

The Barriers of Implementing Governance Module in NGO in Arab Country: (The Case Study of Jordan)

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Abstract

The NGOs governances are always in continues development due to the changing life variables. As such, the previous studies of the NGOs performances and challenges always build a solid background for other researchers since they agree with many findings and conclusions globally and regionally. Therefore, this study represents a review that discussed the NGOs governance in Jordan as a case study of the Arab countries to conclude their barriers and obstacles. The article directed the knowledge for governance limitations in the developing countries in general and in Jordan in specific. Accordingly, it offered an enhancement on the theoretical background that can assess further studies. The NGOs in Arab countries have faced different barriers and challenges. These challenges could be divided to the international and regional levels. The main challenges that are categorised as international level includes conflicted opinions during strategies creation, ideological stereotyped for possible associates, the situation framing that led to a competition for reaching the targets, the anxiety to fail that creates the depression of current rules and policies, the covering strategy that hides doubts, inner conflict, and disappointments. Whereas, weak governance, poor communications and poor internet usage are the main regional challenges of NGOs. According to the studies, the NGOs in Jordan are suffering from the mentioned obstacles besides the great lack of IT and internet usage, the significant social gap and weak regulations. As such, the consistent assessment of the NGOs governance progression will always be required.

Keywords: NGOs, governance, barriers, Arab countries, Jordan

1. Introduction

1.1. NGOs

The nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been developed significantly over the years since the world witnessed a great change in the countries' governance methods due to neo-liberalism correspondence of donors' sectors which motivated the nongovernmental organizations NGOs to participate in the governing procedure (Brass, 2012). As such, a relationship has been created between the governmental and nongovernmental sectors that were a positive relation between some countries and negative in others. The NGOs can be defined as the nonprofit sector that Institute by the civil society with income from a contribution of voluntaries (Brinkerhoff, 2004), (Edwards, 2000). In other words, they rely on the public management to create less formalized governance, as Termeer (2009) clarified. However, despite the NGOs impact on the governmental regulations, there must be distinguished from other public or society organizations which are influenced by the political changes (Banks et al., 2015). Moreover, the differences between for-profit and non-profit organizations also need to be clarified since the first mainly concerns about business profits while the latter aim to fulfill the needs of marginalized societies although they still have to correspond to donor's demands (Power, 2002).

Sending and Neumann (2006) explained that as the NGOs create varied active orientations for non-governmental actors which requires the governing of independent topics; a new type of NGOs. The researchers also described these organizations that their actors are responsible for operating within the international sets to achieve their process. However, Jordan (2005) elaborated that nowadays, NGOs adopt the accountability concept within three perspective; 1) effectiveness that state the social side of the organizations that aim to fulfill the quality and quantity aspects of the community needs; 2) The regulation's validity that led to the independent institutional structures for the organizations that represent the NGOs social values; 3) authority status that related to the political side of the associations that contribute to policies creation for international public. The researchers defined that accountability with the methods of functional abilities that manage the organization's performance methods to reach their assigned objectives which indicate the important relationship between the NGOs' and their regulations.

1.2. Governance

According to Jepson (2005), the governance, as a term, means the methods that an organization relies on for its process and structures to manage to achieve its goals. He added, "Governance is about vision, oversight, process, independence and accountability and not the day-to-day running of operations" (p.218). Moreover, it is worth mentioning that governance includes both the government and the citizen's role (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2002).

Meanwhile, Nefissa (2001) discussed that governance either refers to the political and organizational measurements of governmental social policies, on the encouraging of private sector development, or on the

analytical level for the which affect human beliefs and ideologies. Moreover, she elaborated that governance includes a complex application of different stakeholders; institutions, individual actors, and government agencies, within independent networks. As such, new concepts will be revealed and create a gap from past definitions and meanings which require the regular investigations on governance.

Furthermore, the United Nations (UN) declared that there is a significant growth in the NGOs of several fields; education, research, health, environment, etc. roles (Al-Qirim, 2007). Consequently, due to this development, the policy managers need a consistent improving to their governance which requires the interaction with current government, community, public and private companies. As such, the indication of the relation between the society and the government which Termeer (2009) called it the “horizontal governance” can be noticed. Also, the study discussed the difficulties to improve the governance strategies of the horizontal modes, which other studies also stressed on. The researcher justified it by the contradictions between new and existing governance forms since every new organization started its operation within the existing governance.

