



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring Middle Managers' Administrative Effectiveness of a Higher Education Institution in the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving educational landscape of the 21st century, the role of middle managers has become crucial in navigating contemporary challenges and shaping organizational success. Middle managers within higher educational institutions served as a crucial link between the strategic vision of senior leadership and the operational realities faced by frontline employees, setting the tone for an overall educational success. This research aims to explore how the perceived roles and responsibilities affects the effectiveness of middle managers as they navigate into the 21st century facing its contemporary challenges. Specifically, to identify the perceived level of preparedness that the middle managers have in terms of their roles in Resource Management, Curriculum Innovation, Stakeholder's Engagement and Professional Development of the Faculty, the perceived level of challenges faced by the middle managers in the 21st century in terms of Technological challenges, Globalization and Cultural challenges, Economic and Accessibility and Changing Pedagogical Landscape. A survey questionnaire was administered to 37 middle managers of a Higher Education Institution in Basilan Province, Philippines. The findings showed that the roles and responsibilities of middle managers are significantly influencing both administrative effectiveness and the quality of education. The challenges of the 21st century demand that middle managers possess a high degree of adaptability and cultural intelligence, enabling them to effectively handle diversity and inclusivity within educational institutions. It is recommended that middle managers may consider fostering a strong partnership with parents, community organizations, and other stakeholders to support educational initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving and dynamics of educational landscape of the 21st century, the role of effective middle managers has become increasingly significant and crucial in navigating contemporary challenges and shaping organizational success. Middle managers within higher educational institutions served as a crucial link between the strategic vision of senior leadership and the operational realities faced by frontline employees, setting the tone for an overall educational effectiveness. As schools grapple with an array of contemporary issues, including technological advancements, globalization shifting educational standards, diverse student demographics, improving student outcomes, workforce dynamics and enhancing the overall effectiveness of an educational systems, understanding the diverse leadership styles adopted by middle managers in Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) has gained significant importance. Furthermore, as HEI's strive for agility and resilience in this era of Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA) world, the ability of middle managers to adapt and innovate becomes a cornerstone for sustainable growth. (Judijanto, Triolita, Machfiroh, Yunanto, & Siminto, 2024; Hassan, Kudus, Mohamed, Abdullah, & Noor, 2024; Kazu & Kuvvetli, 2023; Mentari, 2023; Prasertcharoensuk & Tang, 2017).

Davies and Davies, (2006) as cited in Carvalho, Cabral, Verdasca, and Alves, (2021) “Strategic leadership is a critical component of school development”. As emphasized, the *“implementation of strategic leadership means change: change in thinking, change in the way schools are organized, change in management styles, change in the distribution of power, change in teacher education programs, and change in roles of all participants* (Barron et al., 1995, p. 180, as cited in Carvalho, et.al, 2021). Therefore, it is imperative that middle managers in higher educational learning institutions who plays key role for school development must possess the ability to make changes in all aspects of their administrative processes to be dubbed as strategic leaders. This may also involve the ability to envision the future, make strategic decisions, and implement strategies that foster an adaptive and resilient learning environment. In this context, school leaders are tasked with not only managing day-to-day operations but also navigating broader systemic challenges brought about by globalization, technological innovations, and increased demands for accountability and transparency in this 21st century technological era. (Mentari, 2023). “This era is marked by unprecedented shifts driven by technological advancements, globalization, and a rapidly evolving socio-economic landscape, redefining the very fabric of educational institutions globally. The evolution of higher education in the 21st century transcends traditional confines, expanding its definition to encompass a spectrum of learning modalities” (Judijanto et.al, 2024).

The 21st century educational landscape presents unique challenges such as integrating technology into the classroom, addressing the needs of a diverse student body, and maintaining high educational standards amidst financial constraints. Middle Managers of HEI’s are also therefore confronted with a complex array of challenges that necessitate an effective leadership vision to ensure success and sustainability. “In an organization's hierarchical structure, middle managers are positioned above junior staff and below senior management” (Harding et al., 2014, as cited in Mahdzir, Ghani, and Yazid, 2022).

