LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract:

Maintaining the profile of students and teachers high is a major challenge for higher educational institutions. Teacher quality influences curriculum, provides leadership, and promote student progression leading to innovation and best practices. The leadership provides clear vision and mission for the institution to advance. The functions of the institution and its academic and administrative units are governed by the principles of participation and transparency. Formulation of development objectives, directives and guidelines with specific plans for implementation by aligning the academic and administrative aspects improves the overall quality of the Institutional provisions. With this in view, institutions resort to a lot of ways by which they can attract, motivate and maintain high standards of excellence among teachers and infuse leadership among students. Efforts taken by the institution in maintaining leadership is reflected in the quality policy of the institution as revealed in the top management philosophy of maintaining high standards. This paper discusses the ways and means of leadership development resulting in quality enhancement in higher education institutions.

Index Terms: Leadership Development, Quality Enhancement & Higher Education

1. Introduction:

Higher education institutions ought to be quality centered. This could be achieved essentially by developing leadership among the teachers and students. Teachers take initiative to learn and keep abreast of latest developments, continuously seek improvement in their work and strive for individual and institutional excellence. Developing leadership among them would enhance improved curriculum delivery and innovative pedagogy, potential for research, best use of infrastructure and learning resources, efficient student progression, good governance and adoption of best practices. So also student leadership development results in increased receptiveness to changes, increased motivation and faster absorption of intended changes aimed at quality enhancement.

2. Leadership Development Initiatives:

The Institution nurture leadership in many ways. The following are some of the commonly adopted ways:

Set Standards:

The faculty are allowed to establish desired levels of knowledge and prepare the students accordingly.
- ✓ Teaching: Faculty uses varied and appropriate methods as per the choice of the situation
- ✓ Assessment: Faculty conducts periodic assessment through internal examinations, assignments, presentations and seminars.
- ✓ Attendance: Faculty maintains the attendance of each students on regular basis and ensure that the students maintains minimum required level of attendance through reducing absence, late comings and drop-outs.
- ✓ Inspiring through providing himself as an example: Faculty strives to maintain a high profile so as to become role models for the students.

Measuring Performance:
- ✓ Periodic examinations: The performance of the students is evaluated through periodic internal examinations.
- ✓ Involving in activities: Students are involved in all activities which promote their growth and development.
- ✓ Feedback based improvement: Students are given feedback on their performance and motivated to improve.

3. Enforcing Discipline:
- ✓ Preparing guidelines: The faculty prepare guidelines on the dos and don'ts inside and outside the class rooms following the regulations provided in the college colander.
- ✓ Enforcing control: Late coming, disobedience, bad habits etc. are discouraged.
- ✓ Monitoring: The faculty actively participate in the disciplinary committee as well as providing counseling services.

4. Imbibing Values:

The values of the institution as reflected in the vision and mission of the institution are translated into action through imbibing values among the students.

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Character Formation:

The faculty works closely with the students to influence their character formation such as gender sensitivity, religious tolerance, linguistic and geographical integration and moral integrity.

Personality Building:

Skill development programmes are offered in addition to regular classes which would build their capacity for communication, language comprehension, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, dignity, and appeal.

3. Grooming Leadership:

Leadership development aimed at improving the quality of students is undertaken in innumerable ways. The institution grooms leadership at students and Faculty levels as shown in following tables:

S.No	Levels of Leadership	Ways of Grooming Leadership
1	Academic leadership	1. Curriculum delivery catering to the needs of the students 2. Time bound assignments & Presentations with strict adherence to quality. 3. Use of Library & Technology as learning resource. 4. Exposure to industry. 5. Interaction with experts and visiting faculty. 6. Participation & presentation in conference, seminars and workshops. 7. Periodic internal assessment and examinations.
2	Program organizing leadership	1. Formulating programmes which suit requirements of growth. 2. Articulating roles and responsibilities. 2. Participatory decision making and 3. Involving in implementation. 4. Working in teams 5. Sharing, collaborating and contributing 6. Accepting feedback and improvements. 7. Corrective actions & learning.
3	Sports & Games leadership	1. Developing sportsman spirit. 2. Encouraging participation. 3. Coaching 4. Learning to accept failures. 5. Reviving ambitions 6. Mustering courage. 7. Winning for team and establishing fame.
4	Cultural activities leadership	1. Identifying talents 2. Practicing trails 3. Organising events 4.Promoting participation 5. Extending appreciation 6. Rewarding 7. Developing quest for perfection.

