

Study on Academic Leadership for Effective Governance in HEIs

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Abstract

This paper made a study on academic leadership and found that leadership in academic field poses problems that are noticeably different than leadership in government agencies and companies. Paper absorbed that academic leaders need to work closely with teaching, learning, research, and scholarship to bring out the best among academics. A literature survey is done on academic leadership in higher education (HE) and issues on freedom of academic, which shows the great importance and relevance in this context. The paper discusses the University Governance Architecture and New Education Policy (NEP) for leadership and effective governance in HEIs, Academic Leadership, and selection of administrators according to NEP-2020. Paper discussed Transforming Regulatory System of HE in NEP-2020, Financing HEIs through the new body called HEGC (Higher Education Grants Council), General Education Council, PSSB (Professional Standard-Setting Bodies) designed in NEP-2020, and the Institutional Development Planning.

Introduction

Academic leadership poses problems that are noticeably different than in the businesses and government agencies, and differences were found in the style of leadership among the three types of leaders. Academic leaders need to work along with teaching, learning, research, and scholarship to bring out the best among academics. This study helps leaders working at tertiary institutions to reflect on their qualities as academic leaders, and such reflection may also help to improve their leadership style to achieve positive outcomes. The following personalities needed to become successful Institution leaders.

1. Leaders understand the importance of community building.
2. Leaders empower teachers and cultivate leadership skills.
3. Leaders utilize data and resources.
4. Leaders have a vision and a plan.
5. Leaders create collaborative and inclusive learning environments.
6. Leaders are passionate about their works.
7. Leaders encourage risk-taking.
8. Leaders lead by example (Role model).
9. Leaders persevere – Staying within an institution for at least five years.
10. Leaders are life long learners.

The vision of the NEP-2020, in motionless among the learners a deep-rooted pride to being Indian in thought, in spirit, intellect, deeds, and to develop knowledge, skills, values, and temperaments to support responsible commitment for human rights, sustainable development, and living, and global well-being, thereby reflecting global citizen. The faculty shall have the capacity for training students and act as mentors and Guides. Hence NEP-2020, provide the responsibility and accountability for decentralizing the HEIs concurrently, and there shall be no distinction between public and private HEIs.

- The Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) itself will be resolving disputes among the four verticals.
- Each vertical in HECI will be an independent body consisting of persons having high expertise in relevant areas along with integrity, commitment, and public service records will track.
- The HECI will be a small and independent body consisting with eminent public spirit experts in higher education to look after and monitor all functions of HECI.
- Within the HECI some suitable mechanisms will be designed to carry out its functions and judgements.

Literature Survey on Academic Leadership in Higher Education

It's important to define the concept of "leadership" in general, and "academic leadership" in particular. The term leadership has been defined variously using strategic management. According to Bijur (2000), "leadership means enhancing human potential". Leadership means nothing but creating an environment for people to grow as leaders. It is interacting effectively and clearly. Heifetz and Laurie (1997), made a statement as the leadership need to involve with three fundamental tasks. Firstly, creating an environment to holding (environment which facilitates for the achievement of goals). Secondly, protecting, positioning, directing, managing conflict and shaping norms, and finally, maintaining presence and poise. The good leadership means guarantee in harmony upon decisions taken by the up and down of the line. It considered has a special case of leadership, who need to work with-in an academic setting or institution. The institution are presenting different set-ups in private and public sector organizations. Private organizations are guided solely by considerations of maximizing shareholder value. The public sector and government organizations will be guided for maximizing the value of stakeholders, which includes the community at large. In academic institutions, maximizing stakeholder value means to maximizing value to students, staff, community, and funding agencies. Thus, the stakeholders in academic institutions will be more diverged. This features of institution poses a different challenges to leadership. It means that nevertheless leadership in academic have some commonalities with general leadership, and there is also special challenges involve. Hence research on academic leadership is evolving. Ramsden (1998), have designed a model which defines the characteristics and influences academic effective leadership. According to Ramsden (1998), academic effective leadership in higher education is to function in several factors or characteristics. These include:

- a. Teaching.
- b. Research.
- c. Deliberate vision and networking.
- d. Cooperative and motivational.
- e. Open-minded and efficient management.
- f. Development and Performance recognition.
- g. Interpersonal skills.

Kvale (1996), speaks five methods those are Meaning of Condensation, Meaning of Categorization, Narrative Structuring, Meaning of Interpretation, and Generating meaning through ad-hoc methods. Patton (1982), addressed number of skills for enumerating and analyzing qualitative interview data. Depending on the purpose of interviewing one or more approaches can be applied. So while comparing the meaning attached to the concept ‘academic leadership’, have used a combination of meaning categorization and meaning interpretation methods. Briefly, this involved categorizing words with similar to those in the framework of the study and interpreting the ‘whole’ significance of the language used by the leaders to describe their styles and the sense they attached to ‘academic leadership’.

