

Analyzing the Managerial Skills of Heads of Teaching Departments at Public Sector Universities of Malakand Division

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Abstract



The knowledge, competencies and managerial skills of manager plays important role in the success of an organization. The purpose of this study was to analyse the managerial skills of heads of teaching departments at public sector universities of Malakand division. The population of the study consisted of 69 heads and 484 faculty members in three public sector universities of Malakand division. Through stratified random sampling 45 heads and 210 faculty members were selected as sample of the study. A self-constructed questionnaire consisted of 21 Likert type items were used to collect the data from the respondents. The responses of the heads of departments were crossed checked through faculty members responses. The reliability of the questionnaire was established through Cronbach's alpha and found 0.83. Data were analysed by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study found that heads of teaching departments' managerial skills were ranging from average to high level. A significant differences were found between the perceptions of heads of teaching departments and faculty members regarding interpersonal, informational and decisional skills. Gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience have no significant effect on managerial skills of heads of teaching departments. The study recommended that Higher Education Commission and university management must arrange capacity building programmes for heads of teaching departments to enhance their interpersonal, informational and decisional skills before appointing them as head of teaching department. Seminars, workshops and refresher courses may be worthwhile strategies to increase the managerial skills of heads of teaching departments.

Keywords: Managerial Skills, Head of Teaching Department, Faculty Member, Interpersonal Skills, Informational Skills, Decisional Skills

Introduction

The success or failure of an educational institution entirely depends upon the factors like, knowledge, competencies and managerial skills (planning, organizing, directing and controlling) of the head (Khan *et al.*, 2010; Paturusi, 2017). The management of educational institutions are more challenging in the present age because of high accountability, nepotism, political and donors' influence. According to Allcock *et al.*, (2015) the front-line persons, (whether managers or professionals), know more about the challenges of delivery than the policy-makers. According to Khan (2019) educational management is responsible for planning, organizing, staffing, controlling, budgeting, reporting to the high-ups and directing the instructions and guidelines to the co-workers, so as to utilize the allied resources effectively and achieve the organizational goals efficiently. To Griffin, (2021) management is a set of activities directed at an organization's resources (human, financial, physical and informational) with the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient and effective manners. In educational organizations the set objectives cannot be obtained alone or with few members of crew, rather it is a team work. It is the way towards working with and through others to successfully achieve the goals of the organization, by effectively utilizing resources (Shinde, 2018).

In educational institutions managers face various problems like leadership, communication, social, political and decision making problems (Hollowell, 2013). These problems affect the performance of educational managers. There are many causes of poor performance of an organization. These reasons include non-achievement of organizational goals, complications in obtaining and

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distributing resources, lack of management skills, lack of motivation, absence of accountability system, and no recognition of services and over expectations (Marr, 2015). Similarly, poor organizational structure is also a hurdle to management. According to Milano (2020) a poor organizational structure not only hurts your ability to maximize opportunities, but can also create problems and lead to serious financial problems. To solve these problems effectively educational managers must be equipped with managerial skills.

Likewise, gender differences also affect management. According to Williams *et al.*, (2017) women administrators see the issues of attracting and retaining more than men do on average. However, Fernandez (2020) concluded that women and men can affect conflict in organization at managerial level in the workplace. Further, supporting the effect of gender difference on managerial skills, Rudman and Kilianski, (2000) argued that individuals who subordinate men with high authority and women with low one have been observed showing prejudice against female authorities. Control over these problems, Mcguire (2019) mentioned various managerial challenges faced by educational managers include maintaining good communication, hiring the suitable staff, retaining the staff for long time, firing of the non-efficient staff, accountability of the staff, resolving the conflicts of staff, retaining organizational secrecy and developing one's own managerial skills.

