

Challenges Faced by Leadership to Adopt Learning Culture Practices for Faculty Development in HEIs

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Abstract

In educational institutions, leadership plays a key role in fostering learning cultures for both teachers and students. This piece of research work intended to explore the challenges encounter by educational leadership in creating learning culture for their faculty in higher education institutes. The study founded on the assumption that educational leaders encourage their faculty to develop learning culture not only for students but also for their faculty , an atmosphere that inspires work-place learning and where both gaining and sharing professional knowledge are prioritized and valued.

The effectiveness of educational leadership for developing learning culture in higher education was rarely discussed. Mainstream higher education researches on leadership largely neglect this aspect of leadership's role and called for narrowing this gap in the available academic knowledge. This was the specific motive for the study, which pragmatically explored, what tensions surround educational leaderships for developing learning culture for faculty development and which dilemmas they faced during journey of leadership.

This piece of work involved six Heads/Deans of Department of Education from different private universities for research. Cresswell (2008) suggested that studying 5 to 25 cases are enough to infer about a phenomenon. Semi structured interviews were used to gain data. The data offered information about professional

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experiences and problems face by leadership for establishing learning culture, placed within the higher educational institutions and centered on the study topics. Thematic analysis was applied to assess the qualitative data. The qualitative data from interviews was analyzed through thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework of familiarization, coding, theme development, and review. The study indicated that sustaining learning environment and promoting faculty development in higher education involves complicated issues, necessitating strategic leadership methods and appreciation of faculty contributions.

Key Words: *Leadership, Instructional/Educational Leadership, Leadership Styles, Learning Culture, Professional/Faculty Development*

Introduction:

In order to foster learning cultures in educational institutions, leadership is indispensable. In learning culture faculty members collaborate to enhance their practices. When teachers collaborate with their colleagues, share teaching concerns, and receive feedback from one another, their self-efficacy improves, which results in their professional development (Tanveer, 2020).

This research aimed to explore the challenges faced by the educational leadership in creating a learning culture for faculty in higher education institutes. The study rests on the belief that effective leaders actively nurture a learning culture within their organizations. Such a culture creates an environment where continuous learning is modeled and encouraged in daily work practices, and where both acquiring new knowledge and openly sharing professional expertise are genuinely valued and supported. Teacher learning becomes integrated into the organization's environment, resulting in motivation and a means for ongoing professional growth.

In past teachers were only responsible for students' academic achievements. During industrial revolution, societal changes like scientific and economic advancement, globalization and immigration movements, have inevitably transformed the structure of educational institutions and responsibility shifted from teacher to principal, with believe that the principal, the only instructional leader is responsible for better learning of students and colleagues as well (Lambert, 2002, Brauckmann, and Pashiardis, 2010 and Jamal, 2014).

Educational researchers started to focus on the effectiveness of educational leadership for improvement of academics' achievements (Sastry, 2021). Instructional leadership is important for teaching and learning process together (Ersozlu, & Saklan, 2016). However, many researchers have proven that effective leaders are responsible for developing such conducive cultures that encourage both faculty and students, resulting in improved teaching learning process (Ferdinandi, and Kiwonde, 2023).

It is claimed by researchers that instructional staff has largest effect size and educational leadership is second most important factor for academic achievements (Sastry, 2021). Therefore, the role of instructional leaders is very important for developing learning culture for their faculty development and students' achievements (Halverson, & Clifford, 2013, Ebert-May et al., 2015 and Sastry, 2021). For decades it was believed by educators that they are only responsible for students' learning, but now they realized that they are also responsible for their own and colleagues learning (Lambert, 2002).

The success of higher education institutions depends on the roles played by faculty (Ersozlu, & Saklan, 2016). Roles of instructional leadership were redefined by implementing more responsibilities to provide learning environment for faculty development and students' academics (Jamal, 2014, Bashir, & Afzal, 2019 and Ferdinandi, and Kiwonde, 2023). To create a positive learning culture is a milestone because it creates sense of ownership among faculty members, they feel blissful and become willing to contribute in developing and maintaining conducive learning culture for peers and students (Bashir, & Afzal, 2019).

As instructional leadership in higher education was rarely discussed. Mainstream higher education researches on leadership largely neglect this kind of leadership and calling for narrowing this gap in the available knowledge (Shaked 2020). This was the specific motive for this study, which pragmatically explored what challenges do leaders face for their role as instructional leadership to develop learning culture for development of their faculty.

