



RESEARCH PAPER

Educators Perception about Leadership Competencies: A Comparison of Public and Private Universities of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

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The present study is an attempt to understand the perceptions of educators about leadership competencies at university level and to draw comparison among perception of educators about leadership competencies in public and private universities. The study was quantitative in nature. Within quantitative paradigm, a survey method was used. The respondents of the survey included educators working in selected universities of Sindh. Based on three constructs 'Accountability of Academic Leader', 'Management and Supervision of Academic Leader' and 'Academic Leaders Facilitation and Negotiation', a survey questionnaire has been designed to find out the perceptions of educator. The responses of educators indicate that the leadership competencies of university academic leaders are not according to expectations of educators. The academic leaders unable to meet the expectations of educators about departmental matters and in resolving their issues and concerns. The academic leaders lacking interpersonal skills to delegate powers to faculty. No significant difference was found in the mean score of public and private university educators' perceptions. The study recommends to orientate university leadership about developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and sustaining strategic plans of the universities.

Introduction

Higher education offers many opportunities for national development. It prepares and trains 21st century workers. Higher education, with its emphasis on academic study, often produces graduates who have few or no practical skills changes are taking place in all walks of life and in the field of higher education and inviting a scholar leader to integrate these innovations and innovations in order to work effectively in the global era. Education leaders have a responsibility to track these

changes as well add them to do well in higher education (Mehmood, Babar, Khan, Raziq, Tahirkheli, 2012). Leadership competence plays an important role in universities betterment and advancement. Competence in general can be understood as the ability of an individual to stimulate, use and connect the acquired knowledge in the complex, diverse and changeable situations (Perrenoud, 1997, cited in Svetlik, 2005). Gruban (2003) defines competence as the ability to use knowledge as well other skills, required to successfully and efficiently achieve the task, work, achieve a goal, or the performance of a particular role in a business process. Skills include knowledge, technology, skills, personal characteristics and behavior, beliefs, motives, values, etc. Behavioral records of roles, people performing in them work processes. Leadership competencies and skills represent an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) that builds effective leadership within the organization (Cited in Hollenbeck, McCall, & Silzer, 2006). Leadership is defined as "a process of social influence" since it requires the participation and support of others in order to be successful. The most basic definition of leadership is a strong power relationship that motivates others to take action or make a change. Various traditional managerial conceptions of leadership have challenged the complex nature of leadership at all organizational levels, both within and outside of official roles, and have challenged the nature of leadership at all organizational levels. This multidimensional aspect of leadership is obvious at all levels of an organization, both within and outside the formal framework of a function. Educational leaders are responsible for bringing about the needed changes. Faculty's satisfaction is high in the success of any educational professional organization. The product name reflects the internal side of the facility. In the field of higher education, the big name depends on the leaders of education. Work style of education leaders, quality acceptance and a willingness to change are the most important factors that determine the credibility of higher education institutions. In the current age of information-based economics there is pressure on higher education institutions to ensure that graduates meet the needs of industry and society. For teachers and policy planners, it is important to know how to achieve this goal better (Siddique, 2008).

Educators are the important part of universities. Their views and perceptions provide view of university leadership. Effective university leadership influence the performance of educators. Educators' perceptions toward their superiors vary depending on their level of education. Finding out how university professors view their own leadership talents and competences was the purpose of this study. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of educators' perception about leadership qualities and how these beliefs affect higher education teaching and learning.

Literature Review

Effective leadership and university management is an important issue for policy makers, leaders themselves, and university staff. Research shows that university leadership is very different from leadership in some respects, and requires

more skills. Add to that the discussion about whether higher education leaders should be academics, or business executives. According to Bennis (1987; quoted in Thach et al., 2007), there are few leadership skills. which has been repeatedly proven as a commitment to effective leadership. These include a collection of vision and goal setting skills, interpersonal skills, self-awareness and technology skill about the details of the business in which the leader works. In addition, skills often referred to include: integrity / honesty, communication, technology ability, diversity, development of others, outcome management, management change, interpersonal skills, problem solving, decision making, political knowledge, strategy / vision thinking, customer focus, business skills, team leadership, persuasive skills, conflict management, more recently emotional intelligence, social and environmental responsibility, depending on organizational culture and even humor and innovation (Trinka, 2004; quoted in Thach et al., 2007).

