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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: A REVIEW ON THE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The Objective of this study identifies the significance of Strategic Planning Efforts (SPEs) and how they contribute to improving the teaching and learning products and discovers and analyses Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) which are important in amelioration the quality and level of education or learning in HEIs. Method: The surveys were applied as a method of research; and the questionnaires were administered to some of the experts in the field of academic development programs, faculty and administrators in HEIs in Iraq, and the analysis was conduct using SPSS software. Novelty: This paper develops a theoretical model based on the objectives of the offered Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) which are essential to teaching and learning processes. The framework combines and links together the following components: Four Common Forms of Knowledge: PCK, CD/CD, IS, EAFP, and PGR, all of which are seen as fundamental features necessary for the progression of faculty development.

INDEX TERMS: *Strategic Planning; Faculty Development Programs; Teaching and learning performance; Higher education institutions.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important element that has remained the only path to exist and thrive in the constantly changing world and reality in every aspect of life, as well as the only way to develop stability in order to realize individual and institutional potential. Sustained academic development is to restore the efficiency of stakeholders, to improve the quality of courses and curriculum while elevating educational institutions where students can efficiently, and at an optimum level, learn science and acquire knowledge to address the challenge of a volatile life. There are thus three major goals of academic development in a higher education institution, the first being to enable and equip the students to gain knowledge and raise their educational capacity and thinking ability to a level that increases productivity. The second objective is to increase the productivity of the faculty members and to promote their competencies and facilitate skills regarding instructional input, research activities and other related academic and professional activities that will increase the quality of teaching as well as enable the faculty members to transmit knowledge to the disciples efficiently. The third is to create and enhance the quality and standards of curriculum in periodic and recurring manner. The academic development programs in most of the world's acknowledged higher education institutions are core and indispensable. They show effectively how the set goals are to be attained and how the envisaged benefits are to be realised for students, faculty and institutions. For instance, it is mandatory that a student, who wants to study academic skills development in a higher education setting, gets a chance to learn research skills, thinking skills as well as knowledge acquisition skills for current or future programs or courses, or even future occupations. In the same manner, all the faculties regardless of level and rank, should participate in academic development pursuits that focus on the teaching-learning skills and academic research and publication aptitude; significant thinking skills in formal curriculum and incidental curriculum; methods, skills, and approaches in teaching-learning process. The above highlights that, through academic development programs, it becomes possible to improve the knowledge base and skills among the faculty members, and facilitate organizational, pedagogical content knowledge among the specified personnel besides the ability to transfer knowledge rapidly and in an efficient manner that reflects in quality teaching and learning competencies in higher education institutions.

Academic Development Programs offer the support, the tools, knowledge, and skills that faculty members need to design or build curriculum and course design, the assessment and feedback, the teaching strategies, and knowledge of learning outcomes.

It is evident that academic development and the benefits and outcomes of its use are not confined to the developed countries only, but to enhance the results of teaching and learning, there is a significant concern shown to adapt with as well as to partner with it from time to time in the Iraqi higher education institutions.

As the society advances towards the next phase of post- modern education, it is more important to understand ways through which strategic planning enhances teaching and learning. In this article, the reader will get an understanding of the ways in which Faculty Development Programs enhance Teaching and Learning and how they affect the efficiency of Professors, faculty members, administrators and the makers of Academic policies.

Some findings of the current literature on strategic planning and academic development programmes, and their effectiveness in enhancing the quality of learning and teaching in higher education institutions are discussed in relation to the theoretical framework. Thus, since the theoretical component constitutes a key aspect of the strategic approaches promoting the advancement of teaching and learning, the literature lacks a focus on the primary effects and outcomes of academic development that directly impact the quality of teaching and learning in the HES in Iraq. In this context, considering all the bureaucracies and challenges in the context of higher education in Iraq, and in the absence of clear international standards for academic development, dimensions of this gap and need for a systemic understanding of the benefits and outcomes of the academic development programs were identified.

While there is a vast amount of standard-related research that serves as the basis for improvement of teaching and learning programs worldwide, however, knowledge and usage of these standards regarding the academic development within HEI in Iraq are limited. Furthermore, recent research is usually based on deducted and non-integrated programs of the academic development process in comparison with using an integrated set of standards, practices, and comprehensive strategic planning in higher education in the country.

