

**A STUDY OF THE MANAGEMENT STYLE AND GROWTH OF STUDENTS
AND TEACHERS AT RISHI VALLEY SCHOOL**

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Research Guide

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ABSTRACT

The approach of looking at organizations from the perspective of Management Strategy, Structure, Systems and Style (4-S) has been considered to be one of the useful ways for understanding and managing them well. In schools, the educational intent or educational philosophy or vision, which may be likened to the term strategy used in other contexts, is one of the determinants of the organizational structure, systems and style. And the way these four elements interact with each other and manifest in the various processes and functions of the school does influence the ambience and culture of school significantly. For a school, management style appears to be more important than the other three because it reflects, conveys and communicates what values are actually held and practiced by the prominent adults in the routine functions and processes of the school.

Apart from setting an example in organizational values, the management style, in conjunction with the management structure and systems, has the potential of actualizing the educational intent of the school by enabling the required scope for growth of teachers and students. The style also has a bearing on the extent to which the scope for growth brought about will be 'utilized' or realized by the teachers and students to actually learn and grow.

This research attempts to study some of the features of the Management Style at Rishi Valley School and the possibilities for growth the management style brings about for the students and teachers. The types of difficulties and constraints the management style causes have also been investigated. Finally, the nature of growth experienced by students and teachers has been studied. An attempt has been made to establish a link between the management style, the scope for growth it brings about and the growth experienced by students and teachers. The instruments of research used are perception survey of parents, students, ex-students and teachers; participant observation of various processes and functions; interviews and case stories. The research work is descriptive in nature with qualitative and quantitative research approaches deployed suitably to aid each other. The study was motivated by peculiarities and inexplicable features that a person notices in the way the school functions and the way it is managed. A few of the features that may be observed are as follows.

- Absence of most formal systems and procedures that one has experienced in most institutions - informality in the way the processes of the school are 'conducted.'

- Innovativeness in educational approaches but certain conservatism in trying out radically different ideas.
- Innovativeness in dealing with students.
- Absence of clearly laid-out or formal systems in many areas.
- Intensive discussions being held on issues with or without decisions emerging – raising awareness being the primary thrust.
- Involvement of many people in certain areas of decision-making and overlooking the people concerned in certain other areas of decision-making.

The impression that the school is ‘doing’ well in the core function of education, with the minimum of systems and structures, where the management is neither too pervasive nor too intrusive, raises the question of how is the school being managed? What is the management style which enables and runs the school without much ado? What are the characteristics of growth that teachers and students experience in the school? The objectives of research are the following.

- To examine the salient features of the management style and the characteristics of the scope for growth emergent from the style of management.
- To determine the characteristics of the growth teachers and students experience at Rishi Valley School.
- To determine the correlation between the scope for growth offered by Rishi Valley School and the type of growth experienced.

The following instruments have been used for research.

- Perception Survey
- Participant Observations
- Interviews and Discussions
- Case Stories
- Review of Documents
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The correlation coefficient between the scope for growth and growth experienced was determined to be as given in the table below.

CORRELATION BETWEEN SCOPE FOR GROWTH AND GROWTH OBSERVED

	Dimension	Scope for growth	Growth observed	Correlation coefficient	z-value **
ADULTS					
Parents (n=51)	Abilities-functional	7.2	6.8	0.99	Z=49.125 Highly Significant at 5% level
	Emotional-sociability	7.9	7.4		
	Psychological-inward	8.1	7.7		
Ex-students (n=60)	Abilities-functional	7.1	6.3	0.56	Z=49.125 Highly Significant at 5% level
	Emotional-sociability	7.7	6.5		
	Psychological-inward	7.5	6.8		
Teachers (n=31)	Abilities-functional	6.3	5.9	0.50	Z=49.125 Highly Significant at 5% level
	Emotional-sociability	6.9	5.9		
	Psychological-inward	6.9	6.9		
NON-ADULTS					
Students (n=53)	Abilities-functional	6.3	6.8	0.83	Z=49.125 Highly Significant at 5% level
	Emotional-sociability	6.0	6.9		
	Psychological-inward	6.7	7.4		

** Statistical test is performed to study the statistical significance of correlation coefficient using z-test and found all coefficients are highly significant, the critical z-value being 1.96.

Conclusions of the study are as follows.

- The teachings of JK bring about and influence the management structure, style, systems and intent (strategy) of the school significantly and it is due to the peculiar and unique nature in which the 4 Ss evolve in the school that the school provides a distinctive ambience of freedom and space to students and teachers.
- Based on the intuitive clustering of variables, the inward growth of students was found to be higher than emotional development. Emotional development was found to be in turn greater than the functional growth.
- Factor analysis of the elements identified indicates that growth and development is a multivariate process, with most of the elements forming one factor. It indicates that most aspects of the development are related to each other and need to be understood as one integral process.
- Some of the salient features of the management style have been determined based on the perception of respondents, case stories and process studies carried out. It is interesting to observe that some of salient features are in the nature of basic attitudes.

- Tentativeness in decision-making.
- Exploratory implementation making course corrections in an organic and smooth manner.
- Decentralization of decision-making in most routine issues.
- Bringing about participation by teachers concerned to a very large extent in many areas.
- Non-use of the authority of power, money, knowledge.
- Being on-judgmental towards teachers and students.
- Respect and politeness for the other, unrelated to his power or position.
- Committee based decision-making minimizing personal biases and prejudices.
- Enabling collective wisdom to emerge.
- Being non-condemnatory.
- Being tolerant towards lapses, providing scope for learning at one's pace.
- Personal integrity and commitment of administrators.
- Absence of tendency to instruct or guide unless seriously warranted or sought.
- Alertness and vigilance about learning at personal and institutional levels.
- Inner confidence and self-sufficiency.
- Learning about one's own capacities and limitations.

Little was it known that initial observation of some peculiarities and inexplicable features in the way the Rishi Valley School functions and is managed could have such a stunning impact on an observer that he is impelled and led to take up a research study which can be so challenging, interesting and enriching – which can give him a glimpse into what education and its management might be about.