In educational institutions, the managers play very important role in achieving organizational vision and mission, therefore, they will have to perform the functions of planning, organizing, directing, evaluating, budgeting, staffing and coordinating different activities as steering influence on production (Kaehler *et al.*, 2019; Wehrich *et al.*, 2008). To perform these functions of management effectively, research studies show that managers need certain skills to perform i.e. technical skills, conceptual skills and human or interpersonal skills (Katz 1955). Similarly, Mintzberg (1960) also mentioned that interpersonal, informational and decisional skills are necessary for managers. Likewise, Griffin (2021) increases four other skills which are necessary for effective managers which include diagnostic skills, communication skills, decision making skills, and time management skills. That is why, Yukl (2012) proposed a set of various managerial roles for managers to play in organization like figurehead, spokesperson, negotiator, coach, team builder, team player, technical problem solver, and entrepreneur. In the same way, decision making, leadership, communication and time management skills are necessary for health managers (Ocampo *et al.*, 2022). Pulmones (2022) recognized various management skills for effective managers which include understanding team dynamics and encouraging good relationships, selecting and developing the right people, delegating effectively, motivating people, managing discipline and dealing with conflict, communicating, planning, problem solving and decision making, and avoiding common managerial mistakes. Further, he found significant relationship between management skills and learning strategies among university graduands. The above discussion shows that management skills are very important for the managers. These management skills are necessary for organizational performance because by applying these skills managers can get rid of the problems in the educational organizations.

In university head of the teaching department is responsible to look after all the matters at department level. Head is responsible to plan the entire activities of the department. Head is also responsible to obtain and efficiently obtain and organize all the resources to effectively manage teaching-learning process. The head provide direction and evaluate the performance of the subordinates and motivate them for doing the best. For performing all these activities effectively they must have efficient management skills (Griffen, 2021).

Effective management is responsible for good organizational performance in achieving the institution's goals and objectives in a peaceful way, while using managerial skills. Having no or nominal background of managerial skills, greed, selfishness, nepotism, prejudice and an unappreciated behavior is seen everywhere. A number of research studies have been conducted on various dimensions of management at different level of educational institutions (Naz *et al.*, 2022;), however, a very less research work has been done on analyzing management skills of heads of teaching departments in public sector universities (Zahid *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, to fill this gap, the present study was designed to analyze the management skills of heads of teaching departments of public sector proposed by Mintzberg (1960). The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. At what level do the heads of teaching departments of public universities demonstrate the management skills?
2. Is there any significant difference between the perceptions of heads of teaching departments and faculty members of public sector universities?
3. Do gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience have any effect on management skills of heads of teaching departments?

Research Methodology

To obtain the answer of the above research questions, the researchers used quantitative research approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Descriptive (survey) research design was used to collect and analyze the data (Mills & Gay, 2019). The population of the study consisted of 69 heads of teaching departments and 484 faculty members working at three public sector universities of Malakand division. By using stratified random sampling technique the researchers selected 45 heads of teaching departments and 210 faculty members from three public sector universities. From each sampled university 15 heads of teaching departments and 70 faculty members of these departments were selected through non-proportionate stratified random sampling technique (Kumar, 2018).

For data collection purpose, a self-constructed questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was developed through review of related literature. The three managerial skills that is interpersonal, informational and decisional skills proposed by Mintzberg (1960) were incorporated in the questionnaire. These three skills are further divided into ten management skills. Interpersonal skills is further divided into figure head, leader and liaison. Informational skills are further divided into monitor, disseminator and spokesperson. Decisional skills are further divided into entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator. All these aspects were incorporated into the questionnaire. The questionnaire has three constructs. The interpersonal skills consisted of seven items; the informational skills consisted of six items and decisional skills consisted of eight items. The researchers developed 21 Likert type items ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. The respondents were asked to select one option out of the five responses. The validity of the questionnaire was established through a panel of experts, who were highly qualified and experienced in the field of educational administration, management and leadership. After the suggestions of the experts, the changes were incorporated in the questionnaire and was refined. Before administration of the questionnaire, it was pilot tested to a sample of five heads of teaching departments and twenty five faculty members. The reliability of the questionnaire was found through Cronbach’s inter item consistency method. The value of alpha was found 0.83, which was found more than that of threshold value (Kothari, 2020).

