

# The Possibility Of Applying The Task Priority Matrix (Applied Study In Baghdad Governorate)

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## Abstract

The two researchers aim through this research to show how to apply the task priorities matrix with its dimensions (important urgent, unimportant urgent, important not urgent, not important not urgent) in the Iraqi environment (Baghdad Governorate Diwan). Serving the future directions of the province with the aim of enhancing knowledge management on time. The problem was embodied in the lack of interest of the administration of the province in question (Baghdad Governorate Diwan) in involving scientific institutions in its work, which caused a defect in the methods of developing and implementing plans necessary to accomplish tasks, as well as a lack of investment and a weak distinction between urgent and non-urgent tasks Urgent and not using the priorities of the matrix correctly, which led to a loss of time and a lack of knowledge of the important work from the unimportant. For the purpose of achieving the objectives of the research and answering the questions, the questionnaire was adopted as a tool for collecting data that was distributed to an intentional sample of (157) respondents represented by (Department Managers and people's officials), the questionnaire was subjected to a test of honesty, reliability and construction, and the adoption of a number of statistical methods to determine the level of importance of research variables and to test hypotheses using the program Statistician (SPSS V.28), and accordingly, the researchers adopted the descriptive analytical approach.

Through analysis and testing, the researchers reached the possibility of applying the task priorities matrix in the Baghdad governorate office, and that the governorate administration has the ability to distinguish between tasks and according to their priorities, and based on the conclusions reached, a set of recommendations was developed, the most important of which was increasing interest in adopting all dimensions Matrix of priorities of tasks, especially with regard to urgent non-important activities and important non-urgent activities if the governorate administration wants to complete its work according to the needs of the beneficiaries.

**Keywords:** (task priority matrix).

## INTRODUCTION

Due to the great development witnessed by organizations today, the fierce competition between them, and the emergence of many modern ideas that shed light on important topics and study them in depth to achieve more progress and knowledge in our study and in the contents of contemporary management thought,

the need for time management and arranging the organization's tasks according to its priorities and more effectively has emerged. , in order to invest time in accomplishing the organization's tasks and activities and not waste it, as time is one of the rarest resources that the organization deals with, as it is the most precious thing that a person possesses, and although it is available to

all people, it cannot be replaced, rented or stored. That is, when time passes, it does not return, so it is a more valuable resource than money, and in order to manage this (important) resource and invest it well, the organization must implement the task priorities matrix, as it is based on the principle of priority, where you complete tasks and activities according to their importance, where the priority matrix divides activities into four Sections, as stated by Stephen Covey and other writers and researchers according to their priority, which are (important and urgent, important and not urgent, not important and urgent, not important and not urgent), where the organization arranges tasks and The activities in the list are one of the most priority that cannot be postponed to the least and that can be postponed, so that the employee in the organization can obtain the knowledge required to carry out the tasks he has to do on time by employing the available fields and techniques. The research problem can be determined by the following question (How can the task priorities matrix be implemented in the Baghdad Governorate Office and what is its relationship to knowledge management in the specified time and thus enabling it to provide services to the beneficiaries?).

Accordingly, the research came to include five sections, as the first topic included the methodology of the research, and the second topic included some previous studies, and the third topic included the theoretical aspect of the task priorities matrix and knowledge management in the specified time, and the fourth topic adopted the practical aspect, while the fifth topic was devoted to the most important conclusions And the recommendations reached by the researchers

## **Research Methodology**

### **First : The Problem Of Research**

Baghdad governorate suffers from the difficulty of distinguishing between urgent and non-urgent tasks, which led to poor business performance

and required decisions in emergencies and crises.

### **Second: The Importance Of The Study**

1. Contribute to knowing the orientation of the study community (Baghdad Governorate Diwan) towards adopting this matrix to enhance its performance and provide service to the beneficiaries. The importance of the study can be seen through:
2. highlights the importance of the field study in choosing the service sector, which represents one of the important sectors to provide services to citizens in the various ministries of the state.
3. The study contributes through the results it uses to provide solutions to the existing problem, which is the weakness of the ability to distinguish between what is important or urgent through the use of techniques and fields in order to achieve the best performance provided to the beneficiaries.