Meanwhile, ECRI (2009) discussed that good governance considers more to the socio-economic aspects that require the investigation not only for the socio-economic conditions at the country level but also on the regional one. The study also clarified that the failure of enhancing the good governance of any country creates long-lasting effects, the declining of governmental actors, and regional development conflicts. As such, it can result that good governance is requiring the cooperation of all related stakeholders; local, regional, international and even donors sectors.

1.3. The NGOs and governance impacts

The NGOs have a significant effect on the international organizations, such as, the UN that has witnessed noticeable individuals’ transitions between it and the NGOs (Al - Qirim, 2007). As such, Jepson (2005) argued on the important impact of governance liability on the international bodies due to the NGOs great role in affecting the international institutional policies by the creation of the international civil community that produces significant organizational standards. Meanwhile, the governance transition liability that in most cases shifts the public responsibilities of the government to complex private stakeholders can create great difficulties for citizens and the outcomes quality (Leat, 2004).

Although the NGOs progression over the years did improve not only their range, but also their impact on human beings which increased their concern to levitate the awareness of their critical impacts and their effective role (Edwards, 1994). Nonetheless, Banks et al. (2015) argued that in nowadays, to create long-lasting governance assessment, NGOs’ abilities still need more enhancements due to the consistent attrition of civil community and the lack of securing new development abilities. In addition, the researchers discussed the possible image of NGOs aiding capabilities that can re-stabilize the balance among the government, public, and private sectors which could affect the NGOs own identities. As such, in some countries, governments NGOs’ funding have increased greatly in the last two decades in order to ensure their countries’ developments (Sending and Neumann, 2006). Nonetheless, the cooperation made the NGOs depend significantly on the government funding which led to their control. Meanwhile, Sending and Neumann (2006) argued that the NGOs’ success could be returned to the central governmental role which highlights the relation between the performance of these organizations and the corresponding actors of the state central role variations that affect the direction of their objectives.

2. The NGOs among Arab Countries

It has been noticed that in the developing countries, the performance of the public sector is impacted by the decision makers’ interests and preferences that in many cases neglect the local resources and expertise, as the ECRI (2009) elaborated. The study also suggested that in order to raise the awareness of this situation, more attention should be given to creating good governance for the public sector that considers the impacts of the country political condition. Moreover, Nefissa (2001) added that the NGOs have been through different ideological and political circumstances over the time which created their varied forms; the social, neoliberal, political, etc. Moreover, the researcher discussed that the Arab countries, as developing countries, were asked for more civil freedom, public sector reformation, respect human rights, and other demands, which direct the governance to have a political identity due to the demands characteristics. Clarke (1998) also argued that in the developing countries it was noticed that the political actors have a contributing role in the NGOs. The researcher added the perception of the donors’ effect on the associations’ purposes and aims. In other words, these characteristics are different according to the region which creates the governance type variations.

Nefissa also clarified that NGO considers a production of social governance that considers new phenomena for all countries; Europe in a the19th century while in Arab countries in the early 20th century. Also, it is worth mentioning, that as the NGOs aim to levitate the dignity of human beings live through preserving certain social and living standards; human rights values, their governance must fulfill these requirements to ensure a better live value (ECRI, 2009). However, this phenomenon went through major changes due to several ideological and

political conflicts as the neoliberal, human rights ideologies, or even by the non-governmental organizations' goals, as she argued.

Salomon and Anheier (1996) elaborated that as NGOs has a significant impact on development, there has been a great interest in them especially in the Arab countries that have their own international NGOs. Meanwhile, they argued that since the government imposed its role in controlling the independent authorities of these associations, their autonomy has been questionable. Nonetheless, Nefissa (2001) elaborated that since the NGOs have a critical effect on many aspects of politics and economics, the Arab countries' governments having a conflict position in giving the civil society, the private sector and donors certain authorities to improve healthcare, education, and any other harmed categories. She clarified that Arab countries tend to create these type of association due to social reasons which the CIVICUS study statistics confirmed that non-profits and social organizations recorded a percentage of "9.7% in Tunisia to 68% in Kuwait, with most other countries varying from 30% to 50%" (p.24).

