

# Perceptions Of Male Teachers Towards Their Female Chairpersons As Administrative Heads In Universities

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how male faculty members perceive female chairpersons' administrative practices in KP institutions using Social Role Theory and Role Congruity Theory. The elements influencing these perceptions are examined, with a special emphasis on Planning and Development, coordination, Decision-making, Conflict management, Instructional supervision, personal attributes, financing, and motivation. A descriptive survey strategy was adopted for the study, collecting data from male faculty members in public universities of the province KP under the supervision of female chairpersons using a self-designed questionnaire with a Likert scale. Validity and reliability were assured through pilot testing. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that male faculty members are moderately satisfied with the administrative work of their female chairpersons, but there are some reservations about the motivation and coordination of the faculty from the chairperson. Remarkably, junior faculty members are less confident than senior faculty members in these domains. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to address issues with coordination and motivation, especially in younger faculty members, to improve overall satisfaction and efficiency. This study adds to the body of knowledge by revealing how male faculty members view female leadership in academic environments, especially in the context of KP universities where there is male dominance in the majority of the departments in universities. It highlights the need for ongoing leadership development programs to effectively address organizational difficulties for females.

**Keywords:** Administrative Practices, Gender bias, Higher Education, Academic Leadership, chairperson.

## Introduction

The presence of gender disparities in leadership roles has been widely documented across several sectors in Pakistan, including the realm of academia, for a significant duration. The historical record reveals a significant dearth of female presence in administrative leadership positions, particularly those involving decision-making, planning, and overall departmental administration (Best, 2004). Despite these discrepancies, there has been a notable increase in the enrolment of women in higher education in

Pakistan during the last three decades (United Nations, 2009). As a result, there has been a rise in the proportion of women assuming leadership roles, specifically as chairpersons, inside academic departments (Lunyolo et al., 2014). However, it is crucial to accept that a significant gender gap persists in the representation of individuals in positions of high-level administration within educational institutions (Powell, 2008). The persistent existence of gender bias and stereotypes in the academic domain has a substantial impact on the perception

of men about women in leadership roles (Fahrenwald & Porter, 2009). When it comes to impressions of their competence, authority, and distinctive approaches to management, women in leadership positions frequently face a variety of difficulties. These prejudices may significantly affect their capacity to lead academic departments and make significant contributions to the expansion and improvement of the organization.

In Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is a geographical province known for its unique social and cultural practices (Mostafa, 2005). It is a province with 35 million population purely male-dominated society where the majority of the girls are deprived of secondary and higher education. However, in the last three decades significant increase has been observed in female enrollment in KPs' universities. The number of universities in KP has increased from two to twenty in the last 20 years which provides opportunities for females to play active roles in the administrative setup of universities. The aforementioned context exerts a significant impact on opinions and actions in academic settings, hence molding gender-related administrative procedures. Universities and other educational institutions are essential in creating a supportive atmosphere for a diverse faculty group with a range of backgrounds and experiences within the context of the production of knowledge (Billing, 2011). The diversity of academic disciplines may result in differences in gender equity attitudes and administrative procedures.

According to Lunyolo et al. (2014), chairs of university departments play a crucial role in the field of academic administration. Those holding this specific role are responsible for overseeing a variety of tasks, such as strategic planning and development, departmental activity coordination, decision-making, conflict resolution, instructional supervision, and creating a positive work atmosphere (Roberts & Ullom,

1990; Lucas, 1994; Bowman, 2002) research. Staffing issues, including underperformance management, staff conflicts, and retention of high-performing researchers, are predominant challenges faced by HODs. Understanding the complex dynamics of gender in leadership holds significant significance, as there is frequently a correlation between individuals' gender and their perceived leadership abilities and approaches (Daily & Dalton, 2003). Societies continue to uphold and reinforce gender stereotypes, hence legitimizing traditional gender roles and norms (Best, 2004). The correlation between cultural beliefs and perceptions of leadership roles is intricately linked to prevailing preconceptions, yielding a significant and far-reaching influence. Considerable progress has been made on a worldwide level in the promotion of gender equality. Nevertheless, it is apparent that women persistently hold a minority of leadership roles worldwide, sometimes encountering largely male-dominated work settings, such as managerial jobs (United Nations research, 2009). The obstacles faced by women in their career advancement are exacerbated by the impact of patriarchal power structures, societal standards, and interpretations of religious texts (Mostafa, 2005).