### **Third: objectives of the study**

1. Determining the level of application of the tasks' priority matrix dimensions in the Baghdad governorate office.
2. The extent to which the surveyed organization is aware of the importance of applying the matrix, the priorities of tasks in the work of the organization in question.

### **Fourth: The hypotheses of the study**

The task priority matrix with its dimensions (important, unimportant, urgent, important not urgent, unimportant, not urgent) can be applied in the Baghdad governorate office.

### **Fifth: The study population and sample**

- 1- The research community: the study community was represented by workers in the province of Baghdad.
- 2- The research sample: the study sample was represented by an intentional sample that included all department managers and people's

officials in the Baghdad governorate office from, and its number reached (168) respondents, distributed between (24) department managers and (144) department officials, and (168) questionnaires were distributed And (160) questionnaires were retrieved, the number of which was valid for statistical analysis (157) with a response rate of (93.5%) of the total study population.

### Sixth: Research Methodology

The researchers adopted the descriptive-analytical approach.

### Seventh: Methods of data collection

In the theoretical aspect, the researchers relied on books, magazines, periodicals and studies related to the subject, but in the practical aspect, it relied on personal interviews and a questionnaire prepared by the researchers, which included (33) questions.

### Eighth: Statistical Methods

The researchers relied on a number of statistical methods to analyze the data and extract the results.

### some previous studies

### Studies related to the task priorities matrix:

1-	(Naji, 2018)
Study Title	The possibility of applying the matrix of time management priorities in the organization An applied study in the Ministry of Health - Medical City Hospital
Purpose of the study	Identifying the possibility of applying the matrix of time management priorities in the hospitals of the Medical City Department, and knowing the level of application of the principle of priority to the activities and tasks assigned to the department managers in the Hospitals of the Medical City Department, and a statement and clarification of the skills possessed by department managers that enable them to identify important activities and urgent activities and distinguish between them.
Study Approach	An Empirical Study.
Study population and sample size	Medical City Department. (34) managers of the administrative and medical departments.
Highlights	The follow-up strategy that supports the activities (important and urgent) is the most followed strategy in the hospitals of the Medical City Department, because the hospital staff deals with cases related to human life and health.
areas of benefit	Enriching the theoretical side.
points of difference	Its field and objectives, the study sample.
Similarities	The study method is practical.

	-Using the same main variable (time management priorities matrix) and its sub-dimensions.  Studied in the service sector.
2-	(Mfondoum et.al,2019)
Study Title	Eisenhower matrix * Saaty AHP = Strong actions prioritization? Theoretical literature and lessons drawn from empirical evidences
Purpose of the study	Incorporating the Eisenhower Matrix and the Analytical Hierarchy Process to enhance prioritization of actions for managers.
Study Approach	Case Study .
Study population and sample size	companies and government agencies. A group of managers, decision-makers and policies, with a strength of (100) managers.
Highlights	Arithmetic mean, relative importance, and F-test.
areas of benefit	Enriching the theoretical side of the current study.
points of difference	Its field and objectives, study sample, using a case study, studied in a non-Iraqi environment.
Similarities	The study emphasizes the importance of using the priority matrix for the study sample.
3-	(DeBeliso et.al,2022)
Study Title	The Time Management Matrix Re-Tooled: An Instrument for Academics Navigating the Tenure Process
Purpose of the study	The academic obtaining a job and a position at the university.
Study Approach	Empirical Study .
Study population and sample size	Carnegie Universities. The study sample was a group of academics.
Highlights	Effective time management is critical to academic success.
areas of benefit	Enriching the theoretical side.
points of difference	-Its field and objectives.  - The study sample.  - Studied in a non-Iraqi environment (Carnegie).

