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Leadership Effectiveness in Implementing Quality Assurance Programs at Private Universities of Lahore

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Abstract

Quality assurance has become acceptable, and all private universities are trying hard to achieve better standards executed by Higher Education Commission Pakistan (HEC) every year. The implementation of quality assurance (QA) programs rests upon the performance of university faculty. An exploratory study was conducted with the faculty of seven private universities in Pakistan to determine the leadership effectiveness regarding the implementation of QA programs. The strengths and weaknesses of the university leadership were measured in a three-fold exercise by identifying leadership characteristics, values, and actions taken to implement QA. For this purpose, a questionnaire was constructed, comprising both close-ended and open-ended responses. Data was collected from 430 faculty members from five private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to meet the research objectives. The results indicate that leadership attempts are yet superficial and inadequate to reach the transformational quality. The effectiveness of higher education leadership needs much improvement to meet the needs of the 21st century. Unless the leaders align their efforts with the faculty's expectations and involve them in shared decision making, reaching transformative quality would remain barred; therefore, the sustainability of higher education will remain in danger.

Keywords: *Higher Education, Leadership Characteristics, Leadership Effectiveness, Private Universities, Quality Assurance.*

Introduction

Research may be regarded as the third mission of the present era, but academic leadership cannot be limited to process development, implementation management, and measurement of the outcomes; there is much to do regarding managing change and building a quality culture. Leadership roles become critical and indispensable for quality assurance and experts have highlighted a score of qualities and characteristics that would help a leader effectively implement QA (Alzafari & Kratzer, 2019). Performing multiple and diverse roles, generating consensus, creating understanding and trust, and developing policies and communication to stakeholders are among the many (Ulewicz, 2017). However, supporting a quality culture in higher education institutions (HEIs) is the top recommendation of quality gurus (Bennis, 2010; Bass et al., 2012; Leithwood and Sun, 2012).

Kanji and Tambi (2002) professed that leadership is pivotal for implementing quality management in universities. Osseo-Asare (2005) declared that "leadership" is the critical success factor needed for continual and sustainable improvement in any organization, be it a university. Leadership drives and leads the quality movement in a university; however, the effectiveness remains compromised if leaders do not update their knowledge and skills. Effective leaders are defined as the ones who plan for change in faculty and staff behaviors, aiming to improve teaching and research. Leadership is role-dependent and does not rely on any formal position. Leaders loyal to the vision and mission of institutions work in every capacity to meet the goals stated in the vision, whereas opting for appropriate actions to achieve vision and mission is essential (EFQM, 2003).

Previous research dictates that leadership theories maintained an exclusive focus on the leaders' characteristics and qualities (Bennis, 2010; Cardoso et al., 2018). Yukl and Mahsud (2010) rendered leaders' ability to handle diverse situations by being flexible as an effective leader's top quality. Leithwood and Sun (2012), on the other hand, noted that leaders must have a good knack for showing individual consideration to their employees; especially, the knowledge workers with a high sense of self-worth deem it essential. They are most pleased when they get a warm and collegial work environment. Many scholars describe individualized consideration as a leadership tool (Wang & Howell, 2012), most effective because it is morale building and keeps one connected with the organization. Hence leadership specialists (Bass et al., 2012; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010) advise the persons in a leadership role to choose wisely among the repertoire of transformational and transactional leadership (Yang, 2014). Picking up wisely from both regimes suiting the context of the situation enables leaders to act wisely. Amin et al. (2013) identified that contingent reward is amazingly effective for faculty motivation and job satisfaction.

Faculty members play a vital role in the success of higher education institutions (Arif et al., 2020). Whether it is faculty or students, university choice depends upon its reputation, well-equipped teaching and learning environment, and the capable, competitive faculty (Alonderiene and Klimaviciene, 2013). Effective leaders consider their employees an asset and not a liability (Arif, 2016). They believe in teamwork, and their focus is on human development.

Leadership effectiveness depends on employee performance (Cheng, 2017). Leading highly qualified, creative, autonomous, and freedom-loving faculty is the highest challenge that holds the management vulnerable (Alzafari & Perner, 2018; Lumby, 2019); they can always play with their autonomy and manipulate the goal achievement (Amzat & Idris, 2012). Changing policies also keep threatening the stability of HEIs (Alonderiene and Majauskaite, 2016). Job satisfaction is an index of employee feelings and attitudes towards the work and work environment (Khaled & Jan, 2019). Job satisfaction is a desired outcome of a job as it results in pleasure, happiness with one's performance, self-confidence, and positive affect towards the organization. Good leaders help employees match their goals with organizational goals to create harmony among leaders and the staff.