Education Leadership Policy Standards have been approved by the National Policy Board

Education Management (2008) strengthens school leadership by defining six levels. These levels are:

1. set a shared view;
2. to develop a school culture and teaching system that facilitates student learning as well staff development;
3. To ensure the effective management of the organization, operations, and security services, an effective and efficient learning environment;
4. work collaboratively with community members, responding to diverse communities interests and needs, as well as the integration of public services;
5. be honest, fair, and ethical; and 6. Understand, respond to, and influence political, social, legal, and cultural implications. (Cited in McCann, Gary Dail, 2011).

There are many literary works that have learned the skills of academic leaders about the various qualities that go along with success. In institutional-level leadership, Marion (2007) stated that in order to be an effective leader in this field, one must be honest in research, knowledge of university life, management skills, communication skills, and communication skills. About departmental level leadership.

Material and Methods

This study was descriptive in nature and survey method was used to answer questions. Questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from sample respondents. All educators teaching at university level (Public and Private) from Sindh province were the population of the study. From 04 universities of Sindh province were selected purposively, two public and two private. Sample of the study

was 200 educators, 50 from each university (25 males and 25 female) were selected by simple random sampling.

At the time of data collection, researcher himself was remained at the sight to provide needed guidance. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed among sample respondents of 04 universities of interior Sindh from which 179 were returned back. After data collection, data cleaning process was done and 03 questionnaires were found ambiguous, so 176 questionnaires were found fit for data analysis process. Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS-24) was used.

Multi stage sampling was used in this study. A total of 200 faculty members from the sample departments were randomly selected. A self-developed questionnaire (on five point Likert scale) was employed for knowing the perceptions of educators about university leadership. For the Validity of the Instrument the instrument was shared to 05 experts of higher education institutions. of Islamabad. The educators also gave some comments for the improvement of the instrument; some statements were rephrased and improved in the light of the comments.

Results and Discussion

Result of the study were presented in the table below:

Table 1
Accountability of Academic Leader

Statement	University	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Our academic leader is concerned about departmental matters	Public	2.27	0.651	0.942	0.390
	Private	2.37	0.677		
Our academic leader concerns towards challenges of faculty	Public	1.89	0.711	1.106	0.331
	Private	2.01	0.773		
Our academic leader craft innovations	Public	2.07	0.689	1.028	0.358
	Private	2.14	0.694		
Our academic leader has sense of belongingness about faculty members	Public	2.35	0.696	0.994	0.370
	Private	2.47	0.625		
Our academic leader facilitates the faculty to complete tasks independently	Public	1.96	0.740	0.203	0.816
	Private	2.01	0.825		
Our academic leader appreciate change and innovation	Public	1.84	0.792	0.779	0.459
	Private	1.95	0.832		

The overall mean score 2.06 of public and private university educators about the construct "Accountability of Academic Leaders" indicate public sector educators' low level of confidence and trust in academic leaders of the university. It further indicated that academic managers unable to meet the expectations of educators about

departmental matters, solving their concerns and appreciating change in the department.

Table 2
Management and Supervision of Academic Leader

Statement	University	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Our academic leader manage faculty members responsibilities according to day-to-day situation	Public	2.43	0.745	0.118	0.889
	Private	2.40	0.740		
Our academic leader has interpersonal skills required for better management	Public	2.50	0.639	0.168	0.846
	Private	2.48	0.580		
Our academic leader has qualities to tackle the situation effectively	Public	2.42	0.769	0.273	0.761
	Private	2.45	0.727		
Our academic leader has built performance-oriented team	Public	2.49	0.724	0.423	0.655
	Private	2.45	0.746		
Our academic leader have basic information supervision	Public	1.66	0.879	68.539	0.000
	Private	2.25	0.795		
Our academic leader empowered the faculty	Public	2.34	0.817	1.468	0.231
	Private	2.40	0.759		

The overall mean score 2.30 of public and private university educators about the construct "Management and Supervision of Academic Leader indicate public sector educators' low level of confidence and trust in academic leaders of the university. It further indicated that academic managers unable to manage faculty properly, lacking interpersonal skills, having moderate ability to address the management situation effectively, unable to develop teams and delegate power to faculty.