In past researches were focusing on to find the impact of different styles of leadership on faculty development and academics achievements (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001). However, this study has on perceptions of leadership in Higher Education for their leadership role, what tensions surround them and which dilemmas they faced during their journey of leadership.

For decades it was believed by the educators that they are only responsible for transmission of knowledge and skill that have stood the test of time (Lambert, 2002). However, the validity of this transmittal approach was questioned and argued that it was only feasible when the time span for social change was larger than the life of individuals of society (Trevor & Loanna, 2013). This assumption is not validated for today's drastically changing world, where the time span for social change is shorter than the human life. Now educators have to be fully equipped and trained, for the transmission of contemporary knowledge and to prepare individuals who can face the novelty conditions.

The concept of learning environment is also being changing with the same pace of technological advancement, in which teachers are not only responsible for the transmission of knowledge, but also responsible for participative and collaborative learning of their own self, students and their peers (Trevor, & Palaiologou., 2013 and Ferdinandi, & Kiwonde, 2023).

The concept of a "learning culture" refers to the perception and approach towards effective learning, as demonstrated by individuals, interactions, and institutional practices within a university (Collie, & Taylor, 2004). The researchers have proven that developing a learning culture within the institution is very effective for personnel and professional development, which ultimately boosts the effectiveness of organization (Finley, and Michael, 2014).

An effective learning culture can be developed by rewarding faculty, by providing opportunities for their professional development, by passing through relevant information, by allowing faculty to participate in in-service training and by discussing interesting innovations at meetings (Brauckmann, and Pashiardis, 2010).

One of the primary functions of faculty development units is to offer training programs for new faculty or teaching assistants who wish to improve their teaching skills. These programs usually include workshops on planning, developing, and evaluating teaching and learning strategies. The methodologies used are based on collaborative strategies, and assessments are continuous, culminating in a final portfolio. Resource materials may include cases, audio and video podcasts, video journals, etc (Ehlers, and Schneckenberg, 2010).

As instructional leadership in higher education was hardly ever discussed. Mainstream higher education researches on leadership largely neglect this kind of leadership and calling for narrowing this gap in the available knowledge (Shaked, 2020). This piece of work has looked on the other side of mirror and tried to dig out what tensions surround them and which dilemmas they faced during their journey of leadership (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001). Hence the research aimed to

- Examine challenges leaders face in fostering learning culture.
- Evaluate the conceptual and contextual constraints in fostering collaborative learning culture in higher education institutions in Karachi, Pakistan.

To understand that how learning and leading are firmly linked was indeed the reason for this study, which empirically explored twofold shades of educational leadership.

1. What are the barriers do they face in fostering learning culture?
2. What are the conceptual and contextual constraints in fostering collaborative learning culture in higher education institutions

Significance of the Study

The development of a strong learning culture in universities is crucial for the growth and development of faculty members (Ersozlu, & Saklan, 2016). Educational leaders play a critical role in shaping the culture of learning in academic institutions (Finley, 2014, Jamal, 2014, Bashir, & Afzal, 2019 and Ferdinandi, and Kiwonde,

2023). This research has highlighted on the need of good leadership in establishing a culture of learning and continual professional development for faculty members.

The study has underlined the need for policy makers to prioritize the development of leadership practices that stimulate faculty development, promote collaboration and innovation in teaching, and support the broader academic purpose of institutions. By recognizing the critical role that leadership plays in shaping the culture of learning in higher education, policy makers can establish policies and initiatives that support the ongoing professional growth of faculty members, promote excellence in teaching and research, and enhance the overall academic outcomes of universities.

Leadership

In order to achieve organizational goals, a leader must successfully elicit the willing participation of their subordinates through a social influence dynamic.

Instructional/Educational Leadership

Instructional leadership refers to all leadership activities that promote staff development and students learning in educational institution. They develop visions, align all activities to achieve defined goals, develop learning culture for both colleagues and students.

Leadership Styles

A leader's relatively constant behavioral pattern is referred to as their leadership style. In order to accomplish organizational objectives, a leader must actively seek out the voluntary participation of their subordinates through a social influence process.

Learning Culture

Learning Cultures" encompasses collective perspectives and strategies for nurturing work place learning resulting in raising teaching and learning standards. Learning culture tends to produce greater behavioural and academic standards. Learning culture develops as leaders and their faculty interact and work together.

