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## Decision-Making Processes of Administrative Bodies in Sports Clubs Participating in the Iraqi Premier League for the 2022-2023 Football Season

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### Abstract

The research aimed to examine decision-making among the administrative bodies of sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Premier League for the 2022-2023 football season. The researchers employed the descriptive (survey) method, which suits the nature of the study. The research population comprised 177 members of the administrative bodies of sports clubs involved in the Iraqi Premier League for the 2022-2023 season. A questionnaire was used to gather the necessary data to achieve the research objectives by applying a survey form designed to assess decision-making within the administrative bodies of these sports clubs. The main findings indicated that the decision-making practices of the administrative bodies of the Premier League football clubs were statistically significant, suggesting that these bodies possess the capacity for effective decision-making in addressing general issues. The effectiveness of decision-making among these administrative bodies, as measured by the scale, involved defining the problem, identifying and evaluating available alternatives, choosing the suitable alternative to solve the problem, and monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the decision, though they faced challenges in data and information collection.

**Keywords:** Decision-making, Administrative bodies, Football

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## Introduction

Decision-making in administrative fields has received significant attention due to its role in enabling organizations to continue their activities efficiently and effectively. Decision-making is "primarily based on future predictions and achieves its potential through anticipated expectations. Furthermore, the complexity of administrative tasks and the demands of modern performance, coupled with scientific and technological advancements, have presented challenges for administration, making traditional methods of relying solely on personal experience and trial and error insufficient for achieving organizational objectives" (Abdul Muneim, 2022). Decision-making is among the crucial responsibilities of administrative bodies tasked with leading sports clubs, requiring substantial effort and objectivity, free from personal biases. Decision-making serves as the backbone of the administrative process, being the decisive point in management. For an administrative body to make sound decisions, it must possess the skills and competence to identify problems accurately, understand and analyze solutions, and select appropriate alternatives. Ibrahim (2000, p. 114) notes, "A decision-maker must possess a knowledgeable and experienced character to overcome challenges that may arise during the administrative process." Sound decision-making requires specific criteria to guide administrative bodies in making timely decisions.

The researchers believe that decision-making is an essential function of the administrative body, which serves as the club's on-ground leadership in its administrative role, especially given the various challenges it encounters. The decision itself represents an intended goal and a means to achieve it. The success of the administrative body depends on its ability to understand and execute administrative decisions effectively. This necessitates clarity, timeliness, and diligent follow-up on implementation and evaluation.

This background highlights the research problem, which aims to explore some of the interrelated aspects needed for harmony in the work of the administrative bodies of Iraqi Premier League football clubs. It seeks to identify administrative weaknesses affecting performance and competitiveness while assessing the decision-making capabilities of these bodies. Additionally, decision-making is crucial for administrative bodies aiming to develop sports administration according to scientifically and logically grounded principles.

Based on this, the researchers reviewed related studies focusing on the variables under investigation, including:

Study on Psychological Stress and Its Impact on Decision-Making among Sports Club Administrators (Abdul Muneim, 2022): This study aimed to examine the influence of psychological stress on decision-making among sports club administrators. Using a descriptive survey approach, the researcher applied a questionnaire to a sample of 85 administrators in Aswan sports clubs,

divided into exploratory and main samples. The study concluded a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological stress and decision-making capacity among Aswan club administrators.

Study on Developing and Standardizing a Decision-Making Scale for Leaders of Olympic Sports Federations from Employees' Perspectives (Attiya & Mohammed, 2021): This research highlights the importance of decision-making in sports administration, particularly in national sports federations. It aimed to create and standardize a decision-making scale for leaders of Olympic sports federations. Using a descriptive method, a sample of 163 national team coaches for Olympic federations was selected. The study found varying responses and recommended the development and standardization of decision-making scales for these leaders.

Study on Decision-Making in Sports Administration and Its Role in Achieving Employee Excellence (Al-Hassan, 2020): This study focused on understanding the role of decision-making in achieving employee excellence in the Directorate of Youth and Sports in M'Sila. The study emphasized that organizational progress relies heavily on competent administrative leadership. Using a descriptive approach, it included 30 employees and offered suggestions such as adopting modern techniques for problem-solving in sports institutions and ensuring strategic decision-making review.

