

Decision Making Practices in the Universities of Pakistan (A Comparative Study)

- 1. Dr. Bibi Asia Naz**
- 1. Dr. Amir Zaman**
- 1. Dr. Abdul Ghaffar**
 - 1. Fazli Ameen,**
 - 2. Dr. Umar Ali**
 - 3. Dr. Javed Iqbal**

1. Department of Education
Abdul Wali Khan University
Mardan.
2. Institute of Education and Research
Gomal University
D.I.Khan.
3. Institute of Education and Research
Hazara University
Mansehra.

Abstract

Main purpose of this study was to compare the prevailing decision making practices in the universities of Pakistan. The decision making practice was compared on the following aspects: a. Decision Dictated by the chair, b. Decisions made by a majority vote c. Decisions taken on political grounds in public and private sector universities. It was found that both public and private sector have same procedure of decisions making and are made by a majority vote. Differences were found between public and private sector universities that decisions are dictated by the chair and are taken according to internal and external pressure. This practice was observed mostly in public sector universities of Pakistan.

Key Words: Universities, Decision Making Practice, Internal and External Influence

Introduction

Decision-making process is daily administrative activity happens at all levels in institutions. Decision should be made in order to execute activities and to achieve the objectives. Decision making process is most intellectual process, as different factors involved in it. Orasanu and Connolly (1993) define it as a series of cognitive operations performed consciously, Narayan and Corcoran-Perry (1997) consider decision making as the interaction between a problem that needs to be solved and a person who wishes to solve it within a specific environment. Decision-making is usually defined as a process of identifying the problems and the possibilities for their solution which includes the efforts before and after the decision is made". Every aspect of the organization may be affected by poor quality of decision (Muhammad, Isa, Othman, & Rahim, 2009).

Decision-making process starts with presence of problems or issues that must be solved in order to achieve the desired goals of organization. Identification and understanding of a problem considered as the basis for determining the next steps to be taken in decision making process. The process of decision making process begin with the identification and recognition of a problem with provide basis for the next step of decision making to think on the solution and alternate solution of the problem led to the decision making and to execute/implement it and then to evaluate the results as it is successful or not. The process is:

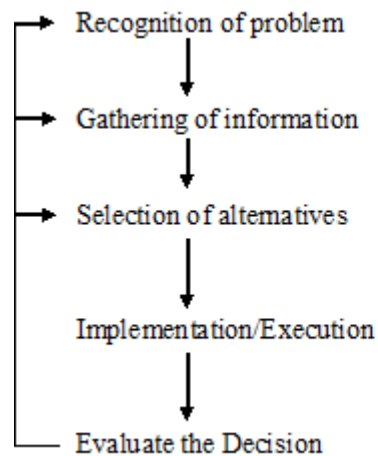


Figure 1: Decision Making Process

Masch, (2004) specified decision making process in four steps: “problem identification/recognition, searching and gathering of information, selection and evaluation of alternatives, execute/implement the selected decision and to evaluate the result on the bases of that decision”. There are several steps that must be followed in order to arrive at a decision: one must realize that it is going to be necessary to make a decision, determine the goals to be achieved, generate alternatives that lead to attaining the proposed goals, evaluate whether these alternatives meet one’s expectations and, lastly, select the best alternative, the one that implies an efficient global result (Halpern, 1997). There are many factors that could influence a decision. Ozer, (2005) stated they could be the personality of decision maker, the state of organization, internal and external situation in organization as well as availability of information. All these factors can be classifying as individual and organizational factor and as controllable and uncontrollable conditions. Factors which influence the decision making process can be the best “strategy” to improve timely, reliable, accuracy, effectively and accountability of the decisions. (Kim, 2012) discussed in his study that “Emotionally intelligent decision makers would better understand and manage their emotion mitigating the influence of emotion on decision ability”.

However besides these, there are several other factors that could influence the decisions. Individual and organizational factors influencing the decision making process. Blackmore and Berardi (2006) stated about seven factors, which can influence decisions. They are a. decision makers (Individual or personal) b. decision situation (environment or condition), thinking in terms of a problem or an opportunity c. decision criteria (single or multi-criteria), d. time and people affected by the decision as well as decision support theories e. models, f. tools, g. strategy and techniques. Atmosudirjo (1987) argue that nature of organization and personal capabilities of decision-maker strongly influence decision making process. Decision maker, which covered their personality characteristic and individual differences, such as gender and age differences, past experience, cognitive biases and belief in personal relevance, could also be an influencing factor for decision-making (Bruin, Parker, & Fischhoff 2007; Sanz de Acedo & Cardelle- Elawar et al. 2007; Juliusson, Karlsson, & Gärling 2005; Stanovich & West 2008)

In universities decision making is the prime responsibility of top management level of authority. Therefore, these personalities must have skill in term of making and taking the decisions. They have to understand “the problem”. For the purpose following questions should be formulated and answered.