Multiple elements exert influence on these attitudes, encompassing individual perspectives, institutional policies, leadership approaches, and personal encounters (Billing, 2011; Fahrenwald and Porter, 2009). Initiatives have been undertaken in Pakistan, namely in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), to tackle disparities and advance gender parity in education and professional settings, encompassing academia (Mostafa, 2005). The objective of these initiatives is to foster a more inclusive and equitable work environment for female faculty members and leaders. Many cultural, historical, and social factors affect how male staff members in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities perceive their female chairpersons.

These factors are also affected by the way the universities are run. According to Billing (2011), conducting empirical research on this subject offers a rare and worthwhile chance to gain knowledge of the intricate networks that control the financing, planning, development, coordination, motivation, dispute resolution, and supervision of instructors in academic departments.

The point of this study is to show how gender beliefs and the way things are run in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's academic departments overlap and to contribute to the discussion about gender equality and welcoming everyone in higher education management. Analyzing how male faculty members view female university chairs is the first step in identifying obstacles and attaining gender equity in academic leadership (Powell, 2008). Studies also show that beliefs affect how people act and what choices they make.

### **Review of the literature**

Zikmund (2003) notes that feelings, beliefs, and preferences influence opinions about female managers. Islam (2014) states that social identity theory stresses group-based classifications and procedures on perceptions. Role incongruity theory also highlights gender norm-based biases (Eagly and Karau, 2002). These biases discourage optimism and prevent women from becoming executives.

In developed countries like the US and UK, women's underrepresentation in management—particularly higher education management—is noteworthy. According to Marín-Spiotta et al. (2020), structural biases and cultural norms contribute to this underrepresentation. Women encounter various obstacles to high management roles. Organisational disparities, family duties, gender preconceptions, the glass ceiling, and partner opinions among these barriers (Forster, 2001). Gender equality in leadership, notably in quality assurance development, requires addressing power discrepancies and providing

equal opportunities for women to lead (Widayani & Hartati, 2015; O'Connor, 2019; Indriyani et al., 2021). Women must be more visible, given greater agency in the public and commercial sectors, and fairly involved in resource allocation and decision-making to attain gender parity in leadership.

Aikman et al. (2011), Juono (2015), Ncube (2016), Pluckrose and Lindsay (2020), and others agree that gender equality is essential to social justice. This notion seeks to eliminate gender, race, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, and gender identity inequalities. Islamic teachings and inclusive education encourage gender equality and impartiality to reduce discrimination. Teamwork, attention to detail, patience, dedication, strong energy, and meeting deadlines are often associated with female leadership, according to Isnaini and colleagues (2023). Understanding this concept is crucial to achieving gender equity in higher education leadership. Strong legislative frameworks that promote gender equality are needed to overcome prejudice and stereotypes. Bringing male and female CEOs together will assist organisations in improving quality management. According to Aikman et al. (2011), gender equality-focused quality assurance methods and tactics are directly tied to male and female leadership styles. Quality assurance processes can help achieve gender parity. These initiatives can promote gender equality by giving men and women equal leadership chances. Patriarchal religious views and cultural biases may contribute to stereotypes about women in leadership roles, especially in higher education. These views perpetuate gender-based power inequalities, limiting women's leadership (Mansour, 2005).

### **Administrative practices of Chairpersons**

Department heads, or "HODs," are very important to the smooth running of departments and compliance with the university's

management system. Hecht et al. (1999) did a deep study of how power works in organizations. Aikman et al. (2011) say that methods and strategies for quality assurance that focus on gender equality are directly linked to the ways men and women lead. Gender equality can be reached with the help of quality assurance methods. Men and women can be equal in leadership roles through these programs, which can help promote gender equality. Assertions about women in leadership positions, especially in higher education, may be fueled by national and religious views that value men over women. These views perpetuate gender-based power inequalities, limiting the leadership potential of women (Mansour, 2005). They specifically look at the various types of authority possessed by heads of departments (HODs). Among the aforementioned factors are legitimate power, which arises when the group accepts the actions of the Head of Department (HOD); expertise, which is acknowledged when the HOD has a firm grasp of the department's mission; reward power, which motivates employees through promotions; and positional ability, which ensures that employees' careers progress positively.

In a study done by Nguyen (2013), the focus was on examining the development of academic leadership positions, specifically the historical trend of selecting senior departmental staff members to temporarily assume leadership posts. This particular paradigm required a significant level of proficiency in both administrative and research skills. Lucas (1994) assert that department chairmen have a broad scope of responsibilities, such as shaping institutional policies, overseeing financial resources, and maintaining departmental culture. According to Lucas (2000), there exists a favorable correlation between the difficulties encountered in leadership and administration functions and the incorporation of service learning and the use of technology.

