

PERCEPTIONS OF MANAGEMENT REGARDING CHALLENGES IN BS PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTATION AT GOVERNMENT GRADUATE COLLEGES

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Abstract

The four years Bachelor of Studies (BS) program in Pakistan was developed with the aim of improving the quality of higher education and making undergraduate education consistent with the international standard. But the development of BS programs in government graduate colleges has brought many problems related to management. This paper attempts to investigate the perceptions of college management regarding these problems in implementation of BS programs and the impact of such problems on the implementation of the programs. The data was gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews with sixteen individuals, comprising of principals, vice principals, and heads of departments, sampled through purposive sampling from two government graduate colleges located in the district Sheikhpura. The data was analyzed through Thematic Analysis. Three major themes emerged from the analysis, namely Human Resources Issues, Issues regarding Resources and Infrastructure, and Issues related to Administration and Governance. Some of the major issues identified include shortage of faculty members, lack of administrative staff members, limited funding, insufficient infrastructure, lack of proper communication with affiliated universities, problems in handling of data, lack of quality enhancement cells, and insufficient autonomy of the institution. One of the key findings was that the expansion of BS programs has not been fully aligned with the institutional capacity of government colleges, which has led to increased demands on management and operational inefficiencies. It is evident from the study that there is a need for increasing institutional capacity, effective coordination between stakeholders, strengthening quality assurance, and giving more freedom in administration and finance.

Introduction

Higher education is a crucial factor in fostering economic development and social development. It is in recognition of this fact that Pakistan adopted the four-year BS degree program as an improvement on the previous BA/ BSc degree

programs in order to bring Pakistani education closer to international standards. The BS program seeks to foster competence-based education, research, skill development, and the acquisition of competencies and knowledge essential for

professional development (Rehman et al., 2024; Zada & Zada, 2023).

In order to widen the scope of higher education, BS courses have been progressively introduced at government colleges of Pakistan. While this expansion resulted in the availability of more educational prospects to the students, it also led to various issues for the colleges that would be offering such courses. It has been found that in the province of Punjab, many such colleges that offer BS courses suffer from issues relating to staffing, infrastructure, finance, and institutional support (PHEC, 2019).

BS programs implemented in affiliated colleges vary greatly from those implemented in universities. As far as administration and finance of government colleges go, they are handled by the Higher Education Department, but academic affairs including curricula implementation, exams, and requirements for degrees are still subject to the control of affiliated universities (Khan et al., 2024). Such a system of governance leads to a very peculiar form of administration where college administration needs to manage academic processes in the framework of predefined policies and rules. As a result, principals, vice-principals, and heads of departments become key figures in resource management, supervision of teachers, and other activities.

In past literature, several issues have been found which can affect the implementation of higher education programs, such as lack of teachers, lack of resources, poor communication, governance problems, too much workload, and insufficient professional development activities (Zia & Dayan, 2016; Kakar & Shah, 2019; Saleem et al., 2022; Bukhari et al., 2023; Rehman et al., 2024). The above-mentioned issues may decrease organizational effectiveness and make it difficult for organizations to implement reforms successfully. In the case of the BS programs, issues like lack of staff, lack of infrastructure, poor coordination between colleges and associated universities, lack of money, and lack of institutional autonomy are considered major barriers to the effective implementation of programs (Khan et al., 2023; Rehman et al., 2024).

Despite the increasing amount of literature available on higher education management and BS program implementation, little focus has been placed on the viewpoint of management staff involved in the planning, coordination, and management of BS programs in government graduate colleges, especially in Punjab. The majority of the literature available today deals with the experience of faculty members or the experience within universities and colleges based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. As a result, little knowledge has been gained regarding the management problems faced by staff managing government graduate colleges in Punjab. Moreover, little literature is available on how these management problems affect BS program implementation.

It becomes imperative to understand such challenges since management challenges have direct impacts on the ability of colleges to successfully undertake reforms in the field of higher education and ensure quality of education. Hence, this study tries to find out how the managers of colleges perceive the challenges faced while implementing BS programs in government graduate colleges.

