



## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND THE WESTERN WORLD

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### **Abstract:**

*This research paper explores the differences in management approach and environment between higher education institutions in Pakistan and the Western world. The study aims to identify the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Pakistani universities in comparison to their Western counterparts. The study employed qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Focused discussions took place during the research from some universities of Karachi solely due to a lack of available resources. The findings reveal significant differences in management approach and environment between Pakistani and Western universities, including differences in governance structures, academic freedom, funding models, and faculty roles. The study concludes with recommendations for improving the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan, including the need for greater autonomy, increased funding, and a shift towards more student-centered teaching methods.*

**Keywords:** Management, Higher Education Institutions, Leadership, Funding

### **Introduction:**

In today's era, educational institutions are not only the yardstick for measuring the progress of any country, but through them, the literacy of the country is also measured. In particular, higher education institutions are also the backbone of the country's economic development. We are aware of many countries that have achieved the high goals of economic and social development thanks to their higher educational institutions and have registered their name among the developed nations of the world. However, in this context, Pakistani higher education institutions face particular difficulties as many issues, such as inadequate funding, political bias, and lack of autonomy are major obstacles to their development. In contrast, universities in the Western world enjoy a high degree of autonomy and are generally well-funded. She also has the experience of leading in the world and she is playing the role of leadership in all walks of life for the whole world. The purpose



of this study is to identify the difference in management approach and environment between higher education institutions in Pakistan and the Western world, which in turn translates into the social differences at the country level that exist between countries in the world. Divides developed and underdeveloped. Therefore, this paper focuses on identifying the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Pakistani universities

Pakistan has a large and growing higher education system, with over 150 public and private universities and degree-granting institutions. However, the sector faces significant challenges, including inadequate funding, political interference, and a lack of autonomy. These challenges have resulted in a poor quality of education, low morale among faculty and staff, and a lack of innovation and excellence in research and teaching.

Although Pakistan has a large and growing higher education system with more than 150 public and private universities and degree-granting institutions, the sector faces significant challenges, including inadequate funding, political interference, and autonomy. The lack of is the most prominent. These challenges result in poor quality of education, low morale of faculty and staff, and lack of innovation and excellence in research and teaching. In contrast, universities in the Western world not only enjoy a high degree of autonomy but also identify and lead the direction of society. All this cannot be possible unless the universities are well-funded. These institutions in the West can attract top talent, invest in cutting-edge research and technology, and provide high-quality education to their students. Higher education systems in Western countries, including Finland, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, and the rest of the world, are characterized by a strong culture of academic freedom, which allows faculty members to pursue research and teaching without political interference.

### **Literature Review:**

There are many researches and papers on the situation of the universities of the world which shed light on almost all aspects. Similarly, the literature on the challenges and opportunities facing higher education institutions in Pakistan is vast and diverse. Here, we review some key studies and findings in the field, highlighting the unique challenges facing Pakistani universities and potential strategies to improve their management.

A review of history shows that even after seven decades of independence, Pakistan's higher education development indicators show no improvement as access to higher education remains relatively low due to unemployment and economic disparity and political instability. The quality of primary and secondary education in Pakistan is generally poor. There is a dire need to improve science education, even though it has reached a very low level. Ever since independence, there is a severe shortage of teachers, libraries, laboratories and inventive materials in these educational institutions. (Ghulam Rasool, 2007).



To maximize the benefits of faculty-student interaction, postgraduate work is currently concentrated in university departments. However, this trend often limits access to university faculty, making it difficult for them to conduct high-level research due to the absence of strict guidelines. Universities are essential for post-secondary education, especially vocational training. The actual management of the education system at the national level is not entirely with the universities. However, all provincial universities offer both public and private degree programs. (John and Hussain, 2020).

These universities oversee research boards that cover various topics, administer bachelor's degree programs, and conduct examinations. These universities have set extremely low standards for faculty qualifications and hiring, and have increased the burden on physical facilities such as labs, libraries, and classrooms. Although inspection teams are also sent to the college regularly, most college and university exams require 50 to pass the students. Only sixty percent of them can continue or gain admission to master's programs. (Nasser Khan, 2018).

Although it is excellent that these professional and technical universities produce a large number of doctors and engineers. However, only exceptional students were admitted to these universities. That is, those who generally score between 85% and 95% in upper secondary school (12th standard or HSSC) examinations. According to [stateuniversity.com](http://stateuniversity.com), according to “After graduating from them, most students move to the competitive Western world to pay for their paid education or to seek better livelihoods and better opportunities.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This research will add to the existing body of knowledge on higher education management in Pakistan and the West. The findings of the study will shed light on the specific challenges faced by Pakistani universities and suggest suggestions for enhancing their management. The study will also highlight the potential benefits of adopting Western governance structures, providing academic freedom, funding models and faculty roles in Pakistani universities.