Performance Measurement in Decision-Making among Sports Leaders in University Sports Departments in Jordan (Asilah, 2018): This study aimed to assess performance measurement in decision-making within Jordanian university sports departments, examining the influence of educational background and university affiliation on decision-making. The study applied a survey to 25 sports supervisors across four Jordanian universities. Results indicated statistically significant differences favoring a more democratic and scientific approach over individualistic decision-making.

Methodology and Tools: The researchers used a descriptive survey approach suitable for the study. They coordinated with the Iraqi Football Association to identify the Iraqi Premier League football clubs for the 2022-2023 season, confirming a population of 20 sports clubs and 177 administrative members through the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The sample included all 20 clubs, representing 100% of the population, as shown in Tables (1) and (2).

Table (1) shows the research community and its sample

Samples					
S	Club Name	Administrative ly Numbers	S	Club Name	Administrative ly Numbers
1	Al-Zawraa	10	11	Duhok	9
2	Al-Quwa Al- iya	7	12	Newroz SC	9
3	Al-Talaba SC	7	13	Al-Najaf SC	8
4	Al-Shorta SC	10	14	Naft Al-Wasat	9
5	Al-Karkh SC	7	15	Naft Al- raa SC	10
6	Al-Hedood SC	8	16	Karbalaa	10
7	Al-Sena'a SC	9	17	Al-Qasim	9
8	Al-Kahraba	10	18	Zakho	9
9	Al-Naft SC	9	19	Al-Naft SC	9
10	Naft Maysan	10	20	Al-Diwaniya	8
Total		177			

### Research Tools:

The research tools for both theoretical and practical aspects included a range of sources, such as books, studies, research papers, articles, theses, and online resources. For the practical field aspect, the researchers conducted field visits and personal interviews at the headquarters and stadiums of Iraqi Premier League football clubs for the 2022-2023 season, along with field

observations. The primary tool used was a specialized questionnaire form designed by the researchers to collect essential data, which included a decision-making scale encompassing five key domains: problem identification, data and information collection, identification and evaluation of available alternatives, selection of the appropriate alternative to solve the problem, and follow-up and evaluation of decision implementation. The researchers applied this scale to a sample of 177 administrative body members, analyzing responses to assign a specific score to each participant.

#### Scientific Validity of the Decision-Making Scale:

**Scale Validity:** Validity is a crucial requirement for a reliable scale, indicating how closely the scale items align with the attribute it aims to measure. The researchers established face validity by having experts and specialists review the scale's items and domains, confirming its suitability for application. The researchers also calculated discriminative power by finding the mean and standard deviation scores of the high and low groups in each domain, followed by applying an independent samples t-test to determine statistical significance. The results showed significant discriminative power in the scale items, as significance values were below the 0.05 threshold.

**Scale Reliability:** Reliability is essential for a scale's consistent performance; repeated measurements of the same individual should yield stable scores. To determine the reliability of the decision-making scale, the researchers employed split-half reliability and Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which confirmed high reliability values, making the scale dependable.

**Results:** The results of the decision-making scale for the administrative bodies of Premier League football clubs were presented and analyzed. Mean and standard deviation scores of the responses were calculated for each item on the decision-making scale across the five domains: problem identification, data and information collection, identification of available alternatives, selection of the suitable alternative to solve the problem, and follow-up and evaluation of decision implementation. These results are displayed in Table (2), which includes mean scores, standard deviations, skewness, hypothetical mean, and significance for the responses of the research sample members.

**Table (2)** Presentation of mean scores, standard deviations, skewness, hypothetical mean, and significance of the decision-making scale scores for the responses of the research sample members.

Domain	Arithm mean	Stand deviation	S	Hypothetical mean	t	R	Significance
Defining problem	24.825	3.827	-	21	8.93	0.0	معنوي
Collecting and information	26.500	2.737	.55	27	1.63	0.1	غير معنوي
Identifying available alternatives	22.837	3.849	-	18	11.2	0.0	معنوي
Choosing appropriate alternative to solve problem	24.975	3.493	.34	21	10.1	0.0	معنوي
Following on the implementation of decision and evaluating it	23.050	3.744	.31	18	12.0	0.0	معنوي
Scale score	122.18	9.217	.11	105	16.6	0.0	معنوي

Analysis From Table (2), it is evident that the decision-making score for the administrative bodies of Premier League football clubs shows a mean of (122.18), with a standard deviation of (9.217) and a hypothetical mean of (105), at an error level of (0.000), indicating a significant difference from the hypothetical mean, which is higher than the latter.