Objectives

1. To analyze the problems associated with management in implementing BS programs in government graduate colleges.
2. To analyze the implications of management problems in implementing BS programs in government graduate colleges.

Research Questions

1. What are the management problems in the implementation of BS programs in government graduate colleges?
2. How does the problem of management affect the implementation of BS programs in government graduate colleges?

Significance of the Study

The present study adds to the literature on problems in management that come about in implementing BS programs in government

graduate colleges. The results can be used to gain insight into ways to overcome obstacles in program implementation by these stakeholders: the management of these colleges, HED, and HEC. The results can also help formulate effective policies for managing resources, faculty, and the quality of the programs.

Literature Review

The successful application of BS programs is contingent upon the ability of the institution's management to organize academic functions, monitor teaching staff, resource allocation, and compliance with educational policies. It has been shown by previous researches that educational administrators encounter many management and administrative problems.

Some of the problems faced by the management in higher education organizations emanate from the inability to effectively manage the faculty, coordinate academic activities, and run efficient departments. Saleem et al. (2022) noted that HODs in the public sector universities of Punjab experienced various management problems such as shortage of teaching materials, low morale of the staff, absence, poor interpersonal relations, communication barriers, and lack of induction programs among others. It was established that the conflicts between the departmental leadership and the faculties, poor coordination, and lack of professional commitment negatively impacted the process of departmental management. This resulted in ineffective leadership and hampered the attainment of organizational goals.

In the same vein, Bukhari et al. (2023) noted that Head of Departments at public universities experienced various academic, managerial, and administrative challenges. The head of departments was expected to manage the process of teaching, research guidance, documentation, monitoring, and administrative tasks all at once. Other issues like faculty resistance, non-cooperation among others increased the level of complexity in the management of departmental affairs. The study indicated that educational leaders should be able to manage institutional requirements alongside departmental

requirements through teamwork and collaboration.

Bukhari et al. (2021) found out that institution principals had to take on several leadership and management responsibilities, and had to confront issues in school improvement, resource management, and institutional management. It was required of the principals to assume several responsibilities, including planning, supervising, guiding, and relationship management while encountering institutional issues. It was highlighted in the study that professional development continuously helps improve leadership efficiency. Similarly, according to Kaur (2024), principals of colleges experience administrative pressures to a great extent owing to their varied roles such as faculty administration, educational policy execution, institutional accreditation requirements, and affiliation with universities and government departments. The studies have further elaborated on issues regarding lack of finances, resource constraints, and administrative pressures affecting institutional effectiveness. Administrators were supposed to coordinate with universities, government departments, faculty and management of institutions, and at the same time maintain quality as per institutional requirements. Taken together, these studies indicate that educational administrators are confronted with multiple issues in terms of personnel management, resource management, communication, and administrative pressures.

Research carried out in the developing countries has further shed light on the challenges of governance and resource management. According to Ndubuisi & Jacob (2021), some of the significant challenges facing higher education management included underfunding, lack of infrastructure, lack of teaching staff, brain drain, political influence, corruption, insecurity, and labor unrest. These challenges restricted the effectiveness of administrators in recruiting competent personnel, providing infrastructure, conducting academic operations, and exercising institutional independence. Likewise, according to Khan et al. (2023), some of the major

administrative challenges faced by principals of government colleges included inadequacy of physical, human and financial resources, lack of financial support, capacity building, poor community relationships and political influence. Haq et al. (2021) conducted research on the administrative problems that principals face in government colleges of the Malakand Division. It was established that principals of government colleges were confronted by many administrative problems such as problems related to teaching and learning process, lack of resources, bad relations with the local community, lack of finances, insufficient professional development activities, and political interferences. All these problems restricted principals from performing their responsibilities as effective instructional leaders, managing their budgets, maintaining good working environment, and applying institutional policies.

The issue of governance along with the resource issue is one of the key determinants of the quality of tertiary education in colleges affiliated to universities. According to the research conducted by Asghar and Khan (2024), governance has a strong effect on the quality of education, but if there are sufficient resources at an institution, the positive impact of governance is enhanced. Additionally, the research pointed out that the affiliated colleges in the public sector often lack the necessary resources for the development of faculty members and scientific research.

