

## Factors causing strategic objective failure: An empirical study in the public sector universities of Pakistan

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**ABSTRACT:** In management schools, continuations of research level degrees (M.Phil and PhD level) are facing serious challenges at public sector universities in Pakistan. This study is aimed at identifying those factors which affect the degrees in the public sector universities of Pakistan. In any academic institution, academic staff is directly linked with the achievement of these objectives. The recruitment of academic staff is done by the top management with the collaboration of external regulatory authority which is higher education commission (HEC). Current study is descriptive and qualitative in nature and accomplished through conducting detail interviews with from the management, academic staff and students. The results revealed that there are different factors influencing the persuasion of research studies in management sciences. Results also identified that administration of universities, HEC and staff members are playing crucial roles in research studies but government role is prominent and due to its unhealthy educational policies resting roles have been paralyzed. Study findings enlightened that there is need to change the organizational constitution for supervision unless the government lift the ban on recruitment of new academic staff as well as the renewal of former teachers' contracts to support and achieve the advanced educational objectives in the present as well as in the future.

**KEYWORDS:** Strategic objectives, organizational constitution, HEC, Continuations.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Advanced education is a key element and playing its crucial role in nation advancement. Effective research mechanism and quality education both are considered prominent obligations of universities. As main objective of universities is to create and broaden the knowledge and learning within the community with strategic perspectives [1]. Strategic planning for the achievement of university's objectives is carried out by the governing bodies regarding instructive guidelines, objectives, standards and regulations. These bodies are responsible to builds the strategies to achieve pre-designed goals in effective manners.

Arrangement of working parts is an exceptionally touchy process as it has an impressive effect on people, divisions, and the entire University for a long time. Administration is assumed to have a vital part in the advancement of education. It is the fundamental obligation of organization and administration to perform the goals of a foundation according to their strategic objectives. The selection boards of universities' administration perform this action with the assistance of Higher Education Commission which is mindful to support the educational institutions by providing advanced instructions to universities. Some people are appointed permanently and some are hired on contract basis in accordance to the need and demand of the institutions. On the off chance that administration of universities is not improved or it is not adapted to the new needs, changes and difficulties, the framework or institution can't accomplish the fancied destinations or fulfill the target [2]. Ambiguity in the achievement of future objectives is always there because of changing environment but the proper administration can minimize this impact being flexible and respondent to the change. So there is dire need to explore the factors which should be considered for improvement to achieve strategic objectives.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

As main objective of universities is to create and broaden the knowledge and learning within the community with strategic perspectives [1]. Objectives ought to be time-constrained, and connected with unambiguous and measurable criteria for achievement. Goals are regularly various leveled [3], [4] and ought to additionally be measurable, confirmable, and actionable [5], [6]. Strategic planning is the deliberate and composed procedure whereby an association makes a record demonstrating the way it plans to accomplish the wanted present or future objectives. Its advancement supports the investment and responsibility of the whole institution in attaining the targeted results, accordingly turning into a vital component in institutional attachment. Finally, an institution that has great strategic planning for its objectives as well and applies it reliably offers a genuine and valid outside picture.

### **2.2 ACADEMIC STAFF**

Previous studies incorporated an examination of the present supply and future prospects for attracting competent staff members in sufficient number to meet requirements in different areas with a view to identify suitable actions ought to be taken to give an appealing and competitive staff pay; reasonable teaching and research assignments and fringe advantages to pull in top positioning teachers [7]. Each educational institution may support its research and advanced educational objective with the help of competent and qualified staff as they have direct link to these objectives. For execution of university staffing matters selection board perform all the exercises. This body set educational standards, objectives, manages and regulations and make the strategies and methods to complete them. They may handle all these capacities successfully if the members are well-trained, furnished with new knowledge, administration aptitudes and decision power [8]. To tackle the staff related issues, Vohra [9] recommended a focal mechanism for recruitment. The reason for this mechanism is to enlist and contract the best accessible and most qualified candidate for each one position, so it is, no doubt demonstrated that the recruitment and selection procedure is capable to provide scholarly staff which ought to be strategically fit to the objectives of the University for accomplishment.

