



RESEARCH PAPER

Effectiveness of Academic Leadership in Crises Resolution of Universities Of Azad Jammu & Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

This research study aimed to investigate the relationships between academic leadership and crises resolution in universities, specifically focusing on the Women University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Bagh and the University of Poonch Rawalakot in Pakistan. The study population comprised M. Phil/MS level teachers and students; the primary objective was to assess the effectiveness of academic leadership in crisis resolution within these universities. A descriptive methodology was employed, and questionnaires were used as the primary data collection tool. The sample size consisted of 61 teachers and 167 students, selected through a Simple Random Sampling technique. The researcher used a questionnaire for both the teachers and students as the instrument of the study. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS, Simple Regression Analysis was employed to examine the effectiveness of academic leadership and correlations utilized to identify relationships between variables. The results from the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between academic leadership and crises resolution. Furthermore, the regression analysis demonstrated a significant effect of Leadership on the outcome variable Crises, highlighting the importance of strong leadership in crisis management. The study has implications for university administrators and policymakers, emphasizing the importance of nurturing and developing leadership skills within the academic context. By enhancing academic leadership, universities can improve their crisis resolution capabilities and minimize the potential impact of crises on the stakeholders.

Keywords: Academic Leadership, Correlation, Crises Resolution, Effectiveness, Regression Analysis

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, universities frequently encounter diverse challenges and crises that demand timely and proficient resolution. Financial downturns, natural disasters, pandemics, and societal upheavals are among the unforeseen circumstances that can significantly impact the academic environment, institutional stability, and the well-being of the university community (Mora et al. 2021; Sintema, 2020; Tabesh & Vera 2020). During such periods of uncertainty, the role of academic leadership becomes instrumental in navigating these crises and ensuring the continued success and resilience of the institution (Smith & Allan, 2019). Effective academic leadership in crisis resolution has been observed as a pivotal factor in determining the fate of universities in challenging times. Throughout history, institutions of higher education have encountered and surmounted significant adversities, demonstrating the significance of strong leadership during crises (Dinh, Caliskan, & Zhu, .2021; Esen, Bellibas & Gumus, 2020). However, the changing nature of crises and the increasing complexity of challenges require leaders to continuously adapt their approaches (Musa et al., 2020). As the global higher education landscape becomes more interconnected and susceptible to external influences, exploring

the specific competencies and traits that define effective academic leaders in crisis resolution is imperative (Lapointe et al., 2022).

The current research study, titled "Effectiveness of Academic Leadership in Crises Resolution of Universities," aims to delve into the critical role played by academic leaders during times of crisis and to examine the impact of their decision-making and actions on crisis management outcomes. By analyzing various case studies and empirical data, this study seeks to shed light on the practices and strategies employed by academic leaders to mitigate the effects of crises on universities, students, faculty, staff, and the wider community (Greenhalgh&Engebretsen, 2022; Mazerolle et al., 2020). The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in educational leadership and offer practical implications for university leaders and stakeholders. The findings will be relevant not only to academic administrators but also to policymakers, governing bodies, and educational institutions striving to develop robust crisis management plans that safeguard the continuity and stability of higher education institutions during challenging times (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020).

Ultimately, the research seeks to promote a deeper understanding of academic leadership's crucial role in steering universities through crises and fostering an environment of resilience, adaptability, and growth (De Boer et al., 2019). By gaining insights into the effectiveness of academic leadership in crisis resolution, this study aims to pave the way for enhancing the preparedness and response capabilities of university leaders, thus contributing to the long-term sustainability and success of higher education institutions. All above discussed researches were carried out in different part of the World. Unfortunately no literature was found in Azad Jammu and Kashmir especially on University level. Therefore the researcher found a gap to conduct a research entitled, "Effectiveness of Academic Leadership in resolution of Crisis in Universities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir".