The study will be significant for policymakers, university administrators, and faculty members in Pakistan. The findings will provide recommendations for improving the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan, including the need for greater autonomy, increased funding, and a shift towards more student-centered teaching methods. The study will also provide insights into the potential benefits of adopting the governance structures, academic freedom, funding models, and faculty roles in Pakistani universities by looking at the models of Oxford University (USA), Harvard University (USA), and the University of Auckland (New Zealand).

### **Objectives:**

1. Identify the challenges faced by Pakistani higher education institutions compared to their Western counterparts.



2. Examine the differences in governance structures, academic freedom, funding models and faculty roles between Pakistani and Western universities.
3. Suggest strategies to improve the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What challenges do Pakistani higher education institutions face compared to their Western counterparts?
2. How do governance structures, academic freedom, funding models and faculty roles differ between Pakistani and Western universities?
3. What strategies can be adopted to improve the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan?

### **Methodology:**

The research methodology of this paper includes a qualitative approach with a focus on document analysis and content analysis of relevant documents and studies. The study comprehensively reviewed academic literature, research reports and policy documents to identify the unique challenges and opportunities facing higher education institutions in Pakistan compared to their Western counterparts. The analysis involved interpreting the results in the context of the research questions. Additionally, this study conducted interviews with experts in the higher education sector in Pakistan to gather additional insights and validate the findings of the document analysis.

### **Obstacles faced by Institutions in Pakistan**

#### **1. Political interference:**

Since the independence of Pakistan, the education system has been facing many challenges and the biggest among them is political interference in the education process. However, there is no denying that the word political intervention is used in a negative context today, even though the issues can be resolved in a better way as a result. However, these measures of political parties did not fulfill the requirements of the country's educational standards. This is the reason that after almost 75 years, despite the experiences of UGC and HEC, the Pakistani university system is facing numerous problems. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan recognizes the current state of the world and strives to present the higher education system in a global context. Pakistan's higher education system is often plagued by shortages of teachers and classroom space, declining research standards, poor facilities and infrastructure, low student enrollment rates, and archaic teaching methods, lack of student enthusiasm, poverty and gender inequality. Issues such as bias are encountered (Salik and Xiong, 2014). In the past, there was usually only political interference at the level of schools and colleges, but as a result of the Eighteenth Amendment in Pakistan, after higher education institutions were given at the provincial level, universities are now experiencing more political interference. Therefore, political interference in university affairs is one of the major challenges faced by Pakistani universities (Ali, 2016). This interference can lead to the appointment of incompetent or incompetent administrators, manipulation of academic curricula,



and suppression of academic freedom (Rashid, 2017).

## **2. Inadequate Funding:**

Pakistani universities also face significant challenges in terms of inadequate funding (Sadiqi, 2017). The higher education sector in Pakistan suffers from a lack of adequate funds. Most universities rely on donors and external aid to support their operations (Asghar, 2017). This lack of resources, including infrastructure, equipment and faculty, can hamper the quality of teaching and research.

According to a research analysis by Younis Ahmed Shaikh, poor infrastructure, especially in the case of public sector-run institutions, is the main reason for the shortcomings of higher education systems in the subcontinent (Pakistan, India and Bangladesh). In India, many colleges are located on the ground or first floor of buildings, where therapists, ready-made clothing stores, or photocopy shops are located. (Younis Ahmed Sheikh, 2017). Although much of the infrastructure for schools still exists in Pakistan, the education system still faces similar challenges. Many Pakistani universities do not have enough facilities or infrastructure to educate students properly. Even in this day and age of advanced technology in education, most Pakistani universities and degree programs lack computer labs, digital libraries, Internet access, and other resources that would be helpful to students on campus.

The fact that government institutions in Pakistan have worse infrastructure and reverses than private ones. This is one of the harsh realities of the country's higher education system. Many universities are still using outdated, traditional teaching methods. Techniques that do not involve the use of technical facilities. The main reason for all this is the inadequate funding available to educational institutions from the state. Even in the country's annual budget, insufficient funds are kept for education. Although this year it has been slightly increased to about 5.5 percent. However, even this amount of money is not enough to make a developing country a developed country.