Professional/Faculty Development

Professional development" refers to organized and structured opportunities for educators/faculty to engage in continuous learning, leading to transformative changes in their knowledge and instructional practices.

Literature Review

Organizational success has long been attributed to effective leadership, which is regarded as a crucial component. Through their observations, researchers have determined that the evolving landscape of increased competition, technological advancements, shifting governmental regulations, and changing worker attitudes necessitates a higher caliber of leadership than ever before for organizations to thrive and endure. When organizations undergo change, it becomes imperative for their leadership to be well-equipped to confront the challenges that arise (Landis, Hill, and Harvey, 2014).

Leadership is a process of developing harmonization among individual efforts to achieve shared goals (Finley and Michael, 2014). Through effective leadership followers can be made familiarize with their potentials (Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy, 2014 and Hofmeyer, et. al., 2015). Leadership is broader concept, it cannot be confined to single dimension of any aspect (Finley and Michael, 2014). Effective leaders are expected to play their managerial role under competing tension situations and are always demanded to take righteous decisions in these situation (Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001).

During late 20th century, implementation of reforms was started to transform the conventional structure of learning organization (Jamal, and Hassan, 2014). It is very crucial for educational institutions to ensure the provision of the best possible education for future generations, while also balancing the need to preserve local heritage and identity with the demands of globalization and individual development (Leithwood, et.al., 2010, Ahmad, & Ghavifekr, 2014 and Sastry, 2021).

The higher educational institutions are generally regarded as learning organizations for consolidated learning at all levels, making them ideal learning organizations. To accomplish these objectives, all stake holders must pay attention on the creation of effective leadership and management practices in higher educational institutions (Lambert., 2002 and Ahmad, & Ghavifekr, 2014).

The foundation for this research is that the concept of educational leadership encompasses all levels of organization. It promotes the idea about higher educational institution as a place where everyone has opportunity to learn and to reach their full potential (Lambert, 2002, Ahmad, & Ghavifekr, and Finley & Michael, 2014, Gümüş, et al., 2024)). The conception that educational leadership is limited to the role of principal/head of department/dean is insufficient, leadership in learning institutions, and any other organization, should be considered in a comprehensive and distributed manner (Ahmad, & Ghavifekr, 2014 and Lambert., 2002).

The Changing Role of the Leaders for Faculty Development

The concept of instructional leadership has changed the role of principal. The institutions become dependent of principals, if they keep their dominancy (Lambert, 2002). Effective principal always tries to develop shared visions, encourages dialogues, promotes learning cultures and participates in collaborative practices to

address perplexing issues. However, this requires skills and contemporary knowledge about instructional leadership (Lambert, 2002; Attsaury, Hadiyanto, and Supian, 2024).

In the study, it was observed that all the educational leaders actively encouraged staff development, including in-service training, visits to other schools, and peer support programs. Their primary objectives were to sustain high morale and motivation levels among staff members and to enhance their capacity-building efforts (Halverson, & Clifford, 2013).

Interestingly, the professional development programs were not just focused on completing the learning institutions' standards but also on personal growth that benefitted the individual as a whole (Lambert, 2002 and Halverson, & Clifford, 2013).

To enable effective collaboration, instructors typically require administrative support to overcome challenges such as time restrictions, institutional limitations, and the desire for social approval. The active facilitation and support of instructional activities by local leadership are crucial for teachers to engage fully in collaborative problem-solving (Lambert, 2002).

Our stance is that environments are most effective when principals cooperate with teachers to create collective competence. Effective principals prioritize both social and professional connections. They promote open communication and guide teachers to engage in critical self-reflection regarding their learning and teaching practices. Research highlights the strong correlation between the daily practices of principals and the work of teachers. Therefore, we argue that principals who consistently collaborate with teachers to enhance instruction are better positioned to share best practices and foster cohesion among teachers (Goddard et. al., 2015).

The Learning Culture for Faculty Development in HEIs: Processes, Outcomes and Issues

Culture describes how things are served as a screen or lens through which to perceive the world. Essentially, it defines reality for individuals within the social structure, provides them with support and identification, and establishes a framework for practice (Stoll, 1998). An organizational culture manifests beliefs and values in the manner in which the organization runs (Fullan, 2007), and it begins with connections—strong and overlapping contacts among all members of the educational institute community (Shafer, 2018; Alateeg, and Alhammadi, 2024).

