquiries of Al-Omiri (2008), in that the Ministry of Education has few experts in implementing the empowerment approach. This finding indicates an urgent need to establish

employee development programmes to prepare members of the educational system within all its institutions through quality rehabilitation and training programmes, especially older serving members or those who have never worked on similar systems. The lack of capacity in qualified personnel in the field of empowerment can hinder educational reform and the implementation of the empowerment approach. The results indicate that implementing the empowerment approach requires individuals with sufficient capabilities and knowledge to define the services and features that the education system must provide to enhance implementation of the empowerment approach.

One interesting finding is the possibility that resistance may emerge to the implementation of the empowerment approach in the education system. This relates to the change management literature discussed in the previous chapters on the education system. The study revealed two areas that may cause resistance to change based on the responses of the participants. There are education leaders who do not trust projects for change for fear of their failure or the loss of power and office. There are also those who believe that the Ministry of Education does provide sufficient training programmes to prepare educational leaders and members of the education system at various levels to take up the concept of empowerment and to benefit from the applications of empowerment in the education system.

The literature emphasises the importance of the participation of all members of the education system and its institutions in ensuring the successful implementation of the empowerment approach. However, the lack of preparedness can lead to what some might call a “cultural shock” as an empowerment approach can lead to drastic changes in more traditional educational institutions (Lam, 2005; Vasilakis et al., 2005; Ibrahim and Irani, 2005).

Leaders participating in this study tended to propose to respond to any resistance that may occur due to the implementation of the empowerment approach through the establishment of training programmes and workshops to prepare professionals and leaders in the educational system, and to provide ongoing support after implementing the empowerment approach. In addition, some of the respondents saw the need to review the financial and moral incentives system, because it was viewed as key to encouraging professionals in the education system to embrace empowerment in reforming the education system and ensuring the quality of the education process. According to Al-Omiri (2008), providing training programmes and workshops for every education employee and motivating them to attend, along with

establishing a new system of incentives to motivate professionals, are important requirements in the transition to empowering educational leaders in the education system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

#### **9.4 Conclusion**

In concluding, this chapter has presented a critical analysis and discussion of the findings that have emerged from this study and the key themes drawn from the data. It is worth mentioning that the participants who contributed to this study have offered many suggested changes and recommendations that the education system and its institutions would benefit from by giving them serious consideration in the task of implementing any empowerment approach. These proposals will be addressed and synthesised into recommendations that potentially offer a heuristic value to practitioners responsible for empowerment implementation in Saudi Arabia's education system.

## **Chapter Ten: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **10.1 Introduction**

In general, the significance of this study stems from the importance of the sector to which it is applied, as the education sector is one of the most important sectors in society and plays an important role in supporting and developing society. It is also one of the systems most affected by the developments imposed by scientific progress. Therefore, officials in the education system and decision makers must prepare themselves and their institutions to deal positively with this development by adopting modern management concepts in education, which contribute to achieving quality in performance and production and achieving competitive advantage, such as through an empowerment approach. This study is also concerned with determining the stakeholders' perspectives in implementing the empowerment approach and identifying the main challenges that may hinder the effective implementation of the empowerment approach in one of the largest developing countries in the world.

As mentioned previously, there is a dearth of literature dealing with the concept of empowerment in education systems from the perspective of education leaders and professionals in the education system and its institutions, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This study aimed to contribute to filling this gap. It drew attention to details related to the implementation of the empowerment approach, the nature of the challenges faced and the potential for empowerment in reforming the educational system. Considering the motives and results of this research, it is hoped that this study will contribute to enriching knowledge in its field. Therefore, it is hoped that the recommendations derived from the conclusions of this research may have some application to education systems in similar circumstances. There were four main questions guiding this research:

1. How has empowerment thought been defined and conceptualised within organisations and educational contexts in the post-war period?
2. From a comparative perspective, how has the idea of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?
3. How do current school principals in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?

4. How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the educational systems of Saudi Arabia?

The chosen research methodology applied in this study utilised qualitative and quantitative data collection tools to attempt to create a more comprehensive picture to help understand the concept of empowerment from the viewpoint of participants in the Ministry of Education and participants in a selected number of educational institutions within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The data collection tools were developed carefully and examined through established validity and reliability tests and procedures. Participants represented three groups of stakeholders in the education system: ministry staff, school administrators and school teachers. The total number of participants included eight in interviews, 24 in focus groups and 200 in the survey. The qualitative data were analysed thematically in relation to the questions and the quantitative data were analysed descriptively using SPSS. The findings were then analysed and discussed critically along with the literature related to the issues raised. The main objective of this study was addressed by compiling the results of the research, along with the relevant literature, and by providing possible strategic benefits to stakeholders responsible for education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and practitioners in the field of implementing the new empowerment approach.

This chapter briefly summarises the main findings of this research and associated conclusions in order to address each major question. Additionally, based on the literature and research findings, a set of recommendations for strengthening the empowerment approach and for further research are presented.

## **10.2 Summary of Research Results**

Data on the concept of empowerment were collected in order to create an overview of the perspective of professionals in the educational sector and to examine their awareness and understanding of the concept of empowerment. This was essential to inform the interpretation stage in working to answer the research questions. The study found that there is widespread belief in the research context that an empowerment approach could be very valuable in the education system. However, education professionals believed that empowerment was still more of a new trend in the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and that the

Ministry of Education should take a stronger position in spreading a culture of empowerment and enhance participation in realising its implementation measures.

The study revealed several factors that could be of influence in the application process, such as the extent of understanding around the concept of empowerment. Some education professionals believed that in reality the concept of empowerment varies from place to place, based on the nature and practices of each educational institution and its needs. Moreover, the study revealed that the definitions provided by the participants do not demonstrate a deep understanding of the concept of empowerment and its processes, but they indicate a state of uncertainty which may weaken the effectiveness of implementation, which leads to issues such as implementation in different ways, depending on personal understanding. However, experience and qualifications seem to play an important role as the Ministry of Education's senior management personnel demonstrated extensive knowledge and understanding of empowerment and its techniques. The study found that this is likely to be explained by the training programmes that were provided for a limited period.