The following six values with corresponding practices are embedded in the Institute's culture developing the full potential of its faculty members and students.

Self Responsibility: Individual takes responsibility of their job, team, function, Institution, the way they wish it to be.

Authentic Communication: Individual communication is open, honest, transparent and vulnerable.

Trust: Individuals feel safe enough to try out new behaviors and take risks without fear.

Personal and Group Process Skills: Individual and the Institution have established protocol's and developed skills which are regularly deployed to resolve interpersonal issues that come across & are resolved quickly and clearly.

Learning and Growing: Individuals are encouraged and rewarded to work on the real growth issues necessary for professional and personal development within the framework of the organization. Individuals are ever challenging themselves and supporting each other to develop and grow.

Caring: The organizational leadership demonstrate in tangible ways concern for individual employee well being. Employees feel valued and are inspired to put in their best effort.

A culture of participative management is promoted by involving the staff and students in various activities. All decisions of the institution are governed by management of facts, information and objectives. Both students and faculties allowed to express themselves of any suggestions to improve the excellence in any aspect of the Institute.

Strategic Level:

✓ The principal, course co-ordinators and staff members are involved in defining the policies and

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procedures, framing guidelines and rules & regulations pertaining to admission, placement, discipline, grievance, counseling, training & development, and library services etc., and effectively implementing the same to ensure smooth and systematic functioning of the institute.

✓ For the various programs to be conducted by the institute all the staff members will meet, discuss, share their opinion and plan for the event and form various committees involving students and coordinate with others.

✓ Staff members are also involved in deciding academic activities and examinations to be conducted by the college.

Functional Level:

✓ For the various events to be conducted by the department, all the staff members will meet, discuss, share their opinion and plan for the event and form various committees involving students and coordinate with others.

✓ Teaching Staff of various departments participate in sharing the knowledge by discussing on the latest trends in their respective area of specialization.

✓ The co-ordinators and the members of different departments meet together and plan the programmes to be conducted.

Operational Level:

✓ All the staff members are involved in deciding day to day academic activities of the department.

✓ Students support to maintain the discipline to ensure smooth and systematic functioning of the institute.

✓ Office staff are involved in executing day to day support services for both students and faculties.

The leadership provides clear vision and mission to the institution. The functions of the institution and its academic and administrative units are governed by the principles of participation and transparency. Formulation of development objectives, directives and guidelines with specific plans for implementation by aligning the academic and administrative aspects improves the overall quality of the Institutional provisions.

4. Quality Policy of the Institution:

Quality policy of the institution is designed to deliver comprehensive, continually enhanced, global quality professional education through an established quality management system complimented by the synergistic interaction of the stakeholders and institution strive to communicate this policy to all the persons at all levels, so that this policy becomes working reality within the organization.

✓ The quality policy is developed by taking into consideration the organizational policy, student progress, expectations of the society and the welfare of the employees.

✓ The Quality Policy is communicated to each and every stakeholder through various channels of communication like College Prospectus, College Calander, and Teaching plan booklets. The Quality policy is displayed to communicate it to all who visit the institute and in the institutional website.

✓ The Quality Policy is deployed by ensuring quality in all the activities and events conducted in the Institute. Quality is also ensured, maintained and given utmost importance in imparting education.

✓ The Quality Policy is also maintained in the functioning of the Library and Information Centre, Computer labs, infrastructure, administration, examination, Student information system and Placements.

✓ For all the activities that take place in the Institute, review of the progress is done at every stage to ensure the quality. On the completion of the activity, all the committee members will review the entire event by taking feedback from the participants, experts and internal staff members. Flaws if any identified, will be rectified for future with modifications and new methods.

