

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF M.A. EPM PROGRAM LAUNCHED THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**

**Dr. Syed Manzoor HUSSAIN SHAH  
Masroor AHMAD M.Phil,  
AIOU Islamabad, PAKISTAN**

### **ABSTRACT**

The study focus the effectiveness of the M.A EPM program launched through distance education system of AIOU. For this purpose the performance of heads of educational institutions with and without M.A EPM degree was analyzed keeping in view different major aspects i.e. planning strategies, managerial approaches, coordination, administration and use of financial resources. The population of the study consisted of heads of educational institutions with and without MA EPM degree in Punjab. It was found that the performance of heads with EPM degree was better while planning strategies, management, coordination, following govt. policies, preparing annual budget and using financial resources as compared to heads without EPM degree. On the basis of the conclusions of the study it was recommended that MA EPM degree may be declared compulsory for heads of educational institutions. All the universities may start MA EPM degree to fulfill the requirements of working and professional educational planners and managers of the country.

**Keywords:** Educational planning and management; Heads of Educational institutional Managerial approaches; planning strategies; performance of heads; selection of heads

### **INTRODUCTION**

For the successful implementation of educational policies there is a need of skilful managers, so it is important that a special crop of educational managers must be trained and prepared to run the educational institutions. There are no special arrangements for the training of educational managers or heads of educational institutions in Pakistan. The head of the educational institutions are selected through competitive exams or promoted as head from in-service teachers working in the government schools as teacher. All these heads of educational institutions have no professional degree or relevant training to perform their professional duties. Keeping in view the requirements of the educational system, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad established the Department of Educational Planning and Management in 1976.

The major aim of the establishment of this department was to provide educational managers and leaders to manage the education system from district level to national level. The master in Educational Planning and Management Program is aimed at producing a cadre of professionals for the educational institutions and organizations in the country for managerial and administrative jobs by equipping them with the knowledge and skills of Educational Planning and Management. The courses of this program are aimed to fulfill the field requirements of the target personnel in the area of Educational Planning and Management. (MA EPM Prospectus, (2009, p.5)

### **Secondary Education**

Secondary education is an important sub-sector of entire education system. It provides middle level work force for economy and on the other hand it acts as a feeder for higher education. The quality of higher education depends on the quality of secondary education. In development countries secondary education is more important because most of the students enter in the work force after their secondary education. The secondary education in Pakistan needs a thorough examination and complete reorientation. Due to the importance of secondary education, the objective should be more inclusive, embracing the needs and problems of adolescent life, which is the most critical period of the individual development.

At secondary level of education, proper guidance and counseling must be provided keeping in view the future needs of the individuals and the society. Secondary education program must offer more diversified and enriched series of courses to prepare citizens in terms of their own capabilities and social and economic needs of the country (Louis, 1987).

### **Role of Educational Institution Heads**

The school heads are responsible to perform all the activities like planning, programming, budgeting, staffing, evaluating, organizing, communicating and coordination. They perform these activities during their daily work to run their institutions according to the policies and provision of the government.

### **Management of School**

The use of management concepts in the field of education is called educational management. Like other fields of life the management is used as an important tool for administering managerial problems of educational institutions. Heads of educational institutions require specialized training to cope up with the changing needs of today. Heads of educational institutions are responsible to maintain discipline in the institutions to achieve the set targets of the institutions. They plan their strategy to achieve these targets.

As a manager of the institution he is responsible to coordinate all the stakeholders. According to Shami, & Waqar, (2007, p.2) "the use of human and material resources for the achievement of the predetermined goals of the organization is called management".

### **Classroom Management**

Classroom management is a combination of actions and strategies required for effective learning and teaching. Classroom management refers to all those activities which are carried out for the achievement of the learning objectives. For classroom management the teacher have to organize the learning activities, organize the groups of students for activities, and organization of learning experiences according to the learning abilities and needs of the students. For proper classroom management the teacher has to motivate and control the students for achieving the predetermined goals according to the national education policy. The head of educational institution has an important role to motivate concerned teachers for proper classroom management.