The study indicated that the Ministry of Education has several paths towards achieving empowerment within the Kingdom's 2030 vision for education: decentralised administrative orientation, encouraging the private sector to invest in public education, and redeveloping procedures and systems in order to ensure the effectiveness of the educational environment and increase its efficiency. There were various new regulations and a number of offices and committees created to manage the implementation of the empowerment approach. However, the Ministry of Education is still attempting to move forward and implement empowerment and obtain benefit from its results. The bureaucratic procedures emerged as one of the difficulties still to be overcome because it makes the empowerment implementation process move very slowly. This results in the evidence gathered at the beginning and during the reform cycle becoming outdated, and therefore comes to be viewed as unreliable. This requires going back to square one and starting the process again. One interesting discovery was that there were differences between those with numerous years of experience and those with less experience in engagement towards implementing the empowerment approach. The study uncovered that the movement towards empowerment and empowerment practices is significantly higher among those more recently appointed, because they were appointed and established based on new educational trends, including the empowerment approach. They tend to have clear plans, they make continuous efforts, and have clear and stated guidelines for their procedures. Also,

these leaders help to attract qualified staff. Contrary to this, the pace of the process of implementing the empowerment approach for those with more experience is slower, this may be due to significant academic and administrative burdens, and an unwillingness to change for fear of failure or loss of authority and position.

Following from this overview of the general issues that have been identified in relation to the move to empowerment in the education system, the main research questions are addressed briefly below.

### **1. How has empowerment thought been defined and conceptualised within organisations and educational contexts in the post-war period?**

The term “empowerment” refers to a philosophical vision that prioritises the perspectives of the oppressed and criticises a hierarchical approach as a source of inequality. Empowerment is a complex process of changing the organisational structure from the ground up. It is also a process that may increase women’s and the poor’s awareness of their capabilities and improve self-confidence that may contribute to providing opportunities for their participation in society, which could lead to a radical shift in the reconstruction of structures in the economic, social, and political fields, which may reflect positively on development (Calvés, 2009).

The development of alternative concepts that surfaced in Brazil in the 1950s with the call for critical thinking and social transformation led to challenges to the traditional power structure within the Catholic Church (Evans, 1992). Paulo Freire concentrated on his philosophy’s basic concepts of critical thinking and spreading awareness. As a result of increasing poverty in developing countries in the 1970s, it was thought that the empowerment of impoverished communities was the foundation of development. Paulo Freire’s philosophy and movement in education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was one of the most important modifications of empowerment, and education is regarded as one of the fundamentals of empowerment. His philosophy included eradicating illiteracy and assisting oppressed people in colonial countries through education (Ann, 2009), where he relied on the “critical awareness” approach as an educational tool that will help an individual understand what his rights are in order to improve their life conditions.

## **2. How do current school principals in Saudi Arabia understand and evaluate the concept of empowerment as an approach to reform?**

The results revealed that awareness of the empowerment approach and its concepts is present among the participants, although it differed somewhat between the senior management and workers in educational institutions. This study indicates that the unequal level of employee understanding in the organisation towards the empowerment approach can affect the achievement of reform and development goals set by the senior leadership. The quality of the education system cannot be improved unless the understanding of the empowerment approach is improved across each layer and institution of the education system. Therefore, a meaningful awareness campaign should be launched by senior leadership teams to raise awareness among employees who are involved in the process of improving the education system. This will help facilitate the implementation of the principles of the empowerment approach in order to obtain the benefits of the management philosophy of the empowerment concept.

One of the main results is the presence of awareness and a positive attitude towards the important and positive role in which the empowerment approach can contribute to reforming the education system and improving the quality of education and professional life. The participants emphasised the urgent need to develop a strategy to implement the empowerment programme in the education system. However, the data indicated that the empowerment approach can provide essential solutions to a number of changing challenges facing the education system.

The findings can be summarised into five potential areas where a successful empowerment approach can assist in the reform and development of the education system. First, management, such as the distribution of roles, clarity of tasks, acceleration of decision-making and problem-solving, and reduction of bureaucracy. Second, processes such as workflow improvement, transparency, flexibility, and efficiency. Third, information management, such as information provision, communication acceleration, accessibility, and authentication. Fourth, follow-up and evaluation, such as performance monitoring and review. Fifth, support, such as professional development, compatibility with modern work methods, and rapid response to inquiries.



**3. How is the use of an empowerment concept in reforming education potentially mediated or shaped by culture in the educational systems of Saudi Arabia?**

The study identified a large body of evidence on an ongoing level of crisis regarding the importance of culture in introducing the empowerment approach as a reforming factor for the education system due to a number of challenges, such as management styles, individual attitudes, staff development, incentives and external factors. The data indicate that there is a common belief that senior management is responsible for the success or failure of achieving the goals of the empowerment approach for many reasons. However, the results of the study revealed that some stakeholders in management lack understanding of the concept and procedures of the empowerment approach. There is also a lack of support from management in terms of factors such as human and technical resources. The last and most important reason is the approach taken by management when the empowerment approach was first introduced into the education system. The management imposed the application of the new approach without giving sufficient time to install it as part of the culture of the society and the culture of the organisation with the aim of obtaining institutional accreditation. This has led to conflicts between management and stakeholders and the emergence of resistance.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with various state institutions that support the development of education, must develop a preliminary plan to introduce the empowerment approach into the education system through the development of curricula and programmes to prepare leaders and teachers that support a culture of adopting an empowerment approach and moves towards modern administrative methods that focus on participation. This can enhance decentralisation. Providing support and continuous evaluation at initiation and during implementation and attention to the incentive system may be important ways to encourage stakeholders to adopt the empowerment approach in the education system.

Managing change by leadership is also one of the main factors that can influence the successful implementation of the empowerment approach. Organisations that practice some of the traditional approaches to education reform may encounter resistance from employees as they transition to the values and principles of the empowerment approach if change is not managed properly and internal and external stakeholders are not involved in the planning and implementation stages.

The departments in the Ministry of Education need a change management system to implement the empowerment approach through educational systems' development and reform programmes, because internal stakeholders use traditional concepts to improve the education system. Changes in development are planned by the Ministry of Education, but internal stakeholders' participation is not fully incorporated into the changes. These data indicate that the Ministry of Education and the leadership need to plan changes in cooperation with each other, so that the interests of stakeholders in educational institutions can be integrated into the planning and implementation stages of the empowerment approach implementation programmes.

#### **4. From a comparative perspective, how has the idea of empowerment within education settings been used within government policy in Saudi Arabia?**

Senior leaders support the principle of empowerment, a significant goal of Vision 2030 for the various sectors of the state, through the development of community culture and the dissemination of principles of decentralisation and transparency using accurate evidence and explicit information. This study found that trying to implement programmes that support the empowerment approach can help organisations get a clear view of specific programmes and identify strengths and weaknesses in implementing the empowerment approach. Despite this, the implementation of the empowerment approach programmes in educational institutions is still in its infancy, and is limited to a few departments and schools only, such as the Transformation Program for Self-Management and Self-Learning. This reflects the fact that the leadership in the education departments and institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not equally committed to implementing the empowerment approach.