### **2.3 ADMINISTRATION**

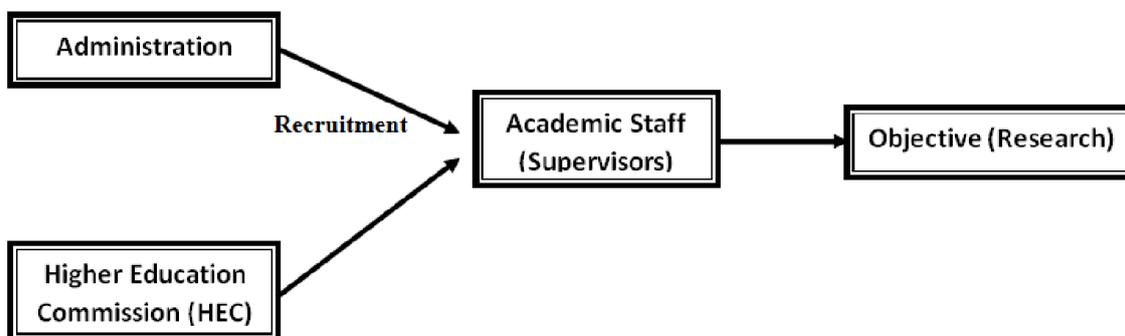
Quality education relies on the worthy administration. Administration is assumed a critical part in the advancement of education. The university has its top levels bodies to take decisions. It has the administrators like Vice Chancellor, deans, and head of the departments [8] for execution of university matters syndicate, academic council, finance and planning committee, advance study and research board manage academic and other day-to-day activities in universities. Therefore recruitment and selection of teaching staff as well as the other working staff is main responsibility of the administration. It specifies there ought to be cooperation of every last one of parts of statutory bodies in all the decisions. The nature of higher education completely relies on upon the proficient and fitting administration of universities. In the most recent two decades, Pakistan has been offering regard for the issues of university administration [10]

### **2.4 HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION (HEC)**

It was observed that constantly top university structures are joined with the "outside world". In Pakistan this part is played by HEC (Higher Education Commission) which is likewise run by the government. That might work in close joint effort with the appointing authorities of the university to find faculty members in the fields in which it is as of now recognized or in

which it looks for distinction. Every department or staff ought to have a specially appointed personnel advisory committee to conduct an active pursuit throughout the country for outstanding and promising young people for its teaching and research staff [9]. So the recruitment and selection of teaching staff and their allocation is done by HEC in Pakistan with the view to promote research based education.

### 3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



### 4 METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the factors causing strategic objective failure in the public sector universities, interviews have been conducted with different stakeholders (Administration, Management, Students) who were linked with the issue being studied. The interviews were conducted using the criteria of a successful interviewer recommended by Kvale [11]. This criteria includes being knowledgeable about the themes in the interview, structuring the interview to facilitate the process smoothly, ensuring that the questions are clear, maintaining proper interview etiquettes (such as allowing the interviewee to finish first before moving onto the next question and listening with sensitivity), being open to new directions that are important to the interviewee, steering the interview process smoothly, using critical questioning to probe any inconsistent comments, relating to the interviewees comments, and clarifying the comments by rewording them differently. Also, there did not appear to be any confusion about the questions among the respondents. On average, an interview took 20 minutes and the interview schedule was emailed to the participants a week before the scheduled interviews so that they had time to reflect on the questions. The structure of the interviews were deliberately kept loose (i.e., semi structured open ended format) in order to allow unexpected and emergent themes to emanate).