As per Bowman's (2002) findings, it is anticipated that academic chairs will possess a diverse set of leadership competencies, encompassing effective communication, problem-solving proficiencies, conflict resolution ability, and coaching capabilities. Morris (2002) presents a thorough examination of the various duties and obligations that are linked to the role of Heads of Departments (HODs). Leadership and motivation of staff, evaluation of performance, management of compensation, promotion of diversity, launch of new programs, establishment of goals, maintenance of curriculum standards, innovation promotion, development of staff competencies, resolution of student issues, management of resources, communication with external stakeholders, and coordination of extracurricular activities are all part of this role. Moses and Roe (1985) overview Heads of Departments (HODs) duties, which include administrative work, staff and student relations, budget and resource allocation, and professional growth. Facilitation of departmental meetings, participation in strategic planning, departmental promotion, task allocation, class schedule coordination, examination oversight, staff selection, recognition of achievements, performance evaluation for tenure and promotion, morale building, and conflict resolution are among the numerous responsibilities that are encompassed in the aforementioned list.

Wolverton et al. (2005) noted the challenge of newly appointed department chairmen lacking leadership training. Only 40% of chairpersons have strategic communication and dispute-resolution skills, according to Wolverton et al. (2005). Dispute resolution, inadequate performance management, and the retention of excellent researchers are additional responsibilities of heads of department (HODs). The research shows that it's hard for Heads of Departments (HODs) to deal with the red tape of universities and make their departments

welcoming and productive places to work. Several authors, including Lucas et al. (2014), Hecht et al. (1999), Nguyen (2013), Lucas (1994), Bowman (2002), and Moses and Roe (1990), have done a lot of research on the problems that head of departments face in higher education.

This study shows how male academic staff members feel about choices made by female university chairpersons that have to do with running the school. This is because being a Head of Department comes with a lot of responsibilities. This sentence shows the many problems female higher education leaders have to deal with, such as biases in the workplace and in society. It also stresses the supervisory roles of area heads and chairmen. Heads of Department (HODs) have to manage many tasks while keeping up with the needs of the business, social conventions, and discrimination based on gender. The study is mainly interested in how these factors affect the views of male faculty members about the ways that female chairpersons at KP University handle these issues. Equality between men and women, training for department heads, and welcoming educational institutions are also emphasized.

### **Research Methodology**

This study utilized a descriptive survey methodology to examine the perceptions of male faculty members at KP universities regarding the administrative practices used by their female chairpersons. This methodology enables the systematic collection of data from a significant and varied sample of male faculty members at universities in the region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). In addition, many theories such as the Social Role Theory, the Role Congruity Theory, the Gender Schema Theory, and the Implicit Bias Theory are utilised to examine the elements that influence viewpoints on female leadership. Gaining a thorough grasp of the frequency and mode of expression of opinions and views by

male faculty members is the goal of this investigation. The purpose of this research is to better understand how male faculty assess the administrative practices used by their female chairpersons.

The study's population comprises 78 male colleagues from various age cohorts and professional domains who are working at KP's public universities and being overseen by female chairpersons. The purpose of including age and experience as demographic factors in the study is to investigate the dynamics and viewpoints of individuals at various career stages concerning female leadership. Individuals' comprehension of company culture, leadership styles, and institutional dynamics is significantly shaped by their academic experience. The study aims to gain a thorough understanding of the perspectives, behaviors, and attitudes of male faculty members working under female chairpersons in public institutions in KP. This was accomplished by taking into account experience and age as demographic factors. This methodology enables us to examine how individual characteristics align with organizational and cultural structures, enhancing our comprehension of gender dynamics in academic leadership. A questionnaire survey was performed to determine the viewpoints of male faculty members regarding the administrative practices of their female chairpersons. The survey was conducted based on extensive and pertinent literature reviews. The opinions and insights of the respondents were collected via a survey that utilized a five-point Likert scale.

The Heads of Departments (HODs) have a vital responsibility in ensuring the efficient functioning of departments and ensuring adherence to regulations within the university's management framework. The administrative responsibilities of the chairpersons form the foundation for the questionnaire sections, including Planning and Development, Coordination, Decision Making, Conflict

Management, Instructional Supervision, Personal Attributes, Financing, and Motivation. The objective of the questionnaire is to generate a more comprehensive understanding of the perceptions and evaluations of male faculty members regarding the administrative characteristics and practices of their female chairpersons inside universities. For insurance of validity and reliability purposes, a pilot study was conducted on ten male faculty members in one university from the population and major data was collected from the remaining 68 faculty members. Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, which is considered acceptable.

The questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents, accompanied by clear

instructions that ensured their privacy and anonymity, hence promoting the provision of truthful responses. The questionnaire was returned by 86% return rate. Ensuring that all participants provide informed consent and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity are ethical considerations that must be considered throughout the research process. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and percentages. The study's acknowledged limitations include its emphasis on public sector universities and the possibility of response bias that comes with survey-based research; these factors will be taken into account when interpreting the results.

## I. Results

**Table 1. Male faculty perception towards their female chairpersons**

Domains of administrative practices	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Planning and Development	68	2.6	.981
Coordination	68	2.4	.963
Decision making	68	2.6127	.883
Conflict management	68	2.6940	.796
Instructional supervision	68	2.5515	.853
Personal attributes	68	2.5401	.840
Financing	68	2.7441	1.061
Motivation	68	2.4664	.945

The findings of Table 1 show that male academics at Pakistani universities have differing opinions about their female chairpersons in terms of several facets of leadership styles. These data show that male faculty members are moderately satisfied and concerned about the performance of their female chairpersons. Male faculty members expressed moderate approaches toward their female chairpersons (M=2.6) in various domains, including planning and development, decision-making, conflict management, instructional

supervision, personal attributes, and financing. This implies a degree of approval or contentment with how female chairpersons in these fields exercise leadership. Male faculty members criticized their female chairpersons for motivation and coordination. Male faculty's low motivation and coordination ratings may suggest unhappiness. Inefficient coordination may suggest department or university cooperation, communication, or effort alignment issues, which could lead to inefficiencies or disagreements.

Similarly, negative motivation impressions may imply that female chairpersons aren't supporting, acknowledging, or encouraging their colleagues, which might negatively impact faculty morale and involvement.

These findings show that motivation and coordination are crucial to organizational efficacy and teacher satisfaction. Strategies that improve communication, foster collaboration, and reward faculty contributions may improve

male-faculty-female chairperson relationships and reduce unfavorable impressions. In conclusion, coordination and motivation are issues, even if male faculty members in Pakistani universities generally view their female chairpersons' leadership moderately. Addressing these concerns and supporting good leadership can create a welcoming and inclusive environment that boosts teacher performance and organizational excellence.

**Table 2. Age wise male faculty attitude towards their female Chairperson**

Gender	Age		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
MALE	23-30	Planning and Development	19	2.5	.86883
		Coordination	19	2.3	.904
		Decision making	19	2.6	.92040
		Conflict management	18	2.5	.68260
		Instructional supervision	19	2.5	.87396
		Personal attributes	19	2.5	.79082
		Financing	19	2.9	.85989
		Motivation	19	2.3	.89525
	31-40	Planning and Development	33	2.7	1.07066
		Coordination	33	2.4	3.62311
		Decision making	33	2.5	.88905
		Conflict management	32	2.7	.86302
		Instructional supervision	33	2.6	.76727
		Personal attributes	33	2.5	.89462
		Financing	33	2.7	1.18919
		Motivation	33	2.3	.88127
		Valid N (listwise)	32		
		41-50	Planning and Development	16	2.6
	Coordination		16	2.6	1.12
	Decision making		16	2.7	.88342
	Conflict management		16	2.9	.80056
	Instructional supervision		16	2.5	1.05785
	Personal attributes		16	2.6	.83945
	Financing		16	2.7	1.06958
	Motivation		16	2.8	1.05729

Table 2 shows intriguing trends in how KP male faculty members view their female chairpersons across three age groups: 23–30, 31–40, and 41–50. Male faculty members of all ages had

moderate views of their female chairpersons' planning and growth, decision-making, resolution of conflicts, instructional supervision, personal traits, and financial practices. This

suggests that female chairpersons in these sectors function well regardless of age. However, motivation and coordination vary with age. Junior Male faculty (23–30 and 31–40 age groups) had a concern about motivation ( $M=2.3$ ) and coordination (2.3-2.4) as administrative practices of their female chairpersons, whereas senior faculty of the 41–50 age group articulated moderate perceptions ( $M=2.6$  and  $M=2.8$ ).

These differences might be because of the assumptions, experiences, and ideas that come with getting mature. Due to female chairpersons, young faculty members may

experience reduced motivation or an absence of inclusion in decision-making processes. In contrast, senior faculty members may be accustomed to the administrative practices or have their perspectives shaped by their tenure and experiences. These findings show that younger teachers must be motivated and coordinated to boost happiness and productivity. Female chairpersons may need to adopt more inclusive leadership styles and provide feedback to energize teachers of all ages. This underlines the need for ongoing leadership development to address organizational difficulties.