### **Discipline**

The head of educational institution is responsible for maintaining discipline within an institution. He needs special expertise to maintain proper discipline in the institution. For this purpose he has to coordinate with staff members, students' parents and community.

### **Academic Management**

The major function of educational institutions is the education of young generation of a society. The head of the educational institution is responsible to plan and provide the opportunities for the mental and physical growth of the students. For this purpose he needs good academic management to achieve the desired goals. Mukhopadhyay, (2005, p. 56) states that "academic management is the core of an institutional process. It comprises planning and management of admission, curriculum, instruction, examination and co-curricular activities".

### **Supervision of Teachers**

Supervision of all the activities in the educational institution is also one of the major responsibilities of educational manager. He supervises all the activities of the students and the teachers. The job of the heads of institutions requires a lot of coordination with the community, the parents of the students, the teaching and non-teaching staff and the students as well. The performance of teachers has a very key role in the success and failure of any educational institutions. The head of educational institutions need to have good working relationships with his subordinates.

### **Students' Supervision**

The supervision, monitoring and evaluation of all the activities carried out by the students and the teachers in the institutions are the responsibility of the head of institution. The head of educational institution according to UNESCO (1993) has to play a variety of roles;

- Provision of guidance and help to students.
- Conduct and organizing of all the examinations by the institution or any other authority.
- Strategy for solution of problems faced by the students and teachers as well.

- Organization of different activities for improving the morale of the students.
- Evaluation of student's activities according to the set standards.

### **Curriculum Management**

The heads of educational institutions are responsible to arrange curricular activities keeping in view the age and mental growth of the students. They organize the activities and provide learning material for the proper mental and physical level of the students and steps of learning.

### **Human Resource Management**

The process of organizing human resources is called human resource management or personnel management. According to Mukhopadhyay, M. (2005, p. 56) "personnel management comprises personnel recruitment and induction, staff development, maintenance of personnel records, management of staff union, conducting staff meeting, staff welfare, job allocation and management".

### **Staff Development**

The staff development at institutional level is very important task. The head of educational institutions are aware about the needs and requirement of their staff members. They are also well aware about the personnel needs and the needs of the institutions for attaining the objectives and targets of the institutions.

### **Financial Management**

Financial management refers to preparation of budget, building of resources, costing of expenditures, payment of salaries and utility bills. Audit and financial control are also part of the financial management. Management of financial resources is one of the most valuable and major task of an educational institution heads to achieve the desired objectives.

### **Office Management**

The school head is responsible for keeping and managing all the records of the school. He received important information from higher authorities of the government time to time. The higher authorities also demand data regarding the school activities, staff members and physical assets of the institution. Therefore record keeping is not only desirable but it is imperative to a school head also.

## **OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

- Compare the performance of the heads of secondary schools with and without MA EPM degree.
- Compare the managerial approaches of the heads of secondary schools with and without MA EPM degree.
- Explore the similarities and dissimilarities in working among the heads of secondary schools with and without MA EPM degree

## METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive in nature and a survey was carried out to collect data from respondents. The population of this study was Executive District Officers (Education), District Education Officers, Heads of educational institutions and Secondary School Teachers in Punjab. Sample for this study were 30 EDOs/DEOs, 30 Heads of educational Institutions and 60 secondary school teachers. The questionnaires were used as an instrument of research. The researchers though their personal visit managed the collection of data.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through questionnaire were tabulated and interpreted. T-test was applied to determine the significance of difference among the respondents. Findings were made on the basis of this data analysis and conclusions were drawn accordingly. Group 1 comprised the heads of Educational Institutions with MA EPM Degree and Group 2 Heads of Educational Institutions without MA EPM Degree

**Table: 1**  
**Management N=30**

S. No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t-Calculated Value
1	You manage the problems related to the shortage of teachers	4.40	3.53	0.507	1.246	2.493*
2	You give importance the views and opinions from your subordinates	4.30	3.07	0.437	1.015	5.136*
3	You follow the management process models	3.47	2.40	1.125	1.352	2.348*
4	You delegate powers to subordinates to make them confident and increase their efficiency	3.99	2.75	0.991	1.902	3.042*
5	You pay attention to the cleanliness of your institution	4.80	4.67	0.414	0.488	0.807

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

Table: 1 shows that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree are more successful as compare to heads without MA EPM degree while managing the problems of shortage of teachers. They give importance to the views and opinions of their subordinates. They delegate powers to subordinates to make them confident and to increase their efficiency and follow the management process models. The performance of both groups regarding giving attention to the cleanliness of educational institutions is same.

