

An Evaluative study of Faculty Members’ Empowerment Practices at Higher Institution Level in Wah Cantt

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Abstract

Empowerment is essential element for an institution to reform and to cope with the changing demands at both national as well as global level as it occurs due to shared decision-making of authorized bodies and stake holders. It is an obvious expectation from the authorized body of the institution to play a vital role to promote empowerment in the institution to implement and support teacher leadership. The main objective of this study was to identify the empowerment practices of male and female faculty members at higher institutions. The study also aimed to evaluate the impact of male and female faculty members’ empowerment practice on their teaching performance. The study was also conducted to identify the factors of empowerment practiced by faculty members at higher institutions. The hypothesis of the study addressed that there is no significance difference between empowerment practices of male and female faculty members in higher institutions. The population of the study were all faculty members of University of Wah and 80 faculty members include 40 male and 40 female were selected for data collection purpose. Data were collected from Empowerment Practices Questionnaire (EP Ques) that was designed on five point Likert Scale. t-Test was used to find out the difference between the male and female empowerment practices at higher education. It was analyzed from the result that the null hypothesis is supported as the p value is greater than 0.05 and it was found that there was no significance difference between male and female empowerment practices at higher education.

Key words: Male and Female Faculty Members, Empowerment Practices, Higher Education Institutions

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Introduction

The education system in Pakistan has been expanded by many folds. We have a wide number of students training and degrees programs that are considered central, State, and private universities which aim to provide is different and innovative individuals. Higher Education sector is generating a large amount of graduates every year, but their lack of skills is the quality of the graduates. Higher education is promoting socio-economic empowerment. This global investment is in the construction of human capital which is recognized as the way, the quality of higher education, the development of the nation and abide by the quality of the term development is important as well.

Stake holders of Higher Institutions include Heads, faculty members and students are all important part of academic infrastructure and contribute their role in supporting and empowering the leadership role. At both levels, university as well as global it has been becoming necessary to be well aware of the changing requirements in the world and these changes have been better communicated in the system to make new knowledge up to date. Short (1992), stated that empowering the teachers by giving them authority in decision making is a part of professional development process which provides professional ground level knowledge, make teachers more capable and efficient in teaching, and encourage them by promoting decision making to meet the requirement of educational process. He further explains three main issues that according to him are important for empowering the teachers. The first issue highlights the provision of effective and positive learning environment that can be possible by polish the teachers' abilities by providing them authority and empower them to take such decisions related to their teaching as well as students learning. The second issue deals with the needs of teachers that they should be highly trained in order to recognize about their self as it has been argued that self-awareness plays a vital role to enhance the learning environment, and the third issue is about empowering motivation as it is an important factor which can improve teacher's sense about the power and authority, therefore it increases their self-efficacy.

Research has been shown that empowerment includes the process, function and structure of the organization that proves helpful to enhance

the participation of the members and also it helps to improve the target achievement for any organization. According to Reitzug & Burrello (1995), empowerment is a process of enhancing the effectiveness and improving the outcomes of an organizations.

In order to impart quality in education by the faculty members it is needed to empower them with knowledge because it is a source which can brings empowerment. Teachers and faculty members should also have the ability of delivering the knowledge with solid content ,information and relevance toward the subject matter that is to be covered with in due time. When a teacher or a faculty member feels him/ herself empowered he/she will automatically feel a boost in their morale, efficiency, stay more collaborative with their colleagues and be more committed to the goals of the educational institution they are employed under.

Problem Statement

The study aimed to find out the 'Empowerment Practices' by faculty members at higher institution level.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- To find out the empowerment practices of male and female faculty members at Higher Institutions.
- To investigate the difference between male and female faculty members' empowerment practice on their performance.
- To identify the factors of empowerment practices by faculty members at higher institution level.

Null Hypothesis

The study set the following null hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant difference between the empowerment practices of male and female faculty members at higher education level.

Literature Review

Education is a formal and an ongoing process of attaining the knowledge. To enhance the effective learning process it is important to improve the Education Systems and provide quality education. The teacher or the faculty member is one of the variables of education system that need to be changed in terms of getting the set goals. (Enderlin, 2002). The skills, competency and knowledge of the teachers/ faculty members is becoming more advanced and up to date all over the world so that they can play their role according to that progressive system of education. Enderlin (2002) also stated that for the set traditions and norms of society it is important to consider the preparation of social lives by inculcating them dynamic individual responsibility and the sense of economic well-being as these important traits cannot be detached from our social life system. However, the same argument supports the preparation and role of teachers/ faculty members, as they would be the main contributor in society building because of their responsible behavior toward the education system and learning process as well.

Cited literature indicates that an active teacher/ faculty member has a positive influence on the student's academic learning and achievement at every level. At higher level it is important for a teacher to be very competent in terms of transmitting or transferring the knowledge to the students. It is the prior role of the teachers to understand about their self as well as their abilities as they are contributing in nation building. For every individual it is necessary to be flexible toward change according to the social needs, requirements and circumstances in the society and this major role is being played by an education process that is an important cycle where knowledge and skills, attitudes are transmitted especially in this new era. This path has been become easier by empowering the teachers at all the levels especially at higher institutions. Kouzes and Posner (1987), stated that for the development of intrinsic motivation of the students an empowering environment should be provided and supported at higher institutions as it has been very helpful in changing the practices of the teachers as well.

