

Academic Administration in Indian Universities: A Study of Occupational Efficacy, Managerial Aptitude and Organisational Commitment of Effective and Ineffective University Administrators

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to find out the occupational efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of educational administrators working in Indian Universities. The descriptive method of research was adopted to carry out the study. A sample of 260 educational administrators was selected from the existing Universities of Jammu and Kashmir State. The Occupational Self Efficacy Scale (OSES) standardised by Pethe, Chowdari and Dhar (1999), Managerial Aptitude Scale (MAS) developed by Dhar, Dhar and Sharma (2011), and Organisational Commitment Scale (OCS) developed by Hyde and Roy (2011) were administered. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between occupational efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of educational administrators in higher education. Besides, the results revealed a significant difference on all dimensions of managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of effective and ineffective educational administrators.

Keywords: *Occupational Efficacy, Managerial Aptitude, Organisational Commitment, Educational Administrators, Indian Universities.*

Introduction

The head of an institution is the most significant person in the university enterprise (Waters et al., 2003). The place of the

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departmental head in higher education is one that requires leadership, administrative skills and scholarship (Gabbidon, 2005; Lucas, 2000) and bridges the gap between faculty and administration. According to Bennett (1983), it is at the departmental level that the real institutional business gets conducted... it is here that teachers and learners can make contact, that researchers find encouragement and direction, and that many of the ways to contribute to the larger community are identified and explored (p. 1). The individuals who lead the academic departments are considered the 'front-line leaders' in higher education (Gmelch, 2000). The fate of an institution in a large measure depends upon the type of man who is heading the institution. Good institutions, for that matter, are named after their Principals, Heads or Deans.

Theoretical Framework

The present research is grounded in three bodies of theory and research, i.e., occupational self efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment. In order to explain how self-efficacy affects managerial aptitude and organisational commitment, the self-efficacy theory advocated by Bandura was used. According to Bandura, self-efficacy is the measure of one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. Bandura postulated four sources of efficacy beliefs: mastery experiences, physiological and emotional states, vicarious experiences and social persuasion (Bandura 1986). Bandura (2000) promoted the importance of self-efficacy in leadership situations by stating, "When faced with obstacles or setbacks... those with a strong belief in their capabilities will redouble their efforts to master the challenge" (p.120). Self-efficacy is vital to leaders' success, because it determines the degree of effort exerted on a particular task as well as the kinds of aspirations and goals that leaders set (Bandura, 1986; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Similarly, regarding the variable, 'Managerial Aptitude' the theory of Katz provided the theoretical base to study the managerial aptitude of educational administrators at higher education level. In 1955, Harvard Business Review published a study by Katz (1955) entitled Skills of an Effective Administrator. Katz argued that what an administrator accomplishes is based on the skills that he possesses and these include technical human and conceptual skills. Technical skill is defined as the understanding of or proficiency in specific activities that require the use of special tools, methods, processes, procedure and is thought of as the

specific skills an individual needs to perform some specialised task (Katz, 1955). Human skills are defined as the ability to work cooperatively with others, to communicate effectively, to resolve conflict (Katz, 1955). Finally, conceptual skill is defined as the ability to see the organisation as a whole or to have a systematic viewpoint (Mintzberg, 1973). Regarding the theory of organisational commitment, the tri-dimensional model given by Meyer and Allen (1997, p 106) was used to conceptualise organisational commitment in three dimensions, namely affective, continuance and normative commitments. These dimensions describe the different ways of organisational commitment development and the implications for administrators' behaviour.

Rationale of the Study

The effectiveness of education depends largely upon the effectiveness of educational administrators. That is why *National Policy on Education* (1986) advocated for paying special attention to the training of educational planners, administrators and heads of the institutions. Research has shown that the educational administrators who received short term orientation courses in management education displayed productive occupational efficacy, effective administrative behaviour, appropriate managerial aptitude, high degree of organisational commitment and are highly satisfied with their job. Rao and Sridhar (1997) in a trend report on Organisation, Administration and Management of Education writes, "There is an urgent need to conduct a series of research studies on management styles in higher education (universities and colleges)". In the light of this research gap, the present study was undertaken.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

- (i) To study the occupational efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of educational administrators working in the Universities located in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- (ii) To compare the effective and ineffective educational administrators working in the Universities located in Jammu and Kashmir on managerial aptitude and organisational commitment.

Hypotheses

- (i) Occupational efficacy is significantly related to managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of educational administrators.
- (ii) Managerial aptitude is significantly related to organisational commitment of educational administrators.
- (iii) Effective and ineffective educational administrators working differ significantly on managerial aptitude and organisational commitment.