Hargreaves (1994) discusses four types of culture with reference to faculty development: individualism, balkanization, contrive collegiality, and collaboration. Collaborative culture is an attempt to nurture a learning culture for future development (Hayes, Preminger, & Bae, 2024).

In a collaborative culture, faculty members are given time to discuss student achievement, and this time is spent critically analyzing each other's practice (Alateeg, and Alhammedi, 2024). Educational leaders work together with faculty to make relevant decisions and provide them with opportunities to observe and discuss what other teachers are teaching and their professional development.

Each organization has its unique reality or mindset, captured in the phrase "the way we do things around here," and its own perspective on the external environment. Everyone is united by culture, which promotes constructive growth (Stoll, 1998 and Ehlers & Schneckenberg, 2010). As an organization grows, the most fundamental cultural features become firmly established, taken for granted, and increasingly implicit, demanding continual growth and renewal in its midlife period, especially when changes occur in its internal and external environments (Stoll, 1998).

Learning organizational culture is manifested through three interwoven dimensions: professional connections, organizational arrangements, and learning opportunities (Stoll, 1998 and Euler, 2008). It is primarily noticed through the manner in which people interact and collaborate, the management of organizational structures, processes, and physical environment, and the presence of a learning-oriented approach for both students and adults, including the nature of that focus (Stoll, 1998).

Instead of depending only on conventional study and reading, creating a learning culture requires situated action, teamwork, coaching, and reflection (Cross, 2003 and Ehlers & Schneckenberg, 2010). Creating a helpful learning platform is analogous to landscaping a garden, where natural learning is embraced, treating individuals as free-range learners in a healthy setting (Cross, 2003 and Clair, 2015). Self-directed learners are connected to multiple networks and information flows, boosting their learning experiences and opportunities (Cross, 2003).

Educational Leadership in HEIs in Pakistan

The impact of leadership on strengthening educational institutions has been thoroughly researched in the literature. Research from Western industrialized nations may not be directly applicable to the context of developing nations, despite the fact that educational leaders are acknowledged as important characters in the educational system. These two regions of the world have quite different educational systems.

In nations like Pakistan, a top-down model dominates, with decision-making power consolidated and limited delegation of authority, resulting in instructors having low effect (Khan, Khalil, & Iftikhar, 2015).

The hierarchical structure of universities in Pakistan, which has been in place for a lengthy duration, was initially established to solve difficulties peculiar to that time. But as time has gone on and the education sector has changed, the necessity of making adjustments has become more apparent. on Pakistani colleges are considered

obsolete, founded on a mindset prevalent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when financial incentives were the key motivator for staff. Managers constantly monitored subordinate performance, limiting staff autonomy and adherence to prescribed operating processes.

The leadership style of Pakistani universities has also been impacted by this strategy. As a result, it is now crucial to look for ways to improve academic standards and results at Pakistani universities (Tanveer, 2020).

In Pakistan, educational leadership faces a number of obstacles. According to Khan, Khalil, and Iftikhar (2015), the bureaucratic governance framework that governs public sector organizations produces leaders who are constrained by regulations, lack vision or influence, and are mostly concerned with administrative duties. On the other hand, educational leaders in the private sector wield personal influence, greater authority in recruiting and firing choices, and the capacity to establish wage arrangements.

Sufficient evidence exists to establish that good leadership plays a significant role in organizational improvement, particularly based on studies undertaken in Western industrialized countries. This begs us to ask if similar leadership styles developed in the West can be utilized in developing nations such as Pakistan (Khan, Khalil, & Iftikhar, 2015).

However, Pakistan also has successful educational leaders, raising the question of how these leaders in the Pakistani setting nurture a learning culture for faculty growth. The current study is being conducted at private universities in Karachi to answer this question. The purpose is to investigate the problems faced by educational leaders to foster a learning culture within higher education institutions (HEIs) to enable faculty growth.

Research Methodology

The research is on the basis of interpretivism paradigm. This research paradigm is selected because interpretive researchers reject the notion of an objective reality that exists independently of human beings. Rather, they view reality as a social construct that is shaped by individuals and society (Tubey, Rotich, Bengat, 2015).