**Table: 2**  
**Cooperation N=30**

S. No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t- Calculated Value
1	You allow your attached people to discharge their duties at their ease	2.93	2.87	1.534	0.915	0.145
2	You encourage your subordinates to share their skills and experiences with each other	4.07	2.80	0.594	1.521	3.004*
3	You give attention to the social needs and views of your subordinates	4.57	3.23	1.131	1.159	2.882*

0.05df =28 mTable value=2.05

Table: 2 reveals that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree encourage their subordinates to share their skills and experience with each other and give attention to the social needs and views of their subordinates as compared to heads without MA EPM degree. Whereas allowing their attached people to discharge their duties at ease the performance of both groups was same.

**Table: 3**  
**Planning N=30**

S.No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t- Calculated Value
1	You timely plan strategies regarding the achievement of students in the next educational year.	4.60	4.00	.507	.926	2.201*
2	You plan the provision of classroom furniture according to the strength of students	4.87	4.21	0.569	0.451	2.904*
3	You prepare the annual development plan of your institution	4.49	3.01	0.899	1.173	5.551*
4	You understand the problems of teachers' absenteeism	4.22	3.40	0.412	1.242	2.370*

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

Table: 3 represents that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree are more successful as compared to heads without MA EPM degree while planning about the achievement of students and provision of classroom furniture according to the strength of students.

They were well aware about the problems faced by heads due to the absence or shortage of teachers and prepare the annual development plan for their institutions.

**Table: 4**  
**Coordination N=30**

S.No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t-Calculated Value
1	You coordinate with district management	4.57	3.68	0.660	1.151	2.404*
2	You dictate orders to subordinates and makes decisions without any consultation	2.87	2.80	1.358	0.664	0.242
3	You consult the parent of students whenever required	4.60	4.00	0.632	0.926	2.073*
4	You coordinate with your subordinates before taking the decision about the planning of educational activities at institutional level	4.07	3.77	0.521	1.165	1.288

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

Table: 4 reveals that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree coordinate with their district management while making the decisions and consult with the parent of students regarding their progress.

The performance of both groups is same while dictating orders to their subordinates and making decisions about the planning of educational activities at institutional level.

**Table: 5**  
**Working Relations N=30**

S. No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t-Calculated Value
1	You work as a team member at institutional level	4.22	3.36	0.421	1.253	2.370*
2	You work as a leader at institutional level	4.57	4.00	0.679	1.509	1.876
3	You play active role in running the educational institution	3.93	2.80	.961	1.082	3.032*
4	You provide better classroom environment for students	4.60	4.00	0.507	0.378	3.674*

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

Table: 5 reveals that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree work as a team member and play active role in running the educational institution more effectively. They provide better classroom environment for students. While working as a leader at institutional level the performance of with and without MA EPM degree is same.

**Table: 6**  
**Finance N=30**

S.No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t- Calculated Value
1	You utilize financial resources according to the priorities of the institution	4.53	2.93	0.516	1.163	4.870*
2	You use financial resources without any interference	4.25	2.77	0.912	1.245	3.890*
3	You prepare the budget of your institution keeping in view your school demand	4.11	2.77	0.521	0.932	3.101*
4	You follow the procedure of budget preparation	4.23	3.44	0.789	0.996	2.611*

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

Table: 6 presents that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree utilize financial resources according to the priorities of the institution and without any interference. They prepare budget according to the demand of the institution and follow the budget preparation procedure.