Whereas leadership sets the direction and motivates the staff to achieve goals (Pravin, 2019), the staff performs and influences the institution's total performance. Teaching and learning environments maintained by faculty result in earning a better image and reputation of the university, the most desired goal of the private universities (Arif et al., 2013; 2017a). Satisfied faculty charge the work environment contributing to institution building and effectiveness. Researchers (Siddique et al., 2011; Webb, 2009) believe that motivated faculty motivates the students for better performance and continuous improvement in learning; consequently, a better university image is achieved. However, Yousef (2000) quoted that increasing the faculty's job satisfaction entails opting for appropriate leadership behaviors (p. 18). Leaders must act justly, promoting an environment of trust and belongingness by shared decision making (Amzat & Idris, 2012) and displaying and displaying integrity, care, and concern about the quality of work-life of the staff (Arif et al., 2017b).

Universities are work-centric, which commands the exchange of knowledge and new knowledge; this focus is different from other business or corporate world; hence HE quality scholars do not recommend using business philosophy in universities (Harvey et al., 2010). Siddique et al. (2011) warned that universities and their employees express different interests, goals, priorities, values, needs, and motivations compared to other corporate employees. Academia believed that university is no more an ideological organization; instead, it is set for business and profits (Shepherd, 2018; Dollinger, 2020; Sophie et al., 2015). The aim of higher education is egalitarian, that is, human welfare without any discrimination, whose effect can be traced through generations. Business models rest more upon efficient and effective management while university tasks are dependent upon leadership, maintaining a strategic vision and setting new directions is critical. Simultaneously, some scholars commend that HEIs are assets worth millions; therefore, they may be treated as businesses needing effective management (Lumby, 2019). However, the university is an institution that must keep a balance by meeting shared goals and sustaining a viable business (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016).

Leadership Effectiveness and Implementation of QA

Quality assurance addresses the issue of product or service non-conformance. It has a soft aspect because it is considered a formative assessment instead of a summative. It does not affect high-stake decisions like promotion or demotion. The desired effect of formative QA or evaluation research is to accelerate organizational learning and understanding individual and collective needs of potentials and opportunities for development (Widmer 2000). Stensaker (2008) argued that introducing QA in HEIs got "enthusiasm" substituted by "realism" in the present era. Beerkens (2018) added that acceptance of QA in higher education has opened to new avenues for evaluation, such as accreditation has become a prime strategic objective (Arif et al., 2019). QA is an effort to scrutinize why does a process or product fails to conform to desired standards.

Researchers (Mews, 2019; Trivellas et al., 2012) pointed out that challenges related to implementing quality assurance are grounded in leadership. Leadership's effective functioning in distributing resources, communication of policies, keeping values intact, and maintaining quality culture is leadership responsibilities (Bendermacher et al., 2016). Multiple reactions from staff are expected at any time, be it resilience or resistance, performance appraisal, or professional development, the leadership decision-making matters (Alzafai & Kratzer, 2019).

The foremost challenge is met while choosing a model for quality assurance to implement in a university; an existing variety of definitions of quality and measurement models are confusing, sometimes limiting implementation capacity. Faculty is still a little apprehensive of the methods used for quality assurance attributing it to neoliberal managerial agenda (Seyfried, 2018) despite all advocacy efforts to prove QA a motivational strategy for developing a quality culture and endorsing the willingness of faculty to use empirical evidence (produced by quality control authority during evaluations) for creating an innovative teaching and learning environment. The purpose and cause of QA activities is a much-debated phenomenon among the stakeholders of higher education, government agencies, the faculty, and the governing body of the universities (Overberg, 2019).

This study was conducted to ascertain the leadership effectiveness in implementing QA in the private universities of Pakistan. The study highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the university leadership in implementing QA in private universities of Punjab through the lens of faculty perceptions. The following research questions led the study:

1. What are the perceptions of faculty members of the private universities of Punjab about the characteristics of their leaders?
2. What are the perceptions of the faculty members of the private universities of Punjab about the effectiveness of university leadership?

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the leaders of Punjab's private universities in maintaining a quality culture?

The Significance of the Study

The study is significant for educating the HE management that they must focus on the soft skills of the faculty for better governance. The results would highlight the gaps between the faculty expectations and service delivery. This gap must be removed to get the faculty cooperation for the QA implementation in the private universities of Lahore.

Conceptual Framework

In the presence of so many models and theories of leadership, the universal definition could not exist. Moreover, most models are developed in a Western context; therefore, the researcher has decided to focus on standard practices that various models suggest, rather than one model or theory. Beyer (2012) also recommended that current leadership models reflect a blend of ideas; similarly, Howell and Costley (2006) described leadership style as a mixture of leadership actions and thoughts. Leadership action matters, which is labeled as style; hence, knowing the leadership pattern is essential. To determine leadership effectiveness in implementing quality assurance in a university, the researcher has chosen a blend of different approaches, incorporating leadership qualities, traits, and values for constructing a quality teaching and learning environment and leadership behaviors and attitudes towards implementing quality assurance. The researcher's approach has been evaluative and exploratory, which is reflected in the methodology opted for research.

Methodology

An exploratory study was organized to ascertain the effectiveness of leadership in implementing QA in the private universities of Pakistan. A self-constructed questionnaire comprising closed-ended and open-ended responses was used as a research tool with the faculty teaching in seven private universities in Pakistan. Data were collected by student volunteers trained for the purpose. For ensuring validity and reliability, the survey questionnaire was expert reviewed and pilot tested. After making the suggested changes, the final questionnaire comprised 24 close-ended items and 14 open-ended items.