As a result, the introduction and implementation of the empowerment approach in the education system can be viewed as a significant change in the culture and style of work, and thus gradual application must be implemented to allow stakeholders to become acquainted with the new work style and culture. Then, senior leadership must make a firm decision to transform traditional management methods into an empowering approach. According to the findings of this study, senior management and influential decision makers must be convinced of the potential benefits to management in order to support implementation and employee motivation (Selvaratnam, 2004; Al-Tamam, 2007).

It is worth noting that before implementing the empowerment approach, there is an urgent need for adequate programmes for employee development, so it is very important to ensure that the appropriate training programmes are available at the right times and provided by professional experts in order to highlight the advantages of the empowerment approach and how it can be used in the development and reform of the education system.

### **10.3 Recommendations**

It is the hope of the researcher that policy and decision makers, the Ministry of Education, and academic contributors carefully consider the recommendations reached as a result of this research in developing a culture and role for empowerment as an approach to reforming the education system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These recommendations are derived from an analysis of the literature and an analysis of the perceptions of participants who have experienced the reality of the move to empowerment in the educational system. In addition, these recommendations help draw attention to key challenges in implementing the empowerment approach, to potential solutions, and the potential benefits of implementing empowerment as an approach to educational reform. This will be beneficial to the Ministry of Education and its educational institutions and other institutions that have the same contextual circumstances and are committed to implementing an empowerment approach and overcoming the many challenges that hinder progress towards excellence.

Drawing upon the results of this research, it is possible to make the following recommendations for consideration by governments, educational policy makers and decision makers, the Ministry of Education and its institutions.

### **10.4 Recommendation for Governments, Education Policy and Decision Makers**

1. Attention to planning. Careful planning is required before launching any project that involves significant change in the education sector in order to increase the likelihood of success.
2. Appropriate models for reform and change should be adopted by the Ministry of Education and adequate material and moral support provided to ensure successful implementation and low resistance.

3. There is a need to ensure that the Ministry of Education and its institutions have sufficiently qualified personnel.
4. Reform leaders should continue to conduct academic activities, such as conferences, workshops, and training programmes, to spread the culture of empowerment and to build a clear understanding of its concepts within education sectors.
5. The requirements for implementing the empowerment approach and for creating flexible versions of an empowerment culture that are appropriate for each group of educational institutions, based on local conditions, should be reviewed continuously.
6. The Ministry of Education and educational institutions should consider building a wide network that facilitates the communication process to exchange experiences and information in the consolidation of the empowerment approach.

### **10.5 Recommendations for the Ministry of Education**

1. Actively reduce bureaucratic administrative tasks and implement the decentralisation of management in education to allow the emergence of a flexible administration, while reducing the number of administrative levels that procedures and transactions must go through.
2. Build strong relationships between leadership and professionals in the education sector at every level. Look to continue to build roles based on the principles of trust, transparency, and empowerment, while giving everyone equal opportunities for participation, rewards, and training.
3. Implement an effective and transparent system to receive the benefits of stakeholder feedback and constantly work to be responsive. This is important in enhancing participation, confidence, and an understanding of the reality of any workflow.
4. Encourage successful educational institutions in implementing an enabling approach to exchange experience and knowledge with other institutions.
5. Establish a research centre to conduct continuous studies. Review and evaluate the implementation of the empowerment approach and develop appropriate processes to identify and respond to problems that may arise during implementation.
6. Establish external expert advisory committees to support, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the empowerment approach.
7. Continuously develop and implement appropriate education system structures to help implement an empowerment approach.

## **10.6 Recommendations for Leadership Preparation**

1. The Ministry of Education should consider organising a training programme for educational leaders in light of the training needs, giving priority to the areas in which leaders see the greatest need for training and implementing these programmes in all educational directorates.
2. Establish a specialised centre to prepare and train educational leaders to keep pace with changes and developments in the fields of training current leaders and preparing future leaders.
3. Establish an educational resource centre in each directorate that contains the latest Arab and foreign references, studies and periodicals in various areas of management, leadership and related activities.
4. Work on developing the current training programmes implemented by the Ministry of Education and training centres, reconsidering their content and upgrading them according to the needs of leaders in each field, and raising the efficiency of administrative training in the light of follow-up and evaluation processes. Incorporate scientific developments that occur in the field of management and leadership.
5. Hold training conferences and seminars to discuss the problems and obstacles related to meeting the training needs to ensure the development of the performance of the training service for educational leaders.
6. Continuous communication between training centres and educational leaders to identify the problems they face in their workplaces and to collect and categorise those problems to address them periodically and continuously so as not to constitute an obstacle in the course of administrative work and its implementation.
7. Practical application of leadership training with in-house, regional and national courses and CPD sessions with far less reliance on theoretical methods.
8. It is important to get the opinion of the leaders themselves about the degree and type of their need for training and not be limited to routine annual sessions.

## **10.7 Recommendations for Future Research**

This study is a cross-sectional study that took a snapshot of the concept of empowerment in a restricted time period and across a sample of geographical regions in the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia. More studies that can capture data over a longer time period need to be planned to understand the meaning and complexities of empowerment in different organisational settings within the educational system of the Kingdom.

This study conducted interviews with Ministry of Education leaders and teachers in educational sector institutions. Future research work can be designed to extend the samples in the methods used in this study. This would allow the Ministry of Education and its institutions to access more in-depth data in order to produce a framework and development model for implementing the empowerment approach. Qualitative data from this study demonstrated a desire to make changes towards implementing the empowerment approach and future work should consider the investigation of the change strategy used in implementing the empowerment approach. Staff development is closely related to the implementation of the empowerment approach; this presents a future area for study around exploring development needs. This research work could inform and be incorporated into the empowerment approach programme to support this factor consistently to improve the educational system.

A future study may also examine rewards, incentives and other forms of appreciation and their impact on motivating employees to participate in implementing the empowerment approach to increase the quality of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Future studies could expand this work by aiming to investigate the implementation of the empowerment approach model in schools and other educational institutions.

## **10.8 Summary**

This research aimed to explore the meanings of empowerment through the perspectives of professionals in the educational system at various levels and institutions and to explore the prospects for implementing the empowerment approach within the Vision 2030 in line with the culture of Saudi society. It has also tried to consider how the potential role it can play in improving the education system and performance of professional work across the education sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can be progressed.