A qualitative research design was used to understand the perceptions about the challenges faced by educational leaders to develop learning culture in Higher Educational Institutions for faculty development. Within this overarching framework, multiple case study was employed to gain a more precise understanding of leaders' perceptions about challenges faced by educational leadership to develop learning culture in higher educational institutions.

To ensure availability of data and triangulation, the collection approach has integrated semi-structured interviews and document analysis. In addition to

ensuring the availability of reliable data, this diverse strategy to data gathering also offered comprehensive views that addressed the study objectives and established the validity of the data. Among these data gathering instruments, interviews played a vital role in capturing narratives of research participation.

Six department heads from Karachi's private universities were interviewed. To prevent gender bias, three subjects were male and three were female. Cresswell (2008) suggested that studying 5 to 25 cases are enough to infer about a phenomenon. All participants recruited for this research were questioned utilizing open-ended questions. This technique intended to explore into the research question. The interviews were audio –recorded and later transcribed to ensure accurate capture of the data. Subsequently, the recordings were transcribed verbatim, leaving no room for omission, in order to capture all the points articulated by the respondents as part of their responses.

To ensure a systematic approach to data collection and to obtain rich and detailed information, the sequence of data collection commenced with interviews and followed by document analysis. This sequence has been selected to facilitate data organization and to gather essential information that has informed the collection of additional field notes. In order to safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of the university, the region in which it is located, and the participants themselves, pseudonyms were assigned to all individuals involved.

It is noticeable that the length of interviews varied significantly across the informants as their education, experience and their leadership style. Thus, duration range was about 40 – to 60 minutes. This variability in the length did not reflect variability in the richness and quality of informants' account. The factors contributing to this variability is completely explored in the discussion chapter.

On the other hand, documents offered a broader perspective on the initiative, typically focusing on its formal aspects and providing a contextual backdrop. In the current study purposive sampling technique was used because it reflects a group of sampling techniques that rely on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (e.g. people, case/organizations, events, pieces of data) that are to be studied (Bhardwaj, 2019).

The study involved six participants, three males and three females, each serving in leadership roles within higher education institutions, with professional experience ranging from 5 to 20 years. Through in-depth interviews, these educational leaders shared their lived experiences, learning practices, and the challenges they encounter in their professional roles. The data generated from these interviews were grounded in the context of higher education institutions and were directly aligned with the study's research question

Table No 1 : Demographic Description

Demographic Details	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	3	50%
Female	3	50%
Experience in Years		
5 – 10	2	33%
10 – 15	3	50%
15 – 20	1	17%
Qualification of Educational Leaders		
PhD	4	67%
Post Doc	2	33%
Degree Program offered at Institution		
Graduation	3	50%
M Phil	1	17%
PhD	2	33%

In this study thematic analysis is used to conceptualize the qualitative data because thematic analysis entails identifying recurring patterns, which researchers present as overarching statements or themes.

For the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity the participants were referred to in the data analysis by pseudonyms. The themes emerged directly from the words, expressions, and meanings shared by the leaders and were identified through a careful and systematic analysis of the interview transcripts. Rather than being imposed in advance, these themes were firmly grounded in the data and refined through a rigorous, iterative process of analysis.

To ensure consistency and credibility, the themes were compared across both questionnaires and interviews to confirm that they were well supported. Each transcript was read multiple times with an inductive focus on the language and terms used by different participants. This repeated, attentive reading allowed meaningful patterns to surface and enabled well-grounded inferences and conclusions to be drawn, reflecting the participants' own perspectives and experiences.

Table 2 maps the theme and sub-themes, which reflect the key organizing constructs for the presentation of the data analysis.

Table 2: Themes and coding

Themes	Sub Themes	Codes
Challenges faced by Educational Leaders for Fostering Learning Culture for Faculty Development	Financial & Resources Constraints	Financial background, middle class, Monetary benefits, travel expenses
	Faculty Resistance	Reluctant, mandatory, not attending, forced
	Policies Issues	policies, centralized

Conceptual Framework:



Results And Analysis

This chapter is consisted of theme and findings which arose out of the interview process and subsequent data analysis. These findings were also discussed in the light of previous research findings and available literature, where applicable, in order to identify similarities and differences between this study and previous studies and literature.