Given these shortcomings, our central research question is: In what manner do academic development programs in Iraq influence the key place of the international benchmarks on which teaching and learning in higher education is premised?

Consequently, this article will start with a review of the relevant literature as it relates to academic development and its effects on improving teaching and learning in higher learning institutions with emphasis on studies done in the Iraqi context. We then utilise the proposed theoretical framework of this research: the main hypotheses are defined based on the core criteria that should be delivered by academic development programmes. Hence, through the survey results, we aim at understanding the distinct issues and prospects of HEIs in the Iraq context and the extent of the integration of academic development programs. Therefore, we have logically broken down the general concept of teaching and learning performance indicators and then schematically seen how and in what manner academic development programs could impact the specific criteria in Iraq. Finally, we will explain how our research can be useful for the higher education context in Iraq, how suggestions for institutional decision making and academic policy making can be made taking into consideration various perspectives and evidence, so as to contribute to the ongoing work toward the improvement of teaching and learning in the Iraq higher education system and student achievement and institutional efficiency.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The subject of strategic planning and academic development as a tool in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in higher learning institutions is of significant interest to academics, researchers and policymakers and therefore much research has been done towards this field. The primary literature that will be examined in this section shall at the same time help derive hypotheses upon which development of the theoretical framework of this research shall be based. In this review, emphasis will be laid on the core deliverables of academic development as well as its function for enhancing teaching and learning performance.

2.1 Strategic Planning and Faculty Development Programs

An important component on which many activities of higher education institutions are built today and, most importantly, in defining the objectives, priorities, and resources required for faculty development programs is strategic planning [1].

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Strategic plans initiated by leaders and decision-makers in higher learning institutions are useful as they will only guide institutions in defining what professional development programs are required for the faculty members and made sure that the programs offered are in line to meet the set goals to ensure that the advanced ranks are attained in enhancing teaching and learning [2].

In this sense, strategic planning occupies a crucial position in the creation of academic environment focused on innovation and collaboration, which is expressed in, for example, support for the development of initiatives by teachers.

Duderstadt highlighted that when educational institutions incorporate academic development programmes in their strategic frameworks, they aim at enhancing professional development that enhances the efficiency of teachers for outcome focused teaching and learning; research and engaging in enhancement of teaching and learning efficacies [3].

Strategic planning has a critical impact on directing the faculty development programs towards the achievement of institutional aims and objectives, attainment of priorities, as well as acquisition of accreditation standards from reputable global organisations [2]. Consequently, the objectives formulated with reference to faculty development programs in strategic plans ensure a high importance and efficacy of institutional programs in the sphere of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

However, as pointed out by Duderstadt [3], while strategic planning plays a positive part in faculty development, it is also a challenge for the organisation to integrate the programs into its processes and accord it high priority in the strategic planning exercise.

Among the most essential challenges, we identify priorities' rivalry, for some IHEs reside in places where goals differ or even contradict each other, while the schedules of such programs may intertwine; therefore, the issue of applying such concepts proves challenging [1].

Another contraindication is limited resources which calls for initiative taking leadership, teamwork and commitment in the regular assessment and evaluation of faculty development programmes. Accordingly, the relationship between Strategic Planning and Faculty Development Programs is hypothesized as follows:
Hypothesis 1: Strategic planning within higher education institution has overall positive impact on the design and implementation of the faculty development programmes

2.2 Faculty Development Programs and the Pedagogical Contents Knowledge (PCK)

Several literatures have discussed on academic development programs and the effects of these programs on enhancing the educational skills and on increasing the teaching effectiveness of faculty members in HEI [4], [5], [6], [7], [8].

In more details, many other literatures have established that FDPs have a positive effect on improving the knowledge of educational content among faculty members in universities and educational institutions [9], [10], [11], [12].

Even if the higher education institutions are also different in the kind and quality of academic development programmes that they design and implement, it should be noted that the most important of these programmes continue to be restricted to ideas such as workshops, seminars, mentoring programmes and plans for group discussions, as well as on-line courses and educative clinics [13].

