

## Comparison of Management Practices in Public and Private Universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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### Abstract

*This study attempted to compare the management practices in public and private universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa, Pakistan. The comparison is based on availability of written rules and regulations, distribution of tasks, availability of managers, access to officers, time management, work load, staff promotion procedure and appraisal system. Additionally, the comparison is also based on transparency, political intervention, use of authorities, nepotism and biasness, human resource availability and functions, academic decisions, existence of different decision making bodies, committees and their role in policy making and implementation and management styles. The population comprised all recognized universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa and a convenience sampling of six universities included three from public and three from private sector. The findings showed that both sector universities had the required offices, staff members and managers. The areas where private universities were observed weak as compared to public universities were lack of proper staff vacancy advertisements and induction policies, vague appraisal system, low salary packages and limited freedom to managers. Public universities were found unsatisfactory in areas including staff induction on merit based policies and political intervention, lack of monitoring system and lack of collegiality amongst university offices. The study recommends that universities in both sectors should*

*prepare staff and student manuals for transparency procedures, should improve the skills and knowledge of its staff/managers by conducting seminars/ workshops/ trainings in collaboration with HEC and other regulatory bodies on regular basis, and establish public private partnership to improve university management system in Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** management practices, private universities, public universities, university governance

### **Introduction**

Universities are places of high professional learning, where one acquires social, intellectual and economic benefits in life. Though there are many universities in Pakistan which offer quality higher education, these institutions are far behind from the universities of the developed world due to academic and administrative reasons. After 69 years of independence, we are still unable to seek the best path of giving standard and useful education to the community (Faridullah, 2012). According to Isani (2001), the major problems of higher education in Pakistan are the outdated curriculum, traditional pedagogical practices, faulty examination system, political leadership and lack of adequate interest in effective education management and administration. Furthermore, Isani asserts that the education system in Pakistan is also facing the problem of lack of modern technologies and strategies. After the establishment of Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan, the quality of higher education has considerably improved and developed as compared to the past, but it still needs further efforts to standardize the system.

Higher education is split into undergraduate and postgraduate programs and starts after completion of the higher secondary level; the age bracket of students for higher education is usually between 16 and 22 years. The first degree in the traditional education system required two years of study for graduation (in old system), and in the new system, graduation requires four years of study. A professional degree in medicine takes five years and the time frame for a bachelor's degree in agriculture and engineering is usually four years. At higher education level, each department at the university develops a curriculum for the concerned disciplines, followed by a review conducted by a Board of Studies, comprising faculty members, external subject experts and representatives of affiliated institutes who finalize the syllabi, recommending additions or changes. After that, at the operational level, teachers

plan lessons for teaching from the approved course contents; however, HEC has developed guidelines for each academic program to maintain minimum standards for different areas, for example, program duration, standard and scope of the syllabus and courses, and the methods of evaluation. This study made a comparison of universities practices, including pedagogy, physical facilities management, curricular and co-curricular facilities, assessment and evaluation procedures, academicians monitoring procedures, recruitment and retention of teachers, budget management, human resource and other related matters.

Regarding administrative difficulties in higher education, Akhtar and Kalsoom (2012) conducted a study which principally focused on the representing body of the colleges and associations with different partners. Information was gathered from institutional and government records, strategy papers and articles. The findings of the study indicated that in Pakistan, the state/government is the key player in the administration of advanced education because it provides nearly the maximum financial support to all state universities. Pakistan's higher education system is divided into private and public sector universities that work under HEC. This paper will compare and analyze management practices in public and private universities and will provide recommendations for the improvement in managerial practices in both sectors' universities.

### **Research questions of the study**

1. What are the current management practices in public and private universities?
2. What recommendations can be made for the improvement of managerial practices in both sectors universities?

### **Literature Review**

Saeed (2007) states that advanced level of education in Pakistan starts after 12 years of education and corresponds to 16 plus to 22 plus years age cohort of learners. Lenn (1997) elaborates that higher education plays a significant role in personal, social, regional and national as well as in international growth and development. The developed nations of the world have invested in higher education by establishing quality oriented, general and professional universities and learning seats in every possible area in their countries. The learning institutions are expected to produce skillful graduates and professionals, therefore, numerous programs have

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been launched to improve quality including application of modern administration strategies, merit based management selection, curriculum modernization, advanced assessment methodology and teaching skills.