The population of the study was the faculty members of the private universities of Lahore, Punjab, and the researcher used a multistage sampling technique. The selection of the university was based on purposive sampling, a technique dependent on individual characteristics that include diversity and the vastness of the target population (Bryman, 2012).

Only universities recognized by HEC in the W4[1] category were selected, operational for more than ten years, and contained three of the following faculties, schools, or departments; Business, Information Technology, and Social Sciences. The faculty selection from the three faculties was based on census sampling, including 100% of the population (Creswell, 2014). All faculty members were approached to fill the questionnaire; some were repeatedly requested. Almost 700 questionnaires were distributed. Only 496 were returned, out of which 430 were complete and were made part of the analysis.

The data were analyzed by both descriptive and inferential analysis. Content analysis (Neuendorf, 2016) was applied for open-ended items of the questionnaire; Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Linear Regression were computed for the questionnaire's scale items.

[1] A category awarded by HEC indicating that QA program is at best in the university.

Results

The results are divided into four sections; the first part is about demographic distribution of data; the second about leadership characteristics; the third about analysis of leadership behaviors; and the last about leadership effectiveness.

Demographic Details

Table 1: Demographic Description of Data

Gender	F	%
Male	260	60.0
Females	170	40.0
Total	430	100.0
Universities		
UCP	130	31.0
LSE	106	25.0
UMT	90	21.0
LUMS	50	11.0
UOL	54	12.0
Total	430	100.0
Age		
25 and above	120	30.0
35 and above	190	46.0
45 and above	60	14.0
55 and above	42	10.0
Total	430	100.0
Status		
Lecturer	160	37.0
Assistant/Associate Professor	138	32.0
Full Professor	72	17.0
Head of the Department	40	10
Dean	20	4
Total	430	100.0

Leadership Characteristics

According to the faculty, leadership characteristics are assessed, which were perceived as dominant in university leadership. The leading characteristics were identified in three domains, dominant positive qualities of leadership, the predominant values of the university culture (it was assumed that the culture is reflective of leadership values), and the traits which leaders need to manage for effectiveness. The results are depicted in the graphs below:

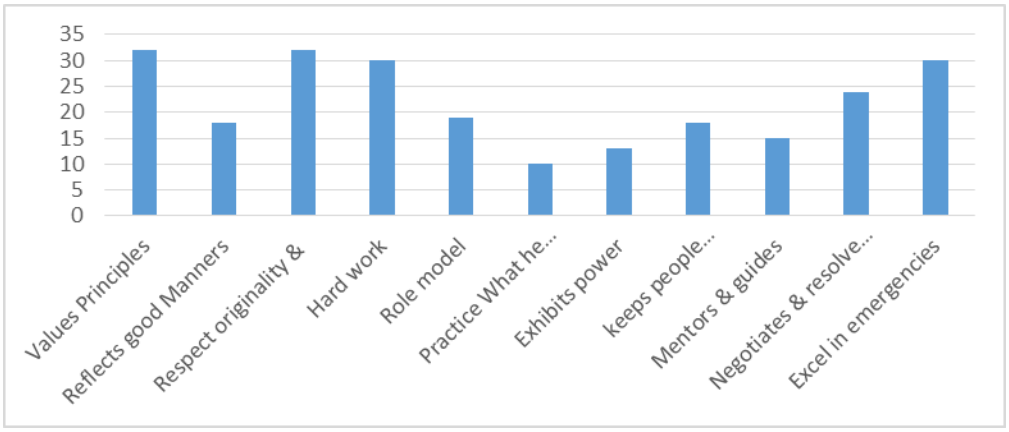


Fig 1: Desired Leadership Qualities

The desired qualities faculty wishes to witness among their leadership are valued principles, respect originality and hard work, and excel in emergencies.

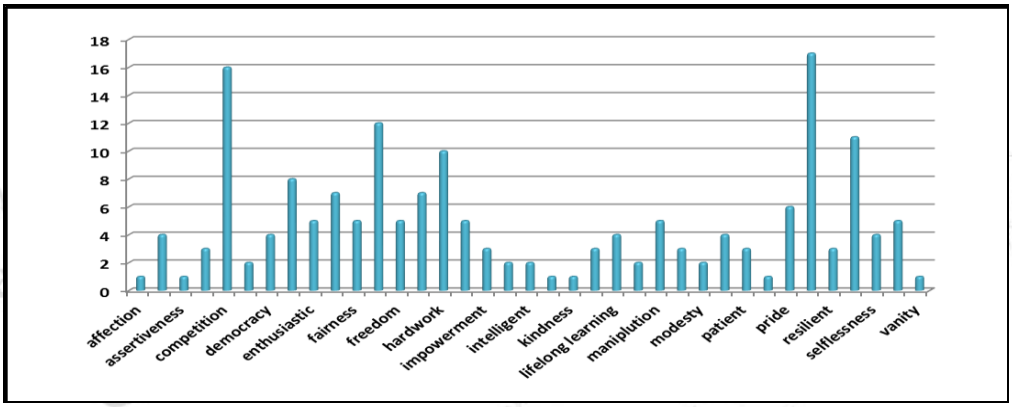


Fig 2: Values dominating University Culture

The most dominant values shaping the university culture are competition, pride, freedom, hard work, and selflessness.

