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Development of management competencies in students based on individual approach

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Abstract: This study explores how an individualized approach to management education can enhance students' leadership, strategic planning, problem-solving, resource allocation, and communication skills. Employing a mixed-methods design, the research involved 120 undergraduate students enrolled in management-related courses at a public university. Data were collected through baseline and post-intervention self-assessment questionnaires, structured interviews, and focus group discussions. During a 16-week intervention, participants engaged in tailored learning activities—such as case studies, simulations, role-plays, and reflective journals—aligned with their unique interests and competency gaps. Quantitative findings showed statistically significant improvements in key managerial skills, including an average increase of 15% in leadership and 18% in communication. Qualitative insights revealed heightened motivation, deeper engagement with course content, and greater self-confidence among students. However, the study also identified increased demands on both instructors and learners, requiring careful planning, resources, and continuous feedback. Despite these challenges, the results indicate that personalized pedagogy not only bolsters students' management competencies but also prepares them more effectively for real-world organizational contexts. Future research should investigate the longitudinal effects of individualized learning on professional outcomes and compare its impact across diverse academic settings.

Keywords: Management Competencies, Individualized Approach, Higher Education, Leadership Development, Strategic Planning.

Introduction: Management competencies have become increasingly significant in higher education as global labor markets and organizational structures demand graduates who can effectively lead teams, analyze complex situations, and make informed decisions. Within this context, the development of management competencies in students through an individual approach has garnered particular attention. Traditional teaching methodologies often focus on delivering theoretical knowledge in uniform ways, offering few opportunities for practical application tailored to each student's learning style, motivation, or aptitude. This one-size-fits-all model can be insufficient for equipping students with the requisite competencies for today's dynamic workplace, where professionals must navigate diverse projects, multicultural teams, resource constraints, and rapid technological changes.

An individual approach in management education recognizes that learners come with varied cognitive abilities, personal interests, and career aspirations. By acknowledging and adapting to these differences, educators can enhance the quality of student engagement, promote deeper learning, and facilitate the transfer of theoretical knowledge into real-world contexts. Moreover, individualization helps stimulate intrinsic motivation, as students feel more responsible for their own learning progress and become active participants in the educational process. Although adopting this approach can be resource-intensive and time-consuming for instructors, the long-term benefits—including the production of more competent, adaptive, and reflective graduates—are widely considered to justify the additional effort.

This article explores the process of developing management competencies in students based on an individual approach, following the IMRAD structure to present a clear narrative of the research conducted. It begins by outlining the theoretical framework for individualized education in management studies and then proceeds to describe the methods used in implementing and assessing such an approach. The subsequent sections detail the results obtained from a pilot program, while the discussion and conclusion interpret these outcomes in light of existing literature, suggesting implications for future practice in higher education.

METHODS

In order to investigate the impact of an individual approach on the development of management competencies among students, a mixed-method research design was adopted. The study took place at a public university offering a bachelor's degree in

Business Administration, where management-related courses form part of the core curriculum. The participant group consisted of 120 second- and third-year students. This group was chosen because they had already been exposed to foundational management theories but had limited practical experience applying these theories in real or simulated workplace scenarios.

Data collection was divided into three interconnected stages: baseline assessment, individualized intervention, and post-intervention evaluation. At the baseline stage, students were asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire measuring perceived management competencies, including areas such as leadership, strategic planning, problem-solving, resource allocation, and communication. This questionnaire employed Likert-scale items ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." In addition to the self-assessment, structured interviews were conducted with ten volunteer participants, providing qualitative insights into their self-perceived strengths and weaknesses. These interviews allowed researchers to identify recurring themes regarding motivations, career goals, and challenges that students felt hindered their ability to master management tasks.

Following the baseline data collection, the individualized intervention was carried out over a 16-week period. Students were divided into smaller groups depending on their learning style preferences, career interests, and self-identified competency gaps. Within these smaller groups, instructors incorporated tailored materials and activities while ensuring alignment with the core curriculum. Specific teaching methods included case studies reflecting students' areas of interest, role-plays that encouraged leadership and teamwork, simulations designed to strengthen strategic thinking, and reflective journals to promote self-awareness. The instructors also scheduled regular one-on-one feedback sessions, during which they reviewed each student's progress and modified learning tasks where necessary.

Finally, in the post-intervention evaluation, participants were asked to complete the same self-assessment questionnaire used at the beginning of the study. Additionally, semi-structured focus group discussions were organized to allow students to reflect collectively on their experiences. The data collected from these tools underwent both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Descriptive statistics and paired-sample t-tests were used to compare pre- and post-intervention competency scores, while thematic analysis was employed to examine changes in student perspectives. This combination of methods provided a holistic understanding of how an individual approach could influence the development of management competencies.