Whaley (1994) stated that in the institutions and educational setups, empowerment starts by empowering the teachers/ faculty members in their job decision making regarding to teaching in providing a healthy

learning environment. Research has shown that the empowerment is strongly correlated with the task motivation which means more you empowered the teachers the more they would be motivated toward their tasks and job roles. The author further stated that there is a need to provide the additional elements that includes rapid increase in knowledge, i. e, up to date knowledge and collaboration opportunities with their colleagues so that they would be able to understand their collective responsibilities and participations in mutual tasks and these are important for the teachers/ faculty member empowerment as well. This is one of the major reason that continued professional development (CPD) and updating knowledge is essential requirement and it will helps the teachers/ faculty members to understand their roles and responsibilities as an empowered teacher and it will also help them to enact instructional decisions timely that are appropriate to their educational situation.

According to Page and Cuzba (1999), faculty members who are seeking to be empowered can be able to take the following steps:

- They would be able to decide that they will be different than the norm and the expectations of others
- They should be well aware of their own abilities and do believe in teaching
- They must be pro-active in their personal and professional development
- They can be able to screen information against their belief system
- They should be focused, manage time and give attention to specific goals and objectives
- They can share current knowledge and information with their fellows

According to Page and Czuba (1999) empowering others is quite different from the administrative responsibilities as the role of teachers and administrative bodies are not same. Empowerment has many dimensions and aspects as it consists of three main features which include psychological dimensions that consists of development of self- efficiency, motivation and confidence; the purpose of opportunity and the demonstration of these aspects are important practicing decision-making, Job Enrichment and more challenges; training and development aspects that include competition, connection of knowledge, information, skills and

experience. Empowerment is considered as the distribution of authority, responsibility and unrestricted power of educational mediators to meet the pedagogical, educational, and instructional objectives of decided content that means the teacher must be empowered in his/ her decision making regarding to their student learning as well as providing best learning environment to the students. (Robbins, Odendaal and Rood, 2003).

According to Met Life Survey Report (2007) the empowerment is a core element in the readiness and great initiative for the students, teachers, principals and the staff of fundamental importance regarding to academia. If its main features are not delivered appropriately it might not work accordingly and does not show sustainability and because of this it becomes crucial part that teachers must empowered in all of its terms so that they would be able to highlight the learning problems and put forward better solutions to overcome them. Michele and Browne (2000) agreed that "empowerment is a cornerstone of the radical reform constructed can." (P.89). It indicates that to get the high achievements and targets it is important to give authority to the subordinates in decision making. In an education system the managerial tasks at different levels are responsible to create and maintain the conditions for the teachers and students so that they would be able to learn the different advanced ways of learning.

The trend of decentralization of administration of all the educational institutions has been increased and it would be great opportunity to become autonomous educational body (Lampe, 2002; Page and Czuba, 1999; and Sandy, 2004). Hurley Management Consultants (2004), emphasized that empowerment is suitable practice only in the environment where there is a desire for getting more power and authority and when the features of empowerment are not close ended and it has several directions to go on then it has a vital sustainability to survive in the educational set up. The achievement of an enactment of strategies and policies regarding empowerment is a process, it is not a single event that occurs only at once and ended, the process is always keep on working and occur different changes according to the requirements. The leaders Palm (2004) stated that Empowerment is a process that facilitates the essential basis of the educational institution. He further stated that many of the educational institutions bring changes but they are at superficial level only.

Steyn (2001) stresses that for the improvement of better socio economic situation and political and technological development the schools managers need to be prepared to face the changes and challenges for their prospective and well- being in the educational field. University management demonstrate the latest ideas and vision of rigid models relating to authority and power of taking decisions that are more collective teamwork in relationship with the distribution of roles between the high authority and the staff of the institutions. Archie (2004) stated that the decisions of traditionally education and public administrators concern for the faculty members and students to learn. The chains of the educational institution are the main indicator for the application of the variation of the educational institution. The sequence of command at higher institutional level are often perceived as social discrimination, which might hinder the effective application of the faculty members' empowerment at work place.

Approaches for Faculty Members' Empowerment

The main purpose of the training of faculty members is the maintenance of an institution which aim to achieve its goal by value on their basic resource and these faculty members are one of the important part of their goal achievement, for which the institutions will used to making the learning environment broader and powerful. So, the training is an investment in the faculty members for better implementation and to make best use of the institutional dimensions. The employees must receive training for their work correctly and effectively and this continuous practice can helps the employees/ teachers to come up with better solutions and output in their performance. (Uchefuna, 2001).

According to Locke (1990), the differentiated concept of education and development is helpful in teachers' professional development and growth in knowledge. The training of short duration workshops and their models designed to allow the teachers and the faculty members to acquire up to date knowledge and become skillful can provide them opportunities while taking decisions for an ongoing work and progress in the institutional development. On the other side the long duration trainings are also important for current and future employees/ teachers for their future work and also for the institutions with better solutions.