The progress of higher education in Pakistan has been accelerated with the birth of Higher Education Commission (HEC) in 2002. There were four higher education institutions until 1957 and by 1967 the number reached 10. In the next 20 years the number reached 16 and from 1988 to 1997 the number of higher education institutions (HEIs) went up to 43. There was a tremendous growth in HEIs from 1998 to 2014 and the number of universities further increased to 160.

Isani and Virk (2005) expressed that the universities and degree awarding institutions fall under general and skills oriented colleges and degree awarding institutions. Regarding scholarly projects, open and public HEIs offer an assortment of scholastic degrees while private institutions concentrate on professional and skills related degrees and courses like business, IT, medicine, which contribute to the corporate sectors' interest. According to HEC, universities are established through National or Provincial Assemblies Acts in compliance with the Model Act, which provides basic structure of management and governance for university.

According to Federal University Ordinance (2002), the University is led by a Chancellor and at the Federal level it is headed by the President of Pakistan, while in the Provinces, the respective Governors act as Chancellors of public universities. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer and the academic leader of the university. Other administrative officers include Registrar, the Controller of Examinations, the Resident Auditor, the Treasurer and the Librarian. University teaching staff is divided into cadres of Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors and Lecturers and have pay scales that fall between grades 18 to 22, or they are recruited on contract basis for specified periods. The Vice Chancellor cannot administer all matters, therefore, he appoints and delegates some of his powers to the senior faculty and non-faculty members. In a university, all the offices are responsible to work for the improvement of education and to achieve the best position in all related areas, whether in teaching or administration. According to the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan and University Ordinance of 2002, the following different bodies should be established in universities: The Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council, Boards of Faculties, Board of Studies, Selection

Board, Advanced Studies and Research Board, Finance and Planning Committee, Affiliation Committee and Discipline Committee.

Regarding the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, even though Stace and Dunphy (2001) acknowledge that universities are endeavoring to function in a more competitive manner, they assert that the world is facing many changes in every walk of life, including education, therefore, the pace of progress must be doubled or tripled by both the state and the community alike. While Stace and Dumphy emphasize on enhancing the pace of progress, Godfrey and Grasso (2000) are more focused on the administrative aspect; they underscore that participatory administration is fairly cutting edge and it is more acknowledged than authoritarian leadership style because in participatory administration, the decision making is always with mutual consultation and discussion. Participatory administration is characterized as an arrangement of structures and procedures which can improve the internal and external organizational system to make it a successful unit.

Elaborating on the multifaceted nature of governance in the education sector, Marginson and Considine (2000) consider that governance is comprehensively characterized to envelop interior connections, outside connections and its convergence. The authors further state that governance in education sector is a complicated and compact issue which involves the handling and solving of all the internal and external factors. At the university level, the administrators are bound to address the issues faced by the staff and students and also have to overcome the hurdles and barriers between university and community connections.

Regarding the quality of graduates produced by the universities, Thaigarajale and Dale (2001), assert that many universities in the developing countries have failed to produce skilled graduates. Therefore, numerous education foundations are now winding up in circumstances where old strategies for administration are no more successful in ensuring a bright future for the institution. Maassen and Vught (1994) believe that administration patterns fluctuate from nation to nation. The administration of an advanced education framework mirrors the general public in which it exists and may be an impression of the main political framework. There are two types of administration models recognized and obviously perceived, state controlled and state directing models.

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Memon (2007) confirms that the government of Pakistan is the major budget giving source to all the state controlled higher education organizations in the country and spends the greater part of its power and money on advanced education institution administration. Government financing has however, demonstrated lack in rising to the needs of the general population divisions of universities that depend to a great extent on state financing. Staff salaries and other expenses demonstrate over pay in every public university and there is a gap observed between capital pay and capital use.