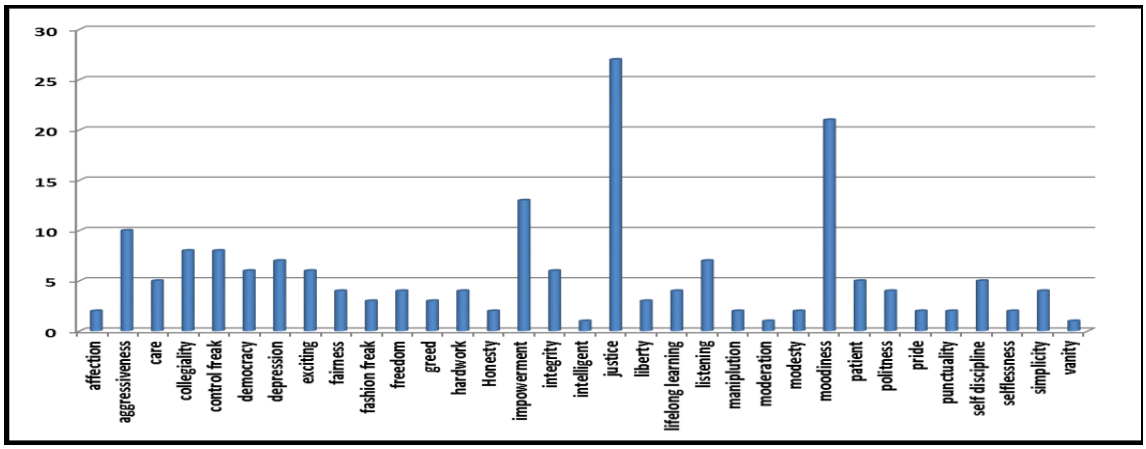


Fig 3: The Traits Leaders Need to Manage for Effectiveness

The graph shows that leaders need to manage their moodiness and aggressiveness. Above all, leaders must maintain an environment of justice and fair play.

Analysis of Leadership Behaviors

This section comprised of the analysis of 24 closed-items developed on a 5-point Likert Scale. The scale's reliability was .80, and the results of the KMO & Bartlet Test verified the sampling adequacy (KMO=.861; χ^2 = 4585.759; p<.001). An exploratory factor analysis technique was used to identify factors in the scale. Scree plot identified four subscales meeting the criteria of factor loadings more than .30 and correlation with at least one other item in the scale (Fava & Vellicer, 1996). See Appendix A for further details.

Pearson correlation was computed to assess the association among five leadership scale factors, Vision, Individual Consideration, Role Model, Communication, and Satisfaction. These factors were assumed as the best indicators of leadership presence, and faculty satisfaction with these attributes was assumed as leadership effectiveness. The following table not only informs us about the relationship between research variables, but it also discloses the relationships' strength.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix showing Relationship among the Research Variables

	Vision	Ind Consid	Role Model	Communication	Satisfaction
Vision	1	.487**	.484**	.419**	.423**
Individual Consideration		1	.550**	.441**	.377**
Role Model			1	.436**	.477**
Communication				1	.141**
Satisfaction					1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table above indicates that all variables are positively and significantly related to each other. The highest correlation is found between the leader as a role model and the leaders' individual consideration (r=.550** p<.000). Positive correlation is found between leaders' individual consideration and vision (r= .487** p<000). Besides, a positive correlation is found between leaders' vision and role modeling the vision (r=.484** p<.000), between leaders' communication and individual consideration (r=.441** p<.000), and between leaders' vision and faculty satisfaction (r=.423** p<.000).

Multiple Linear Regression

Correlation results confirmed a positive association among all variables. Multiple linear regression using the Stepwise method was computed to determine the risk factors associated with faculty satisfaction. The four leadership attributes, vision, individual consideration, role model, and communication, were used as independent variables to predict their influence on the dependent variable, faculty satisfaction with leadership. Four models were generated in the process, and the results are illustrated in the table.