Researches underscored the significant impact of leadership on faculty development, emphasizing on leadership styles, and the importance of rewards, appreciations, increments, workshops and seminars in fostering a culture of learning. These components are essential for improving faculty development and the culture of learning in general. Beyond these factors, it is clear that educational leaders encounter a variety of difficulties in creating a strong learning environment (Camblin & Steger, 2000). Financial limitations, institutional design, decision-making procedures, administrative procedures, and general management tactics are among the difficulties faced by leaders.

(i) Financial and Resources Constraints and Leadership Practices for Developing Learning Culture

For leaders who want to foster a culture of continuous learning and faculty growth, overcoming budgetary constraints and developing strong institutional structures are difficult tasks. The implementation of comprehensive professional development efforts is often hampered by a lack of funding. Leaders should adeptly allocate finances to enhance efforts that refine educators' talents, promote innovative teaching approaches, and facilitate research undertakings.

Concurrently, the configuration of institutional institutions takes critical thought. Establishing a climate favorable to continuous learning entails instituting supportive policies, resources, and platforms for collaborative faculty activities (Patrick, 1988). Leaders must manage the nuances of institutional systems, combining the demand for centralized leadership with the autonomy essential for academic inventiveness.

Overcoming budgetary limitations and creating adaptable institutions require visionary leadership that can match resources to learning goals, cultivate a flexible learning culture, and create an atmosphere that encourages faculty members to succeed in their professional development.

“The students admitted in our institute mostly come from middle class because our fee is not that high, the fee for five courses here is between 70 to 80 thousand. This is relatively less than the current scenario. Otherwise, the fees for courses in any other institute will be between one to two lakhs in a semester. We have students from diverse academic backgrounds, including high achievers, middle-achieving students, and low-achieving students. When we put them together in class, it becomes a mix, regardless of their financial background or educational background. (Interview-2, Q-9)”

Additionally, resource constraints pose a challenge, as providing adequate funding and support for faculty development initiatives may be limited. Balancing competing priorities, such as administrative responsibilities and research commitments, is another obstacle for educational leaders.

“We don't offer any monetary benefits. If you have attended these sessions, you will benefit from them in this way. We don't make any special offers to them. (Interview-3, Q-5)”

“They are not given any monetary benefit or any other privileges to motivate them. (Interview-3, Q-5)”

“And such workshops should be organized at the HEC level, whose fee is minimum, which should be done by the institution and its certification should also be done, and in addition, the travel expenses for the faculty member, the expenses of staying there, the expenses of food and drink should also be provided. If the

institutions bear it or there is any such policy, if such motivation is found, it will be a big beneficiary. (Interview-3, Q-10)”

(ii) Faculty Resistance

Educational leaders encounter a myriad of challenges in their pursuit of developing a robust learning culture within a department for faculty development. One significant challenge is the resistance to change, where faculty members may be hesitant to adopt new teaching methodologies or embrace innovative approaches. Overwhelming deep-rooted traditions and fostering a mentality shift towards continual learning can be a hard task.

“Here, concerning motivation, the situation is that when we announce that there is a Faculty Development Session, faculty members tend to be reluctant. In such cases, we have to make it mandatory, and for those who still don't attend the Faculty Development Session, we call them and inquire about their reasons for not attending. (Interview-3, Q-5)”

It is a permanent challenge to address the individualized needs of faculty for targeted professional development within a department. These challenges demand strategic planning, clear communication, and a commitment, for a culture of continuous learning and development (Patrick, 1988, Camblin, & Steger, 2000).

“When creating HODs, the management should consider the skills of the individuals. The HOD should also be aware of their own team's capabilities, understanding who excels in which skills, whether in writing, administrative tasks, or visual tasks. (Interview-4, Q-9)”

(iii) Institutional Policies

Policies must be carefully crafted to promote lifelong learning, faculty collaboration, and the pursuit of cutting-edge teaching techniques and research projects.

“It is a fact that if the faculty does not focus on self-motivation then it is forced and for this the order is given by the Vice-Chancellor to attend to it. (Interview-3, Q-6)”

“I think that our management bodies, HECs, PECs, and PECs, should implement their own policies, such training should be centralized and grading should be done. (Interview-3, Q-10)”

Managing institutional policies is a difficult undertaking for educational leaders to establish a culture of learning. If these restrictions are not managed

properly, they frequently act as complicated webs that can delay the growth and innovation (Camblin & Steger, 2000). However, seeing these constraints as opportunities for strategic and responsible leadership can help bring about long-lasting and effective reforms (Patrick, 1988, Camblin, & Steger, 2000).