The current study revealed that most of the participants shared similar definitions of empowerment and its applicability is affected by many factors. It was also observed that there are a number of challenges. In addition, this study highlighted the potential improvements and

support that can be given to the empowerment approach in reforming the educational system. Moreover, the study attempted to add to the growing research literature in the area of change in relation to the Ministry of Education and in the study of empowerment approaches. Finally, it is hoped that this research will be of value in applying the empowerment approach in education systems in general and especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

### **10.7 Reflections and Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on this Study**

Fortunately, the data for this study were collected before the pandemic started, so its impact on this study was the dearth of opportunities for presentations and participation in academic conferences in various countries to exchange and impart experiences. However, as life is about to return to normal, the researcher intends, after obtaining a PhD, to maintain communication with the University of Glasgow and supervisors, as well as other universities and researchers, to follow up on scientific developments and to continue working on research and scientific articles and present them to the scientific authorities. As well as contributing to and attending academic meetings and scientific conferences and participating in preparing programmes, the author hopes to contribute to teaching curricula that focus on preparing and developing leaders at King Saud University.

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## Appendices



### Appendix 1a: The structure of the questionnaire -Pilot study (English)

Dear Teacher

As part of my PhD study at The University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK, I am undertaking a survey of **The Education Leadership and The Turn to Empowerment**. The primary aim of this study is to explore the possibilities the educational system enhancement from the application of the empowerment approach in relation to the revision of school leadership within Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision.

Your participation is vital for the success of this study and would be greatly appreciated. Completing this questionnaire will enable the researcher to achieve her aim and objectives.

I would use this opportunity to assure you that data will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this study.

#### **Please:**

- read the enclosed information about the research.
- note that you will indicate your consent to take part in research by completing the questionnaire.

- Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.
- Place your response in the envelope provided then give it to the secretary of the school administration.
- If you have been involved in the electronic questionnaire, you do not need to fill this questionnaire.

Thank you, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Your sincerely,

Researcher: Abeer AL-Ghamdi

xxxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk

Supervisor: Robert Doherty

Email: Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr.Margery McMahon

Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk

### Personal Information:

Please put (X) next to the appropriate response:

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Years of Experience: (1-5) (5-10) (10-15) (More than 15)
3. Regional Area: Centre ☐ West ☐ South ☐ East ☐

**Please put (X) in the appropriate box.**

	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	<b>Delegation of Authority:</b> The educational administration gives me sufficient authority to carry out the administrative tasks entrusted to me.					

2	It is mandated according to the regulations in the educational administration.					
3	The educational administration adopts the philosophy of delegation and develops this culture among school principals					
4	The administration trusts in my ability to perform the tasks entrusted to me.					
5	It gives me enough time to carry out the tasks entrusted to me.					
6	I exercise my powers during the period of empowerment without interference from the educational administration.					
7	<b>Motivation:</b> The educational administration is motivated by the exercise of responsibilities at work.					
8	My salary is commensurate with the effort I have made at work.					
9	Certificates of appreciation give me encouragement to enhance my work.					
10	Physical resources are available to support new creative ideas at school.					

11	The system of rewards and incentives provides opportunities for self-development.					
12	<b>Teamwork:</b>  The educational administration adopts and encourages the philosophy of Teamwork.					
13	There is a climate of cooperation and assistance among school principals.					
14	The atmosphere among principals within the educational administration is trustworthy.					
15	There is Scop for school teams to implement their decisions.					
16	There is a common vision for decision making between school principals and educational management.					
17	<b>Communication and information flow:</b>  The educational administration provides a clear and fast communication system that allows the flow of information.					

18	The instructions and procedures provided by the educational administration are clear.					
19	The educational administration is interested in providing effective and sophisticated means of communication to school principals.					
20	The manager can exchange information with the educational administration about the work problems.					
21	<b>Participation in decision-making:</b>  Participation in decision-making is characterized by positive relationships with the educational administration.					
22	My participation contributes to sound decisions.					
23	There is confidence in the ability of school principals to make school decisions.					
24	The opportunity to participate in decisions gives me the ability to solve many problems.					

25	I am responsible for implementing the decisions that I make.					
26	I have the skills to participate in decision-making.					
27	The Department holds regular meetings with staff to unify efforts.					
28	The Department encourages cooperative relations between schools principals.					

**Educational system reform:**

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	There have been some important changes in the education system in preparation for development.					
2	Some administrators in the senior leadership would like to delegate part of the powers to some school principals.					
3	School principals are trained to meet the developments of the					



	educational organisation.					
4	The work done by school principals granted them some authority is always effective.					
5	There is ongoing research on new ways to develop work methods.					
6	The organisation updates and renews techniques constantly.					
7	School principals are given the authority to do their work well.					
8	There are powers for some principals to act without reference to the higher administration.					
9	The senior management of the organisation selects the competent personnel for the development process of the educational organisation.					
10	There has been a radical shift in the					

	works strategy aimed at developing and modernizing.					
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### **Section 3: Open Questions:**

If we were to apply the approach of empowerment in the educational system in Saudi Arabia

1 - What are the most important obstacles from your point of view?

2. How can these constraints be overcome?

3. What are the factors that contribute to the success of this application?



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#### Appendix 1b: The structure of the questionnaire -Pilot study (Arabic)

عزيزتي المدرسة/ المدرس

كجزء من دراستي للدكتوراه في جامعة غلاسكو، اسكتلندا، المملكة المتحدة، أقوم بإجراء بحث يتعلق بتطوير القيادة التربوية والتوجه نحو مفهوم التمكين. الهدف الأساسي من هذه الدراسة هو استكشاف معنى مفهوم التمكين وإمكانيات تعزيز نظام التعليم من خلال تطبيق نهج التمكين فيما يتعلق بتنقيح القيادة المدرسية ضمن رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية لعام 2030.

مشاركتك أمر حيوي لنجاح هذه الدراسة حيث إنك تشكل عنصر أساسي في النظام التعليمي والعملية التعليمية ووجهك نظرك ستكون موضع تقدير كبير، لأن إكمال هذا الاستبيان سيمكن الباحث من تحقيق أهداف البحث موضع الدراسة.

سأستخدم هذه الفرصة لأؤكد لك أن البيانات سيتم التعامل معها على أنها سرية للغاية وسيتم استخدامها فقط لأغراض هذه الدراسة

رجاء:

قراءة المعلومات المرفقة حول البحث.  
 من فضلك لا تكتب اسمك على الاستبيان.  
 ضع ردك في المظروف المقدم ثم أعطيه لسكرتير إدارة المدرسة.  
 إذا كنت قد شاركت في الاستبيان الإلكتروني، فإنك لست بحاجة إلى ملء هذا الاستبيان.