The researchers attribute this result to the administrative bodies' awareness of the importance of their decisions and their appropriateness to the situations in which they were made. This awareness facilitates the clubs' progress in the right direction, clearly demonstrating the administrative bodies' belief in, sensitivity to, (Abdulhussein et al., 2024) and appreciation of their responsibilities. One of the key factors for the success of these administrative bodies is their ability to make decisions that require awareness and deep thought in various situations and to make these decisions promptly. Decision-making is a fundamental function of the administrative bodies in their efforts to achieve success. It is a continuous process, (Easa et al., 2022) as these bodies operate within a series of diverse decisions across administrative and technical domains. Decision-making is at the core of the administrative process, serving as the foundation for all management functions, including planning, organizing, directing, and controlling. Each of these functions relies on a set of critical management decisions. Decision-making is the tool through which administrative bodies carry out their work by determining what needs to be done, who will do it, (HalahAtiyah et al., 2024) and when it should be done. Therefore, the more capable the administrative bodies are in making appropriate and accurate decisions, the higher their administrative performance level, significantly impacting the club's success or failure. This is confirmed by Khalasi's study (2007, p. 48), (Kadhim, 2023) which states that "decision-making plays an essential role in embodying, adapting, interpreting, and applying the organization's objectives and general strategy." As discussed, decision-making is a dynamic process; administrative bodies must monitor and follow up on the results of their decisions. This process begins with identifying the problem, gathering information, analyzing, and addressing it, (Kazar & Kazim, 2020) allowing for the determination of possible alternatives and the selection of the best solution. Notably, when designing decisions, administrative bodies should analyze, organize, plan for, and evaluate the decision's implementation and management. The administrative body is entrusted with making every effort to arrive at sound decisions.

**Decision-Making Domains:** In the area of problem identification, the mean score was (24.825) with a standard deviation of (3.827) and a hypothetical mean of (21), at an error level of (0.000), indicating a significant difference above the hypothetical mean.

The researchers attribute this result to the administrative bodies' ability to identify problems they face in their work, despite the pressures and competition in the league. The problem identification stage is a crucial step in decision-making for the administrative bodies. Proper problem identification and diagnosis require precision and clarity, (Mahmood & Kadhim, 2023) so they can address the problem effectively. This involves studying the causes, gathering and analyzing related information, and assessing the feasibility of potential solutions and the availability of necessary resources for implementation. Before making decisions, it is essential in administrative work to understand the different aspects of the problem, diagnosing and defining it by type and root

causes to reach a sound decision that achieves the desired objectives. Tawfiq and Al-Quraishi (2006, p. 231) emphasize that "the primary benefit of creativity in decision-making lies in identifying problems and defining their dimensions clearly and accurately, aiding in formulating solutions, alternatives, and exploring innovative approaches while fully controlling work obstacles." This study aligns with Al-Hassan's study (2020, p. 83) on the role of problem diagnosis in decision-making, highlighting its significant impact on achieving outstanding performance. (Mohsen et al., 2024)

In the area of data and information gathering, the mean score was relatively low at (26.500) with a standard deviation of (2.737) and a hypothetical mean of (27), at an error level of (0.106), indicating an insignificant difference below the hypothetical mean. (Ahmed Amer Abdul Hussein, 2020)

The researchers suggest that this points to a weakness among the administrative bodies of Premier League football clubs in gathering data and information, (Hammood et al., 2024) which could impact the accuracy of the decisions made. Decisions made with inadequate data or weak data collection on relevant issues can negatively affect desired outcomes. Information gathering helps thoroughly examine a decision before it is made, leading to an informed choice that aligns with the set objective. (Mandoob Makki Ati et al., 2024) Different solutions vary based on the nature and context of each problem. Thus, collecting data and information plays a critical role in identifying ideal solutions during decision-making. Expertise and skill in information gathering, as well as consulting with experts, significantly contribute to successful decision-making. This is affirmed by Qasemi (2021, p. 36), who states, "Through studying, analyzing, researching, and gathering information on the problem, decision-makers enhance their knowledge, facilitating a solution. Solving some problems depends on experience, (Saad et al., 2023) logical thinking, and the systematic approach of the decision-maker and their qualification and competence." Therefore, administrative bodies should acquire as much data and information as possible through various methods to reach sound decisions. This is consistent with Sokhri's study (2016, p. 83), which concludes that "information quality positively impacts decision-making, and timely access to improved information enhances decision-making quality. Decisions based on available information systems are credible in the sports organization."