By engaging in cooperative discourse, advocating for policy changes, and making practical use of the resources already available, educational leaders can overcome these challenges and lead initiatives that allow faculty members to thrive in educational environment (Patrick, 1988). Educational leadership can ultimately build a culture of continuous learning and professional development among the academic community by overcoming institutional policy limits with persistence and flexibility (Camblin, & Steger, 2000).

Discussion

Many educational leaders are working hard to foster a culture of continuous learning among their faculty, but they are doing so with limited resources. Budget constraints repeatedly stall comprehensive development plans. The challenge is to foster academic creativity, balancing autonomy with guided support. To move forward, leaders are directing these complexities by advocating for adaptable learning spaces and empowering teachers to grow professionally, despite financial hurdles.

Faculty opposition to change enhances complexity, necessitating careful preparation and a commitment to creating a supportive learning environment where teachers are motivated to learn. In short, navigating budget limits, faculty resistance and institutional rules required strategic leadership, clear communication and a commitment to fostering a supportive environment for ongoing learning and growth.

In many low-income countries, educational leaders are striving to cultivate a culture of continuous learning among teachers while operating under severe financial and structural constraints. Limited budgets often restrict access to professional development opportunities, learning resources, and supportive infrastructure, making sustained capacity building a persistent challenge (World Bank, 2018). Despite these constraints, educational leaders are increasingly expected to promote instructional innovation, teacher autonomy, and collaborative learning cultures that can improve teaching quality and student outcomes (UNESCO, 2017). Balancing these expectations with centralized regulations and accountability pressures requires strategic and adaptive leadership. Research indicates that resistance to change among faculty is common in resource-constrained settings, particularly where reforms are perceived as externally imposed or insufficiently supported (Fullan, 2016). By prioritizing supportive learning environments, incremental innovation, and teacher empowerment, educational leaders can mitigate financial limitations and enhance professional growth. Thus, effective leadership in low-income countries depends not only on resource mobilization but also on the ability to navigate institutional constraints, manage resistance, and sustain a shared commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

Limitations of the study

The research has emphasized the challenges faced by leadership in higher education; it is also important to know the limitations that have affected the findings' generalizability. The study concluded solely based on the experiences and viewpoints of participants from Karachi, it was context-specific. The findings are not applicable to other types of educational environments with different challenges, cultures, and institutional arrangements. A significant portion of the data was gathered through participant self-reporting, which is prone to social desirability bias. Attention has not been paid to contextual factors that affect faculty development, such as institutional policies, financial resources and external accreditation requirements.

Recommendations:

These suggestions, which are based on the study's findings, aim to improve faculty development and the learning environment in higher education institutions: -

- (a). Ongoing leadership training programs are to be developed and implemented for educational leaders and Heads of Departments (HODs). These programs should focus on fostering democratic and collaborative leadership styles, emphasizing the importance of open communication, shared decision-making, and team building.
- (b). A comprehensive incentive structure should be established for long term faculty development goals.
- (c). Leaders should create platforms for interdisciplinary collaboration and joint initiatives, to foster a rich and diverse learning experiences for faculty development.
- (d). Collaborative research opportunities for faculty members should be promoted and supported within department.
- (e). A mechanism should be develop for periodic review of institutional policies related to faculty development, workload management and for rewards and recognition.

Conclusion

This study highlighted the significance of recognizing that while leadership is crucial in nurturing a culture of learning. A comprehensive approach to encourage learning demands acknowledgment of multi-layered factors beyond leadership alone. Collaborative efforts, institutional support, resource allocation and a commitment all play important roles. This study has highlighted the necessity of a comprehensive understanding that can cover a wide range of factors for the successful creation and maintenance of a learning culture inside educational institutions. Only by addressing

this broader range of issues, we can hope to build an atmosphere that not only promotes the professional advancement of faculty members but also nurtures a culture of constant learning and improvement.

Public policies are a powerful force in education, setting the stage for everything from degree programs to faculty training. But the real-world push for change often comes from society, which continuously demand new skills from graduates. To equip students, faculty development must constantly progress in response.

Success depends on leaders who can manage day-to-day operations while staying responsive to market shifts and policy changes. Only through this balanced approach can an institute create the dynamic, supportive environment where faculty and their students truly succeed.

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