According to the Task Force Report (2002), the Government of Pakistan assumes a focal part with regards to the administration of advanced education. It is done through a number of strategies, for example, direct subsidizing, arrangement of college representing bodies, authoritative regulations and everyday direct contribution of all such establishments. Since its creation, advanced education has been the focal point of Pakistan's national governmental issues with many associations, plans and policy making departments, which are struggling to cope with it and control the issue of weak and meaningless education, particularly at university level. The government should provide a framework for the governance of universities with modern means and applications for bringing its education level up and also there is a dire need for the establishment of a supervisory strategy for all DAIs in the country. According to Marzano (2000), students' past performance is a strong predictor of future performance. This highlights the cumulative nature of achievement, which is impacted by many factors. Schools are an obvious and important contributor to student performance, but other relevant influences include inherent and acquired abilities, personality, learning styles, and family and community influences. Boissiere (2004) classified the output into five different categories: the first category comprises physical facilities, equipment and sanitation, the second is associated with curriculum, teaching strategies, textbooks and other support materials, the third relates to teachers' effective teaching practices, the fourth includes the structure of the institution and how it is managed and the fifth category pertains to the health status of students, their academic abilities and family background.

Faridullah (2012) opines that various variables, for example, internationalization, advertising, multiplication, competition, improvement of advanced level learning and most noteworthy, regular and constant checks and

balances have added much importance to the quality of higher education for all stakeholders at the national level by keeping in mind the percentage of the pointers of value instruction. He also elaborates on the major areas of standard education which include qualified staff, quality students, upgraded curricula, conducive learning climate, systematic administration and proper accountability system.

According to Aziz and Akhtar (2012), there is a huge gap between school/college level teaching and university level teaching. When a teacher is teaching at school level, he/she is only focusing on subject matter and learners' attention, but on the other hand when a teacher is teaching at university level, he/she must have knowledge of involving the learners, getting their attention, making them attentive and ready for the selected topic and subject. In some cases, it also requires a refinement of the basic ideas and concepts of the previous ways of thinking that require an advanced and experienced professional and competent teacher. Government of Pakistan (2007) in a report stated that the teaching staff, the infrastructure, assistance to teachers and learners for research activities, teaching and its educational programs which will define the situations suitable to standardized advance level education, are to be promoted in all DAIs to make it best for producing skilled graduates. Skelton (2005) has provided a framework to consider indicators of quality and excellence teaching in universities. New managerial practices emphasize the 3 Es of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, which together compose best criteria for judging excellence from the perspective of governments and senior officials in higher education and also provide the basis for accountability in universities. Batool, Qureshi and Rauf., (2008) studied gender representations in both government and private universities in Pakistan. The study examined the number of universities, enrolled number of male and female students' as well as student and teacher ratio. The findings showed that there was a gender gap in universities, not only in enrollment but also women's representation is low in numbers in top managerial positions. The study concluded that there is need to have gender balance in academia. Olerup (2006) identified seven types of teacher educational competencies for university teachers, which included knowledge competencies, didactic competencies and understanding, planning and implementation competencies, communication competencies, assessment competencies, collegiality and professionalism.

## Methodology

A descriptive survey approach was used for the study because the aim was to compare the management systems prevailing in public and private sector universities. The data collection tools comprised two self-developed questionnaires based on the literature review and the purpose of the study. Both tools were personally administered by one of the researchers to collect the data. The instruments were pilot tested with a small cohort of staff and students, who were not included in the original study and suggested changes were incorporated for obtaining more relevant results. The respondents were university managers, academic staff, faculty members and post graduate students enrolled in the current session.

### Population and sample of the study

The population of the study was all 29 recognized universities in KP province of Pakistan. A sample of six universities was selected by convenience. Nine university managers, 20 staff and faculty members and 40 post graduate students enrolled in current session from each sector university were selected.

### Tools for the study

The study used two data collection tools, which included one for the university staff and post graduate students and the other questionnaire was for the selected managerial leadership style. The managers were Chancellor/Vice chancellor, Registrar and Chairman/Head of education departments of the sampled universities. The collected data were analyzed by applying simple percentile method.