The above findings indicate that proper governance and adequate resources are important factors that ensure successful implementation and management of higher education programs in the affiliated colleges. These researches focus on the general management problems of higher education, however, some researchers have focused on managerial problems related to the implementation of BS programs.

For instance, Kakar and Shah (2019) explored the managerial problems experienced by the colleges implementing four-year BS program in Balochistan, Pakistan. The main problems identified in this study included lack of training of teachers, inadequate awareness about semester

system, shortage of academic resources, and technology-related problems. Furthermore, the study highlighted problems in staffing, lack of infrastructure, inability to access computers and internet services, lack of textbooks, and problems in assessment under the semester system. All these problems put immense pressure on the management of these institutions and prevented the successful implementation of BS programs.

In a similar way, Khan et al. (2023) studied the BS & Associates Degree Program of Gomal University and its affiliated colleges and found significant differences in the implementation of programs among the institutions. Communication barriers between universities and affiliated college teachers, inconsistent implementation of curriculum, variation in assessment techniques, lack of technology, poor infrastructure, and poor professional training emerged as significant problems. It is stressed by the researchers that proper coordination and standardization along with faculty development are required for the proper management of BS programs.

Other research done in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa shows the problems of governance that may arise while implementing the BS program. According to Rehman et al. (2024), the government colleges that were running the BS programs had problems due to academic autonomy, affiliation issues, resource distribution inequality, non-standardized evaluation process, and lack of incentives for research. The solution proposed by the researchers was better resource distribution and increased autonomy.

According to Zada and Zada (2023), the implementation of BS courses in Government Postgraduate College Timergara faced several challenges including lack of teachers, high workload of teachers, poor laboratories and libraries facilities, lack of classrooms, and lack of student support facilities. The research further indicated the presence of resistance to change, uncertainty of stakeholders, and worries about the capacity of the institution in handling the new academic system.

Furthermore, the literature has revealed that there is an important relationship between institutional autonomy and governance systems and management performance in affiliated colleges. According to Nagashima et al. (2014), affiliated government colleges were subject to tight administrative and financial controls that hampered decision making and financial planning at the institutional level. In addition, recruitment delay, weak accountability, and low financial autonomy hindered institutional growth. This study stresses the significance of QA system, professional development of staff, and more financial independence for the improvement of educational management.

In general, the existing literature highlights the fact that there is not only one problem related to the management in implementing BS programs, as management problems are multilayered and consist of many aspects such as resource limitation, faculty management problems, high administrative load, limitation in the governance, communication problems, lack of coordination, and QA system, and all these problems are interrelated.

This paper will be guided by the principles of the Resource Dependence Theory as advanced by Pfeffer and Salancik in 1978. Resource Dependence Theory holds that an organization is dependent on external actors in terms of vital resources, thus making the decision-making process challenging. With respect to government graduate colleges, managers depend on the Higher Education Department and the affiliated universities for the provision of financial resources, personnel, academic rules, and administrative policies. The issues faced as identified in this paper, such as lack of institutional autonomy, staff shortages, financial problems, and dependency on external powers, can be explained using resource dependence theory. According to the Resource Dependence Theory, staff shortages, financial problems, lack of autonomy, and dependency on the affiliated university can be regarded as results of colleges' dependency on external organizations in terms of vital resources.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative exploratory research design in order to conduct the study about the perceptions of college management about the difficulties experienced in the implementation of BS programs at government graduate colleges in district Sheikhpura. Qualitative research was deemed to be appropriate for this study due to the reason that qualitative research makes it possible for one to understand deeply the experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the challenges faced in implementing the programs.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of the study was comprised of management personnel employed at government graduate colleges providing BS degree programs in district Sheikhpura. There were four government graduate colleges providing BS degree programs in the district where the research was being conducted. The management population comprised of principals, vice principals, and HODs administering the BS degree programs.