## **3. Brain Drain:**

Pakistan is currently facing a significant brain drain, with many of its highly educated professionals and researchers leaving the country to seek opportunities abroad (Abbas, 2017). This can lead to a shortage of skills and knowledge within the country, which can negatively impact the quality of teaching and research in Pakistani universities.

The so-called "brain drain", which is blamed on nations like Pakistan, is the result of Pakistani professional graduates successfully moving on to better opportunities abroad. As for the universities' woes, critics claim that the best local candidates are not attracted to universities to become faculty members, and even if they are attracted, political interference usually dashes their hopes. The employment prospects offered by multinational corporations in Pakistan, or the lure of working abroad, make the actual talent pool at the university very small. Along with other drawbacks such as inadequate facilities and universities often struggle to fill teaching positions in



an environment conducive to conducting high quality research (Khan, 2021).

#### **4. Low quality of education and teaching methods:**

The educational system of most universities in Pakistan is not even close to being considered among the best systems in the world in terms of quality. A conducive learning and teaching environment, research expertise, teachers, courses, infrastructure, and observation system are some of the factors that determine the quality of higher education (Ahsan Nasir, 2019). However, the quality of education in Pakistani universities has been a concern for many years (Bhattacharya, 2017). Lack of qualified faculty, outdated curriculum and inadequate resources contribute to the poor quality of education (Zafar, 2017). Pakistani higher education institutions face significant challenges in terms of governance and management (Hussain, 2017). Lack of autonomy, inadequate policies, and poor leadership can all contribute to the poor performance of Pakistani universities (Ali, 2018).

One of the main reasons for the lack of specialization in teaching methods is the interference of political parties in employment quotas. These political parties try to hire their political workers. As a result, the majority of students lack professional experience. Often teachers do not receive basic education and training or their knowledge is limited to obtaining a degree.

Some private colleges and universities hire recent graduates as low-paid professors or lecturers. Consequently, the effect of lack of teaching training and experience hinders the development of teaching along modern lines. Due to the hiring of non-professionals, many organizations and universities use sub-teaching techniques that severely compromise teaching ability.

Traditional methods of teaching are no longer effective in the modern age due to lack of quality control, accountability, disapproval of Pakistan's research segregation, rigid curriculum and teaching system, and poor-quality instruction. The majority of academics and administrators in the higher education system prefer not to be involved in teaching activities and want to maintain their political and financial advancement.

#### **5. Unequal development of opportunities:**

Increasing student mobility is an important aspect of Pakistan's higher education landscape. The movement of international students has brought about a significant change in the general environment of higher education due to uneven development of opportunities in South Asian countries, particularly in the subcontinent. Pakistani students who want to study or work abroad are becoming more common day by day. As the years go by, especially in the medical and engineering fields. (Javed, Zainab, Zakai, & Malik, 2019).

Moreover, majority of the younger generation is not interested in serving their country after their education and instead looking for better jobs with higher remuneration packages. After graduating from college, a fair number want to leave Pakistan. In a survey conducted by a local media



network, 48 percent of young people want to leave the country due to reduced economic opportunities, with residents of Karachi, Pakistan's most populous city, wanting to leave the country. With the competitive environment of the West, the majority of graduates from medical and technical schools are where students with exceptional grades seek opportunities because it allows them to cover or pay for their education costs.

The majority of highly qualified graduates from medical and technical schools are looking for jobs in the competitive Western world that enable them to cover or pay for their educational expenses (Ali and Taj, 2008).

The movement of Pakistani professional graduates in search of better opportunities abroad accounts for 70% to 80% of the so-called brain drain, which has been blamed on Pakistan and other developing countries. For postgraduate training, the majority of Pakistani medical graduates prefer to travel abroad due to low pay, unfavorable working conditions, and instability. (Nazli, N. Shah, T. Shah, & Sudra, 2016).

A majority of students in the country struggle to find employment after completing higher education and the government is unable to provide them with adequate opportunities. Because opportunities have not increased unevenly, the majority of engineers, technical professionals, and physicians are forced to move to developed countries.

### **6. Decentralized Decision Making in Western Universities:**

Decentralized decision-making is a distinctive feature of management in higher education institutions in the Western world. According to Gederova and Sholkami (2017), this approach allows for the distribution of decision-making power between different levels of the institution, empowering faculty, staff and students to actively participate in the decision-making process.