**Table: 7**  
**Teaching learning process N=30**

S.No	Statement	Mean Group 1	Mean Group 2	SD. Group 1	SD. Group 2	t- Calculated Value
1	You evaluate the performance of your teachers informally	3.47	2.40	1.125	1.352	2.332*
2	You periodically monitor the teaching activities of your staff	4.20	3.77	0.887	1.305	1.503
3	You regularly evaluate the performance of your teachers formally	4.60	3.20	0.632	1.146	4.141*
4	You are successful to implement co-curricular activities at institution level	4.53	2.93	0.516	1.163	4.870*
5	You use the services of non-teaching staff for teaching learning process	4.00	3.87	0.655	1.246	0.367

0.05 df =28 Table value=2.05

**Table: 7 shows that heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree evaluate the performance of their teachers informally and periodically monitor the teaching activities of teachers. They also give full attentions to cleanliness of the institution. Heads with EPM Degree are also successful to implement co-curricular activities as well. While evaluating the performance of teachers formally the performance of heads with MA EPM degree is better than the heads without MA EPM degree.**

## **FINDINGS**

**The findings indicate that the heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree initiated good planning and strategies while accomplishing their duties. They prefer to work as team member and believe in team working. The heads of educational institutions with MA EPM degree utilized the services of teaching staff in other day to day affairs of their institutions keeping in view their potential.**

**They coordinated the school activities with their subordinates in better way and particularly they involved their colleagues while making all decisions at institutional level. The heads holding M.A EPM degree delegated powers to their subordinates and coordinated different activities with the district educational authorities in better way.**

**Comparatively they implemented co-curricular activities of their school effectively. The level of utilizing financial resources at institutional level was also better. Preparation of annual development plan, developing annual budgets and evaluation of the performance of the teaching and non teaching staff were comparatively better performed by the heads of with M.A EPM degree. The performance of both the groups with reference to cleanliness of the institution was same. Whereas allowing their attached peoples to discharge their duties at their ease was same in both the groups. The performance of both groups was same in dictating orders to their subordinates and making decisions, working as a leader at institutional level and evaluating the performance of teachers informally.**

## **CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION**

**It was concluded that the heads with EPM degree plan their strategies to achieve their educational goals; they work as team leader, gives importance to the views, opinions and social needs of their subordinates and consult with parents of students whenever required. They are very successful to implement co-curricular activities; they consult with higher authorities before taking the decisions and follow the budget preparation procedure. Despite this fact, there were some other parameters, which differentiate the performance of heads with and without EPM degree.**

**There were similar points of view in some cases, while in many they had dissimilar views. The result of this study indicated that in preparing the budget and annual development plans the performance of heads with EPM degree was remarkable as compared to heads without EPM degree.**

The performance of both the groups with reference to cleanliness of the institution, allowing their people to discharge their duties at their ease, conveying orders to the subordinators, working as a team leader, and evaluating the performance of teachers informally was same. On the basis of the conclusions of the study it was recommended that MA EPM degree may be declared compulsory for heads of educational institutions.

All the universities may start MA EPM degree to fulfill the requirements of working and professional educational planners and managers of the country. Since the performance of MA EPM graduate is comparatively better in managing the educational institutions, therefore higher authorities may prefer EPM graduates while selecting the heads of educational institutions.

#### **BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the AUTHORS**



**Syed Manzoor HUSSAIN SHAH** is Professor of Education and Chairman, Department of Education, in Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan.

He has also a long experience of 26 years of distance education (AIOU)

**Professor. Dr. Syed Manzoor HUSSAIN SHAH**  
Hazara University Mansehra PAKISTAN  
Land No. 0997-414165  
Mobile 0302- 5439121  
Email: [drmhshaah@mail.com](mailto:drmhshaah@mail.com)

**Masoor AHMAD** has done his M.A and M.Phil in Educational Planning and Management. Now he is doing Ph D in Educational Planning and Management from Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad. He has sixteen years teaching experience

**Masoor AHMAD,**  
Ph D Scholar,  
Allama Iqbal Open University  
Islamabad, PAKISTAN  
Email: [gazifj@gmail.com](mailto:gazifj@gmail.com)

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