	<p>-Use of the field study</p> <p>-Using field experience as a tool for data collection.</p>
Similarities	<p>- Emphasize the importance of the time management matrix for the study sample.</p> <p>-Studied in the service sector.</p> <p>-Using one of the main dimensions of the study, the time management matrix, and its four sub-dimensions.</p>

### the matrix of priorities for tasks

#### First: the concept of the task priority matrix:

The Task Priorities Matrix is called the Eisenhower Matrix or the Eisenhower Decision Matrix named after the scientist Dwight David Eisenhower, a US Army general during World War II, who served as the 34th President of the United States from 1953 to 1961. At the beginning of the presidential term, facing the American intern The economic, political, and foreign trends, he declared during a conference with his government advisers: "I have two types of problems: urgent and important. Urgent is not important. What is important is never urgent." Since then, the Eisenhower method has emerged, in which tasks are categorized and planned relatively according to their urgency and importance in four descending priorities as explained by him) : (Mfondoum et al,2019: 14-15)

- 1- "Important" and "Urgent" tasks: they receive the highest priority and must be completed as soon as possible. possible. It is a crisis that must be resolved immediately.
- 2- "Important", but "not urgent" tasks: These are the long-term goals and tasks, because they are important, but they do not have a fixed deadline yet. It should be scheduled at the appropriate time and carried out at a later time.

- 3- "Not important", but "urgent" tasks: these tasks can be transferred or delegated to other professionals, because they are trivial from the two previous ones.
- 4- "Not important" and "not urgent" tasks: they are more distracting and should be eliminated or eliminated, as they can be quite a waste of time.

The matrix that represents the method is a square multiplied twice called the Eisenhower box, its representations vary from activity to activity with the same background idea: good time management and prioritization for this reason it is also known as time management matrix

Two decades after the Eisenhower Matrix, Thomas L. Saaty developed the Analytical Hierarchy Process, AHP, between (1971) and (1975). It is a theory and methodology for relative measurement, used to derive measures of ratio from discrete and continuous paired comparisons. In fact, everyday problems, from the simplest to the most complex, can often be presented as a hierarchy with the same basic structure. . Whether it is a subject, feeling, idea or other entity, it should be studied in relation to other similar entities and linked to them by making comparisons, so that the resulting decision is less influenced by subjective judgment and as objective as possible. For these reasons, AHP focuses on setting priorities, based on ratios between entities and not their exact measurements, the process follows four main

steps as explained (Mfondoum et al, 2019 :14-15) which are as follows:-

- 1- Diagnose the problem and assign the type of knowledge necessary.
- 2- Decision hierarchy structure: Break the decision into a hierarchy of objectives, criteria, and alternatives.
- 3- Build a set of pairwise comparison matrices. Each top-level item is used to compare directly related items at the lowest level.
- 4- Use the priorities obtained from the comparisons to balance the priorities at the lowest level directly, so that the final priorities of the alternatives are obtained at the lowest level.

The comparison needs a scale of numbers that indicates how often one element is more important and dominant over another for the criterion or characteristic being compared. Effective time management requires a distinction between what is important and what is urgent, and tasks that are no longer urgent dominate our lives. Our activities are classified into four parts in time management that are more urgent, not urgent, important, and not important. ( El Atrush et.al, 2015: 36), (Walsh, 2008:75) emphasized that the priorities are those activities that affect your ability to reach your goals, so it is necessary to define your goals in front of you that can determine your priorities. He (Al-Jeraisy, 2001: 87) indicated that

priorities are the arrangement of goals according to their importance (the most important, the most important), which helps to gain more time, by giving the goals of great importance priority in implementation.

Covey defined a task management matrix that included the following (Covey, 2007:44-47), as shown in Figure (1).

- 1- The first square represents matters that are considered urgent and important at the same time. Therefore, this square of our lives requires us to time, and therefore we have to pay attention to managing it in the right way and investing the experience possessed by managers to face challenges.
- 2- The second square contains important paragraphs, but they are not urgent, as managers expect problems and strive to prevent their occurrence, as this is achieved through training, skills development and providing sufficient time in this square that builds capabilities and the lack of time
- 3- The third square can be called the deception square because it includes urgent but not important matters. Too much time is wasted to achieve the priorities of others.
- 5- The fourth square is called the lost square because it includes activities that are neither important nor urgent. Therefore, time should not be wasted on it.