Table 1  
*Responses about Different Managerial Practices*

No	Item	Public Universities		Private Universities	
		YES %	NO %	YES %	NO %
1.	Rules and regulations are in written form	87	13	75	25
2.	Managerial' practices guidelines available	70	30	70	30
3.	Managers are experienced	60	40	74	26
4.	They are expert in managerial skills	71	29	77	23
5.	They use their authorities freely	73	27	45	55



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6.	There is a check and balance mechanism for them	70	30	74	26
7.	There is a monitoring team	40	60	30	70
8.	Vacancies are advertised properly	77	23	28	78
9.	Committee available for staff selection/ induction	54	46	34	66
10.	Different decisions making bodies available	80	20	47	53
11.	Vacancies positions are filled by the chancellor	77	23	95	05
12.	Vacancies are filled by the senate/ syndicate	76	24	20	80
13.	Teachers are inducted on merit.	52	48	50	50
14.	Vacancies are filled by political pressure	78	22	45	55
15.	Consultation is done with the concerned department	67	33	55	45
16.	Disciplinary committee existed	92	08	76	34
17.	Academic programs are monitored by Registrar	45	55	50	50
18.	Human resource management available	93	07	40	60
19.	Staff appraisal committee existed	65	35	30	70
20.	Budget allocation and execution committee available	73	27	60	40
21.	Time table is made by the department	80	20	45	55
22.	Time table is made by the university management	24	76	77	23
23.	Rules and regulations clear to teachers and students.	63	37	50	50
24.	Communication is satisfactory b/w staff and managers.	70	30	71	29
25.	Grouping is existed in teaching/staff	88	12	66	34
26.	Authority is biased towards some groups	65	40	60	40
27.	Powers distribution is balanced	23	77	28	72

The above table shows the results in percentile of the sampled respondents in both sector universities about different administrative and managerial practices and activities. Item 1 shows that 87% of public universities have written rules and regulation for its staff and students while 75% private universities respondents agreed that they have written rules regulation. Responses for Item 2 on managerial practices guidelines availability showed that 70% agreed in both sector universities. The item on managerial practices experiences were reported as 60% agreed in public

and 74% agreed in private sector universities as most of the private universities hire the services of retired personnel who had greater managerial experiences as compared to public universities. Item 4 result shows that 71% respondents from public and 77% from private sector agreed that the managers working in their concerned universities have command and expertise in managerial exercises.

The managers of public universities were using their authority freely with 73% freedom while private universities managers were using their authority with 45% freedom only, which meant that they were not allowed to exercise their authority without the owner's permission. Check and balance was good in both sector universities but monitoring teams were not satisfactory. The vacancies advertisement process was more satisfactory in public universities with 77% agreement and was very poor in private universities with only 28% agreement about vacancy advertisement. Item 9 was about selection committee availability and positive responses were 54% from public and 34% from the private DAIs. Responses about different decision bodies availability was 80% in public and 47% in private sectors. Items about staff selection by chancellor and syndicate/senate were high in both sectors as 77% in public and 95% in private universities, but staff selection on merit was 52% and 50% in both sectors respectively. Political pressure was 78% in public and 45% in private DAIs, departmental consultation was 67% and 55%, disciplinary committee availability was 92% and 76% and registrar role was 45% in public and 50% in the private universities. The responses were positive about human resource management existence in both sector universities. Staff appraisal committee existed in 65% public and 30% private universities. 73 % respondents agreed that budget allocation and execution committees were available in the public universities and 60% private universities had such committees.

A vast majority (80%) stated that time table was made by the concerned department in public and 45% in private sector, while 24% public university management and 77% management in private universities made the time tables. 63% public and 50% private universities have clearly chalked out rules and regulations for their teachers and students. 70% indicated that communication was satisfactory between staff and managers in public and 71% in private universities. Teacher and manager grouping were evident as 88% in public and 66% in private universities. The item about authority support to a group indicated as 65% positive from public and 60% from private universities. The last item was about powers distribution and

the responses show that majority of both sector universities staff and students were not satisfied and they observed imbalances in power distribution in both public and private universities.