Method

The present investigation was carried out to evaluate the occupational efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment of educational administrators working in the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir. The descriptive method of research was adopted to carry out the study. The details about the sample, the tools and their description and the statistical method used for data analysis for the present study are given as under.

Sample

The sample for the present investigation consisted of 260 Educational Administrators selected from the existing Universities of Jammu and Kashmir. The sample subjects comprised of Registrars, Dean Academic Affairs, Deans of various Faculties, Heads of various Departments and Directors of various centers/institutes. Among the sample subjects, 216 were male and 44 were female educational administrators. However, it needs to be mentioned here that out of total sample, 174 were senior and 86 were junior educational administrators.

Research Tools

In the present study, the following standardised tools were administered:

- (i) Occupational Self Efficacy Scale (OSES) standardised by Pethe, Chowdari and Dhar (1999) was administered. The scale consists of nineteen items in the areas of Confidence, Command, Adaptability, Personal Effectiveness, Positive Attitude and individuality.
- (ii) Managerial Aptitude Scale (MAS) designed by Dhar, Dhar and Sharma (2011) was selected to measure the Managerial

Aptitude of Educational Administrators. The scale consists of 74 items with 27 attributes, 11 factors and five dimensions i.e., ability to plan, ability to lead, ability to control, ability to motivate and ability to manage change.

- (iii) Organisational Commitment Scale (OCS) developed by Hyde and Roy (2011) was administered. This scale consists of 30 items related to eight factors leading to a total of four dimensions i.e., belongingness, job satisfaction, optimism and quality of work life.

Procedure of Data Collection

The investigator, before the actual conduct of the study, contacted the sample subjects with a view to establish a rapport with them, so that they offer the needed cooperation for the conduct of the study. This was thought to be necessary, because without their active cooperation, neither the administration of the questionnaires under proper conditions, nor the willingness of the administrators could have been procured. As such the data was collected by the investigator from the sample subjects with the help of the standardised questionnaires.

Results

Occupational Efficacy, Managerial Aptitude and Organisational Commitment of Educational Administrators

Table 1 shows that about half of the educational administrators were average on occupational efficacy, followed by about 40 per cent above average and a small number was below average.

Table 1
Occupational Efficacy of Educational Administrators

Scores Obtained on OSE Scale	N	Percentage	Status of Efficacy
83 and above	108	41.54	Above Average
65-82	128	49.23	Average
Below 64	24	9.23	Below Average

About 41 per cent educational administrators were either average or above average on managerial aptitude. Almost similar number possessed high or very high aptitude. The percentage of educational administrators possessing low or very low aptitude was relatively small (Table 2).

Table 2
Managerial Aptitude of Educational Administrators

Scores Obtained on MA Scale	N	Percentage	Aptitude Status
329 and above	35	13.46	Very high
313–328	80	30.76	High
297–312	66	25.38	Above average
276–296	41	15.76	Average
260–275	16	6.15	Below average
244–259	14	5.38	Low
243 and below	08	3.07	Very low

Table 3 contains scores on organisational commitment. About 43 per cent were average, 41 per cent were high, and about 15 per cent low on organisational commitment.

Table 3
Organisational Commitment of Educational Administrators

Scores Obtained on OC Scale	N	Percentage	Level of Commitment
122 and above	31	11.92	Extremely high
113 – 121	77	29.61	High
104 – 112	68	26.15	Above average
92 – 103	43	16.53	Average
83 – 91	17	6.53	Below average
74 – 82	15	5.76	Low
73 and less	09	3.46	Extremely low

Correlational Analysis

Table 4 contains the results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations between three variables, namely occupational efficacy, managerial aptitude and organisational commitment. All the three variables are significantly correlated with each-other.

Table 4
Coefficient of Correlations between Occupational Efficacy, Managerial Aptitude and Organisational Commitment

Variable	Occupational Efficacy	Managerial Aptitude	Organisational Commitment
Occupational efficacy	-	0.54**	0.61**
Managerial aptitude	-	-	0.54**

$P < .01$

Comparison of Effective and Ineffective Educational Administrators on Managerial Aptitude and Organisational Commitment

The effective and ineffective educational administrators were identified on the basis of criterion of occupational efficacy measured with the help of Occupational Self Efficacy Scale. The high and low groups were drawn by employing extreme group technique of 27 per cent above and below. As such the above 27 per cent (N=70) educational administrators possessing high score were considered effective and low 27 per cent (N=70) as ineffective. This was followed by a comparative evaluation of effective and ineffective educational administrators on various components of managerial profile (administrative behaviour, managerial aptitude, organisational commitment and job satisfaction). Table 5 contains the results.