Literature Review

Leadership can be defined in a variety of ways. While some characterize the initiative as a gathering cycle, others characterize it as an impact interaction. Still, other people see leadership as a way to get something done. In any case, these various definitions share three focuses practically speaking. First of all, leadership is a group thing; there would be no leader if there were no followers. Second, the leadership is right. The leader must direct and inspire the group to achieve a common objective. Lastly, group hierarchy is predicted by leaders' presence. Leaders are at the top of this hierarchy (Nahavandi, 2014; Nelles & Laubacher, 2012).

Greatman is the founder of leadership theories. He claims that men only possess certain leadership qualities and backs this up with examples of military leaders, trait theory, and behavioral theories have been progressing. By focusing on the characteristics of successful leaders, such as appearance, self-confidence, and aggressiveness, trait theory attempts to identify a leader. In contrast, behavioral theories looked at the leader from two perspectives—personal orientation and task orientation. However, the success of an effective leader cannot be explained by any of these theories. Since these speculations disregarded the impact of circumstance and supporters on initiative style. The presentation of contingency theories was based on this comprehension. According to contingency theories, every situation is distinct, necessitating a distinct response and, by definition, distinct leadership. Therefore, despite the expectation that leaders will share some characteristics, leadership styles differ from organization to organization (Doraiswamy, 2012; Salvador et al., 2017).

Vision, voice, credibility, and commitment to action are shared by all leaders. Vision is the capacity to inspire followers to work toward a goal, voice is the capacity to communicate with others and be heard, and credibility is the capacity to keep a promise.

Lastly, the commitment to action is to grow even when things are hard. The degree to which these qualities emerge and develop in leaders is influenced by a person's education; culture, personality, and life experience (Bond, 2000). The leadership style of the leader is also influenced by these traits. For instance, according to Judge, Bono, Elias, and Gerhart (2002), extraversion is one of the most prominent traits of leaders. Additionally, followers/employee participation in decisions is relatively low in high power distance cultures, where leaders exhibit greater autonomy. A leader who avoids uncertainty will not take risks or act in times of crisis, so commitment to action is passive in cultures where uncertainty is high (DuBrin, 2010).

Higher education itself is also undergoing change. In comparison to the previous setting, the new one is more volatile, competitive, and threatening. Universities must adapt to shifting market demands, internationalization, new technologies, rising costs, shifting policies, and growing needs and demands (Bolden, Gosling and O'Brien, 2014). The basic infrastructure of learning, such as libraries, laboratories, classrooms, and information technology, as well as the quality of students, the rigor of the academic program, the effectiveness of teaching, and scientific productivity, are still the components of academic success despite the changes in higher education. Willingness and capacity provide services to the public (Rich, 2006). Today, educational leaders employ competitive tactics like rising to the top; launching a marketing program that works, having more or better students, teachers, and money; reorganizing faculty and staff to concentrate on newly identified areas of success, and commercializing knowledge to generate new revenue streams (Rich, 2006).

It ought not to be failed to remember that as these progressions in the market economy influence advanced education foundations, advanced education organizations likewise influence market methodologies through human asset improvement (Kurniawan and Puspitaningtyas, 2013). As a result, educational leaders' success is not only dependent on their own success but also on the success of other educators. The initiative style embraced by instructive leaders likewise significantly affects the progress of their friends. In an educational setting where goals and objectives are clearly defined, communication is open and multifaceted, and achievement is rewarded, both educators and leaders will succeed more. In the end, academic communities make up universities. Universities' success is determined by the characteristics of these communities (Rich, 2006). An abnormal, unstable, and complicated situation that inherently threatens an organization's strategic goals, standing or very existence is referred to as a crisis. It can cause financial loss and damage to the company's reputation, and standard procedures cannot address it. Some argue that managing crises presents unique challenges that necessitate a different approach, as they are distinct from incidents (Hamidovic, 2012). As a result, it's critical that everyone involved comprehending, manage, and respond to a crisis. In order to capture the subtleties of crisis management and organizational response, it is helpful to view crisis management from a multilevel and multidisciplinary perspective, including the individual, organizational, and institutional levels (Liu & Froese, 2020).