In the context of this work, Sarkar et. al. explained Pedagogical Contents Knowledge (PCK) as knowledge in apprenticeship, reception of progressive theories and valuable teaching expertise as well as recognisable evaluation procedures [14]. Hence, teaching knowledge can be a theoretical and practical approach required for enhancing favourable learning environment in the classroom [15].

A case study of a university where the Faculty Development Program had been introduced. The findings have indicated that the identified faculty members enhanced valuable components of their pedagogical knowledge base and teaching behaviours after engagement in this program [16].

Similar studies, on the same subject of how that faculty development interventions impact on the acquisition of pedagogical knowledge, were also reviewed and synthesized in meta-analysis by Gesel et. al [17].

Combined and meta-analysis of the findings of the study also confirmed the overall findings that the faculty development program was effective in enhancing the faculty members' pedagogical content knowledge regardless of the majors and the colleges to which these belonged.

Based on the literature review and analysis it has been identified that the faculty development programs, which incorporate the evidence-based teaching methods, learning activities and the use of technologies often gain speed and quality for developing and integrating the teaching competencies [18].

Hence, the correlation between Faculty Development Programs and the Pedagogical Contents Knowledge (PCK) is hypothesized as follows:
Hypothesis 2: Active participation in faculty development programmes enhances the lecturer's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK).

2.3 Faculty Development Programs and the Curriculum Development and Course Design (CDCD)

The Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) have a major positive impact in improving the curriculum and or course offered in higher learning institution.

All these influences cut across institutional context and the professional capacity of the faculty to extend to the culture and practice of colleges and universities [19].

Engaging such programs creates awareness of improvement and reflection among the members encouraging them to review the courses of study and enhance their response to existing discipline norms and also adopt changes in education [20], [21].

Community cooperation initiatives mean that the faculty members are able to share the best practices and ideas, as well as share experiences concerning contentious issues in curriculum and course development and delivery [22], [23].

In concerns with the Iraqi HEI context, it is clear that the programs aimed at the faculty development has the potential to significantly address the challenges and opportunities which were identified as more relevant to the region.

As the higher education environment continues to expand, so does the expectation for adaptation in the pedagogy and course content by the faculty members [24], [25].

The Faculty Development Programs can assume a basic function of catalysing innovation and change process where the faculty is able to design curricula which are on par with the international standards, taking into account religious and cultural norms and values, and has the potential to integrate multiculturalism into the curriculum in order to prepare students for the world of the future [26], [27]. Accordingly, the proposed hypothesis in this context is:
Hypothesis 3: Attending Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) has a positive correlation with the quality of curriculum and course design on the higher learning institutions.

2.4 Faculty Development Programs and the Instructional Skills (ISs)

The programs of faculty development are important to enhance faculty members' Instructional Skills (ISs) in universities, colleges and other similar higher education institutions to promote the quality of teaching and learning in higher education settings [28]. Scholarly programs and activities directed at faculty members and the enhancement of their instructional effectiveness and academic productivity can be described as having various purposes and subject matters. This means that one program is relevant to some goals while irrelevant to others, so for example, some goals may have to be achieved through the workshops while others may be achieved through group discussion, and so on [29], [30].

Literature review reveals that educational faculty development interventions underlined for instructional skills have a positive correlation and are effective for increasing the level of student's engagement in classroom activities as well as the level of communication between the teacher and the learner [31], [32], [33].

These programmes equip faculty members of higher educations and institutions with researched based curriculum and -teaching methodologies, place the student and technological developments at the core of the 'teaching curriculum', and employ modern end efficient techniques in the assessment thus enabling them to design and

enhance the delivery of teaching learning environment that enhances comprehensive understanding and critical thinking skills [34].

For that matter, there are often opportunities for reflection in practice, working with others, or receiving feedback in faculty development programs. These give impetus to the lifelong learning and development [35], [36].

Lectures, workshops, seminars, teaching seminars, and training sessions are chance to the faculty members to review their skills systematically with the intention of making appropriate improvements and to help ensure that the students are making the most progress they possibly can [37], [38], [39].