Bandura (2002) stated about the training and excessive exercise at administrative level of the institutions/ organizations that according to him can be used to get a place in teaching of technical skills for those who are not experts or other than managerial positions and these trainings will help them in their professional development, so it would be helpful to improve the relationships between the employees and the workers and also improve the conceptual competence of managers that is important to make success in any organization/ institution. Armstrong (2000) elaborate his opinion about the training that it is a pre- planned process to change the current scenario, knowledge, skills and behavior by experience to learn and to ensure the effective performance and role in an activity or a variety of activities. The training for each activity means that learning is depend on the acquisition of knowledge and skills to strengthen the staff and to carry out the efficient organizational/ institutional activities.

According to Cohen (2009), the higher authorities of any organization/institution who are seeking to retain staff who are competent and talented toward success and can contribute their positive role in achieving the set targets, must be encouraged and give them opportunities to participate in management. The decision-making dimensions of empowerment includes teacher participation in critical decision making regarding to their teaching and job related responsibilities that directly affect their work. According to MetLife Survey Report (2007), the employee involvement model of workplace governance has most beneficial impact on their work performance. This indicates that decentralized decisions and lenient rules may lead an increase to the employee's enactment. At University level, the teachers/ faculty members are responsible for taking decisions that are appropriate according to the academic conditions of students, therefore it is beneficial to have faculty members input in the decision-making process. In this way, faculty members may feel a sense of ownership and control over their work which would lead to a greater sense of responsibility for educational institutional improvement.

Cohen (2009) emphasized that the high authorities include Directors and staff that include faculty members and workers need to be involved in maintaining the participative management and that should be encouraged throughout the institutional level. Empowerment of faculty

members must be encouraged to participate in the adoption of important decisions regarding to academia and learning process of students which directly affect their performance. MetLife Survey Report (2007) stated that the participation of workers at the place is most of the positive effects on the outcome of their job task. This means that the decentralized decisions of greater flexibility to power may lead toward great success. The faculty members are responsible for the implementation of the decisions taken regarding to their teaching process and students' betterment therefore, positive faculty member's participation in decision making process is mandatory. In this way, faculty members can feel ownership and control over their work and this may promote the sense of responsibility in institutions and would be able to deliver better in terms of fulfill the institutional expectations.

Methodology

The study was conducted to find out the teachers' empowerment practices at higher institutions. Descriptive design was used to conduct this study. Likert Scale Questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers at higher institutions.

Population

All faculty members of University of Wah were the population of the study.

Sample

Non probability sampling technique was used to select the sample. Eighty respondents were selected as sample of the study through convenient sampling technique which includes forty male and forty female faculty members.

Instrumentation

An 'Empowerment Practices Questionnaire' (EPQ) was designed on five point Likert scale and was used for data collection from the male

and female faculty members of University of Wah. The research instrument was validated from the experts' opinions and pilot testing was done to find out the scale reliability and that was 0.6 Cronbach alpha reliability.

Results

Female faculty members were more satisfied with the weekly meetings with the head of their departments, they feel much comfortable to discuss all the relevant information about their students and job role as compare to the male faculty members. Male respondents were less satisfied with the weekly organized meetings with the head of their departments. The results also indicates that the female respondents are more enthusiastic toward achievements and highlight issues and problems with their high authorities instead of male respondents. The male respondents bothered themselves least to share issues and problems. Moreover the male respondents timely interact with their high authorities about the assigned tasks as compare to female respondents. The result also shows that majority of the male respondents agree with it that their head teachers were hard worker, active and accommodating while the female respondents disagree with it. Most of the male respondents agree that their head teachers contribute in preparing the resource requirement plan as compare to female respondents as they were not much satisfied with their high authorities for preparing resource requirement plans for the departments. Most of the male respondents agree that their head of the departments conducted teacher satisfaction survey but the female respondents disagree with it. Most of the female respondents agree that they have been appreciated from their head of the departments on showing better performance as compare to male respondents. Male respondents agree that their head teachers make effective decisions and design strategies and plans for future as compare to female respondents. The t value is -1.705 and the p value is greater than 0.05 that supports the null hypothesis that there is no significance difference between the male and female faculty members' empowerment practices.

Conclusions

The findings of the study concluded on the bases of result that female respondents were more satisfied with weekly meetings with their head of the departments to share relevant information, discuss innovative plans, achievements, issues and problems as compare to the male respondents. The female respondents viewed that their head of the department appreciate them on showing good performance and positively reinforce them on the assigned task. While on the other side the male respondents viewed that they had timely communication with their Head of the departments and their chairpersons were hard worker, energetic, cooperative and they prepare resource requirement plan to conduct teachers' satisfaction survey. On the basis of results, it is concluded that the male and female respondents have more or less different opinions and experiences about their head of departments but there is no significance difference between male and female faculty members' empowerment practices at higher institutional level.

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