The table indicates how much variation occurs in the dependent variable (satisfaction) with varying independent variables, whereas all independent variables were held constant. Model one explains that role model influences 47% of variance regarding satisfaction (β=.477, p= .000). Thus, leadership role modeling is the single most risk factor that affects faculty satisfaction with leadership behavior. Model two explains that role model and vision can collectively cause 60% of the variance in faculty satisfaction with leadership behaviors (Role Model, β=.356, p=.000; Vision, β=.250, p=.000). Hence, leadership vision and role modeling are the most potent pair, variation in which may damage faculty satisfaction with leadership behaviors.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression

	Model	β	t-value	p-value	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		7.068	.000		
	Role Model	.477	13.640	.000	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)		2.713	.007		
	Role Model	.356	9.179	.000	.765	1.307
	Vision	.250	6.466	.000	.765	1.307
3	(Constant)		4.370	.000		
	Role Model	.404	10.087	.000	.699	1.430
	Vision	.293	7.396	.000	.712	1.405
	Communication	-.158	-4.098	.000	.753	1.328
4	(Constant)		3.673	.000		
	Role Model	.356	8.384	.000	.611	1.636
	Vision	.262	6.429	.000	.668	1.498
	Communication	-.183	-4.683	.000	.722	1.386
	Individual Consideration	.134	3.145	.002	.607	1.647

Model three explains that collectively combining role model, vision, and communication may cause 54% of the faculty satisfaction variation (role model, β=.40, p=.000; vision, β=.29, p=.000; communication, β= -.158, p=.000). The fourth model explains that all four factors, role model, vision, communication, and individual consideration collectively, may cause 66% of the variation in faculty satisfaction (role model, β=.356, p=.000; vision, β=.262, p=.000; communication, β= -.183 p=.000; individual consideration β=.134 p=.000). Communication has exerted a negative instead of a positive influence on faculty satisfaction. Therefore, it is deduced that role modeling and vision are strong indicators of leadership effectiveness regarding faculty satisfaction. In contrast, communication and individual consideration are weak indicators of leadership effectiveness for Lahore's private universities' faculty.

Leadership Effectiveness in the Implementation of QA

In this section, the content analysis of the faculty responses to open-ended items in the questionnaire is presented in tables demonstrating the frequency and percentage of the options opted in table cum graphs.

Intentions to Stay in the University

The faculty was asked about the time they would like to stay at the university. Intentions to stay of the employee at a job is believed to be an indicator of leadership effectiveness. The results have been surprising; many faculty had not planned to keep working in the university.

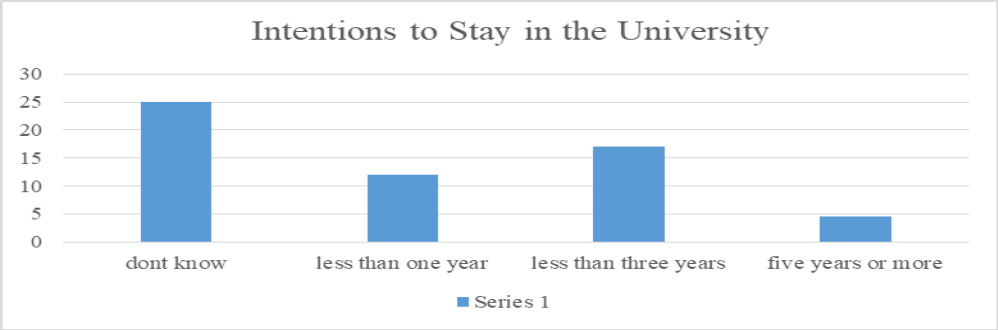


Fig 4: Intended timeframe to stay in the University

Reasons to choose University as a Workplace

The faculty was asked why they had chosen a university as the workplace. Making the institution a popular choice for work is yet another indicator of leadership effectiveness. The results have been enlightening; faculty tend to prefer the working environment as a criterion even over salary or reputation.

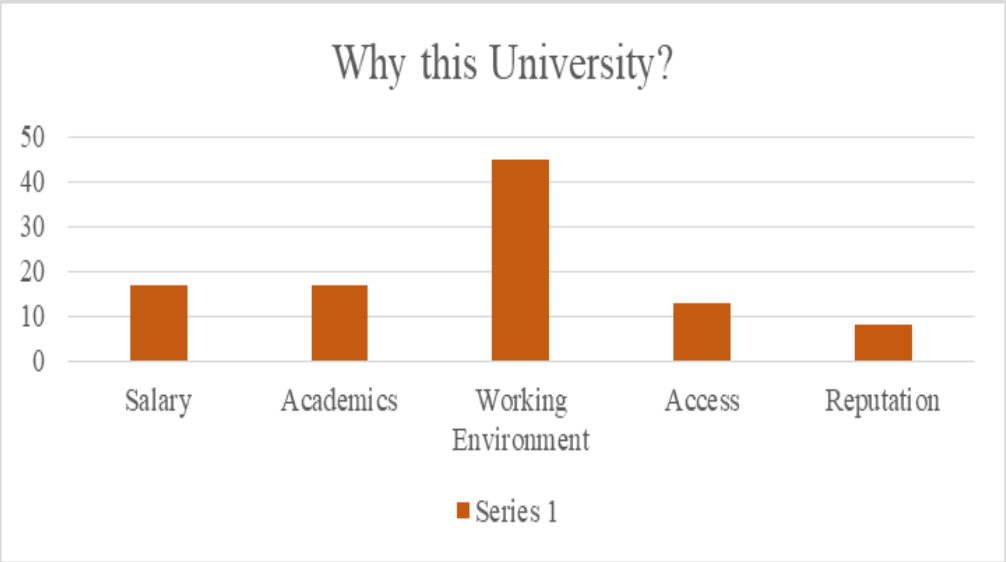
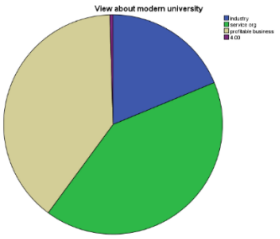