This decentralization promotes collaboration, innovation, and responsiveness to the needs and priorities of different stakeholders (Jones, 2015). Furthermore, it promotes a sense of ownership and accountability among staff and increases the overall governance and transparency of the organization (Vossensteyn et al., 2015). Therefore, decentralization of decision-making is considered essential for effective management and development of higher education institutions. Decentralized decision-making in universities refers to a governance structure where decision-making authority is distributed among different levels and stakeholders within the institution. Here I would like to mention some famous universities of the world:

1. University of California, Berkeley (United States)
2. University of California, San Diego (United States)
3. University of California, Santa Cruz (United States)
4. University of California, Davis (United States)
5. University of California, Los Angeles (United States)



6. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (United States)
7. University of Wisconsin-Madison (United States)
8. University of British Columbia (Canada)
9. University of Calgary (Canada)
10. University of Toronto (Canada)
11. University of New South Wales (Australia)
12. University of Sydney (Australia)
13. University of Melbourne (Australia)
14. University of Queensland (Australia)
15. University of Auckland (New Zealand)

The degree of decentralization may vary among different departments and faculties within these universities.

In contrast, we see a strong desire to take control of things in Pakistani universities. From the head of an education system to an institution and even a teaching department, the head wants to keep things under control and hold people accountable to him. But he does not like to be accountable to anyone else. Here, the universities are called autonomous bodies, but they are subject to some federal and some provincial restrictions. In the same way, there is little desire to think for oneself and act on it, and even if someone tries, it is sometimes called exceeding the powers and sometimes one has to face the lack of funds and resources for the implementation of these projects.

### **7. Leadership Style:**

Leadership is the role that can lead universities to progress. But for this, more than the personality of an individual, long-term thinking is needed that can achieve its great goals for years to come. Leadership style plays an important role in the management of higher education institutions both in Pakistan and in the Western world. In Pakistan, leadership is often based on a hierarchical structure and autonomous decision-making, while in the Western world, a more democratic and participative leadership style is preferred (Hussain, 2020). Differences in leadership styles can be attributed to cultural and social factors as well as the historical context of each region (Woods, 2017). Furthermore, leadership style in higher education institutions significantly affects organizational climate and employee motivation (Siddiqui et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important to understand and adopt local leadership styles for effective management in higher education institutions, regardless of geographic location.

This top-down approach to leadership is also evident in the field of education. Where managers and department heads have significant authority and control over the decision-making process. There has been an increase in our research on leadership, but it has rarely seen an increase in leadership qualities. According to the general situation, the leadership of public universities is now more based on political manipulation than knowledge. The concept of leadership is that an individual develops a line of capable people behind him to carry out his mission, however, today





there are individuals at the level who cannot see beyond themselves.

### **8. Collaborative Leadership in the Western World:**

Collaborative leadership in universities in New Zealand, Australia, USA, Canada, and Switzerland is characterized by the active engagement and involvement of multiple stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students, in the decision-making process. This approach emphasizes shared governance and collective decision-making, where leaders foster a culture of cooperation and inclusion (Brown & Posner, 2001). Through collaboration, Western world leaders aim to leverage the diverse perspectives and expertise of different stakeholders, ensuring that decisions are informed, effective, and reflect the interests of the entire organizational community (Barnett & Jones, 2017).

A collaborative leadership model also encourages open communication and transparency, as leaders involve others in the problem-solving and decision-making process (Leon, 2010). This enables stakeholders to develop a strong sense of ownership and commitment to the institutional mission and goals (Brown, 2015). Ultimately, collaborative leadership in the Western world enhances organizational effectiveness and promotes a positive work environment (Barnett & Jones, 2017).

### **Findings and Discussion:**

Based on the content of the document you provided, here are some key findings and discussions:

#### **1. Unique Challenges Facing Pakistani Higher Education Institutions:**

The paper highlights political instability, inadequate funding, and lack of autonomy as major challenges facing Pakistani universities. These challenges are unique to the Pakistani higher education system and are different from those faced by Western universities.

#### **2. Governance structures and academic freedom:**

The paper notes that Pakistani universities have a centralized governance structure, which can lead to political interference and a lack of autonomy. Additionally, there are concerns about academic freedom, as faculty members may face restrictions on their research and teaching due to political interference.

#### **3. Funding Models and Faculty Roles:**

The paper observes that Pakistani universities face inadequate funding, resulting in a lack of resources including infrastructure, equipment and faculty. The paper also notes that faculty members in Pakistani universities often have multiple roles, including teaching, research and administrative duties, which may affect their ability to focus on teaching and research.

#### **4. Comparison with Western Universities:**

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The paper notes that Western universities generally enjoy a high level of autonomy and are well-funded. These institutions can attract top talent, invest in cutting-edge research and technology, and provide a high-quality education to their students.