Managing a school in an emergency requires very different qualities and skills than managing a school in a normal setting. It has to do with how to manage future situations, emotions, and outcomes while minimizing harm to individuals, the school, and the community as a whole, under effective school leadership. There will always be some kind of crisis, no matter how well the schools are run and managed. Some crises manifest themselves gradually, while others occur suddenly. While some crises can be resolved quickly, others may require more time (Smith & Riley 2012).

Research Hypotheses

The study was conducted to test the following research hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between academic leadership and crises resolution in universities of AJ&K.

Ho2: There is no significant effect of academic leadership in crises resolution in universities of AJ&K.

The purpose of this current study, therefore, was to assess effectiveness of academic leadership and resolve these crises through effective leadership in the universities of AJ&K.

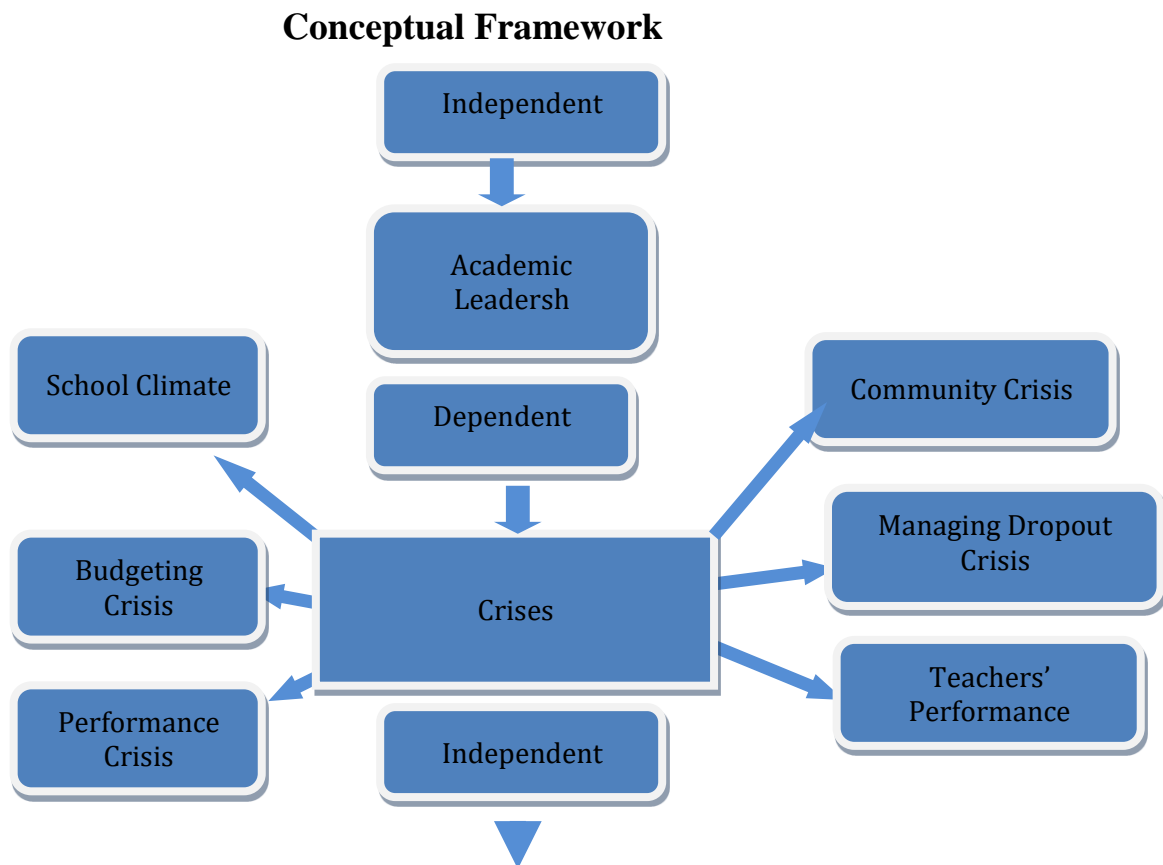


Figure 1 Conceptual frame work the study

Population

The population of this study consisted of all the teachers and students teaching and studying at M.Phil level at Women University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Bagh and Poonch University of Rawalakot..