5. Perspective Plan:

The Perspective Plan is aligned with our vision and mission. Strategic Plan presents a clear, compelling path to a future of greater institutional distinction. The plan begins with statements of institutional mission, vision, and core values, followed by an articulation of key strategic issues.

Perspective for Students:

The various aspects considered perspective for students in the plan are as follows:

✓ To develop an admission process which would attract the best students in large numbers with a variety of background such as gender, linguistic, religious, cultural, socio-economic and nationality.

✓ To impart quality education to the students enrolled through effective teaching/training methods suited to the needs of the students and maintain a team of highly motivated and competent teachers.

✓ To transform the students in to better performers so as to achieve the best out of each student, that will make them quality professionals to handle multi-faceted jobs.

Perspective for Faculty:

The various aspects considered perspective for faculty in the plan are as follows:

✓ To identify and attract talented professionals who would take challenges and provide leadership to equip an emerging generation with clear sense of direction.

✓ To provide appropriate orientation to the existing and newly absorbed faculty, so as to enable them

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handle difficult situation in the easiest way and be devoted in the task of imparting education to the students.

✓ To transform the faculty in to highly productive, efficient and effective in executing the responsibilities of their job with fullest satisfaction to them as well as to the students, parents and stake holders.

Perspective for Courses:

The various aspects considered perspective for courses in the plan are as follows:

✓ Vertical and horizontal expansion of courses in all realms of knowledge pertaining to the areas of interest of the institution, the students and the community at large.

✓ To maintain high standards in the subjects offered through various courses, which would be in the best interest of the institution, students and stake holders.

✓ By way of enriching the courses and adding new and relevant courses, it is expected that more students will be attracted, quality professionals will be created, greater recognition and reputation for the institution is obtained and the community will be satisfied.

Perspective for Infrastructure Development:

The various aspects considered perspective for infrastructure development in the plan are as follows:

✓ To create better and appropriate infrastructure suited to the anticipated situation, emerging out of the increased intake and expansion of courses.

✓ To make the best use of the infrastructure created through optimum utilization, continuous maintenance, and sustainable efficiency.

✓ To accommodate the multiplying needs resulting from expansion, diversification, and anticipated improvements.

Perspective for Employers:

The various aspects considered perspective for infrastructure development in the plan are as follows :

✓ Creating enhanced opportunity, improving employer interest, catering to the diverse needs of the industry so as to achieve harmony between institution and job market.

✓ Ensuring a regular supply of talented and trained professionals who would provide leadership and handle challenging assignments emerging out of developing needs and changing technology.

✓ Collect regular feedback from the employers and utilize to dovetail the curriculum, supplement knowledge gaps through skill building and valuation.

6. Empowerment Initiatives:

In order to perform their roles and responsibilities, the institution adopts the following strategies in training, retraining and motivating for attaining empowerment.

S.No	Problem	Strategies Adopted	Areas of Training, Retraining and Motivation	Resulting Empowerment
1	Language & Fluency	Frequent use	Communication	Improved ability in communication
2	Deficiency in comprehension	Increased reading	Knowledge	Enhanced competence in imparting knowledge
3	Poor Presentation	Providing know how	Skill	Effective presentation
4	Effective Judgment	Providing guidelines	Evaluation	Fair assessment
5	Strained interpersonal relation	Group activities	Team work	Collaboration and synergy
6	Lack of sensitivity to student difficulties	Increased interactions	Counseling	Better student-teacher relation.
7	Inadequate use of technology	Support facility	Technology adoption	Use of teaching aids & electronic media for effective teaching
8	Negative thinking	Re-orientation	Attitude	Positive thinker
9	Stagnation	Provoking analytical thinking	Advancement of research	More publications & contributions
10	Challenges in effective teaching	Competition for excellence	Teaching Innovation	Adoption of creative thinking and improvement in teaching methods.

7. Conclusion:

Leadership development is imperative for higher education institutions to strive for excellence. This

cover not just teachers, but also students. A variety of ways could be adopted by which quality is realized. The quality policy of the institution and the perspective plan clearly spell out the entire range of possibilities towards quality enhancement through leadership development.

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