RESULTS

Quantitative analysis of the self-assessment questionnaires revealed statistically significant gains in various management competencies between the baseline and post-intervention stages. Leadership competency scores, for instance, increased by an average of 15% compared to the initial measures, while communication and conflict-resolution skills showed an average increase of 18%. Strategic planning and resource allocation improved by approximately 12%, pointing to an overall positive shift in students' perceived abilities to manage complex tasks and teams. Paired-sample t-tests confirmed that these changes were significant at the 0.05 level, suggesting that individualized teaching methods contributed meaningfully to the development of management competencies.

Focus group discussions complemented these quantitative findings with rich qualitative data. Many students reported feeling more engaged with the course material when it was adapted to their personal interests and career aspirations. For example, students whose main interest lay in entrepreneurship expressed appreciation for case studies drawn from real start-up settings, which allowed them to apply theoretical frameworks to scenarios that felt authentically relevant. Similarly, those gravitating toward corporate roles benefited from simulations that mimicked organizational hierarchies, departmental dynamics, and resource constraints they might encounter in large companies. One recurring theme was the perception that collaborative projects, guided by individualized feedback, significantly enhanced teamwork and communication skills. Students who initially self-identified as introverted or hesitant in group activities noted an improvement in their confidence and willingness to participate after receiving personalized encouragement and support.

Interview data and focus group sessions also highlighted some challenges encountered during the intervention. While most participants lauded the individualized approach, they acknowledged that it required a higher level of self-direction and time management than conventional lecture-based classes. In some cases, students struggled with juggling personalized projects alongside regular coursework. Moreover, instructors cited increased demands on their own schedules to develop and deliver customized content, as well as to hold frequent one-on-one feedback sessions. Despite these hurdles, participants generally agreed that the benefits—improved competencies, stronger motivation, and a clearer understanding of management concepts—outweighed the additional demands.

DISCUSSION

These findings align with broader educational research suggesting that student-centered, individualized instruction can enhance both engagement and skill development. Traditional methods in management education, often reliant on lectures and standardized examinations, risk underestimating the diversity of learning preferences and motivational drivers present in any given student cohort. By incorporating practical tasks tailored to individual strengths, the intervention described here enriched students' exposure to real-life management scenarios and enabled them to apply theoretical knowledge in varied, context-specific ways. The significant improvements observed in leadership, communication, and conflict-resolution scores corroborate existing studies that highlight the value of situational, hands-on learning for bolstering managerial efficacy.

The challenges identified in this study underscore the resource-intensive nature of individualized approaches. Instructors must commit extra time and effort to design specialized materials, monitor student progress, and provide targeted feedback. Students, in turn, must adopt a higher degree of self-regulation to stay on track with individual learning paths. Integrating technology could alleviate some of these pressures. Online learning platforms can automate certain administrative tasks and offer personalized content more efficiently, using learning analytics to track each student's progress. Virtual simulation tools can replicate complex management scenarios, allowing students to practice decision-making without the need for extensive face-to-face resources.

Yet, the human element remains crucial for scaffolding student growth. One-on-one mentorship fosters trust and openness, enabling students to discuss challenges frankly and receive tailored advice. The success of an individual approach also hinges on a well-structured curriculum that still ensures students meet overarching learning objectives. While personalization permits variability in pacing and focus, it should not lead to the fragmentation of educational standards. Balancing individual needs with institutional benchmarks is essential for maintaining both rigor and relevance in management programs.

CONCLUSION

The research presented in this article demonstrates that an individual approach to management education can markedly enhance students' development of essential managerial competencies, including leadership, strategic thinking, resource allocation, and communication. By tailoring assignments and feedback to each student's personal interests and career goals,

instructors can tap into intrinsic motivation and create more authentic learning experiences. The quantitative improvements in self-assessment scores, supported by the qualitative feedback from focus groups, highlight the substantial positive impact this approach can have on students' readiness for professional challenges.

At the same time, it is evident that implementing such an individualized strategy requires careful planning, additional resources, and a willingness to adapt traditional pedagogical practices. Educational institutions may need to invest in teacher training, technology, and support services to facilitate a smooth transition. Future research could focus on longitudinal studies that track students beyond graduation, assessing whether the individualized development of management competencies translates into measurable professional success. Additionally, comparative analyses involving different academic disciplines or cultural contexts could deepen understanding of how best to adapt individualized methods to various educational settings.

In summary, fostering management competencies in students through an individual approach offers a promising path for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Although not without its challenges, this method aligns with the evolving demands of contemporary workplaces and contributes to the cultivation of dynamic, reflective, and socially responsible future managers. By continuing to refine and expand these individualized instructional strategies, higher education institutions will be better positioned to equip graduates with the adaptive leadership and problem-solving skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

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