The refined questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The researchers prepared 255 survey packets. The questionnaire was accompanied with a consent letter. The researchers distributed the questionnaire among the respondents and they were explained the purpose of the study and requested to fill the questionnaire. Some respondents filled the questionnaire on the spot and some have promised to fill it later on and will send it back to the researchers on the self-addressed envelope of the researchers. The researchers collected hundred percent data from the respondents. The collected data were feed into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. The collected data were analyzed by using through applying of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Table 01

Sample profile of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Respondents		
Heads of Teaching Departments	45	100
Faculty Members	210	100
Gender		
Male Heads	40	88.88
Female Heads	05	11.12
Age		
Less than 45 Years	18	40
Greater than 45 Years	27	60
Academic Qualification		
MS/MPhil	15	33.33

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PhD	30	66.67
Administrative Experience		
Less than 10 Years	33	73.33
Greater than 10 Years	12	26.67

The above table reveals that out of 255 respondents 45 were heads of teaching departments and 210 were faculty members. Of 45 heads of teaching departments, 40 were males and 05 were female heads. Out of 45 sample respondents, 18 were less than 45 years of age while 27 were greater than 45 years of age. Of the 45 respondents, 15 have MS/MPhil degree holders while 30 respondents PhD degree holders. Out of the 45 sampled heads of teaching departments 33 have less than 10 years of administrative experience while 12 have more than 10 years of administrative experience.

Table 02

Management skills Level of Heads of teaching departments

Constructs of Managerial Skills	Heads of Teaching Departments (n = 45)		Faculty Members (n = 210)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Interpersonal Skills	4.524	.607	3.917	1.024
Informational Skills	4.256	.623	3.767	1.037
Decisional Skills	4.233	.589	3.694	1.097
Managerial Skills	4.338	.586	3.792	1.048

1-2 = Sufficiently Below Average; 2.1-2.9 = Below Average; 3 = Average; 3.1-4 = Above Average and 4.1-5 = Sufficiently Above Average

The above table reveals the management skills level of the heads of teaching departments perceived by the heads of teaching departments and faculty members. The heads of teaching departments perceived that the level of their management skills were found sufficiently above average level as the value of mean scores of all constructs were found to be greater than the mid-point value which is 3. On the other hand, faculty members perceived that the level of management skills of teaching heads were found to be above average level as the value of mean scores for all the constructs were found to be greater than the mid-point value which is 3. The heads of teaching departments perceived that they possessed interpersonal skills on the top level as its mean value was found to be 4.52 followed by informational skills as its mean value was found to be 4.25 and then followed by decisional skills as its mean value was found to be 4.23. The same sequence was also perceived by faculty members of the departments.

Table 03

Comparison between the perceptions of Heads of teaching Departments and faculty members regarding management skills

Constructs of Respondents	n	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Managerial Skills						
Interpersonal	Heads Teachers	45 210	4.5238 3.9167	.607 1.024	.15691 .13222	2.19 .031
Informational	Heads Teachers	45 210	4.2556 3.7667	.623 1.037	.16091 .13400	1.74 .046
Decisional	Heads Teachers	45 210	4.2333 3.6938	.589 1.097	.15230 .14167	1.83 .041
Managerial Skills	Heads Teachers	45 210	4.3376 3.7924	.586 1.048	.15133 .13531	1.93 .037

The above table shows the differences in the perceptions of heads of teaching departments and faculty members of public sector universities of Malkand division. The value of t-test was found to be significant for interpersonal, informational and decisional skills of the heads of teaching departments as the value of p was found to be less than that of the value of level of significance ($p < .05$). Therefore, significant differences were found between the perceptions of heads of teaching departments and faculty members of the public sector universities regarding interpersonal, informational and decisional skills. Heads of the departments perceived that they perform management skills very effectively while the faculty members perceived differently.