Table 3
Academic Leaders Facilitation and Negotiation

Statement	University	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Our academic leader has ability to inspire	Public	2.40	0.749	3.598	0.028
	Private	2.62	0.592		
Our academic leader always negotiate subordinates to tackle the situation	Public	2.36	0.720	3.550	0.029
	Private	2.49	0.710		
Our academic leader is self-disciplined to manages decorum	Public	1.60	0.858	96.454	0.000
	Private	2.56	0.577		
Our academic leader is able establish a feedback mechanism	Public	1.70	0.883	16.831	0.000
	Private	1.63	0.874		
Our academic leader gave access to information	Public	2.29	0.765	6.977	0.001
	Private	2.58	0.665		
	Public	1.67	0.874	20.010	0.000

Our academic leader has broad vision to achieve set goals	Private	1.71	0.905
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The overall mean score 2.01 of public and private university educators about the construct “Academic Leaders Facilitation and Negotiation” indicate public and private sector educators’ low level of confidence and trust in academic leaders of the university. It further indicated that academic leaders are not inspiring, having low negotiation skills, less self-disciplined to manages decorum, less able to establish a feedback mechanism and unable to set goals for their organization. The mean score of public and private university educators further showed that university leadership lacks academic management and interpersonal skills. Management unable to form team and devolve the power at grassroots level.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand the perception of educators about leadership competencies at university level. Research demonstrate that effective leadership and management of universities is an important issue for policy makers, leaders themselves, and university staff. Research shows that university leadership is very different from leadership in some respects, and requires more skills. Add to that the discussion about whether higher education leaders should be academics, or business executives. The findings of the present study suggest that university leadership facing challenges in meeting the expectations of educators. The findings of the present study have been aligned with Dinh, Caliskan & Zhu (2020) who mention that Universities have been facing various challenges and pressures over the past decade. Therefore, the capacity building of academic leaders is an important factor in making universities successful in this difficult time. The findings regarding educators’ perceptions about leadership competence of university professionals suggest that academic leaders in universities are not inspiring, having low negotiation skills, less self-disciplined to manages decorum, less able to establish a feedback mechanism and unable to set goals for their organization. These findings are in line with Moore and Diamond (2000) who cite different characteristics of academic leadership. They were of the view that leadership is the power of liberation and the inclusion of human power in achieving the same goal. Sustainable transformation must emerge within the education unit, driven by the vision and commitment of its academic leadership. Leadership competencies and skills represent an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) that builds effective leadership within the organization (Hollenbeck, McCall, & Silzer, 2006). The findings of this study illustrate that universities in Sindh do not have proper mechanism for developing leadership skills of the educators. Similar study was shared by Spendlove, (2007), in which he found that most educators recognized that academic integrity and knowledge of university life were essential to effective leadership in higher education. Many universities in the

study did not have a systematic approach to identifying or developing leadership skills.

Conclusion

Higher education supposed to accomplish multiple tasks. These tasks; include but not limited to; drive the economy, social and moral development of future generation and provide opportunities, for the promotion cultural diversity, political democracy and commerce. In order to achieve the goals of higher education, the role of university leadership is decisive. If university leadership do not fulfill the expectations of educators and students, it will be very difficult for universities to respond international trends and demands. The present study was an attempt to understand educators' perceptions about university leadership about their role in promoting quality education. The study has far reaching implications for the improvement of current leadership practices. The university leadership should understand the significance of educators' perceptions and strategize their future policies and action plans.

Recommendations

In the light of findings of the study, followings recommendations have been made:

- The university management should conduct professional development programs for academic heads in education leadership and management.
- The higher education commission(HEC) of Pakistan and Sindh HEC should develop the capacity of university management staff such as heads of the department, directors, registrars and departmental co-ordinators in developing long term and short term strategic plans of the universities.
- The Vice chancellors in universities of Sindh should establish think-tanks in their respective universities. In think -tank meetings, academic and managerial issues may be discussed. This forum can also provide opportunities to faculty and management to discuss latest trends of internationalizations and research developments.
- The university management should delegate powers at departmental level to solve faculty's issues and problems.

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