Fig 5: Intended timeframe to stay in the University

Table 4: View about Modern University

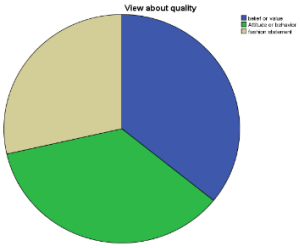
Choices	f	%
Industry	119	19
Service Organization	262	41
Profitable business	250	40
	634	100.0
Total		



Most of the faculty believe that the university is a service organization (41%), whereas 40% believe it is profitable, and 19% renders it an industry.

Table 5: View about Quality

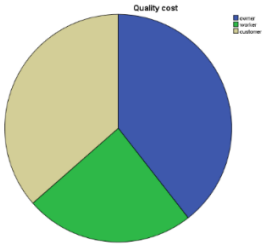
Choices	f	%
belief or value	227	36
Attitude or behavior	226	36
fashion statement	181	28
	634	100.0
Total		



Mixed views about quality were found; some view it as attitude, belief or value.

Table 6: The Cost of Quality

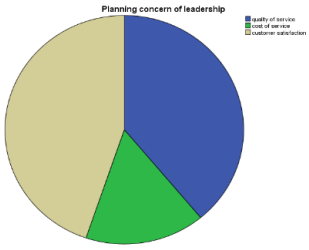
Choices	f	%
Owner	250	40
Worker	153	24
Customer	231	36
	634	100.0
Total		



The cost of quality is born by the owner (40%) or the private universities' customers (36%).

Table 7: Leadership's Primary Concern

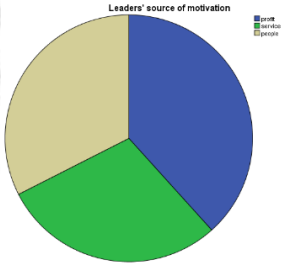
Choices	f	%
Quality of service	247	39.0
Cost of service	103	16
Customer satisfaction	284	45
	634	100.0
Total		



Leadership's primary concern while planning for quality is service quality (39%) and customer satisfaction (45%).

Table 8: Leaders' Source of Motivation

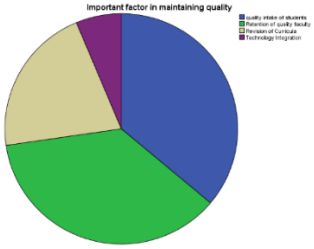
Choices	f	%
Profit	243	38
Service	185	29
People	206	33
	634	100.0
Total		



The leaders' source of motivation is people (33%) and profit (38%).

Table 9: Factors in Maintaining Quality

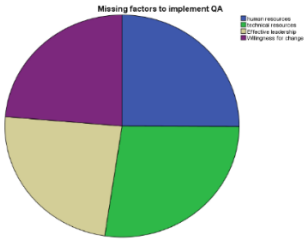
Choices	f	%
Quality intake of students	229	36
Retention of quality faculty	232	37
Revision of Curricula	133	21
Technology Integration	40	6
	634	100.0
Total		



The most critical factors in maintaining quality are a quality intake of students (36%) & retention of quality faculty (37%).

Table 10: Missing factors in implementing QA

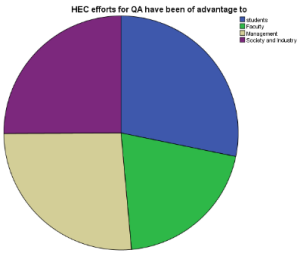
Choices	f	%
Human resources	159	25
Technical resources	173	27
Effective leadership	152	24
Willingness for change	150	24
Total	634	100.0



Most mixed responses, almost equal, ranging from 21 to 23%, are about missing elements in implementing quality.

Table 11: HEC efforts for QA have been of advantage to

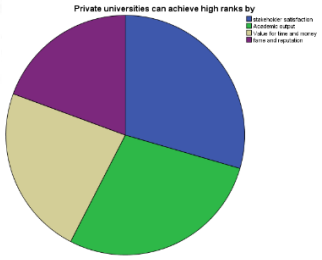
Choices	f	%
Students	179	28.2
Faculty	129	20.3
Management	167	26.3
Society and Industry	159	25.1
Total	634	100.0



Similarly, mixed responses have been generated about the advantage of HEC's quality initiatives. Faculty think that the initiatives have been of most advantage to students (28%) and least to the faculty (20%). In comparison, other stakeholder's management and society and industry have an almost equal share of 26 & 25%, respectively.