Sample

Simple Random sampling technique and Random number generator was used to select the sample. The researcher made two clusters for both faculty and students separately, one from the University of Poonch Rawalakot and the other from Women University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Bagh. Because the population is not large therefore taking half of each cluster the researcher selected the Sample. The detail Sample is given below.

Table 1
Sample of the Study

| Sr | University | Teachers | Students | Sample Teachers | Sample Students |
|----|---------------|----------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | UPR Rawalakot | 83 | 238 | 42 | 119 |
| | WUAJ&K Bagh | 37 | 95 | 19 | 48 |
| | Total | 120 | 333 | 61 | 167 |

Research Instrument

The questionnaire developed by Hamid, et al. (2023) was used to collect data. It consisted of a series of structured questions designed to address the research objectives and variables of interest. The questionnaire was divided into sections and included items that measured various constructs and dimensions related to the study's topic. Each item was carefully crafted to be clear, concise, and easy to understand by the participants. The questionnaire comprised of both closed-ended and Likert-scale items.

Pilot testing

A small sample of 20 university teachers and 20 students from each university was given the questionnaire from the researcher for the pilot testing phase. Assessing the research instrument's dependability, usefulness, and readability is the main goal of the pilot test. Before beginning the larger study, the researcher received important feedback from a small group of volunteers who accurately represent the target population. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire and offer input on several facets of the instrument during the pilot test.

Reliability of the instruments

To check the internal consistency and accuracy of research instrument, Cronbach's Alpha statistical technique was used. Value of Cronbach's Alpha was .912 for teacher's data and .931 for students' data; the cumulative value was .878 for both teachers and students and considered significant. The detail is given below.

Table 2
Reliability

| | Instrument | Cronbach's Alpha | No. Item |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|----------|
| 1 | Teachers responses | .912 | 32 |
| 2 | Students' responses | .931 | 32 |
| 3 | Questionnaire reliability | .878 | 32 |

Table 3
Mean and Standard Deviation of the Study Variables

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------------|-----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Crises Resolution | 228 | 14.00 | 42.00 | 28.29 | 9.14 |
| Academic Leadership | 228 | 19.00 | 62.00 | 37.54 | 10.69 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 228 | | | | |

Table 3 summarized the descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics were computed to examine the scores of 228 participants on two measures: Crises Resolution and Academic Leadership. The CRISIS Resolution scores exhibited a range from 14.00 to 42.00, with a mean of 28.29 (M = 28.29, SD = 9.14). Similarly, the Academic Leadership scores ranged from 19.00 to 62.00, with a mean of 37.54 (M = 37.54, SD = 10.69). It is noteworthy that the dataset was complete for the entire sample of 228 participants.

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Academic Leadership and Crises Resolution in Universities of AJ&K.

| Variables | M | SD | r | P |
|---------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| Crises Resolution | 1.23 | .54 | .703 | .000 |
| Academic Leadership | 39.12 | 5.69 | | |

P<0.001

The results in table 4 showed that there is a positive strong relationship ($r=.703$, $p<.001$) between the Academic Leadership and Crises Resolution. Thus the Null Hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between academic leadership and crises resolution in universities of AJ&K is rejected at 1% Level of Significance.