<b>not urgent</b>	<b>urgent</b>	
<p><b>Postpone these tasks until all urgent and important tasks have been completed.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Make an appointment for the dentist</li> <li>•Reply to a coworker's email regarding a future event</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do these tasks as quickly as possible.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Submit the job application by 5 pm.</li> <li>•Picking up a sick child from school</li> <li>•Call a plumber to fix a leaking toilet</li> </ul>	<b>Important</b>
<p><b>Delete these tasks - they are often a waste of time.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reply to social media comments</li> <li>•Online shopping</li> <li>•Finish watching the TV show</li> </ul>	<p><b>Delegate these tasks to the appropriate people who can manage them.</b></p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Helping the son with the homework</li> <li>Pulling weeds from flower beds</li> <li>•Preparing dinner for the family</li> </ul>	<b>not important</b>

Emergency / Importance	urgent	not urgent
Important	<u>square one</u> Crises, stressful problems, projects that have a specific time, meetings, preparations	<u>second square</u> Preparations for the future, self-encouragement, stopping and preventing expected problems, creating important values in our lives, planning for the future, forming healthy relationships, fun and self-development.
not important	<u>third square</u> Interruptions, telephone calls, mail and reports, interviews, ordinary urgent matters. Simple and desirable activities	<u>fourth square</u> Unimportant business, disparate phone calls, people losing your time. Useless activities. Post is not important. Long time watching TV

Figure (2) The task priorities matrix

Source: Chapman, S. W., & Rupured, M. (2020). Time management: 10 strategies for better time management. University of Georgia.p3.

### Figure (2) The task priorities matrix

Source: Stephen R. Covey, "Managing Top Priorities First, author of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" by A. Roger Merrill - Rebecca Merrill, translated by d. Mr. Al-Metwally Hassan, the Arabic translation rights for publication and distribution are reserved for

Jarir Bookstore. Reprint of the fifth edition 2007, p. 179

And( Chapman & Rupured, 2020:3), in a research conducted by both of them, indicated to the division of activities according to importance as follows, as shown in Figure (2):

(Al-Ghamdi ,2018: 35-37) indicated that the activities were divided into four groups, in order of importance and urgency, and as shown in Figure (3):

Quadrant I (Important and Urgent Quadrant): Important matters. Emergency yard issues are very important and urgent in time. Example: You have an exam tomorrow.

The second square: It is the successful square, and it is the square of planning the important and

not urgent matters, for example: doing the planning of a trip.

Quadrant Three: It consists of things that are not important but urgent, and most people think that urgent matters are important, for example: Your car needs fuel.

Fourth box: The first corresponding box. Things that are not important and not urgent, for example: chatting on the Internet.

	urgent	not in a hurry
Important	Urgent and important matters (emergency and production)	Important non-urgent matters (quality and effectiveness)
not important	Urgent unimportant matters (deception)	non-urgent matters (escape)

Figure (3) shows the task management matrix

**Practical Analysis**

**tests of validity and reliability of the questionnaire.**

**First: honesty tests for resolution**

It is clear from Table (1) that the value of the (KMO) coefficient amounted to (87.8%), which is greater than (50%) and that the (Bartlett)

correlation coefficient was at a significant level (0.000), and these indicators reflect a distinct level of the adequacy of the research sample size to perform the factor analysis test exploratory.

Table (1) Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett tests for the components of the independent variable task priority matrix.

the exams	Transactions
Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Measure Sampling Adequate	0.878
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi – Square	3056.099
Sig.	0.000



Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of statistical analysis using the statistical program .spss v.28.

## 2- Construct validity

It is clear from the results of the statistical analysis that the values of the correlation coefficient for the items (important and urgent activities) were between (0.799\*\* - (0.574\*\*), which is significant at the level of significance (0.00) with a confidence limit of 100%, and this indicates that all items are suitable. It is very important to measure the dimension of the important and urgent activities that were set to measure them, but after (important and non-urgent activities) the values of the correlation coefficient were confined between (0.811\*\* - 0.507\*\*), which is significant at the level of

indicates that all items are suitable for measuring. After the non-important and non-urgent activities that were developed to measure them, the correlation coefficient values for all items of the tasks priorities matrix were confined between (0.308 \*\* - 0.811 \*\*), which supports the strength of the correlation between the