Table 04

Effect of gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience of heads of teaching departments on their Management Skills

Constructs of Managerial Skills	Respondents	n	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Gender	Male	45	3.538	.667	.1345	1.23	.061
	Female	210	3.667	.568	.1453		
Age	<45 Years	45	3.556	.632	.1534	1.31	.086
	>45 Years	210	3.767	.714	.1613		
Academic Qualification	MS/MPhil	45	3.333	.545	.1543	1.43	.071
	PhD	210	3.438	.597	.1467		
Administrative Experience	<10 Years	45	3.376	.596	.1533	1.13	.067
	>10 Years	210	3.424	.648	.1365		

The above table reveals the effect of gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience of heads of teaching departments on their management skills. The value of t-test was found non-significant for gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience of the heads of teaching departments as the value of p was found to be greater than that of the value of level of significance ($p > .05$). Therefore, no significant effect of gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experiences was found on the management skills of heads of teaching departments.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that heads of teaching departments in the public sector universities have above average level of management skills including interpersonal, informational and decisional. Moreover, significant differences were found between the perceptions of departmental heads and teachers regarding the management skills including interpersonal, informational and decisional. The study also revealed that gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience of heads of departmental heads have non-significant effect on their management skills.

Various studies on management skills supporting the findings of the current study that various management skills are important to run the organization effectively (Khan & Ghouri, 2011). Ahmad and Ahmad (2021) found positive impact of management skills on strategic planning. Pulmones (2022) found a positive relationship between students' management skills and learning strategies. Burke and Collins (2001) found that female accounts reported higher perceived effectiveness on two management skills i.e. coaching and developing and communicating as compare to their counterparts. Setiyawan (2022) considered that conceptual, humanitarian and technical skills are necessary for school principals. Therefore, they should be trained in these skills. As junior and senior, more aged and younger, more qualified and less qualified, more experienced and less experienced departmental heads have to perform the same roles and responsibilities, therefore, these variables have no significant effect on their management skills. They have to maintain the relationship with people both inside and outside the organization. They have to obtain and share the information with subordinates and high ups, therefore, they have to play this role effectively. Similarly, they to make the same academic and non-academic decisions, therefore, these variables have no significant effect of their management skills.

Conclusions

On the basis of findings, the researchers drawn the following conclusions:

1. It was concluded that both heads of teaching departments and faculty members perceived that the level of managerial skills of heads of teaching departments ranges from above average level to sufficiently above average level. Interpersonal skills level was found high followed by informational skills and then followed by decisional skills.
2. A significant difference was found between the perceptions of heads of teaching departments and faculty members regarding interpersonal skills, informational skills and decisional skills. Heads of the department perceived that they possessed high level of managerial skills while faculty members perceived that heads of teaching departments possessed above average level of management skills.
3. It was concluded that gender, age, academic qualification and administrative experience have no significant effect on management skills of heads of teaching departments as both male and female, younger and older, highly and low qualified, and highly and low experienced heads of teaching departments performed the same roles and responsibilities in the departments. Therefore, these variables have no significant effect on the management skills of heads of teaching departments.

Recommendations

On the basis of conclusions following recommendations are offered to HEC, universities administration, policy makers and government officials:

1. It is recommended that heads of teaching department may be appointed on the basis of merit. The university administration must consider the knowledge, competencies, understanding, experience, management and leadership abilities of individuals before appointing them as the head of teaching department.
2. Seminars, workshops and refresher courses are health activities for capacity building of heads of teaching departments. Therefore, ample opportunities may be provided to heads of teaching departments to increase their leadership abilities and managerial skills to run the departments efficiently.
3. The HEC and university administration jointly organize the capacity building programmes to enrich the academic leadership abilities, pedagogical skills, research skills, administrative and management skills of the faculty members and heads of teaching departments. For this purpose government must provide physical, human and financial resources to HEC and universities to build the capacities of the faculty members and heads of teaching departments.

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