One of the significant challenges in the 21st century is the rapid advancement of technology, which demands that schools integrate digital tools into both administrative processes and classroom settings effectively (Fullan, 2001). Administrators’ skill in managing this integration is essential to enhance learning outcomes while maintaining cybersecurity and data privacy (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Moreover, the growing diversity within student populations requires leaders to adopt inclusive practices that address the varying needs of students, ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities for all (Leithwood, 2020). These challenges necessitate a strategic approach to administrators that emphasizes long-term planning, resource optimization, and the cultivation of an inclusive and innovative school culture. Furthermore, school administrators are frequently confronted with evolving educational standards and policies at various governmental levels (Spillane, 2006). This dynamic environment requires leadership to implement new curricula and teaching methodologies sustainably. In addition, budget constraints pose significant challenges, necessitating resource management to optimize spending and prioritize initiatives that directly impact educational quality and student success (Senge, 1990).

The pressure for accountability is another critical issue, as schools are expected to demonstrate measurable improvements in performance. Administrator’s role involves setting clear, attainable goals, utilizing performance metrics, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement to meet these demands (Leithwood, 2010). Lastly, unforeseen events such as pandemics and other socio-economic disruptions underscore the importance of administrators to lead in crisis management, ensuring that educational continuity and safety are maintained during challenging times (Fullan, 2020).

Like any other higher learning institutions, Philippine Higher Education Institutions in Basilan, an island province of the Philippines in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), are also confronted with challenges when it comes to administrative effectiveness of school administrators particularly the middle managers in the 21st century. For instance, student population increases yearly, addressing the needs of this growing student population to include facilities and equipment, and other learning materials, the demands that schools integrate digital tools into both administrative processes and classroom settings effectively, the need to adhere to the evolving National, International and even global educational standards, budget constraints, these and other reasons pose significant challenges, necessitating

the importance of strategic leadership approach for middle managers who served as links to senior administrative leaders and frontline leaders while maintaining quality amidst global challenges.

It is in this context that the researcher delves into the core aspects of the roles and responsibilities of middle managers within school the school administration, offering insights into best practices and emerging trends that can help educational leaders navigate the complexities of the modern educational landscape. Through this exploration and a comprehensive analysis of current trends and emerging perspectives the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how the perceived roles and responsibilities can be leverage by middle managers to overcome challenges and propel schools toward future success. This will also help middle managers in leveraging their unique position to drive change, inspire teams, and contribute to the long-term strategic goals of the organizations particularly HEI's and to shed light on the evolving role of middle managers as influential leaders in the 21st century.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon key management theories to elucidate the roles and effectiveness of middle managers in higher education. Central to this analysis is Henry Mintzberg's Managerial Roles framework, which provides a detailed categorization of the various functions that managers perform, including interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles. This framework is complemented by broader management theories, such as Contingency Theory, which examines how managers adapt their strategies to changing environments. Together, these management theories offer a comprehensive lens for analyzing how middle managers navigate complex organizational landscapes. In the context of 21st century challenges, this research draws on six theories.

Complexity Theory:

This theory emphasizes understanding how organizations adapt and evolve in complex and dynamic environments. It is highly relevant for analyzing how middle managers navigate uncertainty and rapid changes brought about by technological advancements, globalization, and economic fluctuations.

Adaptive Leadership Theory:

This theory, developed by Ronald Heifetz, focuses on how leaders help their organizations adapt to change. It is pertinent for exploring how middle managers facilitate curriculum innovation and professional development in response to pedagogical shifts.

Innovation Diffusion Theory:

Proposed by Everett Rogers, this theory examines how new ideas and technologies spread within and between organizations. It is applicable for studying how middle managers promote and implement new teaching methods and technologies.

Transformational Leadership Theory:

This theory highlights the role of leaders in inspiring and motivating their teams to achieve higher levels of performance. It aligns with the need for middle managers to engage effectively with stakeholders and drive organizational change.

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Theory:

This theory addresses the ability to relate and work effectively across cultures, making it relevant for managing globalization and cultural diversity challenges faced by middle managers in educational institutions.

Sustainability and Triple bottom Line Theory:

This approach considers the long-term impacts on people, planet, and profit. It is essential for examining how middle managers address economic and accessibility challenges while maintaining organizational sustainability.

By applying these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to assess how middle managers' strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement impact institutional effectiveness and innovation in educational settings. This multi-theoretical approach highlights the dynamic and adaptive nature of management practices required to meet the evolving demands of the 21st-century educational landscape.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

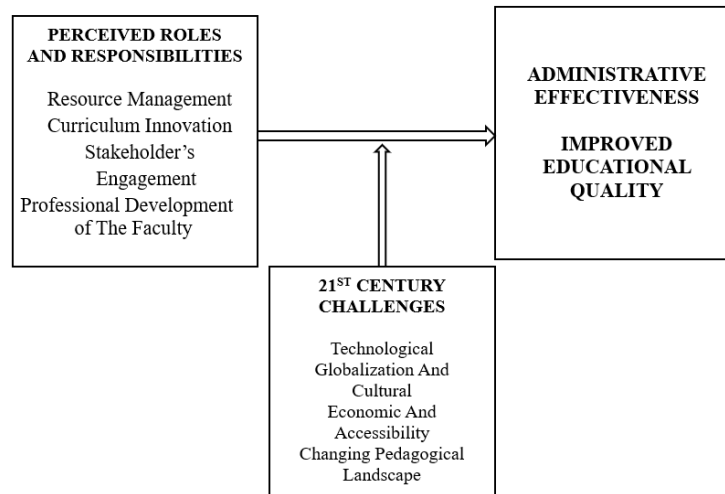


Fig.1 Schematic diagram of the study

Figure 1 above shows the conceptual paradigm of this study. Perceived administrative roles and responsibilities such as resource management, curriculum innovation, stakeholder's engagement and professional development of the faculty are at the core, guiding how the school navigates 21st Century challenges such as technological challenges, globalization and cultural challenges, economic and accessibility, changing pedagogical landscape in Higher Education. These administrative roles and responsibilities of middle managers of a Higher Education Institution are believed to have influenced the perceived administrative effectiveness which may affect the educational outcomes of the students. The effective combination of these perceived roles and responsibilities leads to positive outcomes, such as improved educational quality and a strong school reputation.

The administrative effectiveness in this study the middle managers, as established by Gulick and Urwick (1937) are crucial for identifying, understanding, and adapting to 21st-century challenges as promoted by Judijanto, et.al, (2024). Effective administration must incorporate these perceived roles and responsibilities into their administrative process in response to changing external conditions such as the challenges in the 21st century which leads to improved educational outcomes.

This research aims to explore how the perceived roles and responsibilities affects the effectiveness of middle managers as they navigate into the 21st century facing its contemporary challenges. By examining their roles, this study seeks to provide insights that can inform both current and aspiring middle managers in effectively leading their teams in a dynamic environment.

1.3 Objectives

The study aims to explore the effectiveness of middle managers as they perform their perceived roles and responsibilities in the 21st century, specifically this study aims to identify and describe:

The perceived level of preparedness that the middle managers have in terms of their roles in

Resource Management;

Curriculum Innovation;

Stakeholder's Engagement;

Professional Development of the Faculty.

The perceived level of challenges faced by the middle managers in the 21st century in terms of Technological challenges;

Globalization And Cultural challenges;

Economic and Accessibility

Changing Pedagogical Landscape

The perceived level of administrative effectiveness of the 21st century middle managers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study seek to bridge the gap between leadership theory and practice, providing a comprehensive understanding of how administrative effectiveness can address the unique challenges faced by middle managers in the 21st century.

By exploring the perceived roles and responsibilities within the context of school administration of a college, this study will expand the theoretical understanding of how administrative practices can be applied to navigate complex, modern educational challenges. This contributes to the broader academic discourse on leadership in educational settings. The findings of this study will also have impacts on the following:

School Leaders: The findings of the study will provide actionable insights for school administrators and policymakers. Understanding effective administrative practices of middle managers can help schools improve technology integration, resource management, and inclusivity, thereby enhancing overall educational quality.

Student: By investigating how the perceived roles and responsibilities of middle managers affects student achievement and school performance, the study can help identify practices that lead to better educational outcomes, ultimately benefiting students and communities.

Policy Development and Implementation: The research can inform educational policy by identifying key roles and responsibilities that successfully address 21st-century challenges for effective administrative actions. This can guide policymakers in developing frameworks and resources that support effective administrative practices specifically for middle managers.

Crisis Management and Resilience Building: By examining effective administrative role in crisis management, the study can offer valuable lessons for building resilient educational institutions capable of withstanding and recovering from crises, such as natural disasters or pandemics.

Professional Development and Training: The study's insights can contribute to the design of leadership training programs particularly the middle managers, helping them to equip current and future school leaders with the skills necessary to navigate the evolving educational landscape effectively.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation

Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in the context of higher education institutions in Basilan, providing a focused examination of the roles and responsibilities played by the middle managers which may affect their effectiveness amidst challenges in the 21st century. The participants of this focuses on both the administrative educational leaders and the academic school heads, that is the research will include school administrators such as Deans, Program Chairperson, and Directors of academic departments and heads of student's support services who played key roles in decision-making. The study considered the perceived roles and responsibilities and challenges over a period of 2 years, to capture recent trends and changes in administrative processes. The research focused on challenges relevant to the 21st century, such as technological challenges, globalization and cultural challenges, economic and accessibility, changing pedagogical landscape in Higher Education.

Delimitation of the Study

The study will not cover administrative effectiveness in primary and secondary education, focusing instead on higher education institution of a college. Faculty and other staff, while important, were not the primary focus of this study, except as they relate to administrative roles and dynamics. The study did not delve into the specifics of all educational policies but have considered how the roles of middle managers affect its effectiveness for policy changes generally. Factors that are difficult to quantify, such as personal leadership styles or individual charisma, were not the primary focus of quantitative analysis. Further, the study may not fully account for cultural differences that affect the administrative roles and effectiveness, especially considering the diverse constituents of Basilan.

This body of literature explores the myriad ways in which middle managers contribute to organizational success, providing a comprehensive understanding of their impact on the modern workplace.

METHODS

Descriptive Quantitative design particularly survey research was utilized in this study. According to Creswell (2014) Survey Research provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. It includes cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires for data collection with the intent of generalizing from a sample to a population

2.1 Participants

The participants of the study were thirty-seven (37) school administrators, these participants were selected since they were directly involved in Leadership and Administrative processes and that they have the knowledge about the process. These include the Head of administrative offices (or equivalent post), Deans, and Program Chairpersons of each College and the Director of department/student support services and all program coordinators (or equivalent post) who have at least two years of experience as an administrator.

2.2 Instrument

A researcher made survey questionnaire was utilized in this study to answer the research questions. The survey questionnaire is composed of two-parts. Part I – Perceived Roles and Responsibilities. This part was designed to gather perceptions on how well middle managers perform in these critical areas such as Resource Management, Curriculum Innovation, Stakeholder's Engagement and Professional Development of The Faculty. Part II – 21ST Century Challenges, this part was designed to evaluate how effectively organizations or individuals perceive and address these 21st-century challenges in terms of Technological, Globalization and Cultural, Economic and Accessibility, Changing Pedagogical Landscape which was based on the findings of a study by Judijanto et.al (2024). The survey questionnaire was pilot tested to 20 participants. Each category included 5 questions, rated on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The computed Cronbach's Alpha for each category was approximately 0.978, indicating excellent internal consistency. This suggests that the survey items within each category are reliably measuring the intended constructs.

2.3 Data Collection Methods

A survey questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data. As an initial step, to ensure that the survey was valid, four individuals (Deans) reviewed the survey instrument and rate each item using three-point scale (not necessary, useful but not essential and essential) and provided suggestions to improve the questions and the clarity of instruction. Then the changes were incorporated in the survey instrument. After those changes were incorporated a pilot survey was conducted to ensure that the instrument was reliable, the survey was pilot tested with at least twenty individuals. This pilot group includes employees of the college, who did not participate in this study, some with an understanding of strategic leadership, and some with a limited understanding of such leadership. Comments that were received from this pilot group were used to refine the survey instrument.

After the questionnaires were validated and pilot tested, the final instrument was used. Next, permission to conduct the research study were obtained through a letter from the College President. Same permission was obtained from the respective Deans/ Director of each Colleges on the intent of the researcher to conduct this study. Individual consent for the respondents was also obtained through a letter.

After permissions were granted, the researcher begun to carry out the sampling plan of the study. Next, an orientation was conducted by the researcher to every respondent on how to accomplish the questionnaire as well as its ethical consideration, followed by the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. The survey questionnaire was administered to the participants of this study who are the head of offices, Deans, Directors and Program Chairpersons of a college. The researcher has personally distributed the questionnaires to each of the respondents. Each accomplished questionnaire was inspected to check if all the items were answered. Recording, tabulating, analyzing and interpreting of data were personally accomplished by the researcher.

Table 1. The Liker Scale used to determine the level of challenges faced by the middle managers in the 21st century

Value	Description	Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	Strongly Agree	4.3 – 5.0	Not at all challenging
4	Agree	3.5 – 4.2	Mostly Not Challenging
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2.7 – 3.4	Neither Challenging nor Not Challenging
2	Disagree	1.9 – 2.6	Mostly Challenging
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 – 1.8	Extremely Challenging

2.4 Ethical Considerations

The participation of the eligible or qualified respondents were voluntary, they were not coerced, in fact, those who were eligible to qualify as study participants have the option to withdraw anytime from the study without any punishment or repercussion or the like. Further, there were no known risks perceived in this study. Thus, psychological support was not necessary, however, the researcher ensured the willingness to assist should there be any need of assistance in relation to this study. In addition, Consent Forms were secured from the participants.

All data that were gathered from this study were stored as electronic or printed transcripts as encrypted files or was locked in a secured location for five years after the publication of this research, after which, all files will be destroyed

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Resource Management

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating	SD
Effectively allocates resources to meet departmental goals	3.78	Agree	1.16
Resources are managed efficiently to maximize productivity within the department	3.54	Agree	1.28
Ensures that resources are used sustainably	3.86	Agree	1.22
There is transparency in how resources are allocated	3.43	Agree	1.34
Prioritizes resources effectively based on departmental needs	3.70	Agree	1.19

Table 2 above suggests that most respondents agree that middle managers effectively allocate resources, indicating a generally positive perception. The standard deviation of 1.16 indicates moderate variability, suggesting that while many respondents lean towards agreement, there are differing opinions. With a mean score of 3.86, reported the highest mean, indicate that respondents tend to agree that middle managers are effective in ensuring sustainable resource usage, showing strong positive feedback. The standard deviation of 1.22 shows moderate variability, implying general agreement but with some differing views. The mean score of 3.43 suggests a more neutral to slightly positive view on transparency in resource allocation. The

higher standard deviation of 1.34 indicates greater variability, suggesting that transparency practices may be inconsistent or perceived differently across departments. Overall, the results reflect a generally positive perception of middle managers' effectiveness in managing resources, though there are areas with more variability in opinions, particularly regarding transparency. The consistent agreement across most statements suggests that middle managers are seen as competent in resource management, but there may be opportunities for improvement, especially in enhancing transparency and uniformity across departments.

Table 3. Curriculum Innovation

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating	SD
Actively Support and Promote Curriculum Innovation	3.82	Agree	1.22
Innovative Teaching Methods are Encouraged	3.76	Agree	1.17
Facilitate the Integration of New Technologies into the Curriculum	3.83	Agree	1.10
Support from Middle Managers for Pilot Programs	3.63	Agree	1.19
Engage with Faculty to Develop Innovative Curriculum Solutions	3.84	Agree	1.21

Table 3 shows the results on Curriculum Innovation. Data reveal a strong commitment to fostering innovative educational practices within the institution. This high mean score suggests that there is a strong institutional emphasis on actively supporting and promoting innovation within the curriculum. It indicates that policies and initiatives aimed at fostering innovation are well-received and perceived as effective by the respondents. Encouraging innovative teaching methods is seen as a priority, with respondents agreeing that such practices are supported. On the other hand, results show that there is a positive attitude towards integrating new technologies, highlighting the institution's willingness to embrace digital transformation in education. While slightly lower than other areas, with a mean score of 3.63 the score still indicates a positive trend. It suggests that while support is present, there may be room for improvement in how middle managers back pilot programs for curriculum changes. Engagement with faculty in developing innovative curriculum solutions is highly rated, with a mean score of 3.84 showing that faculty members are seen as active partners in the innovation process. This collaboration is vital for tailoring curriculum changes to meet both educational goals and faculty expertise.

Table 4. Stakeholder Engagement

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating	SD
Effectively communicate with stakeholders to understand their needs	3.92	Agree	1.21
Engagement initiatives lead to positive stakeholder relationships	3.78	Agree	1.16
Responsive to stakeholder feedback and concerns	3.84	Agree	1.20
There is consistent interaction between middle managers and stakeholders	3.68	Agree	1.19
Facilitate partnerships with external stakeholders to enhance departmental goals	3.73	Agree	1.24

Table 4 shows that the participants reported the highest mean score of 3.92 indicates a generally positive perception, suggesting that respondents agree that middle managers communicate effectively with stakeholders. The standard deviation of 1.21 reflects moderate variability, demonstrating some diversity in opinions but a predominant agreement. Respondents also generally agree that engagement initiatives are effective, responsive to stakeholder feedback and are effective in facilitating external partnerships. The mean score of 3.68 indicates a slightly less strong agreement about consistent interaction compared to other areas, but it is still positive. The standard deviation of 1.19 shows moderate variability, indicating a mix of experiences among respondents, with most agreeing but some having different views. Overall, the results suggest that respondents perceive middle managers positively in terms of stakeholder engagement, with most

scores indicating agreement with the statements. The moderate standard deviations across questions imply that while there is general agreement, there are variations in how respondents perceive the effectiveness of middle managers' stakeholder engagement strategies. This suggests opportunities for improving consistency in communication and partnership efforts across the board.

Table 5. Professional Development of the Facult

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating	SD
Provide ample opportunities for faculty professional development	3.84	Agree	1.20
Professional development programs meet the needs of the faculty	3.73	Agree	1.26
Encourage faculty to pursue continuous learning opportunities	3.81	Agree	1.18
Support for faculty career advancement is readily available from middle managers	3.62	Agree	1.24
Recognizes and rewards faculty participation in professional development	3.70	Agree	1.27

Table 5 above shows the Professional Development of the faculty. The participants reported the highest mean score of 3.84 indicates that respondents generally agree that middle managers provide sufficient opportunities for faculty development. Next, with a mean of 3.73, respondents show a positive perception of how well professional development programs meet faculty needs. The table also showed that there is a general agreement that middle managers encourage continuous learning. However, with a mean score of 3.62 implies that respondents hold a fairly positive but somewhat less strong agreement about the availability of career advancement support. The standard deviation of 1.24 indicates moderate variability, meaning there's a range of perspectives regarding the level of support provided. Overall, the results suggest a positive perception of middle managers' roles in supporting faculty professional development. However, the moderate variability in responses across the questions highlights areas where perceptions differ, suggesting opportunities for middle managers to further enhance consistency in providing support and recognition. These interpretations underline the importance of continuous efforts to align professional development strategies with faculty needs and expectations.

Table 6. Technological Challenges

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	SD
Our institution effectively adapts to technological advancements	3.95	MNC	1.26
We prioritize cyber security and data privacy in our technological initiatives	4.03	MNC	1.17
Technological skills development is a key focus in our institution	3.84	MNC	1.08
Our institution invests in the latest technology to stay competitive	3.81	MNC	1.18
There is resistance to adopting new technologies within our institution	2.78	NCNC	1.55

MNC – Mostly not challenging

NCNC -Neither Challenging nor Not Challenging

The respondents reported the highest mean score of 4.03, indicates that there is a strong agreement that cyber security and data privacy are prioritized within technological initiatives. The standard deviation of 1.17 indicates relatively consistent responses, showing a shared understanding and agreement on the importance of these priorities. Next, a mean score of 3.95 indicates respondents generally agree that their organization adapts well to technological advancements, that technological skills development is a significant focus within their organization, and that the organization invests in the latest technology for competitiveness. However, the mean score of 2.78 shows a more neutral to slightly disagreeing stance regarding

resistance to adopting new technologies, reflecting mixed feelings. The higher standard deviation of 1.55 indicates considerable variability, suggesting a wide range of experiences and views on technological adoption challenges.

Overall, the results paint a positive picture of how the organization handles technological challenges, particularly in adapting to new technologies and prioritizing cyber security. However, the responses to resistance in technology adoption highlight a more diverse range of opinions, suggesting areas for improvement in change management and fostering a culture more open to technological innovation.

Table 7. Globalization and Cultural Challenges

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	SD
Our institution successfully navigates cultural differences in a globalized market	3.78	MNC	1.14
We promote diversity and inclusion in our workplace	4.03	MNC	1.03
There is effective communication in our institution across different cultures	3.76	MNC	1.16
Global market trends are well understood by the academe	3.70	MNC	1.16
Cultural sensitivity training is a regular part of our institutional development	3.65	MNC	1.19

MNC – Mostly not challenging

Table 7 above shows the results on the globalization and cultural challenges as reported by the respondents. The results indicate a positive perception of how the organization handles globalization and cultural challenges, particularly in promoting diversity and inclusion. With a mean of 4.03, there is strong agreement among respondents that diversity and inclusion are promoted within the workplace. However, the standard deviation of 1.19 shows moderate variability, suggesting varied opinions on the extent and regularity of such training. On the other hand, the mean score of 3.65 reflects a slightly positive agreement that cultural sensitivity training is a regular part of organizational development, this variability across responses regarding cultural sensitivity training and understanding global market trends, suggests there are areas for improvement in communication and training initiatives to ensure more consistent and effective engagement across cultures.

Table 8. Economic and Accessibility Challenges

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	SD
Our institution adapts well to economic fluctuations	3.78	MNC	1.15
We ensure accessibility to our products/services for people from various economic backgrounds	3.70	MNC	1.15
Cost-effective strategies are implemented without compromising quality	3.81	MNC	1.10
Our overall academic strategies are competitive yet inclusive	3.81	MNC	1.13
There is financial transparency and accountability in our institution	3.62	MNC	1.17

MNC – Mostly not challenging

The mean score of 3.78 suggests that respondents generally agree that the organization adapts well to economic fluctuations, indicates a positive tendency toward agreement that the

organization ensures accessibility for diverse economic backgrounds, also, there is general agreement that cost-effective strategies are implemented without sacrificing quality. The results suggest a positive view of the organization's ability to handle economic and accessibility challenges, with a focus on cost-effective strategies, competitive pricing, and accessibility. However, the variability in some areas, particularly regarding financial transparency and accessibility, indicates opportunities for further strengthening these initiatives to ensure more consistent respondent experiences and perceptions.

Table 9. Changing Pedagogical Landscape

Constructs	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	SD
Our educational strategies evolve to meet modern pedagogical needs	3.84	MNC	1.23
We integrate digital tools effectively into our teaching/learning processes	3.86	MNC	1.17
There is support for innovative teaching methods and practices	3.76	MNC	1.14
Faculty and staff receive training on current educational trends	3.73	MNC	1.16
We engage students actively in the learning process to adapt to new educational paradigms	3.70	MNC	1.24

MNC – Mostly not challenging

Table 9 above shows the results on changing pedagogical landscape as reported by the participants. Results show with a highest mean of 3.86, indicating that there is a strong agreement that digital tools are effectively integrated into teaching and learning processes. The participants also reported the lowest mean score of 3.70 which reflects a generally positive agreement about active student engagement. The higher standard deviation of 1.24 suggests more variability in responses, indicating some differing views about the effectiveness and consistency of student engagement practices. However, the overall results suggest a positive perception of the organization's adaptability to the changing pedagogical landscape, particularly in integrating digital tools and evolving educational strategies. But, the variability in some areas, like student engagement and training on educational trends, highlights opportunities for improvement to ensure more consistent and effective practices across the board.

Findings

The middle managers exemplified in the integration of digital tools into the academic processes, demonstrating adaptability to technological advancements. It also shows strong efforts in promoting diversity and inclusion, as well as navigating cultural differences effectively within a globalized market. While demonstrating a positive approach to adapting to economic fluctuations and ensuring accessibility to products/services for diverse economic backgrounds, enhancing transparency in financial operations and ensuring cost-effective strategies remain uncompromised in quality will strengthen trust and inclusivity in economic practices. Further, based on the results, it was also noted that curriculum and educational strategies are evolving to meet modern needs, with effective integration of innovative leadership methods and digital tools. It is therefore encouraged that the college must emphasize the training of middle managers on current educational trends while enhancing faculty and student engagement strategies, this will further align teaching practices with new educational paradigms, ensuring relevance and engagement.

CONCLUSION

The roles and responsibilities of middle managers are pivotal in navigating the myriad challenges of the 21st century, significantly influencing both administrative effectiveness and the quality of education. Middle managers, acting as pivotal links between senior administration and faculty, are tasked with implementing strategic initiatives and fostering an environment conducive to innovation and growth. Their roles extend beyond traditional managerial duties, encompassing

leadership in areas such as curriculum innovation, resource management, and stakeholder engagement.

The integration of theories such as Mintzberg's Managerial Roles and Adaptive Leadership Theory underscores the dynamic nature of middle management in responding to rapid technological changes, globalization, and evolving pedagogical needs. In this context, middle managers are not only resource allocators and decision-makers but also change agents who drive curriculum innovation and promote professional development among faculty.

The challenges of the 21st century demand that middle managers possess a high degree of adaptability and cultural intelligence, enabling them to effectively handle diversity and inclusivity within educational institutions. Their ability to engage with and motivate stakeholders directly correlates with enhanced educational outcomes, as they work to implement effective teaching methodologies and integrate new technologies into the learning environment.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of middle managers in fulfilling these roles is crucial for ensuring that educational institutions remain competitive and capable of delivering high-quality education. By addressing contemporary challenges with strategic foresight and operational acumen, middle managers play an instrumental role in shaping an adaptable and resilient educational ecosystem, thereby contributing to both administrative success and improved educational quality.

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