significance (0.00) with a confidence limit of 100%, and this. It indicates that all the items are very suitable for measuring the dimension of the important and non-urgent activities that were set to measure them, but after (urgent and non-important activities) the values of the correlation coefficient were confined between (0.308 \*\* - 0.768 \*\*), which is a significant function at the level of significance ( 0.00) with a confidence limit of 100%, and this indicates that all items are suitable for measuring after the urgent and non-important activities that were set to measure them, but after (non-important and non-urgent activities) the values of the correlation coefficient were confined between (0.481 \*\* - 0.800\*\*), which is significant at the level of significance (0.00) with a confidence limit of 100%, and this

dimensions and the items that were developed to measure them. Which means the validity of the paragraphs of the priority matrix of all tasks to represent the variable is the best representation for conducting statistical tests, as shown in Table (2).

Table (2) Construct validity test for the items of the tasks priority matrix dimensions

The result	morale level (Sig. (2-tailed))	Correlation coefficient between paragraph and dimension	Paragraph	Dimensions of the task priority matrix X
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.735**	X11	important activities and urgent  X1
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.719**	X12	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.574**</b>	X13	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.799**</b>	X14	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.744 **	X15	

Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.656 **	X16		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.681 **	X17		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.693 **	X18		
<b>Suitable for measuring distance</b>	(0.00)	0.692 **	X21	Important activities and other urgent  X2	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.645 **	X22		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.619**	X23		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.665**	X24		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.811**</b>	X25		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.786**	X26		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.679**	X27		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.682**	X28		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.570**	X29		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.507**</b>	X210		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.672**	X211		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.644 **	X31		Urgent and non-important activities X3
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.639 **	X32		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.680 **	X33		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.308 **</b>	X34		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.768**</b>	X35		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.664 **	X36		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.686**	X37		
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.714**	X41	Non-important and non-urgent activities	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.481**</b>	X42		

Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.762**	X43	X4
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.741**	X44	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	<b>0.800**</b>	X45	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.718**	X46	
Suitable for measuring distance	(0.00)	0.706**	X47	

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the results of statistical analysis using the statistical program spss v.28

### Second: Resolution stability test

It is clear from Table (3) that the values of Cronbach's Alpha stability coefficient for the dimensions of the independent variable task priorities matrix (important and urgent activities, important and non-urgent activities, urgent and non-important activities, unimportant and non-urgent activities) amounted, respectively, (0.864, 0.873, 0.731, 0.830), which is much higher than the minimum permissible, which means that these dimensions are highly

stable and can be adopted at different times for the same individuals and give the same results, while the values of Cronbach's Alpha stability coefficient for the independent variable (task priority matrix) amounted to (0.946), which is Much higher than the minimum, and this means that the independent variable with its thirty-three measures is highly stable and can be adopted at different times for the same individuals and gives the same results,

Researcher's comment	stability level	Cronbach's Alpha . Resolution Stability Coefficient Value	The number of items in the questionnaire	search variables
There is high stability in important and urgent activities within the task priorities matrix	high	0.864	8	Important and urgent activities
There is high stability in important and non-urgent activities within the task priority matrix	high	0.873	11	Important and non-urgent activities
There is high stability in urgent and non-important activities within the task priority matrix	high	0.731	7	Urgent and non-important activities

There is high stability in non-important and non-urgent activities within the task priority matrix	high	0.830	7	Non-important and non-urgent activities	
The presence of high stability in the paragraphs of the task priorities matrix	high	0.946	33	task priority matrix	

Relative importance	standard deviation	weighted arithmetic mean	Paragraph	code
78.6%	0.872	3.93	(important and urgent activities)	X1
76.4%	0.827	3.82	(important and non-urgent activities)	X2
76.2%	0.868	3.81	(urgent and non-important activities)	X3
78.4%	0.848	3.92	(non-important, non-urgent activities)	X4

Table (3) The results of testing the stability of the resolution using Cronbach's Alpha . method

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the results of statistical analysis using the statistical program spss v.28

**Description and diagnosis of search variables**

The description of the independent variable (task priority matrix) at the total level is evident from Table (1) that

the level of answers about the task priority matrix is the following:

Table (1) The level of answers to the dimensions of the task priority matrix

Source: The results of the statistical analysis using the statistical program spss v.28

1- Based on the arithmetic mean values for the dimensions of the independent variable, the independent variable achieved the task priorities matrix at the total level with a mean of (3.87) and with a standard deviation (0.854), and this indicates agreement in the answers of the sample members about the paragraphs of the task priorities matrix.