Although currently faculty development programs in higher education institutions in Iraq are weak or in their initial stages, there is observed a developing need among the decision-makers regarding the concerned problems relating to practice and learning in educational field for the students [40], [41]. Consequently, to improve the quality of teachers' practices, these development programs improve the learning outcomes and the students' achievement [42], [43]. Accordingly, the correlation between Faculty Development Program and Enhanced Instructional Skills is hypothesized as follows:
Hypothesis 4: Professional development of faculty members contributes to an improvement of instructional skills and thus the quality of education and students' performance in teaching institutions.

2.5 Faculty Development Programs and Enhanced Assessment and Feedback Practices (EAFP)

This has been underscored by many literatures on Academic Development programs and the effectiveness of the programs in improving principle in the assessment and Feedback Practices in the higher education institutions [44], [45], [46], [47], [48]. Teaching skills enhancement strategies added to the assessment improvement plans are part of the faculty development activity of the academe [49]. These offer the chances to learn innovative methods of formulating assessment with regard to current theories on learning and technique improvement [50]. Hence assessment related workshops, seminars and courses, make it possible for the faculty development programs to support, sustained faculty development in assessment practices that the faculty members wish to enhance [51].

Faculty development programs, affect basic teaching and learning achievement through enhanced and mature assessment practices. Basically, numerous literature reviews have revealed that classroom faculties who engage in professional development and assessment skills programs are far more willing than other faculties to introduce new and various methods of course assessment [52].

The skills of various assessment like Focused Listing, Misconception/Preconception Check, Analytic Memos, Documented Problem Solutions, Student-Generated Test Questions etc. will lead to a more active pedagogy and will enhance critical thinking abilities and different modes of positive learner involvement [53], [54].

Further, faculty development programs equip the lecturers with means and morale to enhance course offerings and tests to be in harmony with learning outcomes [55]. Active engagement in faculty development programmes enhances specific evaluation practices required in dealing with issues as validity, dependability and equity among others.

Despite the fact that faculty development programs in higher education institutions serve to help adopt advanced models of assessment, the institutions in general, including the Iraqi ones, are challenged with certain barriers to successful implementation. Due to lack of institutional support or the absence of academic development programmes at the required level, participants in those programmes tend to resist change [51]. Moreover, technology-based assessment also has other challenges such as skills in using IT for assessment need continuous updating and IT support which certain tutors do not possess [56]. Based on the literature reviews conducted, the hypothesis proposed in this content is as follows:
Hypothesis 5: Engagement in Academic Development Programs at the faculty level results to improved Assessment Practices.

2.6 ***Faculty Development Programs and Professional Growth and Reflection (PGR)***

Professional development programs offered through higher learning institutions have had a chance to develop their approaches to teaching and methods and to triumph over impasses that occur every occasionally to offer higher order decisions that go a long way in enhancing student learning through reflection, peer review, and feedback [57].

Enhancing the faculty development programs in the higher education institutions through reflective practice is the one of the most important components, with the direct effect related to the improvement of critical evaluation practices, ways and methods of teaching and to the raising up the level of the evaluation of the students' outcomes [58].

Review of available literature underscores FDPs and especially their central role in enhancing the overall professional growth and reflection of faculty members in HEIs [59], [60]. Recent study explained the engagement which was facilitated by FDP and the multiple dimensions; the most critical of them being to support the continuous professional growth for faculty and encourage reflection in higher education institutions [61].

Another study to the evaluation of reflective teaching that is supported by FDP workshops, and based on the results obtained, it can be stated that the participants of such events reported about higher level of reflection, enhanced understanding of teaching approaches, and growth in reflective practices [62]. Therefore, Brown et. al. outcomes show how the FDPs foster reflection and professional development in the teaching process and faculty in HEIs.

Mentoring programs of FDP were highlighting effects of FDP online program on reflective profession of the faculty members [63]. The study also focused more on the expansion of the role of self-criticism, group and professional participants' criticism of FDP activities related to mentorship, and it contributed enhancement of critical-thinking skills of faculty members of higher education institutions.

Further, engagements in faculty development programmes should encourage reflective practice and professional development of the faculty participants [64]. The study has shown that as a result their teaching skills have been enhanced in a way.