In the domain of identifying and evaluating available alternatives, the mean score was (22.837) with a standard deviation of (3.849) and a hypothetical mean of (18), at an error level of (0.000), indicating a significant difference above the hypothetical mean.

The researchers conclude that these results show the administrative body members' ability to identify alternatives to resolve the issues they face, assisting in reaching sound decisions. This



signifies that they are competent in recognizing potential solutions or alternatives when making decisions. This stage requires foresight and a broad perspective to identify various alternatives, evaluate them, review information, consider others' opinions, and select the best option to achieve the decision-making objectives. Generating a list of flexible, practical alternatives enables viable solutions for decision-making. This aligns with Al-Hassan (2020, p. 78), who notes that "the stage of available solutions and their evaluation involves identifying at least two solutions, with participation fostering idea sharing, generating as many ideas as possible, and combining and refining ideas to reach a sound decision." Harrison describes decision-making as "an ongoing process of evaluating alternatives to achieve a specific objective" (Hammoud, 2012, p. 179). This step assesses each alternative's strengths and weaknesses, depending on the accuracy of the related information.

For the domain of choosing the suitable alternative to solve the problem, the mean score was (24.975) with a standard deviation of (3.493) and a hypothetical mean of (21), at an error level of (0.000), indicating a significant difference above the hypothetical mean.

The researchers attribute this to the administrative bodies' understanding of the importance of their decisions in achieving desired outcomes, (Zghayer & Kadhim, 2014) representing their vision and goals, which are documented as decisions that contribute to their aspirations and perseverance toward success. By making decisions that improve club effectiveness and help prevent problems, administrative bodies exchange views to select the best alternative. This phase requires in-depth study of each alternative's efficiency and expected return. Hasty decisions are avoided to ensure a suitable choice is made. Farhan and Saud (2018, p. 47) assert that "the decision-maker should anticipate both negative and positive outcomes based on the alternatives, thoroughly examining each one's advantages and disadvantages and assessing it against established criteria."

In the domain of monitoring and evaluating decision implementation, the mean score was (23.050) with a standard deviation of (3.744) and a hypothetical mean of (18), at an error level of (0.000), indicating a significant difference above the hypothetical mean. (Yasir & Sikhe, 2020)

The researchers observe that these results indicate the administrative body members' ability to monitor and evaluate decision implementation, marking the final stage of decision-making, through which the decision's success or failure is assessed. This process involves various steps, including delegating responsible personnel, defining responsibilities, implementing procedures, evaluation methods, success measurement, addressing issues during implementation, and formulating backup plans. This phase allows the administrative body to detect early issues with the decision, execute it with realism and accuracy, and foster a sense of accountability. Atwi (2004, p. 303) emphasizes that "evaluation is an organized and purposeful process that assesses decision

success in achieving targeted objectives." Evaluation is continuous, helping administrative bodies correct negatives, reinforce positives, confirm or reject decisions, understand final results, and prevent recurrent issues. Decisions should align with the objectives of the implementing personnel (club employees), positively affecting performance improvement.(Rija, 2023)

### **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

Following their research and analysis, the researchers drew several conclusions:

The current state of decision-making among the administrative bodies of Premier League football clubs is statistically significant, indicating that they possess the ability to make effective decisions for problem-solving.

The effectiveness of decision-making among the administrative bodies of Premier League football clubs, according to the scale domains, was evident in problem identification, identifying and evaluating alternatives, selecting the suitable alternative, and monitoring and evaluating implementation, while data and information collection showed weakness.

Based on these conclusions, the researchers recommend:

Emphasizing the collection and provision of sufficient data and information on problems before making decisions.

To achieve the administrative body's objectives and programs, focused efforts, follow-up, and empowerment of decisions are essential to ensure desired program and plan outcomes.

Prioritizing decisions that enhance the club, technical staff, and employees, and involving employees in the decision-making process to boost decision effectiveness and loyalty to the club.

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