2- Achieve the important and urgent activities on the highest computational circles between the dimensions of the task priorities matrix according to the opinions of the research sample, which means that (there is a high interest on the part of the governorate administration to face the crises it faces or to accomplish exceptional and unexpected tasks by allocating more time to address or

accomplish them ), then after the non-important and non-urgent activities, which means that the Baghdad governorate administration is highly concerned with developing the skills and capabilities of its functional cadres (followed by the important and non-urgent activities, which means that) there is an agreement that personal visits lead to a waste of time, which can be invested in accomplishing Business), then after urgent and unimportant activities in the last rank, and this indicates the agreement of the sample members that the unimportant and non-urgent activities reduce the chances of providing services to the customer sufficiently and this is realistic and tangible in the governorate and causes delays in the completion of important works and reluctance in providing services to the beneficiaries ), and Figure (2) shows the order of the level of the answers to the dimensions of the task priorities matrix.

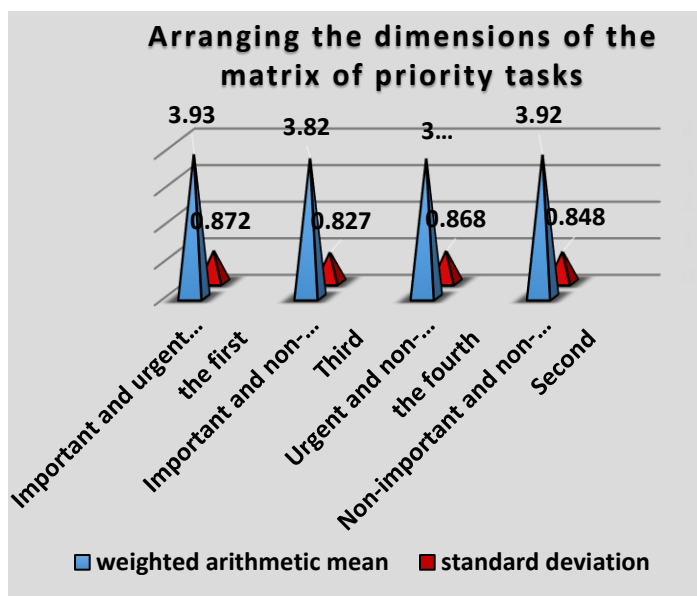


Figure (2) The order of the level of the answers to the dimensions of the task priority matrix.

### conclusions and recommendations

of providing services to the customer sufficiently and this is realistic and tangible in the governorate and causes delays in the completion of important works and

### First: the conclusions

reluctance in providing services to the beneficiaries ), and Figure (2) shows the order of the level of the answers to the dimensions of the task priorities matrix

1- The administration's interest is noticeably more in the important and urgent activities dimension compared to the rest of the dimensions, which indicates that the administration is working to confront crises at work and find appropriate solutions to them at the right times.

3- has the ability to distinguish between the tasks it performs in terms of priority.

4- The governorate administration performs the routine daily work,

which leads to a lack of optimal investment of time.

### **Second: recommendations**

To complete the research requirements, we will review a set of recommendations according to the conclusions that were presented as follows:

1- Enhancing the governorate administration's continued interest in important and urgent activities by allocating the governorate additional time to face crises and unexpected tasks.

2- Increasing the governorate administration's interest in the dimension of unimportant and non-urgent activities by setting a time for non-important and non-urgent activities for employees, for example (meal time), which leads to not wasting a large amount of time that can be used to complete the tasks assigned to them.

3- The governorate administration puts together a list of the most important priorities and needs, taking into account the selection of the most priority and highly important works.

2- The lack of interest of the governorate administration in the dimension of unimportant and non-urgent activities compared to the rest of the dimensions, which may be due to reducing the delay in completing important works and reluctance to provide services to the beneficiaries.

4- Increasing the governorate administration's interest in reducing the daily work of a routine nature in order to reach a more effective investment of time.

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