### 5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following themes were emerged in the study during the data collection and analysis:

#### 5.1 LACKING STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning to achieve the objectives is definitely not a bed of roses. Given that strategic planning is not an accurate science, a genuine fear is that even with great planning an association may in any case still fail. There may be the availability or resources but the administration is not able to get the desired results [12]. As one of the respondents say:

*“Objectives are not proved fruitful always because the changing or turbulent environment creates the risk of failure obviously greater as when there is no proper administration and accurate strategic planning.” (Respondent – 03)*

#### 5.2 IMPROPER ADMINISTRATION

It is the fundamental obligation of administration to perform the targets and accomplish the objectives of an institution of a foundation. On the off chance that administration of education is not upgraded or it is not adapted to the new needs, changes and challenges, the framework or association can't attain the fancied destinations or achieve the target. As one of the respondents states that:

*“When it was known to the administration that there is not enough staff then why the admissions were announced. Absence of supervisory staff is the cause of lacking research which leads to the failure of advanced quality education”.*

### 5.3 RESTRICTED (HEC)

The Higher Education Commission is the main regulator of higher education in Pakistan and facilitates the development of higher educational systems. It additionally encouraged the advancement of higher education, research and development framework. Its principle design was to redesign colleges in Pakistan to be focuses of instruction, innovative work. The HEC has assumed a heading part towards giving out several doctoral grants for training abroad consistently and giving quality instructing staff to the higher instructive establishments. And this is the same staff needed by the public sector universities to provide advanced education as well as the accomplishment of objective. About this situation a portion of the reactions are:

*“Though the HEC is responsible to provide academic staff to the universities for advance studies but currently it cannot do so as it also has been restricted by the Government from doing so”.*

*“A letter has written to the prime minister requesting that the ban on recruitments be lifted, arguing that many universities have opened new departments and programs (objectives) which require new staff to operate smoothly”.*

### 5.4 LESS ACADEMIC STAFF

In building up an apex university, it will be necessary to have a proper search throughout the country for exceptional and talented young people for its teaching and research staff. Under the past practice, the university publicized such opportunities and called those whole aspirants for the meeting who met the criteria. Thusly, a competitor was chosen, evidently with great scholarly records, yet regardless of the reality whether he/she could be a great educator or not. But now the criteria have been transformed into a new system to get quality teachers to support the quality academic staff. As one of the faculty members for the change in the recruitment policy, told:

*“There was a dire need to introduce this system where the selection board, comprising vice-chancellor, heads of the respective departments, deans of social or natural sciences, two subject specialists, representatives of Higher Education Commission and the education ministry, would conduct the final interview”.*

In many places, a large number of posts of lecturers are filled temporarily on an ad hoc basis to fulfill the need of the institutions and the cancellation of teachers' contracts will be the barrier in the achievement of advance education objective in the universities. As respond one of another interviewee:

*“If the contractual employees are sacked then there would be a grave crisis and it would be entirely difficult to run affairs of the universities for its objectives”.*

### 5.5 CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT POLICY

Before 1980's the advanced education in Pakistan was the sole obligation of the government. There were a couple of foundations of higher education in the private segment from 1985 onwards. Basically the main function and objective of universities is to provide and extend knowledge to the nation. It is a scholarly train concerned with the execution of government policy; studies this implementation and prepares civil servants for working in the public service. The accompanying articulation accentuates halfway concerned with the association of government strategies in public sector universities might be an obstruction towards the development of higher education. One of the interviewee said:

*“Government has banned the recruitment of new teaching staff. It will cause the shortage of supervisors for strategic objective of advance research settled a few years before seems to be failed and the educational quality also”.*

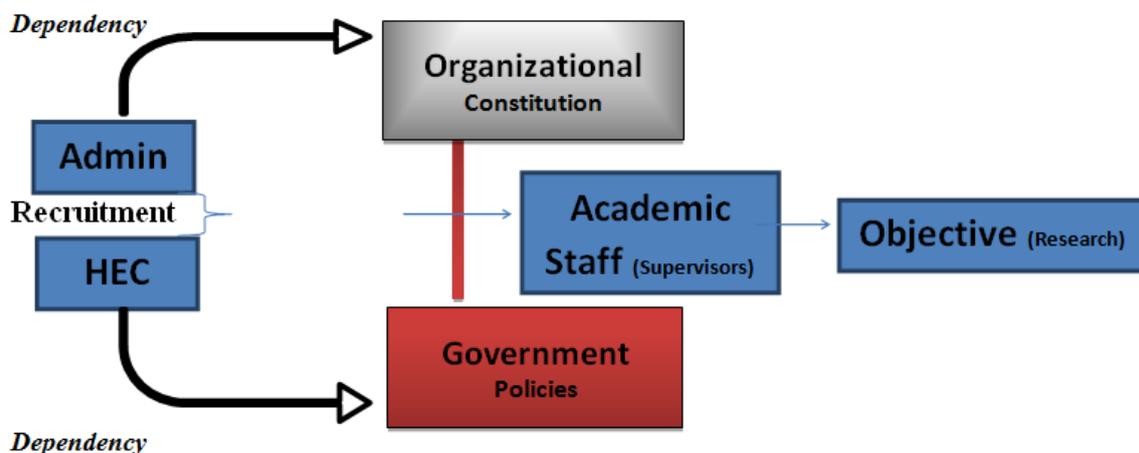
*“A large number of faculty members, administrative staff members, security guards and other employees are working on contractual basis and if all of them are sacked then our routine work would literally come to standstill. If the directives to get rid of contractual employees are implemented in the public sector universities then I say that we would not even have security guards to keep vigilance in the vicinity of the university”.*

### 5.6 STRICT ORGANIZATIONAL CONSTITUTION

Every university has a constitution follow up on the premise of which it works. The constitution demonstration set out the university's function and obligations, decides the different powers through which it govern itself. Sometimes the rules made by the administration beneficial to the university go wrong unconsciously. So the changes in the constitutions of each university are necessary to meet the changing situations and requirements [13]. One of the interviewee said:

*“It has been mentioned in the constitution of the university that neither the visiting academic staff nor the external supervisor is allowed to supervise the students for research and advance studies”.*

**RESULTANT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK:**



**6 CONCLUSION**

Fulfillment of a high level performance through output and efficiency has always been an organizational goal of high significance. There are three fundamental obligations of universities which are education, research and procurements for the accessibility of plan. The quality of higher education totally depends on the efficient and proper administration of universities. Administration is the mainly responsible for the management to accomplish the objectives of an institution. It may handle all these functions effectively if the members are well-trained, equipped with new knowledge, management skills and decision power [8]. In past, advanced education in Pakistan was the exclusive responsibility of the government. The constitution demonstration set out the university’s responsibilities, decides the different powers through which it oversee itself. The main purpose of HEC is to upgrade universities in Pakistan to be centers of education, research and development. The results show that there are different factors causing the failure institutional objectives where Government has indirect but more effective impact when it has changed the educational policy while HEC can do noting with the restrictions of Governmentpolicies. Administration’s direct impact is that strategic planning for admissions and required staff at administrative level is not supportive to the achievement of objectives.However there is need to change the organizational constitution for supervision unless the Government lift the ban on recruitment of new academic staff as well as the renewal of former ad hoc teachers contracts to fulfill the need of supervisors to support the achievement of advanced education objective in present as well as in the future.

**7 LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Limitations are always there while conducting research. There was shortage of time for this study and insufficient resources as well. The other thing is that the research has been conducted in the public sector organization and the administration did not provide the whole information which may cause the lack of secrecy for the institution and which also may be the more relevant to the research. While talking about the implication of the study the educational institutions should set their objectives keeping in mind that the organizational constitution should be flexible. If there is any unseen external environmental situation then some contingency plan can be made to run the institution.

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