Table 12: Private universities can get high ranks by

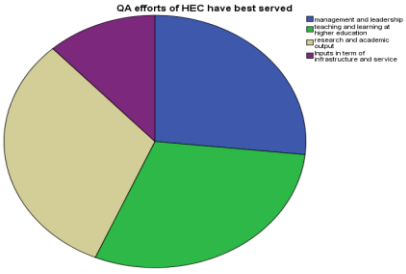
Choices	f	%
Stakeholder satisfaction	187	30
Academic output	178	28
Value for time and money	146	23
Fame and reputation	123	19
Total	634	100.0



QA efforts of HEC have best served to increase research output (32%) and improved teaching and learning at higher education (29%)

Table 13: QA efforts of HEC have best served

Choices	f	%
Management and leadership	169	27.0
Teaching and learning at higher education	189	30.0
Research and academic output	201	31.0
Inputs in term of infrastructure and service	75	12.0
Total	634	100.0



Discussion

This study was carried out to ascertain the leadership effectiveness in the implementation of QA in the private universities of Pakistan. The evidence that the leadership practices linked to communication, empowerment, and support are weak indicates that the type of power quality managers and leaders exercised over their subordinate staff has a weak base seeking forced compliance, which is against the very spirit of QM. Cardoso et al. (2019) call it 'an added bureaucracy.'

However, some of the suggested behaviors have different interpretations in the Pakistani context. The transformational leader, for example, motivates followers to challenge their ideas and values along with the leader's and institution's values (Yang, 2014). Contrary to this, in Pakistan, challenging the leader's values is considered inappropriate (Shah, 2009) because of the cultural and religious values and norms of leaders and the led.

Quality assurance is perceived to be strongly related to control, conformity, bureaucratic, and therefore, burdensome (Cardoso et al., 2013; Overberg, 2019; Vettori & Loukkola, 2014) since its framework is always externally imposed by regulatory authorities such as HEC (Cheng, 2010; Gallagher, 2014). Faculty are not given enough time and space for adaptation; instead, immediate compliance is expected. The results also inform that the faculty has minimally related to implementing quality assurance; according to faculty, quality assurance is beneficial for students and owners of the private universities (Cardoso et al., 2019; Lumby, 2019). The faculty has not yet discovered a participatory leadership role in quality assurance; they instead attribute it to interference in academic culture (Cardoso et al., 2013; Vettori & Loukkola, 2014).

Eacott (2011) provided empirical evidence that there is a dearth of well-qualified and experienced leaders well-versed in QA implementation. The academia still blames that QA methodologies are reeking bureaucratic control and illegitimate interference of external agencies (Seyfried, 2019). The rectorate also keeps attempting to 'regulate and discipline academics' (Lucas, 2014, p. 218) because too much power is avowed.

Another reason for the low participation of faculty could be that QA's design and implementation are often externally imposed, giving little room to the faculty for their adaptation. Therefore, they resist giving much input and developing minor ownership (Lucas, 2014; Vettori & Loukkola, 2014). Additionally, most of the processes are dictated as top-down, and the faculty need to report to junior support staff instead of senior academia. The sense of power 'differential' may result in beneficial but ritualistic behaviors, further deteriorating to meaningless compliance (Cardoso et al., 2013). If deeply involved in the process, the faculty realizes the superficiality and mechanical nature of the process (Kleijnen et al., 2013), different from what is expected from highly esteemed knowledge workers. Moreover, the dichotomous and conflicting policies further disillusion the role in this critical management process.

These results are in sharp contrast with Koch (2003), who argued that QA initiatives such as total quality management (TQM) have an insignificant impact on educational institutions. Some researchers have repeatedly advised that quality management practices reflect neoliberal managerialism (Javris, 2014); they think it would be limited to non-academic activities such as registration and purchasing (Alzafari & Kratzer, 2019).

Conclusions

The results show that the most potent attribute of leadership is role-modeling of the vision. If a leader role models the vision and communicates it effectively, the faculty will be satisfied with the leadership. However, the results also deliberate that the faculty is not satisfied with the communication style of university leadership. They have hinted that the leaders must overcome negative emotions like moodiness and aggressiveness and learn to self-regulate their emotions. Faculty doubts that leadership has maintained

a fair and just environment in the universities. Moreover, according to the faculty, dominant cultural values are also negative; there is more competition than collaboration. The faculty wished that their leaders must value principles, respect originality and hard work, and excel in emergencies.

Thus, leadership effectiveness rests upon the vision, the capacity to role model and communicate the vision and individual consideration for problem-solving at the personal level. It calls for ethical leadership with transformative quality. The results of content analysis show that private universities are operating on neoliberal policies for accountability, which has somewhat disturbed the traditional academia as they feel their authority has been compromised. The faculty attitude is more resistant than collaborative, as no immediate benefit is reaped by faculty directly. Moreover, according to faculty, initiatives taken for QA have been most beneficial to students and least to the faculty; likewise, incentives of HEC have best served to increase research output and teaching and learning. Faculty think stakeholder satisfaction is far more critical than academic output or infrastructural improvements in Punjab universities.