Not only does the faculty development concern the teaching part of education and learning, teaching-methods, approaches and teaching skills but also scientific activities like research, publishing, conferences and seminars [58].

University development academic activities offer intellectual concepts, abilities, materials, advice, and dissemination to enable the faculty members to engage in research and development practice, and to expand their expertise in specialties [57].

Consequently, as the professional growth, scientific and critical thinking, faculties can develop their specialized, sophisticated knowledge and spread the culture of knowledge in the academic background [65]. Accordingly, the correlation between Faculty Development Program and Professional Growth and Reflection (PGR) is hypothesized as follows:
Hypothesis 6: Active participation in faculty development programs has a positive impact on the professional growth of faculty members as well as their reflection practices in higher education institutions.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research explores the effectiveness of academic development in the various facets of teaching and learning in an attempt to find out how far the participation in such programs aid the improvement of the existing teaching practice, encourages the professional development of university instructors and support the development of a culture of academic reflection. The survey research method was developed and administered following a structured questionnaire that was sent electronically to selected academics.

3.1 Conceptual Framework and hypotheses

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 has been developed through the present study to analyse the impact of academic development programs on teaching and learning elements in higher education contexts.

Presenting the associates amongst the leading variables of the study and exhibiting how the measures of academic development programs can affect academic performances, teaching competency, and learning engagement in academic sessions, this theoretical framework forms the theoretical foundation of the research.

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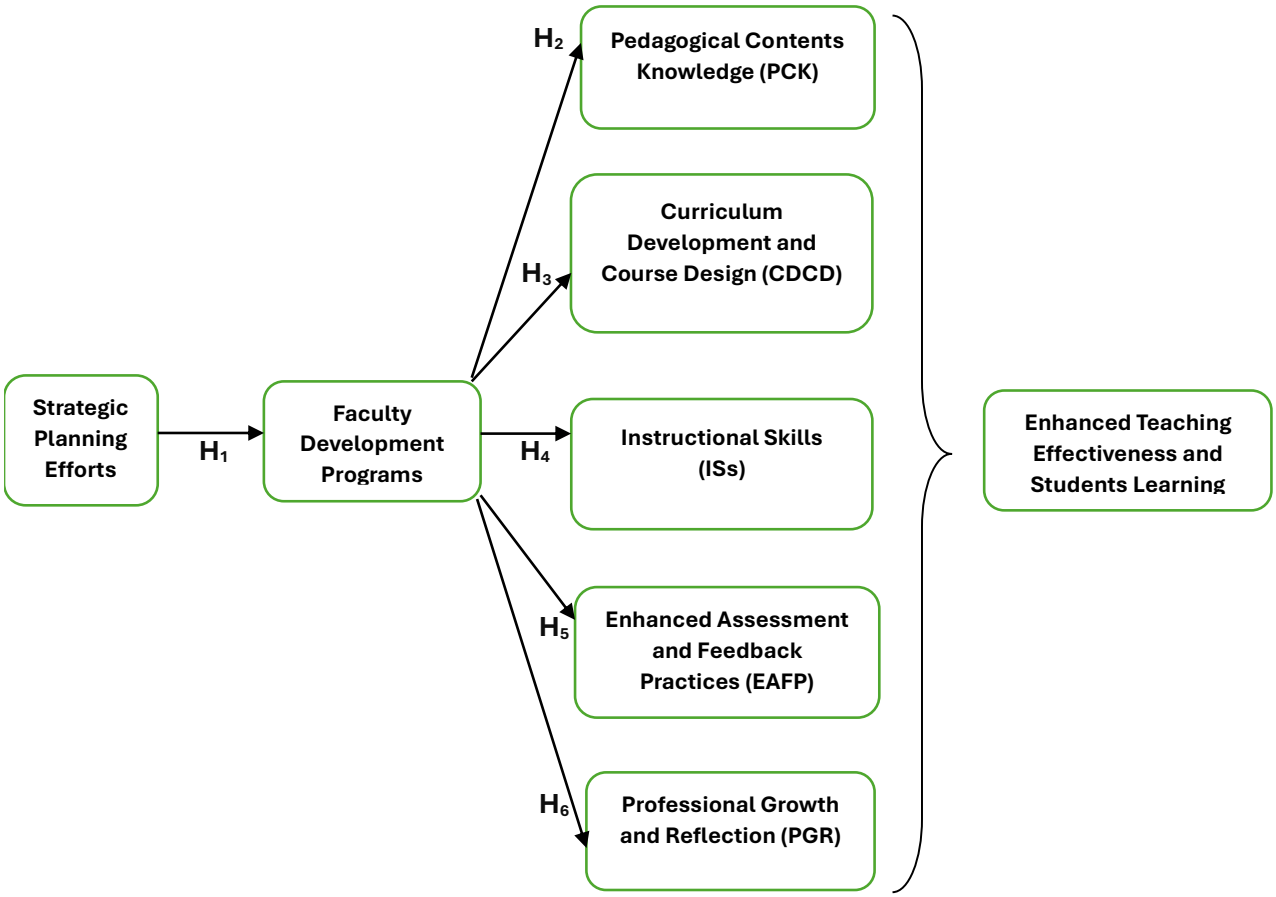