Purposive sampling was employed in the selection of respondents having direct experience on the management and administration of BS programs. The two government graduate colleges that offer more BS programs were chosen since they had participants rich with information concerning the difficulties in managing the programs. The sample size was sixteen management staff comprising twelve Heads of Department, two Principals and two Vice Principals. The reason for choosing them is their direct participation in the planning, coordination and management of the BS programs.

Data Collection

The data were gathered using a semi-structured interview guide that was tailored specifically for the managers. Questions within the protocol touched on the problems facing administration,

resource management, staff supervision, workload, finance management, infrastructure, quality assurance, coordination with university, and implementation of policies. The semi-structured questionnaire made sure that the participants were able to share their experiences while covering the research objectives.

Content validation of the interview guide was done by consulting with experts in educational research and university administration. Suggestions from these experts were taken into consideration to make sure that the interview questions are clear, relevant, and appropriate. A pilot test of the interview guide was done with management officials who were not part of the main sample. Data collection process was carried out in compliance with the necessary formalities of obtaining permission from appropriate authorities. The subjects were made aware of the nature of the study along with ethics issues before conducting the interviews. The interviews were held in the form of semi-structured ones and each interview lasted approximately 30-40 minutes. Interviews were audio taped after the consent of the subjects and then transcribed for analysis. Strict adherence to ethics guidelines was maintained throughout the study. Subjects were made aware of their freedom of withdrawal at any stage of the study. Prior consent for participation was obtained by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity using participant codes.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was achieved through the following methods. Credibility was ensured by staying engaged with the respondents for long periods and conducting member checks. Dependability was achieved by keeping track of data collection and analysis methods. Confirmability was achieved through documentation of the interviews and coding process. Transferability was made possible through description of the context of the study and its respondents.

Analysis of Data and Its Interpretation

The data obtained were analyzed through thematic analysis. The interview transcripts were studied carefully to become familiar with the data. Segments of the data that contained important meaning were highlighted and coded. Codes that had similarities were categorized together, and categories that had connections were further put together to form the main themes of management problems experienced in implementing the BS program. The themes were analyzed and interpreted in light of the research objectives. This led to the identification of three main themes: Human Resource Problems, Resource and Infrastructure Problems, and Administrative and Governance Problems. Themes are listed in Table 1.

Table 1
Themes, Categories, and Codes of Management Challenges in BS Program Implementation

Themes	Categories	Codes
Human Resource Challenges	Faculty Issues	Faculty shortage Dependence on visiting faculty Lack of commitment Workload burden
	Clerical Workload	Insufficient clerical staff Untrained support staff Administrative burden on HODs
Resource and Infrastructure Challenges	Financial Management	Inadequate funding Budget constraints Difficulty hiring faculty Limited financial authority

Administrative and Governance Challenges	Infrastructure and Resources	Classroom shortage Inadequate laboratories Limited library resources Lack of multimedia facilities
	Communication with University	Delayed responses Policy changes without notification Coordination difficulties
	Data Management by University	Result errors Registration issues Record management issues
	Quality Assurance (QEC)	Absence of QEC Weak monitoring Lack of quality improvement mechanisms
	Lack of institutional autonomy	Academic dependence on university Administrative dependence on HED

Findings

Theme 1: Human Resource Difficulties

Problems related to faculty

One problem repeatedly mentioned by the participants was the lack of teaching faculty in implementing the BS program. It was stated by management that some subjects like Computer Science, Mathematics, and Tarjuma-tul-Quran were present in almost every discipline and faculty shortage in these subjects created problem. Therefore, visiting faculty members had to be hired who may not have fully devoted themselves to the students' education. A participant stated:

"Sometimes it becomes very hard for one teacher to teach BS and intermediate classes simultaneously because it is tough to maintain the standard of teaching." (HOD-7)

While the participants viewed their faculty members as academically qualified, they stressed the point that dedication was essential for good teaching at the BS level. Management pointed out the necessity of advanced degrees, such as M.Phil and PhD.

Clerical Workload

One other challenge highlighted by the participants was the inadequacy of administrative personnel who are charged with performing administration work associated with BS programs. Participants noted that there is an inadequate number of support personnel who are also not adequately experienced in the field.