Neoliberal views prevail in private universities of Punjab; business and industry perceptions overshadow the university's conventional belief as a service organization. The leaders are more concerned about service quality and customer satisfaction, and increased profits than human development. The cost of quality is divided between the owner and the customer; the workers have no ownership. The faculty thinks that quality improvement depends on the intake of quality students and retention of quality faculty, meaning that meritocracy is the seed for quality. Highly mixed opinions were observed about the missing elements in the maintenance of quality; the faculty's opinion was equally divided among the four factors: human and technical resources, effective leadership, and willingness to change.

Implications

The multi-purpose and multi-dimensional facet of higher education is immersed in more profound complexity by increasing new knowledge (Altbach, 2014; Alzafari & Perner, 2018). Evaluation experts award more credit to research and quality outputs than teaching, and the academe thinks vice-versa. Both ideas seem poles apart, and reaching a compromise does not seem to do any favor to both. For centuries, the faculty was raised to produce successful graduates and not robust research; for many academics, research is temporary, with a short shelf life. Evaluation is at the heart of quality assurance; after the advent of privatization and massification of higher education, the government explicitly and society implicitly demands to hold the university accountable for its performance (Alzafari, 2017). Hence, the chief actor of any education system, the teacher, will be evaluated for the purpose, and the academy shall be ready to bear the burden (Seyfried & Pohlenz, 2018).

To establish sanity and peace, the higher education regulating authorities (Higher Education Commission (HEC) in the case of Pakistan leaves it at the discretion of internal stakeholders, whatever they may decide as 'competence' or 'productivity in their institutions (Ulewicz, 2017). On the one hand, it brings autonomy and a challenge for leadership effectiveness on the other (Arif et al., 2019). Whatever the perspective, the stakeholders would grant acceptance to quality assurance to takeover; at least the researchers' focus has shifted from the applicability of Quality control tools in higher education to the successful implementation of quality assurance (QA) (Matei & Iwinska, 2016; de Vincenzi, Garau, & Guaglianone, 2018).

Kecetep & Özkan (2014) remarked that implementing quality assurance is still lagging behind the targets set initially by the Bologna declaration. After putting effort into it for years, the implementation of quality assurance is quite unsystematic and scattered across the world. Implementation of quality challenges is linked to leadership and its critical role in implementing quality (Alzafari & Perner, 2018; Khaled & Jan, 2019). Recent research has highlighted the need for university reforms to become self-aware of the sustainability challenge, necessitating that universities must self-govern themselves for autonomy by opting for clear vision, manageable organizational structure, and evidence-based policies (Khawar & Arif, 2019).

QEC officials, who must collect data for quality assurance, remain in an awkward position, looked at as a nuisance in the sacred academic work. They need to play smart by offering sugar-coated pills to the faculty. Usually, the faculty feels that QA's record-keeping is a clerical task and an extra burden they had to bear. The QA procedures should not be too mechanized and must offer flexibility so that the faculty may adapt them to suit their expectations (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). However, the academic practices must continue for the quest for truth, through self-regulating and independence on the one hand and social integration in professional (or academic) communities on the other (Seyfried, 2019). Nevertheless, they say that quality is here to stay; in the complex world of multitasking, diverse handling of situations, and rising expectations of higher education stakeholders, QA has become an inescapable necessity.

Recommendations for the Future Research

This study has highlighted the perceptions of private universities' faculty; the importance of getting public universities' faculty must be gathered as well. The social sciences faculty is still naïve about quality implementation and standardized operations of teaching and learning. It could be an important subject of study in the future for further investigation. Quality implementation needs a continual learning attitude by the faculty and management. The study of this relationship would highlight the barring attitudes in quality improvement.

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Appendix A

Factor Analysis Table

No	Factors	Items	Factor Score	Alpha
1	Vision	I agree with the vision of the leadership of this university.	.642	.862
		I agree that the vision is well communicated throughout the university.	.619	
		I agree that the vision inspires me to give my best for the university.	.607	
		I agree that leadership vision will be able to bring desired change.	.646	
		I agree that leadership efforts will bring quality and improvement in the university?	.522	
5	Individual Consideration	I agree that leadership gives importance to needs of people while making decisions?	.621	.702
		Leaders have selected best people for the job.	.496	
		Leaders provide feedback on performance.	.630	
		Leaders ignore mistakes and shortfalls?	.408	
		Leaders coach and guide for improvement?	.499	
3	Communication	Leaders provide important information in time.	.381	.670
		Leaders communication is not influenced by his\her personal mood?	.619	
		Leaders are never available to discuss problems.	.428	
		Leaders do not violate personal respect and sense of self-esteem while communication?	.690	
		Leaders focus on problems and issues when in meeting?	.416	
		Leaders provide important information in time.	.381	
4	Role Model	Leaders influence by personal example.	.449	.760
		Leaders are committed to professional development of faculty and staff	.522	
		Leaders set goals and push us to achieve those goals.	.575	
		Leaders are fair in distribution of rewards	.554	
5	Satisfaction	I am satisfied with the quality of leadership in this university.	.445	30
		Most of my expectations have been met by this university.	.587	
		I advise and recommend my friends & family to join this university.	.812	
		I'd like to take part in the promotional activities of this university.	.789	