The Architecture of University Governance

NEP-2020 called for special consideration of university governance in two aspects. Firstly, the issue of autonomy, and secondly there structuring of internal university governance. In the NEP-2020, the issue of autonomy shall be desired but constrained and organized by the state government. The term faculty autonomy means, providing independence in designing curricula and pedagogical methodologies, but which need to be in the NEP-2020 framework. It can be imagined that the educational bureaucrats might have four harmless words empowering them to limit and restrict the independence which is promised to faculty. In case of institutional autonomy means primarily applied for affiliated colleges, which can be used in unspecified ways to slowly moving towards ‘Research-Intensive’ or ‘Teaching-Intensive Universities’. The most disturbing change contemplated is to the institutions of university governance. Hence the new policy came up with an egregious violation of the fundamental principles of self-governance, which is an integral part of university functioning.

Formally self-governing institutions such as universities typically have Boards of Studies (BoS) and Academic Councils (AC) for regulating the academic matters and maintaining standards of instruction in education and examination process. The Executive Councils or Syndicates will take decision related to the general management and administration, revenues, and properties of the university. University Courts or Senates will be the supreme authorities and oversight institutions that hold the university accountable for society. Faculty members will conquer both ex-officio (deans and chairs) as well as elected offices in the university statutory bodies. Hence faculty of university can debate and disagree before things are at a consensus on a wide variety of academic issues that lie at the heart of what the university sees as its purpose.

NEP for Effective Governance and Leadership in HEIs

The NEP-2020 is providing suitable systems like graded accreditation and graded autonomy to institutions within 15 years. HEIs in India is aim to be come independent self-governing institutions with pursuing innovation and excellence. So following steps have been taken.

- Receiving the appropriately graded accreditations means that deem the institution is ready to establish the Board of Governors (BoG). It consist a group of highly qualified, dedicated, competent, and individuals proven their capabilities with a strong sense of commitment to the institution.
- The BoG will be authorized to govern the institution free from all external interference, appointments all the posts including the institutional head, and taking all decisions regarding governance.
- There will be legislation overarching to supersede the contravening provisions of other legislation done earlier and it should provide a constitution, modalities of functioning, appointment, rules and regulations, and the responsibilities and roles of the BoG

- The expert committee appointed by the board shall identify the new members and all selections of new members will be done only by the BoG. But selecting the new members it should provide equity.
- It is envisioned that all HEIs will be supported, incentivized, and mentored during this process and target to become autonomous and have such an authorized BoG by 2035.
- The BoG shall be answerable and liable to the stakeholders through transparent self-disclosures of all relevant records.
- BoG shall be responsible for meeting all regulatory guidelines mandated by HECI through the National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC).

Academic Leadership

- The enthusiastic and outstanding institutional leaders, need to cultivate innovative views and excellence in all aspects.
- The faculty with excellent academic and service credentials, and established leadership and management skills we be identified early and trained through a ladder of leadership positions.
- The position of leadership shall not remain vacant, but slightly with an overlapping during transitions period in leadership will be the norms to guarantee the smooth running of institutions.
- The leaders of Institution need to develop a culture of excellence, which will incentivize outstanding and motivate teaching innovates, research, institutional service, and outreach of community from the faculty members and HEI leaders.

The NEP-2020 Policy's Vision includes the following Changes in the Current System

- According to NEP-2020, the higher education system needed to be established in large scale across the country and it should include multidisciplinary colleges and universities. Education should offer in local languages.
- We are moving towards a more multidisciplinary undergraduate education.
- We are moving towards faculty and institutional autonomy.
- Pedagogy, Curriculum Revamping, valuation, and student support to boosted their experiences.
- Recommending the integrity of faculty and institutional leadership positions through merit-based appointments and career progression based on teaching, research, and service.
- Setting up of a National Research Foundation to aid outstanding peer-reviewed research works, and to actively seed research activities in universities and colleges.
- Governance of HEIs shall be done by the highly qualified independent boards which, are having academic and administrative autonomy.
- The slogan, 'Light but Tight' means the regulation by a single regulator for higher education;
- To increased access, equity, and inclusion through a range of measures, including countless opportunities to outstanding public education. Scholarships need to provide from private charity for disadvantaged and under privileged college and university students. And online education, ODL (Open Distance Learning), accessible of learning materials and all infrastructure need to available for learners with debilities.

Selection of Administrators according to NEP-2020

- Institution Heads and all leadership position will be provided to highly qualified in academics and also who have demonstrated capability of administrative and leadership ability in complex situations.
- HEI leaders need to demonstrate constitutional values and institutional vision along with social commitment, belief in teamwork, ability to work with diverse people, and positive attitude.

- Leaders of an HEI will demonstrate strong alignment to constitutional values and the overall vision of the institution, along with attributes such as a strong social commitment, belief in teamwork, pluralism, ability to work with diverse people, and a positive outlook.
- BoG will constitute Eminent Expert Committee (EEC) for the selection of administrators and leaders through an impartial, rigorous, merit-based and competency-based.
- The stability of tenure is to guarantee the growth of a suitable culture. At the same time, succession of leadership will be planned to safeguard the practices which define an institution's processes should not affect due to a change in leadership and it should not remain vacant for the smooth transitions.
- Outstanding persons will be identified and trained early and allowing them to work along with the leaders in a ladder of leadership positions.

Transforming Higher Education into Regulatory System

The regulatory system will guarantee the distinct functions of regulation, funding, accreditation, and standard-setting up of academic performance independently, and empowered bodies. NEP-2020 will be set up as four independent vertical structures within one umbrella, which is called as Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).

- First vertical will be the NHERC (National Higher Education Regulatory Council). NHERC will function as the single controller for the higher education sector, including teacher education but it exclude medical and legal education.
- The second vertical will be a 'meta-accrediting body' called the NAAC (National Assessment Accreditation Council). The accreditation of institutions will be founded on basic norms, self-disclosure of public, good governance, and its outcomes. It will be approved by an independent ecosystem of accrediting institutions supervised and overseen by NAAC.
- The third vertical will be the HEGC (Higher Education Grants Council). It will function as funding agency to higher education based on transparent criteria.
- The fourth vertical will be the GEC (General Education Council), which will set-up an predictable learning outcomes form an higher education programs, which referred as 'graduate attributes'. A National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) shall be formulated by the GEC.
- The functioning of all the independent verticals for Regulation (NHERC), Accreditation (NAAC), Funding (HEGC), and Academic Standard-Setting (GEC) and the overarching autonomous umbrella body (HECI) itself will be based on transparent public disclosure and use technology extensively to reduce the human interface to guarantee efficiency and transparency in their work.
- The professional councils, such as the ICAR (Indian Council for Agricultural Research), VCI (Veterinary Council of India), NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education), CoA (Council of Architecture), NCVET (National Council for Vocational Education and Training) etc., will act as PSSBs (Professional Standard-Setting Bodies).
- The separation of functions means that each vertical within HECI should single take-up role which is relevant, meaningful, and important in the new regulatory scheme.

Financing HEIs

HEGC (Higher Education Grants Council) is the third vertical body of HECIs. It will carry-out funding function to higher education based on transparent criteria, including the Institutional Development Plans (IDP) prepared by the institutions and its progress made on their implementation. HEGC will be delivered with the distribution of scholarships and fund development to launch new focused areas and expanding programs quality offered at HEIs across disciplines and fields.

General Education Council

The GEC (General Education Council) is the fourth vertical body of HECI. It will frame expected learning outcomes from higher education programs, mentioned as ‘graduate attributes’.

- A NHEQF (National Higher Education Qualification Framework) will be voiced by the GEC. It will work beside the NSQF (National Skills Qualifications Framework) to ease the incorporation of vocational education in the higher education.
- NHEQF describe the learning outcomes of degree, diploma and certificate programs offered in higher education.
- The GEC will create the norms to issuing credit transfer, equivalence, etc., through the NHEQF.
- Students should acquire some important skill sets specified in academic programs.

Professional Standard-Setting Bodies (PSSB)

The councils for professional like the ICAR (Indian Council for Agricultural Research), VCI (Veterinary Council of India), NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education), CoA (Council of Architecture), NCVET (National Council for Vocational Education and Training), etc., will act as PSSBs. It plays an important role in the higher education system and it will be a member of the GEC. After PSSBs restructured as different councils, it will continue to pull the curricula applying certain standards in academic, and also direct teaching, research and extension activities in their domain or discipline. Thus, PSSB’s would also set the standards or expectations in particular fields of learning and practice while having no regulatory role. All HEIs will decide how their educational programs reply to these standards, by considering other things, and it also need to reach out form the support provided by the standard-setting bodies.

Institutional Development Plan

- All HEIs, need to display its commitment for institutional excellence, arrangement with local communities, and maintain the peak standards in financial truthfulness and responsibility.
- Institution need to make a strategic IDP (Institutional Development Plan) based on which institutions will develop initiatives, assess their progress, and set their goals to attain its excellence, which can become the basis to public funding in further.
- The IDP needed to prepare with the joint participation of board members, leaders of institution, faculty, staff and students.

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