One participant stated:

"BS Program's clerical work is managed by both the HOD and the teaching faculty. In addition, HOD is responsible for all student issues, such as submission of fees and admission issues, supplementary admissions as well." (HOD-1)

One other participant responded with:

"Currently our clerical work is carried out by private workers. These individuals are largely untrained and possess inadequate IT skills. A number of clerk positions have also been done away with, thereby creating many problems for the college." (VP-1)

Administrative burden was cited as the reason for having less time available for academic leadership and program administration.

Theme 2: Resource and Infrastructure Challenges

Financial Management

Financial resource inadequacy was a common factor mentioned by the participants in relation to implementation challenges. It was hard for the management to recruit and retain visiting faculty due to insufficient funding. The following point made by the management participant clearly highlighted the gap between expectation and finance:

"Expectations for BS programs have increased, but financial support for colleges is still low. This creates a lot of pressure on management because they are expected to do a good job despite having little finances and financial autonomy." (HOD-8)

The participant commented that:

"How do we expect a good teacher from one who is underpaid and unhappy?" (P-1)

A third participant stated:

"As a result of lack of money, we hire personnel, pay salaries to them and also pay for students who deserve." (VP-1)

Management felt that due to lack of funds, the staffing of programs was being affected.

Infrastructure and Resources

The participants mentioned another factor that was the scarcity of the infrastructural and academic resources needed for implementing the BS program.

This includes the inadequacy of classrooms, scarcity of library resources, laboratories, and multimedia resources.

One of the participants said:

"The resources and infrastructure in the college are not adequate; there is also a shortage of classrooms. At least four classrooms per discipline are needed." (HOD-2)

One of the participants mentioned:

"We do not have enough financial resources to improve the library, solve classroom inadequacies, acquire laboratory equipment, and provide multimedia capabilities in classrooms. All of these problems affect the quality of education." (VP-1)

The management felt that the limited resources were limiting the possibilities for learning and proper implementation of the BS program. The

issue was well summarized by one of the participants as follows:

"The problem is not in the BS program but in the expectation that colleges will deliver what universities can without the necessary resources." (HOD-9)

Theme 3: Governance Issues

Communication with affiliated universities

There were issues relating to communication with affiliated universities, where delays in response to official letters and unexpected policy changes were mentioned. It was stated that examination and course policy changes were not always timely communicated to create confusion among staff members and students.

One respondent recounted an incident where the course requirements were changed by the institution just before examinations, leading to confusion among the students who had already been preparing for the other course option.

It was clear from the responses that inadequate coordination between colleges and universities affected the planning process.

Student Data management by universities

Some difficulties faced by the management participants were associated with the student records and examination data that were being managed by the affiliated universities. Mistakes in result processing, registration records, roll number slips, and result cards were common in this regard.

One participant said:

"Non-Muslim students roll number slips had incorrectly mentioned the papers of Tarjuma-tul-Quran and Islamic Studies." (HOD-5)

The other participant stated:

"During Zoology 2nd semester, the results of some subjects were not mentioned in the result cards." (HOD-3)

This sort of administrative and exam-related mistake made confusion for the students and added more burden on the college staff because they had to contact the university many times to address the problem. Such mistakes delayed the academic process and generated confusion about the academic status of students.

Lack of Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC)

The issue of lack of Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) was one of the major problems identified by participants. According to them, the lack of such a cell meant there is no way to monitor and evaluate BS programs. One participant said:

"Universities have quality assurance mechanisms, but college does not have any dedicated structure for QEC to monitor BS programs." (HOD-6)

Management identified areas of concern relating to academic standards, feedback mechanisms, faculty development, accreditation needs, and quality control. Participants argued that the setting up of QECs would enhance institutional accountability and ensure quality programs.

The Absence of Institutional Autonomy

The participants stated that the lack of institutional autonomy was another barrier facing the implementation of BS programs. According to the management, there is very little room for decision making in government graduate colleges due to the control of financial and administrative issues by the Higher Education Department, and academic issues, such as curricula, examinations, and degree requirements, by the affiliated universities. This led to delays in colleges when responding to institutional needs and making improvements. The management stressed that increased autonomy would increase administrative efficiency and allow colleges to deal with problems better. When it came to institutional autonomy, one participant said:

"Management is responsible for the result of programs, but the decision-making process on such programs is done outside the college." (VP-1)

From this statement, it can be understood that management staff is required to guarantee the success of BS programs despite the fact that they have little control over several key decisions.