### **5. Strategies for improving management:**

The paper recommends several strategies for improving the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan, including greater autonomy, increased funding, and a shift towards more student-centered teaching methods.

However, implementing these strategies may be challenging, particularly in the current political and economic climate of Pakistan.

The findings of this research have implications for policymakers, university administrators and faculty members in Pakistan. Policymakers need to prioritize increasing funding for higher education and implementing policies that promote autonomy and academic freedom. University administrators need to focus on attracting and retaining top talent, investing in cutting-edge research and technology, and providing high-quality education to their students. Faculty members need to be flexible in their teaching methods and open to adopting new technologies and approaches to teaching and research.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of addressing the unique challenges faced by Pakistani higher education institutions to improve the quality of teaching and research. By adopting Western-style governance structures, academic freedom, funding models and faculty roles, Pakistani universities can compete with Western universities and provide high-quality education to their students.

### **Conclusion:**

Finally, there is a significant difference in management approach and environment between higher education institutions in Pakistan and the Western world. These differences arise from various factors such as cultural, political and economic contexts. Despite efforts to implement modern management practices, Pakistani institutions face challenges in terms of governance, autonomy and accountability (Hasan, 2018). On the other hand, the Western world places more emphasis on systemic reforms, quality assurance, and internationalization (Sharma and Bhargo, 2019). However, it is important to recognize that these differences are not absolute, and there is growing recognition among Pakistani universities of the need to align with international standards and best practices to enhance the quality and competitiveness of their institutions (Ahmed, 2020).

To address the challenges and seize the opportunities in higher education management, policymakers and stakeholders must act. They need to recognize the differences in management practices and environment between higher education institutions in Pakistan and the Western



world. By understanding these differences and implementing appropriate strategies, policymakers and stakeholders can work to improve the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan (Smith, 2018). This includes providing the necessary funding for infrastructure development, encouraging research and innovation, fostering collaboration between academia and industry, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement (Jones, 2019). Furthermore, policymakers and stakeholders need to prioritize the professional development of educational leaders, as effective leadership is essential in the management of higher education institutions (Brown, 2020). Through these initiatives, policymakers and stakeholders can ensure that the management of higher education in Pakistan meets international standards and provides quality education to its students.

### **Suggestions:**

#### **1. Strengthening academic freedom**

Academic freedom, the ability of scholars to acquire and disseminate knowledge without undue interference or restraint, plays an important role in the development of higher education institutions worldwide. In the context of Pakistan, academic freedom faces significant challenges due to political, cultural and religious influences that limit the autonomy of scholars in their research and teaching endeavors. These barriers impede the development of a vibrant intellectual community and inhibit the potential for innovation and critical inquiry (Anderson, 2008). In contrast, in the Western world, academic freedom is generally stronger because of a long tradition of valuing intellectual freedom and protecting the rights of scholars to challenge prevailing views (Menand, 2008). This fundamental difference in management approach and environment highlights the need for Pakistani higher education institutions to adopt policies and practices that promote academic freedom, and ensure an environment conducive to intellectual growth and creation of new knowledge.

#### **2. Enhancing cooperation with international institutions**

In today's interconnected world, it is important to enhance collaboration with international institutions to keep the management of higher education institutions in Pakistan at par with global trends and standards. This collaboration can provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, faculty and student mobility, joint research projects, and curriculum development (Manpower Training and Overseas Pakistanis Division, 2009). By partnering with leading international institutions, Pakistani universities can improve the quality of education, foster a multicultural learning environment and strengthen their global reputation (Higher Education Commission, 2020). Joint efforts can also contribute to Pakistan's economic development by attracting foreign students and promoting international research collaboration (Nabi et al., 2019).

#### **3. Student-Centered Learning:**

Pakistani universities have been criticized for not focusing on student-centered learning (Asghar, 2018). Traditional teaching methods used in Pakistani universities are often lecturer-centric, which can lead to a lack of engagement and motivation among students (Bhatta, 2017). Similarly, this



process does not encourage students' critical abilities, or the desire to do something new and unique and they are inclined towards rote learning.

#### **4. Digitalization:**

Digitization of higher education is a growing area of interest in Pakistan (Ali, 2019). The use of technology can improve access to education, enhance teaching and learning, and support the development of online courses and programs (Khattak, 2017). There is a dire need to train teachers in this regard. Because there is a big gap between the new generation and the existing teachers regarding the digitalization of education.



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