شكرا لك، وأنا أتطلع إلى تلقي ردك .  
 المخلص لك،

الرقم	العبارة	موافق	موافق بشدة	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشدة
١	يتمتع الهيكل الإداري في المدرسة بنوع من السلطة والمساءلة الكافية					
٢	أنا عضو مشارك في عمليات تحسين وتطوير مدرستي					
٣	أود الحصول على مزيد من المسؤولية واتخاذ القرارات فيما يتعلق بالعمل الذي أقوم به.					
٤	أنا مسؤول مسؤولية كاملة عن عملي الذي أقوم به.					
٥	تشجع للنظام التعليمي مشاركة جميع أعضاء المنظمة التعليمية من مديرين ومعلمون في تحسين وتطوير العملية التعليمية.					
٦	لقد أتيت لي فرص تدريب لتأهيلي في المشاركة في صنع القرار والعمل الجماعي.					
٧	تمنحني إدارة المدرسة السلطة الكافية للقيام بالمهام الموكلة إلي.					
٨	كانت هناك تغييرات كبيرة في نظام التعليم فمن أجل التحضير لرؤية المملكة العربية السعودية 2030.					

					لدي فهم واضح عن مفهوم التمكين في النظام التعليمي في رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية للتعليم 2030.	٩
					تهتم إدارة المدرسة بالأفكار والآراء التي تقدمها المعلمات	١٠
					أستطيع المشاركة في عمليات التقييم الذاتي للمدرسة التي اعمل فيها.	١١
					تعقد إدارة المدرسة اجتماعات دورية مع المعلمات لتبادل الآراء واتخاذ القرارات بشكل جماعي.	١٢
					أفعل معظم عملي من تلقاء نفسي دون إشراك المعلمات	١٣
					تفرض مديرة المدرسة آراءها حول الأساليب التي تستخدمها المعلمات في اداء العمل	١٤
					يتشكل الهيكل الإداري في المدرسة من خلال العمل الجماعي، والإجماع والمشاركة	١٥
					لا أريد أن أتحمّل المزيد من المسؤولية عن اتخاذ القرارات في المدرسة التي اعمل بها.	١٦
					هناك اتصال مفتوح بين مديرة المدرسة والمعلمات.	١٧
					توفر لي إدارة المدرسة فرصًا لاتخاذ القرارات بشكل مستقل.	١٨

ثالثًا: أسئلة مفتوحة

إذا أردنا تطبيق نهج التمكين في النظام التعليمي في المملكة العربية السعودية

1 . ماهي اهم المعوقات من وجهة نظرك؟

2 . كيف يمكن التغلب على هذه القيود؟

3 . ما هي العوامل التي تساهم في نجاح هذا التطبيق؟



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#### **Appendix 1a: The structure of the questionnaire (English)Main study**

Dear Teacher

As part of my PhD study at The University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK, I am undertaking a survey of **The Education Leadership and The Turn to Empowerment**. The primary aim of this study is to explore the possibilities the educational system enhancement from the application of the empowerment approach in relation to the revision of school leadership within Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision.

Your participation is vital for the success of this study and would be greatly appreciated. Completing this questionnaire will enable the researcher to achieve her aim and objectives.

I would use this opportunity to assure you that data will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this study.

#### **Please:**

- read the enclosed information about the research.
- note that you will indicate your consent to take part in research by completing the questionnaire.

- Please do not write your name on the questionnaire.
- Place your response in the envelope provided then give it to the secretary of the school administration.
- If you have been involved in the electronic questionnaire, you do not need to fill this questionnaire.

Thank you, and I look forward to receiving your response.

Your sincerely,

Researcher: Abeer AL-Ghamdi

xxxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk

Supervisor: Robert Doherty

Email: Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr.Margery McMahon

Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk

### Personal Information:

Please put (X) next to the appropriate response:

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Years of Experience: (1-5) (5-10) (10-15) (More than 15)
3. Regional Area: Centre ☐ West ☐ South ☐ East ☐

**Please put (X) in the appropriate box.**

No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The administrative structure of the school is characterized by authority, and accountability.					

2	I am involved in the processes of improving and developing my School.					
3	I would like more responsibility and decision making concerning the work I do.					
4	I am held accountable for my work.					
5	Today's policies in the education system encourage the participation of principals and teachers.					
6	I have had training opportunities to help me participate in decision making or teamwork.					
7	The school administration gives me sufficient authority to carry out the tasks assigned to me.					
8	There have been significant changes in the education					



	system in preparation for Vision 2030.					
9	I understand the idea of empowerment in the vision 2030.					
10	The school administration is interested in the ideas and opinions offered by teachers.					
11	I have opportunities to participate in the self-evaluation processes of my school.					
12	The school administration holds regular meetings with teachers to allow collaboration.					
13	I do most of my work on my own without the involvement of other teachers.					
14	The school principal has strong views on the					

	methods to be used by teachers.					
15	The work of the school is characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation.					
16	I do not want to have more responsibility for making decisions in my school.					
17	The school administration provides me with opportunities to make decisions independently.					
18	There is open communication between my school principal and the teachers.					

### Open Questions:

If we were to apply the approach of empowerment in the educational system in Saudi Arabia

- 1- Does the education system give headteachers the authority that they need?
- 2- What would have to change in education system for teachers to be empowered?
- 3- Do teachers have enough freedom to do their jobs?
- 4- What is the potential of empowerment to improve the performance of the teachers?

المملكة العربية السعودية  
وزارة التربية والتعليم  
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة  
الرياض



#### Appendix 1b: The structure of the questionnaire (Arabic)

عزيزتي/عزيزي: المشاركة / المشارك

كجزء من دراستي للدكتوراه في جامعة غلاسكو، اسكتلندا، المملكة المتحدة، أقوم بإجراء بحث يتعلق بتطوير القيادة التربوية والتوجه نحو مفهوم التمكين. الهدف الأساسي من هذه الدراسة هو استكشاف معنى مفهوم التمكين وإمكانيات تعزيز نظام التعليم من خلال تطبيق نهج التمكين فيما يتعلق بتنقيح القيادة المدرسية ضمن رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية لعام 2030.

مشاركتك أمر حيوي لنجاح هذه الدراسة حيث إنك تشكل عنصر أساسي في النظام التعليمي والعملية التعليمية ووجهك نظرك ستكون موضع تقدير كبير، لأن إكمال هذا الاستبيان سيمكن الباحث من تحقيق أهداف البحث موضع الدراسة.