Role of Management Challenges in the Implementation of BS Programs

From the results obtained, it is clear that the problems faced by the management of the college had far-reaching consequences in terms of

implementing the BS programs in the graduate colleges of the government. The participants were of the opinion that these problems had effects in terms of the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of the delivery of the programs. One consequence was in the form of interruption in academic activities and course delivery. These challenges sometimes caused strain on departments and also resulted in inconsistencies in educational service delivery.

Management staff was forced to allocate much time towards administrative activities, thereby being unable to dedicate time towards academics and strategic thinking. This meant that initiatives geared towards enhancing teaching quality and academic programs were not taken seriously. The difficulties experienced were also reported to have hindered the ability of the students to learn in an enabling environment. The lack of adequate infrastructure and teaching materials, in addition to academic delays, were reported to have hindered the learning process.

The other significant factor was the development of uncertainty and inefficiency in academic management. The problem of inefficiencies and procedural complications led to problems in dealing with matters related to admission, examination, record keeping, and others of an academic nature.

Further, the results indicated that the difficulties also limited the ability of the colleges to sustain and improve academic quality. It was noted that constraints in monitoring, evaluating, and institutional support made it difficult for the process of continuous improvement and the quality assurance process to be effective. In general, the findings revealed that management difficulties affect the implementation of the BS program through inefficiency, academic development, quality assurance, and quality education provision.

Moreover, it was discovered that the limited administrative independence of the institution played an important role in implementing BS programs in government graduate colleges. It was indicated that there exists a dual governance system wherein financial and administrative

aspects are governed by the Higher Education Department whereas academic aspects are governed by affiliated universities. In this regard, the management of the college had no independence in making decisions concerning recruitment, budgets, resource allocation, planning, and program development.

The respondents highlighted that reliance on the external authorities would cause delays in decision making and actions in response to institutional requirements. The management staff expressed their problems in handling such problems as shortage of faculty members, improvement of the infrastructure, introduction of new programs, and handling academic problems due to the necessity of seeking approval from various authorities. As a result, BS program implementation was not flexible. One of the participants noted that:

"In most cases, we are occupied by operational matters, having little chance to devote ourselves to the betterment of academic performances and institutional development." (VP-1)

Summarizing the entire situation, one of the participants said that:

"The success of BS programs will depend not only on policy formulation but also on the capacity for implementation that colleges are given." (VP-2)

Discussion

Major factors such as those relating to human resources, resource and infrastructure, and administration and governance were found to be affecting the implementation of BS programs in government graduate colleges. Such factors combined had an effect on the effectiveness of the institutions, their functioning as well as quality of the programs. The problem area related to human resources was found to be a major issue. The same issues have been documented by Kakar and Shah (2019) and Zada & Zada (2023), in which they concluded that lack of faculty members along with extra burden was an impediment to effective implementation of BS programs. This shows that the problem of insufficient staffing is still persistent in affiliated colleges due to increase in BS programs; hence putting more burden on the management and effective conducting of

educational activities. In the similar manner, Saleem et al. (2022) have mentioned that the problem of staff shortage and lack of professionalism impacted departmental management. Lack of academic as well as support staff imposed more responsibilities on the Heads of Departments.

Inadequacy in terms of resource and infrastructure also affected the implementation of BS programs. Respondents indicated lack of funds, inability to recruit competent lecturers, scarcity of classrooms, lack of laboratory, shortage in library facility, and absence of multimedia. This is consistent with the study done by Ndubuisi and Jacob (2021), in which they highlighted inadequacies in funding and infrastructure as significant obstacles in higher education management. The same thing was found by Bukhari et al. (2021), Kaur (2024), and Asghar and Khan (2024), who pointed out the role of availability of finances and facilities in sustaining quality in education.