What should to do? (What is the problem? Who are facing the problem? How to solve and what are the alternatives?)

Who will be the decision maker/s (decision will be taken individually or it will be group decision)

Why the decision should be taken? (Purpose of decision making)

When to take decision? (Suitable time) and

How to utilize the best strategy? (Which strategy should be used?) (Bovay 2002).

According to Haris, (2012) like other organization, in Higher Education Institution (HEIs), “the execution of decision is normally done by the top management level of HEIs. Therefore, the management must have skill in term of making and taking the decisions. They have to understand “the core of decision question”. The success of any organization depends on the right decision at right time by right people. It is considered that the prime job that lies at the heart of management and the basis of success depends largely on decision-making (Marvin, 1981; Jennings and Wattam, 1994 and Choudury, 2001).

There are always several critical areas concerning universities for which the governance of higher education involves authority. These areas are their mission, student’s enrollment strength, access of students to different instructional discipline, recruitment and appointment of employees, degree requirements, quality of research and research culture promotion, freedom and instructional supervision, organization instructional structure and allocation of available resources.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To differentiate between public and private sector universities of Pakistan regarding decision making practices.
2. To compare public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that decision dictated by the chair.
3. To compare public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that Decision made by a majority vote.
4. To compare public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that Decision taken on political grounds

Hypothesis of the Study

1. There is no significant difference between public and private sector universities of Pakistan regarding decision making practices.
2. There is no significant difference between public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that decision dictated by the chair.
3. There is no significant difference between public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that Decision made by a majority vote.
4. There is no significant difference between public and private sector universities of Pakistan about that Decision taken on political grounds

Methodology

The study aimed to compare the decision making practice in public and private sector universities of Pakistan. A sample of 320 respondents was randomly selected from selected four public and four private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa and Punjab. The respondents was asked about decision making practice in their universities that are decisions are made by the chair, are made by a majority vote and are influenced by internal or external pressure. The questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents. T-test was used as a statistical technique for analyzing the data.

Results

Table 1: Comparative Views of Respondents of Public and Private Sector Universities Regarding the Bodies Decision Making.

S.N	respondents	N	Mean	Std	t	df	p-value
1	Public sector	160	9.38	1.67			
2	Private sector	160	8.98	2.08	1.89	318	.06

The table 1 above shows that the cal; value $1.89 < \text{tab; value } 1.97$; with df 318 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence means that null hypothesis of no significant difference between the opinions of respondents of the public and private sector universities regarding bodies decision making is accepted. It is concluded that the respondents of public and private sector universities were of the similar opinions regarding the bodies' decision making.

Table 2. Comparative Views of Respondents of Public and Private Sector Universities Regarding the Decision are dictated by the Chair.

S.N	respondents	N	Mean	Std	t	df	p-value
1	Public	160	3.73	.822			
2	Private	160	3.24	1.05	4.64	318	.000

The table 2 above shows that the cal; value $4.64 > \text{tab; value } 1.97$; with df 318 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence means that null hypothesis of no significant difference between the opinions of respondents of the public and private sector universities regarding decisions are dictated by the chair is rejected. It is concluded that the respondents of public and private sector universities were of different opinions regarding decisions are dictated by the chair.

Table 3. Comparative Views of Respondents of Public and Private Sector Universities Regarding the Decision are made by a majority vote.

S.N	university	N	Mean	Std	t	df	p-value
1	Public	160	2.51	.997			
2	Private	160	2.54	1.262	.223	318	.824

The table 3 shows that the cal; value $.223 < \text{tab; value } 1.97$; with df 318 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence means that null hypothesis of no significant difference between the opinions of respondents of the public and private sector universities regarding decisions are made by a majority vote is accepted. It is concluded that the respondents of public and private sector universities were of different opinions regarding decisions are made by a majority vote.

Table 4. Comparative Views of Respondents of Public and Private Sector Universities Regarding the Decision taken on political grounds.

S.N	university	N	Mean	Std	t	df	p-value
1	Public	160	2.95	1.05			
2	Private	160	2.62	1.16	2.68	318	.008

Note: The result is significant if probability of occurrence (p-value) is equal to or less than 0.05 level

The table 4 shows that the cal; value $2.68 > \text{tab; value } 1.97$; with df 318 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Hence means that null hypothesis of no significant difference between the opinions of respondents of the public and private sector universities regarding decisions are taken on political grounds is rejected. It is concluded that the respondents of public and private sector universities were of different opinions regarding decisions are made by a majority vote.

