

*Full Length Research*

# The Traits of Non-collegial University Faculty Members as Perceived by the Faculty Members at the University of Jarash

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This study aimed at recognizing the traits of non-collegial university faculty members as perceived by the faculty members at the University of Jarash, to find out if significant differences existed between their views due to sex, specialization, academic rank, age, and experience. Moreover, the study aimed to find out if these traits differ from those of non-collegial faculty members in foreign countries and universities. To collect data, a list consisted of (24) different traits, drawn from American and European related studies, were used. The results showed that the respondents rated nine of these traits as high ( $m=3.68 - 4.25$ ), and rated fifteen traits as medium ( $m = 2.42 - 3.65$ ). The finding also revealed that no significant differences existed between the mean of scores due to the study variables. In addition, the results also indicated that the traits of non-collegial university faculty members, as perceived by the faculty member at the University of Jarash, did not differ from those of their counterparts in foreign countries and universities. The researchers recommended that the chairperson should observe non-collegial faculty member, to gather concrete evidences of his/her undesirable behaviors, and to discuss this problem with him/her, in a private meeting. The purpose of this procedure is to find out if this uncivil behavior is caused by the work environment, or it is just the nature of this person to behave this way. If the chairperson fails to change, or at least to modify this unacceptable behavior, he should take the proper and necessary action against him/her in accordance with the rules and regulation of university.

**Key words:** Collegiality, non-collegial faculty member, Colleagueship.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the main problems which face chairpersons of academic departments in any university, is the presence of one, or more, non-collegial members. Such a person, or persons, make life difficult for the chairperson as well as for his/her colleagues, the students, and for the administrative and professional staff. Collegiality among

the faculty members in any academic department contributes to the stability of that department, and it reflects the healthy relationship among faculty members, the way they deal with each other, respect one another, interact socially and academically with each other, and the way they cooperate with each other to achieve the

goals of their department, and those of their university. Most, if not all local, regional and global universities consider research, teaching, and community service as the three main indicators of the faculty member's performance, or the three pillars the universities' mission. Most universities have added another task, that is, collegiality. They consider it as a criterion for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure. One cannot expect that all university faculty members to have the same manners, values, beliefs, or the same pattern of behavior. This is a great number of individual differences among them such as, sex, race, social, economic and religious backgrounds, and the countries or universities from which they received their training and degrees.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of the literature showed that nearly all of the studies pertaining to collegiality were conducted in the U.S. and in Europe. None were conducted in any Arab country or university, although good relations with others, which might be one of the definitions of collegiality, is considered to be one of the criteria for contract renewal, promotion, and tenure in most of these universities.

Collegiality is widely defined in the literature, using the following terms: community, respect, value of peers and of their work, concern for colleagues, highly valued peers' interaction, and belongingness. (Austin, Sorcinelli, and McDanial, 2007; Gappa, Austin, and Trice, 2007; Bode, 1999; Dirani and Alshdooh, 2016). In their extensive treatment of faculty incivility, Twale and De Lucca (2008) presented incivility as "bullying behaviors, aggressive and/or manipulative behaviors, (including passive aggressive behaviors, gossip and competition among others), indifference, retaliatory actions, and open hostility or intimidation." Cipriano (2013) who has written several books and articles, and has delivered so many lectures about collegiality, states that "the phenomenon of collegiality and non-collegiality can range from disputes and tension at one end of the spectrum to violence at the other." He also added that "there are many departments that suffer from non-collegial, uncivil, and nasty encounters between faculty members, faculty members and professional and administrative staff, and faculty members and students." He listed eighteen signs to recognize non-collegial behaviors. Sutton (2007) cataloged the unpleasant behaviors of non-collegial faculty members as "The Dirty Dozen: insults, violation of personal space, threats, unsolicited touching, sarcasm, flames, humiliation, shaming, interruption, backbiting, and snubbing". Riccardi (as cited in Caron, 2013) has conducted several studies and has written numerous articles about how department chairs deal with their jobs, including difficult personalities. In one of his studies, he noted that some 83% of 528 chairs reported having, or

having had, uncivil and non-collegial professors in their departments. A recent study conducted by Dirani and Alshdooh showed that few faculty members at the University of Jarash are non-collegial, or tend to be (Dirani & Alshdooh, 2016).

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to recognize the traits of non-collegial university faculty members as perceived by the faculty members at the University of Jarash, and to find out if significant differences exist between their perceptions due to sex, specialization, academic rank, age, and years of experience, and finally, to find out if these traits differ from those of their counterparts in foreign countries and universities.

## QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The following three research questions guided this study:

1. What are the traits of non-collegial university faculty members as perceived by the faculty member at the University of Jarash?
2. Are there significant differences between the perceptions of the faculty members at UJ of the traits of non-collegial university professors due to sex, specializations academic rank, age, and years of experience?
3. Are the traits of non-collegial university faculty members as perceived by the faculty members at the University of Jarash differ from those of their counterparts in foreign countries and universities?