سأستخدم هذه الفرصة لأؤكد لك أن البيانات سيتم التعامل معها على أنها سرية للغاية وسيتم استخدامها فقط لأغراض هذه الدراسة

رجاء:

قراءة المعلومات المرفقة حول البحث.  
من فضلك لا تكتب اسمك على الاستبيان.  
ضع ردك في المظروف المقدم ثم أعطيه لسكرتير إدارة المدرسة.  
إذا كنت قد شاركت في الاستبيان الإلكتروني، فإنك لست بحاجة إلى ملء هذا الاستبيان.

شكرا لك، وأنا أتطلع إلى تلقي ردك .

المخلص لك،

باحث مشارك: عبير بنت سعيد الغامدي

[xxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:xxxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk)

المشرف الدراسي الاول بجامعة جلاسكو [Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk)

المشرف الدراسي الثاني بجامعة جلاسكو:

[Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk)

الرقم	العبارة	موافق	موافق بشدة	محايد	غير موافق	غير موافق بشدة
١	يتمتع الهيكل الإداري في المدرسة بنوع من السلطة والمساءلة الكافية					
٢	أنا عضو مشارك في عمليات تحسين وتطوير مدرستي					
٣	أود الحصول على مزيد من المسؤولية واتخاذ القرارات فيما يتعلق بالعمل الذي أقوم به.					
٤	أنا مسؤول مسؤولية كاملة عن عملي الذي أقوم به.					
٥	تشجع السياسات الحالية للنظام التعليمي مشاركة جميع أعضاء المنظمة التعليمية من مديرين ومعلمون في تحسين وتطوير العملية التعليمية.					
٦	لقد أتيت لي فرص تدريب لتأهيلي في المشاركة في صنع القرار والعمل الجماعي.					
٧	تمنحني إدارة المدرسة السلطة الكافية للقيام بالمهام الموكلة إلي.					

٨	كانت هناك تغييرات كبيرة في نظام التعليم فمن أجل التحضير لرؤية المملكة العربية السعودية 2030.				
٩	لدي فهم واضح عن مفهوم التمكين في النظام التعليمي في رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية للتعليم 2030.				
١٠	تهتم إدارة المدرسة بالأفكار والآراء التي تقدمها المعلمات				
١١	لدي فرصة للمشاركة في عمليات التقييم الذاتي للمدرسة التي اعمل فيها.				
١٢	تعقد إدارة المدرسة اجتماعات دورية مع المعلمات لتبادل الآراء واتخاذ القرارات بشكل جماعي.				
١٣	أفعل معظم عملي من تلقاء نفسي دون إشراك المعلمات				
١٤	تفرض مديرة المدرسة آراءها حول الأساليب التي تستخدمها المعلمات في أداء العمل				
١٥	المدرسة من خلال العمل الجماعي، والإجماع والمشاركة				
١٦	لا أريد أن أتحمّل المزيد من المسؤولية عن اتخاذ القرارات في المدرسة التي اعمل بها.				
١٧	هناك اتصال مفتوح بين مديرة المدرسة والمعلمات.				
١٨	توفر لي إدارة المدرسة فرصًا لاتخاذ القرارات بشكل مستقل.				

الأسئلة المفتوحة :

السؤال الأول: من وجهة نظرك هل يمنح نظام التعليم في السعودية مدراء المدارس السلطة التي يحتاجونها؟

السؤال الثاني: من وجهة نظرك ما الذي يجب تغييره في النظام التعليمي السعودي حتى يتم تمكين المعلمين والمعلمات؟

السؤال الثالث: من وجهة نظرك هل يتمتع المعلمين والمعلمات بالحرية الكافية والصلاحيات للقيام بإعمالهم؟

السؤال الرابع: من وجهة نظرك ماهي إمكانيات تطبيق التمكين في تحسين الأداء الوظيفي؟



College of Social  
Sciences

#### **Appendix 2A: The structure of interview – Main study (English):**

##### **Interview questions (Leaders):**

1. How many years have you been in this post or in this role?
2. In the last five years have you noted or been aware of changes in the education system?
3. How difficult or how easy has making change or achieving change been in your experience?
4. Across management and leadership thinking has the idea of empowerment been developed or has the government taken up this idea of empowerment in 2030 vision?
5. How do you personally understand the idea of empowerment?
6. How do you think empowerment could operate in a school in the education system?
7. Had you heard of the term empowerment before I mentioned it to you? if (yes)  
Where did you come across the idea?
8. What changes would need to be made to allow empowerment to operate or become part of a school of education system culture?
9. What would help you to be more empowered?

10. What do you think the Ministry and leaders in the education system need to do to promote empowerment?



المملكة العربية السعودية  
وزارة التربية والتعليم  
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة  
الرياض

#### Appendix 2B: The structure of interview – Main study (Arabic):

##### اسئلة المقابلة:

1. كم عدد سنوات الخدمة لك في هذا المنصب؟
2. هل لاحظت وجود تغيير في نظام التعليم بالمملكة العربية السعودية خلال الخمس سنوات الأخيرة؟
3. كيف كانت تجربة التغيير من وجهة نظرك؟
4. كيف أدخلت وطورت حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية فكرة التمكين في رؤية المملكة ٢٠٣٠؟
5. ماذا يقصد بمفهوم التمكين من وجهة نظرك؟
6. ما هو الدور الذي قد يلعبه مفهوم التمكين في تطور النظام التعليمي في المملكة؟
7. هل لديك فكره مسبقه عن مفهوم التمكين؟  
إذا نعم من اين جاءت هذه الفكرة؟
8. ماهي التغييرات والإجراءات التي يجب القيام بها من اجل تطبيق مفهوم التمكين في الثقافة التنظيمية للنظام التعليمي؟
9. ما الذي تحتاج اليه لتصبح قائد ممكن؟
10. رأيك في توجه الوزارة في النظام التعليمي لتعزيز مفهوم التمكين؟





**Appendix 3a: The structure of focus group Main study (English):**

**Focus group questions (principal):**

- 1- Has anyone ever heard about this concept of empowerment? If (yes)  
Could you please explain to me more about it?
- 2- Have anyone ever heard this idea in schools or organisation or how people should  
be organised and work together?
- 3- Have you ever felt empowered or had an experience that would be an example of  
empowerment as a teacher?
- 4- In our school system, what would have to change to empower teachers?
- 5- Do you think this idea of empowerment fits with our Saudi culture?
- 6- What would the ministry or government have to do to promote empowerment in  
the education system?
- 7- Any other ideas or thoughts about empowerment?