Conclusion and Discussions

Decision making is the worthy and integral element of management process. Decision-making influences organizational setup. 'Influences' are individuals or groups that hold common interests and endeavor to persuade/convince authorities that certain changes should occur. They may focus upon specific activities or processes that should occur in universities. Pakistan is a developing country, at present there are 69 public and 58 private sector universities in Pakistan (Naz, 2013). According to Anwar M. N, (2008) "Unfortunately, in Pakistan there is a long tradition of making decisions based on factors other than merit, that's why the decision-making practices were found to be unsatisfactory". From the findings of the study it is concluded that different factor affect the decision making process.

Decision should be made by a majority vote and the influential and political person should not indulge in the university decision making as it can harm the academic environment. The person who is chairing the meeting should give equal chances of participation to the members and stakeholders.

Clear differences were found in decision making practice in public and private sector universities. Public sector should cover its deficiencies in the sense and the results of the study are in line with Gore (1977) analyzed whether decisions are made at individual level or at a group level. He found that decisions were made at apex level without participation of academic staff. He recommended and reported that participation in decision-making becomes an important dimension, as it is believed that people at lower levels in the hierarchy are more familiar with the field problems. He pointed out that decentralization in decision-making increases the need for coordination at the higher levels.

References

- Anwar, M. N. (2008). Decision Making Practices in Universities of Pakistan. *Journal of Diversity Management*, 3 (4).
- Atmosudirdjo, Prajudi. (1987). Beberapa Pandangan Umum Tentang Pengambilan Keputusan. Jakarta. Ghalia Indonesia.
- Berardi, A & Blackmore C. (2006). Introducing Environmental Decision Making. Book. 1. Open University Worldwide. . Milton Keynes/GB.
- Bovay, Kris (2002). Decision making tips to improve decision outcomes and the best types of problem solving Strategies. Available from: <http://www.morefor-small-business.com/decision-making-tips.html>.
- Bruine de Bruin, W., Parker, A. M., & Fischhoff, B. (2007). Individual differences in adult decision making competence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 92(5), 938-956. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.92.5.938.
- Choudhury, N.R. (2001). *Management in Education*. A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi.
- Gore, M.S. (1977). Decision Making: A Framework for Analysis. In Matthai, R. J., U. Pareek and T. V. Halpern DE (1997). *Critical thinking across the curriculum*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Haris, I. (2012). Determinant Factors of Decision Making Process in Higher. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 12 (18).
- Jennings, D. and Wattam, S. (1994). Decision Making: An Integrated Approach. Pitman Publishing, New York.
- Jullisson, EA, Karlsson, N, Gärling, T. (2005). Weighing the past and the future in decision making. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology*. 17(4). 561-575. DOI: 10.1080/09541440440000159.
- Marvin, P. (1981). *Multiplying Management Effectives*. Taraporevala Publishing Industries, New York.
- Masch, Vladimir A. (2004). Return to the “natural” process of decision-making leads to good strategies. *Journal of Evolutionary of Economics*. Springer-Verlag. 14: 431–462. DOI: 10.1007/s00191-004-0218-8.
- Muhammad, N. M., Isa, F. M., Othman, S. N., & Rahim, R. A. (2009). *Decision Making Quality of Higher Education Institutions Leaders in Malaysia: Leadership Style, Decision Style, Managerial Process and Competitive Intensity Relationships*. Malaysia: Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi (Akept) Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia.
- Naz, B. A. (2013). *A Comparative Study of Administrative Practices at Public and Private Sector Universities of Pakistan*. Gomal University D.I.Khan: Unpublished Thesis.
- Narayan SM & Corcoran-Perry S (1997). Line of reasoning as a representation of nurses’ clinical decision making. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 20, 353-364.
- Orasanu J & Connolly T (1993). The reinvention of decision making. In G Klein, J Orasanu,R.
- Ozer, Muammer. (2005). Factors which influence decision making in new product evaluation. *European Journal of Operational Research* 163. 784–801. CiteSeerX. 10.1.1.109.1479. Psychology. 38, 102 – 116.
- Sanz de Acedo & Cardelle-Elawar et al. (2007). Factors that affect decision making: gender and age differences. *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy*, 7, 3, 381-391.
- Stanovich, K. E, & West. R. F. (2008). On the relative independence of thinking biases and cognitive ability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2008, Vol. 94, No. 4, 672–695.