Nefissa (2001) also added that nowadays, the global non-profit organizations had achieved to prove their main aim on responding to social needs wither by levitating the economic level, providing job opportunities, and enhancing education and healthcare requirements. Nevertheless, the researcher described the Arab countries NGOs that they have poor social effects, superiority believers and lack of senior members "Broadly speaking, their distinctive features are their weak social impact, their "elitist" nature, their small number of grassroots members." Also, the researcher added that "their restricted scope for intervention in cities, their close involvement in the political and administrative machinery and the relationship of "patronage" relationship they have with their environment" (p.23). Also, her study elaborated the inefficient system of the Arab's policies and administration regulations due to poor political contribution, inadequate leaderships' election, power concentration. Meanwhile, the Arab civil communities, as Nefissa also described, that they are delicate, unstable, under the others controlling and follow the capitalized concentrated policies. As such, it can be noticed that the NGOs in Arab countries are facing different barriers and challenges.

3. The NGOs challenges and barriers

3.1. On the International Level

Kramer (1981, p. 265) discussed the vulnerabilities of NGOs for the non-profit sector that they can be characterized as *Institutionalization* of the conspiracy trial to make the organization formalized, *Goal deflection* of dealing with the means as priorities, *Minority rule* which makes clients less important than 'philanthropic origins,' and *Ineffectuality*. Also, Salamon (1987, p. 39) also outlined that non-profit sector could fail because of *Philanthropic insufficiency* due to the NGOs' resources limitations, *Philanthropic particularism* that returns to NGOs' client's choices, *Philanthropic paternalism* since the sources owners can control the society priorities, and *Philanthropic amateurism*.

Meanwhile Young in (2000) proposed three perspectives that linked government and non-profitable organizations: 1) *The Independent relation* that non-profits operate to supplement the government; 2) *Partnership relation* to complement the government; 3) *An adversarial relation* due to the consistent engagement of the government accountability. Cho (2007) also emphasized that the government and the non-profit organizations interact with each other to provide their shortages; such as, sources, information, political support, etc. (Figure 2.1).

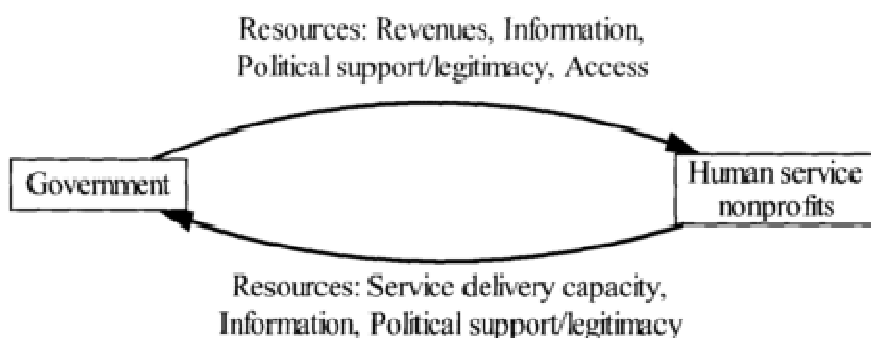


Figure 2.1: The government-nonprofit relationships

Source: (Cho, 2007)

Meanwhile, Termeer suggested in (2009) another five barriers: 1) conflicted opinions during strategies creation; 2) ideological stereotyped for possible associates; 3) the situation framing that led to a competition for reaching the targets; 4) The anxiety to fail that creates the depression of current rules and policies; 5) The covering strategy that hides doubts, inner conflict, and disappointments. The researchers also investigated the

horizontal governance barriers, that most of them were caused by fixations; “the process of sticking to rules to maintain existing meanings even if there are clear signals of their finiteness” (p.3). The researcher also resulted that many of these barriers are created mainly by the governmental associations due to the conflict between new and old governance. In addition, Dongen et al. (1996) elaborated that fixations are created when the current rules lose their ability to reflect on which van Eeten (1999) referred to it as “dialogues of the deaf” (as cited in Termeer, 2009). Moreover, the framing procedures of certain situations, where public managers sealed certain policies and regulations, prevent the improving discussions and maximize the NGOs barriers (Sabel et al. 1999).

Power et al. (2002) also discussed the international NGOs tendency to oppose the community leadership for improvement’s procedures which could be due to the unrecognized internal barriers. The Shalabi (2001) study also resulted from their case studies the shortage of employees’ role in decision-making participation due to their lack of capabilities and self-esteem. This could occur by the NGOs arguable multiple sponsors who are larger than any private sector. As such, it is worth mentioning that NGOs information resources are from their experiences or their fields without sharing them among the different organizations’ which could lead to the data shortage (Edwards, 1994).