Table 2

*Managers Leadership Styles*

No	Administrator/ Manager	Authoritarian Leadership		Democratic Leadership		Laissez-Faire Leadership	
		Public %	Private %	Public %	Private %	Public %	Private %
1	Vice Chancellor / Chancellor	87%	82%	8%	12%	5%	6%
2	Registrar / Deputy Registrar	75%	64%	18%	23%	7%	13%
3	Chairman / HOD / In charge	73%	58%	22%	24%	3%	18%

Table 2 shows that in public universities the Chancellors/Vice Chancellors were 87% authoritarian in style, 8% Democratic and 5% laissez-faire, while in private sector 82% were authoritarian, 12% democratic and 6% laissez faire. Registrars of public universities were 75% 18% and 7% authoritarians, democratic and laissez faire respectively and the registrars of private universities were 64% authoritarians, 23% democratic and 13% laissez faire respectively. Chairman/HOD/ of education departments were 73% authoritarian in style, 22% democratic and 3% laissez-faire while in private sector universities they were 58% authoritarian, 24% democratic and 18% laissez faire.

**Discussion**

The outcomes showed that the public and private universities had written rules and regulations regarding managerial practices. It was revealed from the data result that public universities were performing better in the use of managers’ authorities, disciplinary committee availability, vacancy advertisements, staff induction process and the availability of different bodies and committees as compared to private universities which were observed to be lacking in such areas. This is consistent with the results of Mazhar and Akhtar’s (2016) study. The study found that private universities were more satisfactory regarding experienced managers availability, their managers were more proficient because most of the private universities hire the services of retired personnel who have greater managerial experiences as compared

to public universities and there was a strong check and balance mechanism (Anwar, 2008; Naz, 2013). It is observed that political intervention was exercised in public sector universities. Furthermore, findings indicated that the Registrar's office was more active in private universities as compared to public universities. Differences were found between public and private universities about decision making processes and authorities because results showed that public universities were more independent in decision making while private universities managers were dependent on the chair or owner of the organization (Berardi & Blackmore, 2006; Naz, 2013). Human resource management existence, staff appraisal committee, budget allocation and execution committees were more satisfactory in public universities as compared to private universities (Juliussen, Karlsson & Gärling, 2005). Communication between staff and managers, was more satisfactory in private universities. While the existence of teachers and managers grouping was more visible in public universities, it was observed that authority's support to one or the other group prevailed in both public and private sector universities. Both sectors university staff and students were not satisfied and they observed imbalance in power distribution (Mishra, 2007). It was also observed that a majority of the managers in both sectors were of authoritarian style, but in comparison, public university leadership was more authoritarian as compared to private university leadership. Knowledge management practices require informed participative management in educational organization where creative thinking is considered as the basic value which is a key factor in knowledge management (Soo, 2002). This shows that there is no significant difference regarding knowledge management measurement between public and private universities. The study also revealed that the leadership style of the managers working as Vice Chancellors, Registrars and Department Heads in public universities were more authoritarian as compared to private sector university managers. The university management system in private sector was weak due to the influence of the owners as a majority of the managers were appointed without matching qualifications and experiences.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study identified weaknesses and strengths in both public and private sector universities about different administrative and managerial practices. The findings showed that both sector universities had the required offices, staff members and managers. The areas where private universities were observed weak as compared to public universities were lack of proper staff vacancy advertisements

and induction policies, vague appraisal system, low salary packages and limited freedom to managers. Public universities were found unsatisfactory in areas including staff induction on merit based policies and political intervention, lack of monitoring system and lack of collegiality amongst university offices. The study recommends the following:

3. The universities in both sectors should make rules and regulations booklet for staff and students.
4. There should be proper check and balance mechanism and separate committees regarding vacancy advertisements, staff induction, promotion and staff appraisal.
5. Public university leaders should be friendlier to promote higher education in the country.
6. Power should be distributed with justice and according to merit. Nepotism and favoritism should be discouraged.
7. The authorities should not support one group over the other; in fact they should discourage grouping in staff and students.
8. There should be no political intervention in both sector universities.
9. Universities in both sectors may improve the skills and knowledge of its staff and managers by conducting seminars, workshops and training.
10. There should be public private partnership committees and associations to improve university education in Pakistan.

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