**Table 3. Experience wise male faculty attitude towards their female Chairperson**

Gender	Experience in years	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
MALE	Planning and Development	45	2.5	.92316
	Coordination	45	2.3	.943
	Decision making	45	2.6	.88517
	Conflict management	43	2.6	.78212
	1-10 Instructional supervision	45	2.6	.78840
	Personal attributes	45	2.5	.81287
	Financing	45	2.7	1.06909
	Motivation	44	2.3	.82754
	Valid N (listwise)	42		
	11-20 Planning and Development	23	2.9	1.06738
	Coordination	23	2.6	1.080
	Decision making	23	2.7	.90177
	Conflict management	23	2.9	.82245
	Instructional supervision	23	2.5	1.00000
	Personal attributes	23	2.7	.90352
	Financing	23	2.7	1.08898
	Motivation	23	2.7	1.07987

Table 3 shows male faculty members' reviews of their female chairpersons' administrative duties by years of experience. Male faculty members in KP universities had moderate views of their female chairpersons across all administrative criteria, regardless of their years of experience (1-10 years and 11-20 years). With mean ratings ranging from 2.5 to 2.9, male faculty members

believe their female chairpersons are competent or effective in planning and development, decision-making, conflict resolution, instructional supervision, personal qualities, and finance. Though male faculty members have more experience, this consistency suggests female chairpersons are competent.

Years of experience change motivation and



coordination viewpoints. Motivation and coordination were unfavorable for male professors with 1-10 years of experience ( $M=2.3$ ). Those with 11–20 years of experience had moderate views on motivation ( $M=2.7$ ) and coordination ( $M=2.6$ ). Expert faculty spend more time learning from and understanding their female chairpersons' administrative practices. Their views may be more complicated and sophisticated than those of their less-experienced colleagues. Organizational experiences shape faculty expectations and attitudes toward administration. Over time, organizational dynamics, leadership styles, and institutional norms may affect senior colleagues' impressions.

Years of experience boost the study's quality by allowing for a more complete evaluation and precise recommendations for enhancing managerial practices and establishing a more favorable work environment in KP institutions.

### **Conclusions and Discussion:**

The study's findings reveal how Pakistani male academics see their female chairpersons. The study found that male faculty perceived that their female chairperson was effective or competent in these areas. However, they showed their concerns about coordination and motivation practices used by their female chairpersons. Pessimistic views and sociocultural variables are influenced by cultural norms and traditional gender roles, which prescribe that males should lead and women should follow. This study confirms Mousa's (2021) findings that cultural stereotypes contribute to the low number of female professors in academic administrative jobs. According to Hobgood and Draucker (2022), male-dominated informal academic networks lead to female chairpersons' loneliness. Despite negative

perceptions, male faculty members can develop more moderate or positive attitudes if they have had positive interactions with female leaders, have more tenure at the institution, and have been exposed to diverse leadership styles. This aligns with the notion put forth by Okhakhume (2008) that engaging in constructive meetings with female leaders has the potential to challenge and eliminate preconceptions and stereotypes, thus fostering a more inclusive and supportive atmosphere for women subjugating leadership roles. Bystydzienski et al. (2017) found that empowered unit administrators can improve female chairperson perceptions by promoting a welcoming departmental culture.

Types of Perceptions about Chairpersons' Practices: When it comes to the majority of their female chairpersons' administration practices, male faculty members typically have moderate opinions. However, opinions regarding motivation and coordination are particularly negative, especially among faculty members who are younger and less experienced. Deal and Stevenson's (1998), study results show that there are no gender disparities in attitudes towards women in leadership roles. However, they do underscore the belief that men are more reliable in management, which contributes to a greater degree of negative attitudes towards women in leadership roles. The report also highlights the necessity of continuing leadership development initiatives designed specifically to assist female chairpersons in overcoming the challenges associated with overseeing a diverse faculty with a range of experience levels. According to Sperandio (2010), by proactively addressing these concerns, institutions can foster a more supportive and inclusive environment that is beneficial to faculty performance and organizational

excellence. In conclusion, it will take a coordinated effort from all parties involved in academic leadership to address the attitudes of male faculty members toward their female chairpersons as well as the underlying socio-cultural issues. Pakistani universities can ultimately contribute to academic performance, promote gender equity, and increase organizational effectiveness by putting the aforementioned principles into practice and creating a welcoming and inclusive workplace.

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