Leadership and management issue was most noticeable in its coordination with the affiliated institutions. Failure to respond promptly, changes in policies, and errors in student documents made planning challenging for academics and increased the amount of the manager's workload. The findings above support Khan et al. (2023), who have found that poor communication and coordination between the universities and the affiliated colleges is one of the existing problems. Lack of Quality Enhancement Cells was another significant problem that was noted during the discussions. Due to the lack of a structured approach to ensuring quality, the institutions faced problems in assessing performance and making improvements. This statement can be backed up by Nagashima et al. (2014) and Khan et al. (2022), who pointed to the importance of having quality assurance systems for improving the effectiveness of institutions and education management. Inability to establish quality assurance structures can affect colleges' ability to evaluate performance and maintain educational standards. Institutional autonomy was limited and this hindered management. It was noted that there were decisions made by the Higher Education

Department and the respective universities, and this limited the capacity for colleges to react to their needs in regard to staffing, financial, and academic requirements. Restrictions on autonomy have been mentioned by Rehman et al. (2024) and Nagashima et al. (2014) as limiting institutional development and administration. Increased autonomy would allow colleges to be able to deal with issues and implement programs more efficiently. It is clear from the findings that management issues are not only influenced by internal institutional factors but also external governing factors.

Moreover, one could interpret the results of this study in light of the Resource Dependence Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), which asserts that organizations are dependent on external agents in terms of resource provision and decision-making. In this case, the dependence of government graduate colleges on the Higher Education Department and universities for staff approval, finances, and decision-making was responsible for some of the problems noted in this study. Shortage of faculty members, lack of funds, and autonomy can be linked to the level of external dependency of organizations.

Conclusion

In this study, perceptions of management on issues faced by them during the implementation of BS programs in government colleges in district Sheikhpura were examined. The results showed that there are various issues faced by the management which include human resource issues, issues related to resources and infrastructure, and administrative issues, which hamper the proper implementation of BS programs. Shortage of faculty, lack of financial and physical resources, too many administrative duties, problems in communicating with affiliated universities, and lack of quality assurance are some important issues.

One of the more significant findings is the low level of autonomy granted to the colleges' management. According to the respondents, the decisions regarding academic, administrative, and financial aspects were mainly taken by other parties, such as the affiliated university and the

Higher Education Department. It hindered the responsiveness of the colleges to local problems and the solution of implementation issues in time. At the same time, the increase in the number of BS programs does not correspond to the capacity of the graduate colleges in the government sector. Although institutions have been assigned the task of offering BS programs, most institutions still function under constraints in terms of resources, inadequate staff, poor infrastructure, and lack of autonomy. This is why the introduction of BS programs poses a lot of strain on the institution's management and limits its efficiency in the provision of quality programs. It may be necessary for institutions to improve their capacity and give them more autonomy to implement the BS programs successfully.

Recommendations

1. For the HED and the universities associated with it, it is recommended that the ability of the institutions to undertake BS programs or to increase student enrollment be evaluated beforehand. In doing so, various factors like faculty availability, infrastructure, resources, finances, and other requirements need to be considered.

2. It is recommended that the government colleges which have graduate programs be provided greater administrative and financial freedom, along with sufficient funds. This will help them overcome their infrastructure problems, improve their educational facilities and academic inputs. There should be transparency in the process of recruiting, retaining and developing faculty members and support staff. Along with taking care of the problems related to shortage of faculty members, there must be enough clerical and administrative staff so that the administrative burden of heads of departments and the management of colleges may be reduced.

3. For communication, coordination and efficient information handling, affiliated universities should work with colleges. There should be proper channels of communication so that policies, syllabi, examinations and guidelines are communicated properly, whereas data

management should be efficient so that errors in registration, examinations, roll numbers and results are avoided.

4. Quality assurance and collaborative governance mechanisms should be strengthened through the establishment of Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs) in government graduate colleges and increased representation of colleges in university academic and decision-making bodies. This would promote continuous monitoring, evaluation, quality improvement, and ensure that the concerns of affiliated colleges are considered in policy formulation and implementation.

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