### Appendix 3 B: The structure of focus group (Arabic):

#### اسئلة مجموعة المناقشة:

- 1- هل يوجد لديكم فكره عن مفهوم التمكين؟  
إذا نعم هل يمكنك ان توضح أكثر عن هذا المفهوم؟
- 2- هل لديكم فكره عن كيفية تطبيق هذا المفهوم في المدارس او المنظمات التعليمية؟
- 3- هل من وجهة نظرك تعتبر أنك مدير ممكن؟
- 4- ما لذي يجب تغييره في الهيكل والنظام المدرسي من وجهة نظركم لتطبيق مفهوم التمكين؟
- 5- هل تعتقد ان فكرة التمكين تتناسب مع ثقافة المجتمع السعودي؟
- 6- ما لذي يجب على وزارة التربية والتعليم القيام به لتعزيز تطبيق مفهوم التمكين في النظام التعليمي؟
- 7- هل لديك أي أفكار أخرى عن هذا المفهوم؟

## **Appendix 4 A: Plain language statement - Interview/Focus group (English)**

### **Plain Language Statement**

#### **Study title and Researcher Details**

My name is Abeer Saeed Alghamdi. I am a doctoral student at the University of Glasgow. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research project. The title of the project is:

#### **Educational Leadership and the Turn to Empowerment**

#### **11. Invitation**

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. Because of your experience and position, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview. This interview would be concerned with the reform of the education system in the KSA. You will be provided with full information regarding the scope and aims of this research study. If you have any questions about any aspect of the research, please ask me. Please be aware that you can withdraw from the interview at any stage, and you do not need to provide me with an explanation. You are also free to opt out of answering any question if you choose to do so.

After reading this Plain Language Statement if you agree to take part in this project; please give your consent by filling out the attached consent form. Thank you for taking the time to consider my invitation.

#### **12. What is the purpose of this study?**

This study takes as a focus empowerment as a reforming concept in the education system of Saudi Arabia. The history and meaning of empowerment within organisations and educational contexts will be explored in framing contemporary approaches influencing policy and reform. The application of empowerment derived change to the role of school leaders in Saudi Arabia will be explored. This study also aims to investigate the possibilities of system enhancement from the application of empowerment approaches in relation to the revision of school leadership within Saudi Arabia's 2030 vision.

### **13. Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen because you are an education professional working in our national system.

All the participants in this research study will be affiliated with the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or working as principals or teachers in secondary schools in Saudi Arabia.

### **14. Do I have to take part?**

No. You are free to opt out of this research study at any stage of the interview or at any time. You do not need to provide an explanation for your withdrawal.

### **15. What will happen to me if I take part?**

You will be invited to take part in an interview. The project will interview 3-4 Executive Directors from the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and 5-7 school leaders. It will be conducted at a place and time convenient to you and last for 30 to 40 minutes.

You will be asked various questions relating to the implementation of the concept of empowerment of school leaders to reform education system in Saudi Arabia. You will be free to express your opinions and discuss your experiences about the concept of empowerment and its role to improving the education process in Saudi Arabia. With your permission the

interview will be audio recorded and the recording will be kept in a secure location. The audio recording will be transcribed by me and will then be used to inform my research, to identify common themes across the responses collected from other participants.

#### **16. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

Yes, all the information provided by you in the form of answers to the questions will be kept confidential and will not be revealed to a third party. All of your responses will be anonymised (i.e. an irreversible process whereby identifiers are removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the participants). It is then impossible to identify any individual who took part in the interviews. The data collected will be used according to the University of Glasgow approved Code of Good Practices in Research.

Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.

#### **17. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of this study will be derived in part from analysing the interview data, which will be presented in the results chapter of my PhD thesis. Later, the findings will be published in the peer-reviewed journals. The results of this study will be used to provide tentative conclusions to help the implementation of the concept of empowerment of school leaders in order to reform and improve the education system in Saudi Arabia.

#### **18. Possible Risk**

This study is low risk because it deals with the issue of implementation of the reform of the educational system in Saudi Arabia in line with the vision of 2030.

#### **19. Who is organising and funding the research? (If relevant)**

The researcher's doctoral studies are funded by the King Saud University in Saudi Arabia.

## **20. Who has reviewed the study?**

The project has been reviewed by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

To conduct this research project, I would be working under the supervision of

### **1- Dr. Robert Doherty**

Tel No: +4401413303091

Email Address: [Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk)

### **2- Professor. Margery McMahon**

Tel No: +44(0)1413303018

Email Address: [Margery.McMahon@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Margery.McMahon@glasgow.ac.uk)

**University address:** [student.recruitment@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:student.recruitment@glasgow.ac.uk)

## **21. Contact for Further Information**

If you wish to have further information about this study, you may contact me by email at

**xxxxxxx@student.gla.ac.uk.**

Should you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you can contact the College of Social Science Ethics Officer by contacting [Dr Muir Houston:](#)

[Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk)

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION**



#### Appendix 4B: Plain language statement - Interview/Focus group (Arabic)

##### بيان توضيحي

##### عنوان الدراسة و تفاصيلها :

انا طالبة الدكتوراة : عبير بنت سعيد الغامدي

كجزء من دراستي للدكتوراه في جامعة غلاسكو، اسكتلندا، المملكة المتحدة، أقوم بإجراء بحث يتعلق بتطوير القيادة التربوية والتوجه نحو مفهوم التمكين.

تحت عنوان " التوجه نحو التمكين وتطوير القيادات التربوية "

الهدف الأساسي من هذه الدراسة: هو استكشاف معنى مفهوم التمكين وإمكانيات تعزيز نظام التعليم من خلال تطبيق نهج التمكين فيما يتعلق بتنقيح القيادة المدرسية ضمن رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية لعام 2030.

##### الدعوة للمشاركة:

مشاركتك أمر حيوي لنجاح هذه الدراسة حيث إنك تشكل عنصر أساسي في النظام التعليمي والعملية التعليمية ووجهك نظرك ستكون موضع تقدير كبير، لان اجابتك على هذه الأسئلة سيمكن الباحث من تحقيق اهداف البحث موضع الدراسة. و يسعدني ان تسالني او تناقشني فيها متى اردت اذا كانت غير واضحة لديك، ارجو ان تمنع النظر وان تأخذ وقتا كافيا في الموافقة او عدم الموافقة على المشاركة إذا كنت ستوافق على المشاركة في هذا المشروع؛ يرجى إعطاء موافقتك عن طريق ملء نموذج الموافقة المرفق. شكرا لك على الوقت الذي قضيته للنظر في دعوتي.