Table 5
Comparison between Effective and Ineffective Educational Administrators on Various Dimensions of Managerial Aptitude

Dimensions	Group	Mean	S.D	t-value
Ability to plan	Effective	109.14	8.95	7.23**
	Ineffective	98.86	7.91	
Ability to lead	Effective	81.56	7.89	6.78**
	Ineffective	73.22	6.78	
Ability to control	Effective	66.12	7.67	6.71**
	Ineffective	57.93	6.79	
Ability to motivate	Effective	46.19	6.88	9.41**
	Ineffective	35.83	6.31	
Ability to manage change	Effective	17.12	4.69	4.72**
	Ineffective	13.81	3.72	
Overall dimensions	Effective	320.13	26.67	9.82**
	Ineffective	279.65	21.86	

** $P < 0.01$

Table 6 shows that the effective educational administrators exhibited better managerial ability than their counterparts. The effective educational administrators have been found to be more effective in planning, advanced in leading and superior in controlling. In the light of these results, the hypothesis that Effective and Ineffective Educational Administrators working in the Universities of Jammu and Kashmir differ significantly on Managerial Aptitude stands accepted.

Table 6
Comparison between Effective and
Ineffective Educational Administrators on
Various Dimensions of Organisational Commitment

Dimensions	Group	Mean	S.D	t-value
Belongingness	Effective	52.18	7.62	8.37**
	Ineffective	43.81	6.79	
Job satisfaction	Effective	24.12	5.36	8.91**
	Ineffective	16.72	4.56	
Optimism	Effective	4.09	1.72	7.23**
	Ineffective	2.86	0.92	
Quality of work life	Effective	48.22	6.43	8.35**
	Ineffective	39.61	5.89	
Overall	Effective	128.64	18.79	10.32**
	Ineffective	102.93	15.76	

** $P < 0.01$

The effective educational administrators have been found to exhibit more affection, high belongingness and are more empathetic towards their organisation. They show contentment, goal fulfillment and seem to be highly satisfied with their jobs. They seem to be optimistic and believe in efficient work culture than the ineffective educational administrators. In the light of these empirical evidences, the hypothesis number fifth which reads, "Effective and Ineffective Educational Administrators working in the universities of Jammu and Kashmir State differ significantly on Organisational Commitment" stands accepted.

Discussion

The study shows a significant positive relationship between occupational efficacy and managerial aptitude of educational administrators. This indicates that educational administrators who exhibit better confidence level to work independently are able to choose best among various available alternatives. This suggests that more the occupational efficacy, higher shall be the rating of managerial aptitude of educational administrators. The data further depicts that there is positive relationship between occupational efficacy and organisational commitment of educational administrators. Further, a significant positive correlation between

Managerial Aptitude and Organisational Commitment was reported in the study. This confirms that higher the score of managerial aptitude, more will be the rating of organisational commitment.

While comparing effective and ineffective educational administrators on various dimensions of managerial aptitude, it was observed that effective educational administrators showed better managerial ability than ineffective educational administrators. Their decisions are based on sufficient facts and proper analysis. They are proactive and are able to translate decisions into action. It was observed that effective educational administrators tend to have more belongingness, high affection and extra contentment towards their organisation than their counterparts. This implies that effective educational administrators show contentment and goal-fulfillment towards their organisation. They are objective in their approach and do not mix their feelings, emotions and personal problems in their professional work. Their thinking styles are governed and dominated by positive thoughts.

Educational Implications

Findings of the present study reveal some important educational implications. Majority of the administrators come from the teaching cadre and they have a little experience in administration, which affects their administrative effectiveness and efficacy. In this backdrop, it is suggested that they may be provided specific training before they are promoted to the job of administrator. It was found in the study that majority of the educational administrators have been found to exhibit average occupational efficacy. Therefore, suitability should be judged before promoting the administrators to the higher posts. Short term/long term training in field of management, planning and finance should be introduced for the professional growth of junior and female educational administrators. Effective educational administrators exhibited better managerial abilities than ineffective counterparts. Thus, efforts should be taken to initiate various training programmes such as professional conferences/seminars, professional training programs and an advanced degree in higher education so that the managerial abilities of the educational administrators can be brought to the effective level. Considerable emphasis should be given to value addition, effective resource allocation on a priority basis and team work. Significant differences have been reported between effective and ineffective educational administrators on

organisational commitment. In the light of these results, optimal provision of intrinsic and extrinsic job rewards should be arranged for ineffective educational administrators so that they may become highly satisfied and more committed.

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