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Pivotal to this framework, the strategic planning efforts are well defined as those deliberate or purposeful endeavours and planning processes that are carried out by Institutional leaders with the intent of raising the standards of educational performance.

It is therefore the kinds of strategic planning initiatives that are credited for the design, implementation and outcomes of faculty development programmes. Faculty development programmes are thus tools that enable the improvement of skills, content and efficiency of university teachers. An analysed and experience-matured strategic approach suggests that educational institutions will tend to appropriate the resources required for performing far more potent and influential FD tasks.

In these development programs claiming faculty knowledge, faculty members come into contact with impressive array of pedagogical knowledge with which they can develop curriculum, enhance learning competencies or even enhance the quality of assessment and feedback practices. Also, these programs foster the reflective practice of lecturers and improve the kind of knowledge they impart to students.

Thus, improvement in the realm of knowledge, approaches, development and critical analysis of the faculty members seems to be contributing a great deal in the advancement of teaching. Faculty members involved in effective professional development projects are better placed to enhance education participation, deliver constructive feedback and promote the interactive learning environment.

The higher education institutions have the following great opportunism through which the level of educational experience can be raised through extra strategic plan implementation and faculty development program. By means of these programmes, it is possible to achieve the highest results in terms of the quality of teaching-learning processes, which will enhance the process of further development of higher education institutions.

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3.2 Participant Selection

To achieve maximum result and increase its credibility, there was a lot of concern in selecting participants in the survey where only academic competencies, those with experience in strategic planning, academic development, teaching, education, research, and publishing were selected. Therefore, participants were recruited in a manner that is consistent with the criterion of this research; so that insights that will be useful for the purpose of narrowing this gap and responding to the research questions are achieved.

So, there was the big concern to choose participants of this questionnaire, who are the academic leaders and decision-makers, who have the experience of working in different positions in the higher education institutions in Iraq and they can be deans of colleges, assistant deans, head/ deputy head of departments, or directors of centres.

3.3 Questionnaire Design

The survey was divided into two main sections: The first section included questions regarding demographic data of participants, and the second section contained the majority of this research's questions. The demographic department is expected to gather information on the age, sex, qualification, academic rank and job position of participants.

The second part of the questionnaire was the main survey questions formulated to assess the six hypotheses in this study as explained below. The main survey questions used the Likert scale as an assessment tool.

3.4 Data Collection

The survey was distributed electronically using a link generated from a Google Doc form in order to reach and share the questionnaire with the selected participants as quickly as possible. Above 257 experts of strategic planning in higher education institution, academic leaders and faculty members were requested to complete the survey; the objective being to receive as many views and inputs as possible from different people who had experiences in the field of higher education in Iraq. A total of 172 participants submitted complete and integrated answer to the online questionnaire while 23 participants partially filled the questionnaire, and 62 participants did not answer the questionnaire.

3.5 Data Analysis

At the end of data gathering process, the answers which were collected were categorized and quantified using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool. The research hypotheses were tested with the help of numerical information and correlation and regression analyses were used to identify relationships between the variables.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

In order to provide a clear view of the results of the data analysis and save space simultaneously, we have summarized all the findings in the table below. This approach emphasizes only the most important findings; thus, there is a detailed and uncomplicated analysis of the associations between faculty development programs and various positive outcomes, which will be comprehensible for our readers.

The rows on the table represent the six hypotheses of this study and each column displays important statistical measures that we derived from our analyses. In summary of the analysis, we combine the ANOVA F-values and associated p-values and link the coefficient t-values to the respective p-values to provide a comprehensive picture of the significance of all the relationships studied in the course of our research.

This procedure helps a fast correlation of hypotheses with the help of which it is easier to pay attention to significant results. For instance, hypotheses analysed and attained p-values less than our election standard of 0.05 levels are termed 'Accepted', implying a close link between faculty development activities and the often-dependent variable. Nonetheless, hypotheses, which p-values are higher than the set criterion, are categorized as 'Rejected,' meaning that no correlation is present. Table 1 below shows results of the analysis that we have collected and presented in this format.

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Table 1: The Condensed table

Hypothesis	ANOVA Sig.	ANOVA F-value	Coefficient Sig. (Constant)	Coefficient t-value (Constant)	Coefficient Sig. (Ind. Var.)	Coefficient t-value (Ind. Var.)	Accept/ Reject
Hypothesis 1	<.001	445.380	<.001	3.782	<.001	21.104	Accepted
Hypothesis 2	<.001	91.670	<.001	8.498	<.001	9.574	Accepted
Hypothesis 3	<.001	18.714	<.001	9.861	<.001	4.326	Accepted
Hypothesis 4	<.001	404.954	<.001	4.647	<.001	20.123	Accepted
Hypothesis 5	<.001	436.643	<.001	3.993	<.001	20.896	Accepted
Hypothesis 6	<.001	856.337	<.001	3.928	<.001	18.818	Accepted

4.2 Discussion

The descriptive cross-sectional study design was aimed at establishing the effect of the variables below on the lecturers' willingness and quantity of use of multimedia for their lectures. The population of participants consisted of 10 lecturers and 120 students taking literature, among whom were 14 students from Univ.1 and 9 students from Univ.2, all in their third year taking the creative writing course. The details of the respondents are captured in the table below.

H_1: Strategic planning within higher education institution has overall positive impact on the design and implementation of the faculty development programmes.

The findings from the linear regression analysis conducted with SPSS demonstrate a statistically significant correlation between the independent variable: The Strategic Planning Efforts, and the dependent variable: Faculty Development Programs.

The ANOVA in Table 1 shows that Sig is 0.01 which indicates that there is a relationship between these two variables. Also, the high F (F = 445.380) shows this same corelation also exits. As for the significance of the variables within the framework, both the Constant and the Coefficient for the Strategic Planning Effort yield p values well below.001.

The analysis of results presented allows to state that there is enough evidence to accept H_1 and to conclude that the operative strategic planning in higher education institutions has a positive and statistically significant influence on success of the FD initiatives in the higher education institutions. This hypothesis highlights, particularly the importance of strategic leadership in sustained universities, enhancing a continuing professional development competency, and improving the educational professions.
Therefore, H1 is accepted.

H_2: Active participation in faculty development programmes enhances the lecturer's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). Based on the ANOVA of hypothesis 2, the significance value (Sig) in table 1 corresponding with the regression model is less than 0.001. This means that, the overall model has a very significant value in a statistical sense of the word. Moreover, the F-value of 91.670 is greater than the F-value of 2.45 for 2 and 18 degrees of freedom which is the cutoff for significance. It also appears from the Coefficients in table 1 that the constant is statistically significant since the Sig. = 0.000 < 0.001 and t = 8.498 >Critical value. In a similar manner, for the independent variable "Faculty Development Programs," the Sig. is less than 0.001 with a t- value of 9.574. According to the above findings, it is apparent that faculty development programs feature a central direction in enhancing the quality of knowledge in education, within faculty members in order to maximize teaching effectiveness and students' performance to the optimum way and to the best. Hence, in view of this analysis, H_2 has been accepted.

H_3: Attending Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) has a positive correlation with the quality of curriculum and course design on the higher learning institutions. The ANOVA significance level is less than 0.001, and this means, there is a significant correlation between the variables. The F-value is 18.714, which goes above the critical value when it comes to significance.

Furthermore, the sig value for the coefficients for both the constant and the independent variable are less than 0.001 making them significant. The t-values for both the variables are also as far correct significant. These statistics therefore indicate that apprehensive participation in such programs will enhance curriculum development and course designs in a higher learning institution. This would in turn stimulate quality teaching and mastering approaches in addition to enhancing general teaching and learning full critical skills. Therefore, engagement in

the faculty development programmes and its effectiveness on curriculum and course development in the higher learning institutions call for the endorsement and approval of H_3.

H_4: Professional development of faculty members contributes to an improvement of instructional skills and thus the quality of education and students' performance in teaching institutions. In the case of hypothesis 4, the obtained ANOVA sig. value is less than 0.001, implying a significant relationship between the variables. The F–ratio is 404.954 which is fairly above the essential F–value for significance. Also, the obtained values of sig for both, the Coefficients Constant and Independent Variable are less than 0.001. In addition, both t-values for the variables are also highly significant.

This means that the faculty development programs proposed towards presenting the best image of education lead to a significant enhancement of their educational competencies and teaching expertise. It emphasizes the necessity of opportunities for professional development for the lecturers in order to enhance the teaching skills of HEIs' instructional staff and promote effective teaching practices; thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and learning performance, therefore accepting H_4.

H_5: Engagement in Academic Development Programs at the faculty level results to improved Assessment Practices.
With the case of Hypothesis 5, since the value of ANOVA sig. shown in the table is less than 0.001 there is important relationship. Moreover, the value of F obtained is 436.643 which also validates in precise manner that it has exceeded the cut off value of significance. The values of the coefficients sig. function show that the constant and the independent Variable have sig values below 0.001. Further, the t-values of the two variables are tremendously significant as well.

This means that contribution in faculty development programs leads to adoption of progressive assessment strategies that support student learning and academic achievement, therefore supporting H_5.

H6: Active participation in faculty development programs has a positive impact on the professional growth of faculty members as well as their reflection practices in higher education institutions. ANOVA sig. for hypothesis 6 in Table 1 is less than 0.001 which means the relationship is very important. The F-value received is 856.337 which is quite high from the F critical value at the level of significance.

The value in the sig. function discovered that, both the coefficient for the constant term as well as for the independent Variable was less than 0.001. The t-values for both variables are also greater that their respective t-critics values hence highly significant. This supports the understanding that faculty development programs do effect on the professional growth and reflective practice of higher education faculty and therefore improves the teaching skills of the faculty members and publicizing the student learning outcomes. Therefore, H_6 is accepted.

5 CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: This article discusses some of the implications of faculty development programs and strategic planning on teaching and learning activities in higher learning institutions. In order to demonstrate the nature and overall strength of the relationships concerning the six hypotheses concerning faculty development and teaching and learning outcomes were analysed in the study. The results showed that strategic planning in the context of higher education institutions directly affects the activation of faculty development programs, which also have an effective and direct positive impact on the main pillars on which the edifice of higher education is built, namely Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Curriculum Development and Course Design (CDCD), Instructional Skills (ISs), Enhanced Assessment and Feedback Practice (EAFP) and Professional Growth and Reflection (PGR).

Implication: Such outcomes stress the importance of the further development of the proper faculty development initiatives and such strategic planning to enhance the quality of educational process in HE institutions. If institutions equip faculties with all the necessary professional developmental capability and obtain cooperative educational environments, they shall build needful ecologies favourable to learners, facilitates needed education and ensure overall satisfaction.

Limitation: Any credible higher learning institution will embrace the notion that development of faculty and having strategic plans are the two most efficient ways of making academics prosperous in their future. Unfortunately, this research did not incorporate all the standards, therefore the work of these institutions would require further research of other factors that could increase the efficiency and capabilities of faculty members.

Future Research: Credible higher learning institutions understand that faculty development as well as strategic planning are the only ways to a great future of education. Hence, making those institutions more innovating, collaborative, and improvement oriented, then those institutions can effectively address the needs of the students and equip them appropriately to live in a competitive and pressing world.

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