ما هو الغرض من هذه الدراسة؟

تركز هذه الدراسة على التمكين كمفهوم إصلاحي في نظام التعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية. سيتم استكشاف تاريخ ومعنى التمكين داخل المنظمات والسياسات التعليمية في صياغة النهج المعاصرة التي تؤثر على السياسة والإصلاح. سيتم استكشاف تطبيق التغيير الناجم عن التمكين على دور قادة المدارس في المملكة العربية السعودية. تهدف هذه الدراسة أيضًا إلى استكشاف إمكانيات تحسين النظام من تطبيق مناهج التمكين فيما يتعلق بمراجعة القيادة المدرسية ضمن رؤية المملكة العربية السعودية 2030

لماذا تم اختياري؟

لقد تم اختيارك لأنك محترف تعليمي وعنصر هام يعمل في نظامنا التعليمي ضمن خطط التنمية الوطنية سيكون جميع المشاركين في هذه الدراسة البحثية تابعين لوزارة التربية والتعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية أو يعملون كمديرين أو مدرسين في المدارس الثانوية في المملكة العربية السعودية.

هل يجب علي المشاركة؟

لا. لك مطلق الحرية في الانسحاب من هذه الدراسة البحثية في أي مرحلة من مراحل المقابلة أو في أي وقت. لا تحتاج إلى تقديم تفسير لانسحابك.

ماذا سيحدث لي إذا شاركت؟

ستتم دعوتك للمشاركة في مجموعة تركيز. سيشمل ذلك 5-7 مدرسين في مدرستك ويستمر لمدة 40 دقيقة. سيعقد الاجتماع في مدرستك.

ستطرح عليك أسئلة مختلفة تتعلق بتنفيذ مفهوم تمكين قادة المدارس لإصلاح نظام التعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية. لك الحرية في التعبير عن آرائك ومناقشة تجاربك حول مفهوم التمكين ودوره في تحسين عملية التعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية. بعد إنك، سيتم تسجيل المقابلة صوتيًا وسيتم الاحتفاظ بالتسجيل في مكان آمن. سيتم نسخ الصوت من قبلي ثم استخدامه لإثراء بحثي، لتحديد الموضوعات المشتركة من خلال الردود التي تم جمعها من المشاركين الآخرين.

هل ستبقى مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة سرية؟

نعم، ستبقى جميع المعلومات التي قدمتها في شكل إجابات على الأسئلة سرية ولن يتم الكشف عنها لطرف ثالث. ستكون جميع ردودك مجهولة المصدر (أي عملية لا رجعة فيها حيث تتم إزالة المعلومات واستبدالها برمز ، مع عدم وجود سجل لكيفية ارتباط الرمز بالمشاركين). ومن ثم يصبح من المستحيل تحديد الشخص الذي شارك في المقابلات. سيتم استخدام البيانات التي تم جمعها وفقًا للممارسات البحثية الجيدة المعتمدة من جامعة جلاسكو.

يرجى ملاحظة أنه سيتم التقيد الصارم بضمانات السرية ما لم يتم الكشف عن دليل على وجود خرق أو ضرر محتمل. في مثل هذه الحالات، قد تكون الجامعة ملزمة بالاتصال بالهيئات / الوكالات القانونية ذات الصلة



ماذا سيحدث لنتائج الدراسة؟

سيتم اشتقاق نتائج هذه الدراسة جزئياً من تحليل بيانات المقابلة، والتي سيتم عرضها في فصل النتائج من أطروحة الدكتوراه. في وقت لاحق، سيتم نشر النتائج في المجالات المحكمة. سيتم استخدام نتائج هذه الدراسة لتقديم استنتاجات أولية للمساعدة في تنفيذ مفهوم تمكين قادة المدارس لإصلاح وتحسين نظام التعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية.

المخاطر المحتملة.

تعتبر هذه الدراسة منخفضة المخاطر لأنها تتناول تنفيذ الإصلاح التعليمي في المملكة العربية السعودية بما يتماشى مع رؤية 2030.

من يقوم بمراجعة هذه الدراسة؟

يتم مراجعة هذا المشروع من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث بكلية العلوم الاجتماعية لإجراء هذا المشروع البحثي، سأعمل تحت الإشراف

الدكتور: روبرت دوهرتني

المشرف الدراسي الاول بجامعة جلاسكو: [Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Robert.doherty@glasgow.ac.uk)

المشرف الدراسي الثاني بجامعة جلاسكو: بروفيسور: مارجري

[Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Margery.mcmahon@glasgow.ac.uk)

شكرا لك، وأنا أتطلع إلى تلقي ردك.

y

**Appendix 5 A: Participation consent form - Interview/Focus group (English)**

Title of Project: **Educational Leadership and the Turn to Empowerment**

Name of Researcher: **Abeer Saeed Alghamdi**

I confirm that I have read and understood the Plain Language Statement/Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I acknowledge that participants will be not be identified and a pseudonym will be used in any publications arising from the research.

I acknowledge that there will be no effect on my employment with MOE in Saudi Arabia arising from my participation or non-participation in this research.

I understand that the data collected from this research will be stored securely with my personal details removed and agree for it to be held as set out in the Plain Language Statement.

I consent ☐ do not consent ☐ to interviews being audio-recorded.

(I acknowledge that copies of transcripts will be returned to me for verification.)

I agree to take part in this research study ☐

I do not agree to take part in this research study ☐

Name of Participant:

Signature:

Date .....



## Appendix 5 B: Participation consent form - Interview/Focus group (Arabic)

نموذج نموذج الموافقة

عنوان المشروع: القيادة التربوية والتحول إلى التمكين

اسم الباحث: عبير سعيد الغامدي

أؤكد أنني قد قرأت وفهمت بيان اللغة المبسطة / صحيفة معلومات المشاركين للدراسة أعلاه وأتيت لي الفرصة لطرح الأسئلة.

أفهم أن مشاركتي طوعية وأنني حر في الانسحاب في أي وقت دون إبداء أي سبب.

أقر بأنه لن يتم التعرف على المشاركين وسيتم استخدام اسم مستعار في أي منشورات تنشأ عن البحث.

أقر بأنه لن يكون هناك أي تأثير على عملي في وزارة التربية والتعليم في المملكة العربية السعودية نتيجة مشاركتي أو عدم مشاركتي في هذا البحث.

أفهم أن البيانات التي تم جمعها من هذا البحث سيتم تخزينها بشكل آمن مع إزالة بياناتي الشخصية وأوافق على الاحتفاظ بها على النحو المنصوص عليه في بيان اللغة البسيطة.

أوافق ☐ لا أوافق ☐ على أن يتم تسجيل المقابلات صوتيًا.

(أقر بأنه سيتم إرجاع نسخ من النصوص إليّ للتحقق منها).

أوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية ☐

لا أوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية ☐

اسم المشارك:

التوقيع: ..... تاريخ: