

Title: Digital leadership in the digital era of education: enhancing knowledge sharing and emotional intelligence

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Abstract: Purpose Establishing an effective educational system is directly tied to academic leadership, a multifaceted concept that differs from one environment to another. The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of digital leadership (DL) aspects in the enhancement of technical knowledge sharing (KS) and dealing with emotional intelligence (EI) among the teaching faculty of higher education institutions (HEIs).

Design/methodology/approach Following a quantitative and cross-sectional research design, convenient sampling is employed for data collection via a self-administered questionnaire from 320 faculty members of private HEIs in Pakistan.

Findings Structural equation model (SEM) is used for path analysis. The results reveal a positive and significant effect of DL, aspects like visionary leadership (VL), digital citizenship (DC), systematic improvement (SI), on knowledge sharing (KS), and emotional intelligence (EI). Practical implications This study has highlighted the significance of DL in private HEIs. The findings of the study imply that institutional heads of higher education institutions (HEIs) can successfully manage the knowledge assets that they have and those of their staff members, ensure the successful adoption of technology and foster product and process innovation that improves organizational performance and integrates successful strategies into the educational system by demonstrating DL aspects. The research also analyzes institutional heads' present leadership strategies to enhance response to technological change and innovations, which are considered fundamental pillars of organizational success. Ultimately, this will extend the literature on adopting DL techniques towards digital transformation in the education system.

Originality/value This study empirically confirms the role of DL aspects such as VL, DC, and SI towards KS and EI. Most of the research demonstrates the direct impact of DL on EI, whereas the aspects of DL are not directly related to KS and EI. Studies have also shown how DL enhances its role in incorporating leadership in organizations, industries, and education, mainly in Western countries. This research addresses the gap in understanding the direct effects of DL aspects on KS and EI in non-Western countries, particularly within the education sector.

Keywords: Digital leadership, Visionary leadership, Digital citizenship, Systematic improvement, Emotional intelligence, Higher educational institutes

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