## METHOD AND INSTRUMENTATION

This study utilized the survey research method design. To collect data, the researchers reviewed a numerous number of international research papers and articles (Ward, 2005; Schmidt, 2013; Seigel and Miner-Robino, 2009; and Caron, 2013). They were able to list more than thirty different traits to describe the behavior of non-collegial faculty members. After translating these traits into the Arabic Language, the list was reviewed by two English Language and two Arabic Language professors to ensure that the translation was correct, and it gave the exact meaning. The list was judged by a panel of eight professors from different public and private universities in Jordan. Taking into consideration the differences which exist between this country's culture, and those of other countries, the judges indicated that six of those traits were inappropriate, among which were: aloof, asshole,

**Table 1.** Distribution of Population

Specialization	M	F	Total
Scientific	69	13	82
Literary	91	23	114
Total	160	36	196

The sample of the study consisted of (139) faculty members. Table 2 shows the distribution of the sample of the study according to its variables.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the Sample of the Study According to its Variables

Sex		Spec.		Rank			Age in Years			Experience		
Male	Female	Scientific	Literary	Professor	Asso.prof	Asst.prof	Less than 25 years	25-35 years	More than 35 years	Less than 10 years	10-20 years	More than 20 years
108	31	51	88	18	30	91	17	42	80	95	24	20

liar, nagger, and neurotic. Thus, the list consisted of (24) traits. A Likert-type scale with three possible answers was used to determine the degree of the respondents' responses to each item as follows: (1.00 – 2.33, Low), (2.34 – 3.67, medium), and (3.68 – 5.00), high.

## POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population of the study consisted of (196) faculty members (160 male and 36 female), distributed as shown in Table 1

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

- To answer the first question of the study, a list consisted of (24) traits was utilized, and the respondents were asked to rate each trait as they perceive it. Nine traits were rated as high ( $m=4.25-3.68$ ), and fifteen were rated as medium ( $m=3.65-2.42$ ).
- To answer the second question of the study, t-test was employed to determine if significant differences between the faculty members' perceptions of the traits due to sex, and specialization. The results showed no significant differences existed between the respondents' perceptions of the traits of non-collegial faculty members due to these two variables. ANOVA was also utilized, and the results also showed

that no significant difference existed between the perceptions of the respondents attributable to academic rank, age, and number of years of experience.

- To answer the third question of the study, the researchers compared the Arabic version of these traits with the English one, and taking into consideration the comments made by the judging panel, the researchers came to the conclusion that these traits apply to non-collegial faculty members wherever they are, and describe their behaviors regardless of their culture, or the country they belong to.

The respondents rated (9) of the traits of non-collegial university faculty members as high, (15) traits as medium, and non as low. This means that non-collegiality exists among faculty members regardless of their cultures or countries. Backbiting, involving students in personal problems, being a jerk, and interfering in others' business received the highest rates. Table 3 shows the percentages, means of scores, and the rates of traits.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Needless to say, the teaching process is also a communication process. Teachers, as well as university professors, deal or communicate with, students, parents, colleagues, professional and administrative staff. To be successful, respected, and accepted by others, faculty

**Table 3.** The Traits and Percentages of the Respondents Who Rated the Traits as High and Medium and the Mean Score of Each Trait

	Traits	%	m	rate
1.	Backbiter	85.1	4.25	high
2.	Involves students in his personal problems	81.4	4.07	high
3.	Jerk	80.3	4.05	high
4.	Interferes in others' business	80.1	4.05	high
5.	Aggressive	79.9	3.99	high
6.	Spreads rumors	79.2	3.96	high
7.	Weird	79.1	3.94	high
8.	Bully	75.1	3.75	high
9.	Untrust worthy	73.7	3.68	high
10.	Inferior	73.1	3.65	Medium
11.	Trouble maker	72.5	3.62	Medium
12.	Disagreeable	71.1	3.55	Medium
13.	Rude	70.0	3.50	Medium
14.	Irresponsible	68.6	3.43	Medium
15.	Emotionally unstable	68.3	3.41	Medium
16.	Non-cooperative	67.2	3.41	Medium
17.	Troller	66.1	3.31	Medium
18.	Selfish	63.2	3.30	Medium
19.	Avoided by others	62.9	3.14	Medium
20.	Conspires against others	62.0	3.10	Medium
21.	Hypocrite	61.3	3.06	Medium
22.	Unbearable	59.0	2.95	Medium
23.	Complains most of the time	58.9	2.44	Medium
24.	Provoke others	58.4	2.42	Medium

members, should have good relationships with others, mutual respect and understanding, and appreciation of others' work. These traits, among others, mean that a teacher, or a university professor should be collegial. Unfortunately, not every teacher, or a university professor, can be collegial because of the so many individual differences among them. In addition, to the differences between their personalities, cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs. In conclusion, we can say that the best training, or preparing for the profession, can not alter most, if not all, of these traits.

In the final analysis, one recommendation can be presented, that is, if the chairperson realizes that one, or more, of his colleagues are non-collegial, or act improperly, he/she should gather and document enough evidences about this person's behavior to be the basis for a private discussion between them. If the chair fails in his endeavor, he should take the proper action against him/her according to the rules and regulations of his university.

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