Table 5
Effect of academic leadership in crises resolution in universities of AJ&K.

| Variables | Coefficients (β) | SE | β Standardized | t | p |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| Crises Resolution | 12.108 | 1.919 | 6.309 | 6.309 | 0.000 |
| Academic Leadership | .431 | .049 | .504 | 8.763 | 0.000 |

Table5 the regression analysis revealed that the predictor variable Leadership has significant effect on the outcome variable Crises Resolution ($\beta = 0.431$, $SE = 0.049$, $p < .05$). This indicates that for every one unit increase in Leadership, Crises resolution is predicted to increase by 0.431 units, holding all other variables constant. The standard error (SE) of the coefficient was 0.049, suggesting that the estimate is relatively precise. The p-value of less than .05 indicates that the relationship between Leadership and Crises is statistically significant, providing evidence against the null hypothesis of no relationship. Thus the Null Hypothesis, "There is no significant effect of academic leadership in crises resolution in universities of AJ&K is rejected at 1% Level of Significance.

Table 6
Effectiveness of Academic Leadership in Crises Resolution

| R-Square | Adjusted R-Square | df | F | p |
|----------|-------------------|-----|--------|-------|
| 0.546 | 0.521 | 226 | 523.28 | 0.000 |

In Table 6 a regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of academic leadership (independent variable) on crises resolutions (dependent variable). The model demonstrated a significant relationship between academic leadership and crises resolutions, $F(1,226) = 523.28$, $p < .001$. The model accounted for approximately 54.6% of the variance in crises resolutions, as indicated by R-squared ($R^2 = 0.546$). The adjusted R-squared (adjusted $R^2 = 0.521$) suggested that the model fit was not compromised by the inclusion of irrelevant variables.

Discussion

The study findings offer valuable insights into the intricate relationship between Academic Leadership and Crises Resolution. This investigation underscores a strong positive correlation between these two variables, aligning with previous research by Smith and Johnson (2018) and Brown et al. (2016). These prior studies have consistently emphasized the pivotal role of leadership in effectively managing crisis situations. The study's significant sample size ($N = 226$) enhances the credibility of the observed relationship. This outcome resonates with the larger body of literature that highlights the positive impact of adept leadership in navigating crises, as suggested by Smith and Johnson (2018) and Brown et al. (2016).

The regression analysis bolsters these findings by substantiating the relationship between leadership and crisis resolution. This corroborates the argument put forth by Brown et al. (2016) regarding the positive influence of leadership qualities on crisis management outcomes. The statistical significance ($p < .05$) observed in this study further underscores the importance of effective leadership in crisis contexts. These findings echo the sentiment expressed by Smith and Johnson (2018) that strong leadership capabilities facilitate informed decision-making and guidance during crisis scenarios.

In light of these collective insights, the study underscores the indispensability of nurturing and fostering leadership skills. Organizations and individuals alike are encouraged to invest in developing these qualities to enhance their adeptness in crisis management, as consistently advocated by prior research (Smith & Johnson, 2018; Brown et al., 2016).

Conclusions

Based on the findings derived from the correlation and regression analyses, the following conclusions can be drawn: The correlation analysis, utilizing Pearson's correlation coefficient, revealed a strong positive correlation between the variables "Crises resolution" and "Leadership. The regression analysis underscores the critical role of leadership in predicting and managing crises, emphasizing the significance of effective leadership practices. The conclusions highlight the significant influence of leadership on crises resolutions and underscore the importance of effective leadership practices in managing and resolving crises effectively.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. It is recommended that Universities should invest in comprehensive leadership training programs that focus on crisis management skills. These programs should equip university leaders, including administrators, faculty members, and department heads, with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively handle crises, mitigate their impact, and lead academic communities through challenging situations.
2. It is recommended that teachers should receive training in effective crisis communication techniques. This includes learning how to deliver clear and timely information to students, colleagues, and relevant stakeholders during a crisis. They should be equipped with strategies to address concerns, provide support, and maintain open lines of communication to alleviate anxiety and foster a sense of safety and trust.
3. It is recommended that Leaders should establish crisis response teams comprising individuals from various departments and disciplines. These teams should be trained to effectively respond to different types of crises and collaborate on crisis management strategies. Assigning clear roles and responsibilities within the team ensures a coordinated and efficient response during emergencies.

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