Clark (1991) referred to the previous situation as the 'age of information' where the organization source of information is as important as their actions since they affect their objectives. Edwards (1994) added that these sources are varied in their forms where they can materialize sources or through human beings these indicates the possible constraints that could face any association. As such, the researcher highlighted the barrier of data resources shortage in enhancing the NOGs abilities which revealed on the organizational management input and output data and motivated many NGOs to spend more effort on data collecting and synthesizing that will increase the knowledge contribution.

As such, Edwards also explained that the data, knowledge, and actions relations and limitations in NGOs had confirmed their impact on promoting or reducing the organization's capabilities. As a result, many NGOs had better performance due to the awareness of their own competencies. Furthermore, Brass (2012) discussed the benefit of government and NGOs data transformation to improve their outcomes; however, this balanced relation is missing in many cases due to the lack of trust, poor of communication, and resource limitations. The researcher added that along with government-NGOs good relation could enhance also the government organizations due to the public and private cooperation, and the governance performance.

3.2. On the Regional Level

Many studies had also discussed the barriers of NGOs in the developing countries, and they concluded that these barriers could be summarized to the following:

- *Funding shortage*

In 2015, Yaari et al. argued that there is a great lack of sustainable financing of the NGOs. Also, they represented the 2014 GIZ (the German International Development Agency) overview that discussed the importance of having different financial modules; permanent funding for main functions and needs, and a temporary one covering further needs.

- *Weak Governance*

Searching for a good state of governance requires the public sector to override the consumption of human and material resources as well as the need to update the administration practices (ECRI, 2009).

- *Networking Deficiency*

Holmén (2002) and Khasawneh-Jalghoum (2011) confirmed that networking needs to be improved in NGOs to enhance their performance especially since most organizations tend to be small and scattered. He explained that networking also helps in the data sharing, expanding knowledge, improving NGO's capabilities, developing their negotiation skill.

- *Poor Communication*

The creation e-government had highlighted the significant importance of communication especially through the use of the internet. As such, it had spread widely in the private sector that enhanced their communication abilities to strengthen the connections among the government, community or donors (Heeks, 2003), (Khasawneh-Jalghoum, 2011). Tambouris et al. (2001) also explained that through communications the transportation services could be improved. Moreover, the researchers added that the “efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of governments and stakeholders” will be enhanced (as cited in Khasawneh-Jalghoum, 2011, p.35).

- *Poor Internet usage (the E-governmental organization's obstacles):*

The UNDP (2006) highlighted the barriers of e-government as a part of NGOs in the Arab countries. These barriers are the lack of regulations, organizations, funds, good IT application in the agencies, well-known guidelines, networks security, privacy security, lack of regulatory frameworks, resources, and awareness. Meanwhile, Khasawneh-Jalghoum (2011, p.72), represented the Lam (2005) argument that there are four barriers for e-government in the developing countries, which are the lack of:

- a) A strategy that caused by “lack of shared goals, lack of ownership, unrealistic milestones, lack of implementation guidance and funding.”
- b) Technology due to the “lack of interoperability ..., standardization in data formats, the rigidity of legacy systems, incompatible technological standards and dissimilarities in security models.”
- c) A policy that preserves the privacy, the ownership of any data.
- d) An organization that considers the result of the shortage of willingness, progression in the administration staff, formation, process, and management.

4. The Jordan Case Study

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small country that located in the Middle East with an area of 91,000 sq km, and a population of 5.16 million than 1.2 million of them live in its capital; Amman (Al-Qirim, 2007). It has a monarch; the Majesty King Abdullah II, who has is the head of state for the country. According to Talāl (2004) who elaborated in his book “[Rethinking an NGO](#)” that Jordan indeed faces a great natural resources limitations that made it rely more on the human capital wither by industry or business fields. He added that the national economies are on a steadily declining path which empowers the role of the private sector as an alternative to the government, as such, the overall economy could be at risk.

Talāl also discussed that the Jordanian population had increased significantly mostly due to the political situation in the surrounding countries, which amplified the negative impact poverty and unemployment ratios. Accordingly, He argued that many trials may try to overcome these obstacles by the government and the non-government actors, but by only international donors who created non-profit and non-government organizations (NGOs), had succeeded in creating supportive programs. As such, the variations of stakeholders; the government, non-government and non-profit authorities, had created many obstacles and contradictions that led to several barriers during any improvements for their governance.

Although there is a shortage of studying the current condition of NGOs in Jordan, there are some studies that tried to cover the matter from a different perspective. For instance, Al-Qirim research in (2007) that investigated the Jordan House of Commerce (JHC) as one of the important NGOs in Jordan. He argued that the JHC was proposed to be a legal organization that intends to help and protect the community. As such, the organization aimed to protect the role of the private sector and promote it along the national and the international levels. Nonetheless, the study highlighted the shortage of IT and the internet usage in the NGOs of Jordan.

Furthermore, Nagi and Hamdan (2009, p.580) studied IT relations with e-Government that has four sectors: 1) “*Government-to-Government (G2G)*” that improves the government organizations’ relationships; 2) “*Government-to-Business (G2B)*” that connect the government to the business sector which develops the national economy; 3) “*Government-to-Citizen (G2C)*” that mainly aims to serve the citizens which enhance the public interaction with the government; 4) “*Government-to-Employee (G2E)*” the relates to the governmental employees. Moreover, their study concluded several obstacles due to the lack of communication, internet access, local internet provider among governmental organizations and municipalities. Also, Nagi and Hamdan also noticed that ministries have many IT problems; such as the confusion of software variations, and the lack of IT expertise.

In 2011, Khasawneh-Jalghoum represented a study that discussed and investigated the barriers on e-government from stakeholders’ point of view. He argued that although it has been confirmed that using the internet among organizations can indeed enhance their performance, communication, abilities, Jordan still suffers from many barriers and limitations toward it. As such, Khasawneh-Jalghoum concluded that due to the following reasons the internet usage has been in reducing:

- The variations of the used software applications among the institutions have created great confusion.
- The significant social gap that reflects on education, poverty, technological ownership, internet usage.
- The inequivalent utilization of technological equipment that concentrates on certain tools and neglects the others.
- Trust shortage of internet usage due to the lack of responsible authorities that can secure their access and preserve their privacy.
- Institution isolation that obstacle the needed organizations and regulations for enhancing the used system.

Meanwhile, Yaari et al. (2015) offered a report of Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) that discusses the concerns of the governance stakeholders for the future Lower Jordan River basin. The study resulted in the lack of pre-considering the previous similar cases which require the expansion of the research phase to increase the assessment, data collection and considerations. Moreover, they highlighted the great need for more cooperation between the civil society and the government that has the ability to promote the NGOs role.

Finally, ATM (The Center on Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University) in 2016 represented a research of the Jordanian NGOs during the Syrian refugees’ condition. The study noticed a success in the quality of assigned programs where their staffs deal individually with each family for detailed reports and assessments.

Moreover, challenges were also recognized in the lack of physiological considerations and awareness, the government- NGOs organizational cooperation, information gathering incapability. In addition, ATM documented the inability to convert these programs from sudden aided organizations to long-term and sustainable ones in order to enhance refugees living conditions.

5. Conclusion

The NGOs have been developed through the years within their governance and barriers which required the consistent investigations and studies. Accordingly, the article studied the NOGs in Jordan by investigating the previous studies that analyzed the organization's varied impact on the global, regional and local level. As such, it has been confirmed that the NGOs as a nonprofits sector require flexible governance that organizes their interactions with citizens, the private sector, and government. Moreover, the NGOs social relations have also emphasized since they mainly aim to satisfy the different social needs.

Despite the NGOs significant role in enhancing the human beings lives, many obstacles eliminate their performance. At the global level, it can be concluded that the main problem that these associations face is related to their institution regulations. Meanwhile, on the regional level, many other problems were summarized to the shortage of funding, networking, good governance, communication and internet usage.

Moreover, for the case of Jordan; a part of the Arab countries, the implementing of NGOs governance also face many barriers. According to the studies, the NGOs in Jordan are suffering from the mentioned obstacles besides the great lack of IT and internet usage, the significant social gap and weak regulations. As such, the consistent assessment of the NGOs governance progression will always be required. In spite of all these limitations that draw a difficult road in overriding them, but according to Termeer (2009, p.13) "that change comes step by step. Rather than a picture of an abrupt change, more in order is a picture of continuous change with delays, acceleration, and small wins".

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