Role of Quality Enhancement Cells in Uplifting of Higher Education: A Case Study of Public Sector Universities of Punjab

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Abstract:

Purpose-The purpose of this research is to study the quality enhancement departments and its effect of organization and systemic factors as well as the student and teachers engagement in the process of quality assurance.

Design/Methodology/Approach-The primary data was collected through three different self-constructed questionnaire and was distributed over five universities and about 250 responses were collected. Self-administered survey technique was used for collection of responses. SPSS was used as a statistical software. Pearson's correlation, R-square and t-test was used

Findings-The finding shows that the quality enhancement cells though are working to uplift education but the results are different for different universities. The monitoring role of higher education commission has moderating impact but its partial moderation

Originality/Value- *The study will help in understanding that higher education commission is playing to improve the quality of education by monitoring quality enhancement cells.*

Practical Implication-*The practical implication of the study is to identify and then rectify the shortcoming in working of quality enhancement cells and its impact on uplifting of education. The study will also support quality enhancement cells in taking initiatives that will help in developing quality oriented culture in universities.*

Key words: Quality Enhancement Cell, Higher Education, Quality Assurance

INTRODUCTION:

Quality in higher education is very important. Quality, when defined in context of education, then it is defined as achieving excellence in education system and its procedures (Gallifa & Batalle, 2010). It is also defined as a system of learning where well educated individuals who are experts in their field are produced (Rasheed, 2000). Quality in education has become a major concern for the countries in the globalized world. It is one of the major issues to ensure quality in education and education for all. The competition in the world has become so fast that in order to compete and gain a sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) quality has become crucial (Owlia and Aspinwall, 1997). Through enhancing quality of education and of procedures in higher education institutes one can attain SCA in global competition (Materu, 2007). Moreover, the rapid changes in the world which have caused increased competition are mostly driven by political, economic and socio-cultural changes (Trow, 2010).

In Pakistan, University Grant Commission (UGC) was working formerly but in 2002 it was renamed to Higher Education Commission (HEC). Its founding chairman was Prof.

Atta-ur-Rahman. The purpose of HEC is to uplift education in university with main focus on learning, research and development. It is doing so by providing grants to universities and awarding scholarships for higher studies. The quality of education in Pakistan is not compatible to internationally established standards (Halai, 2010).

The institutions in Pakistan are generally using a traditional pattern and particularly government institution lacks commitment and consistency (Dilshad and Iqbal, 2010). Most of the policies which were made to ensure quality had never been applied. Higher education commission realized the need to improve the status of education and make sure that these problems are resolved to set Pakistani universities on track of providing better output. So HEC established quality assurance agency under which Quality Enhancement Cells (QEC) in universities were established to improve output quality, efficiency and learning of higher education. These were developed in different phases from 2007 to 2011. The objective of the study is to investigate the role of higher education commission to monitor quality enhancement cells. The researchers want to know the roles and responsibilities of Quality Enhancement Cells in universities, to investigate the Quality Enhancement Cells fulfilling their responsibilities and what is the role of higher education commission in monitoring of quality enhancement cells .

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Quality is defined in different ways. In the management literature, the term quality has different meanings. According to Pounder (2000), quality is defined as conformance to specifications. According to Crosby (1979), quality is the name of "conformance to requirement". According to Deming (1985), "Good quality means a predictable degree of uniformity and

dependability with a quality standard suited to the customer". On the other hand, according to Juran and Gryna (1988), quality is "fitness for use" this concept was focused mainly on satisfaction for customer by providing them what is fit for them to use and according to their expectation but it only focus on meeting the expectations of customer not exceeding those expectations.

Quality has become a popular term in every field of life either it is manufacturing or services concerned field. Quality was previously considered important only for manufacturing industry but today it is considered important in every field of life like service, government, health care, banking and education (Hassan et al., 2013). Quality has become vital in this world due to educated customers and numerous competitors willing to offer similar product or services. Service quality has become one of the very important topics of discussion in past few decades (Gallifa & Batalle, 2010).

Most of the researchers in higher education have concluded that higher education is a services concern and its customers are students. So building a long term relations with the students is beneficial for the institutions (Eagle and Brennan, 2007; Houston, 2007). According to Harvey, (2002) good education is the means to end for better and long term relationship with its primary customer i.e. Students. Different organizations and institutions are taking interest in improving standards of higher education and are investing heavily on it (Houston, 2007). New approaches are needed to be developed so there is focus on promoting quality within departments. Quality management within departments consists of all activities and processes that are carried out to improve teaching process (Grant et al, 2004).

Lomas (2007) has classified quality improvement in education into two major approaches one is quality assurance and the other is quality enhancement. Quality assurance uses

the definition of Juran(1991), where quality is defined as fitness for use. The most popular approach to measure quality is through quality assurance (Kistener, 2012). According to Kis (2005), there are three main approaches to quality assurance i.e accreditation, assessment and audit. Self-assessment is used to assess the weakness and strengths of any organization and it tells us where improvement is needed (Ruben, 2005 & Schraeder, 2004). The method of self-assessment helps to give an organization a common goal and direction of future that where it wants to go (Ruben, 2004). Self-assessment deals with internal improvements and helps in removing the faults of organization internally while external assessment is basically concerned with allocation of funds and keeping thing in check and balance (Brennan & Shah, 2000). Most authors agree that if the organizations want to survive in this highly competitive world then they have to adopt methods of self-assessment.

Accreditation is used as a tool of quality assurance. Accreditation is the process in which the third party establishes or re-states the status of the program, legitimize or approve a program or institution (Harvey, 2004). All over the world, process of accreditation is carried out on two levels, one is institutional level while the other is at program level. According to Hayward (2008), most of the countries use the accreditation process for the professional degrees only after which a person is eligible for job but in some countries like South Africa accreditation is necessary for all kinds of programs. Throughout the world, many countries are using this method for example USA has been using this method since 1900 where it is used for external quality assurance mechanism or for accountability purpose (Liacouras, 2004). In Netherland, Accreditation has been introduced at institutional level and basically focus on quality of conformance (Schwarz and Westerheijden, 2004). Following the trend, Singapore government has also realized the need and importance of quality in education has formulated

a council to regulate and monitor the standards of quality in hiring faculty and development and execution of programs. This council is called Singapore Higher Education Accreditation Council SHEAC (Davie, 2006).

In Pakistan, focus on quality gained importance when Higher Education Commission was established in year 2002. Previously, Pakistani universities had obsolete infrastructure. They also lacked resources in research and development of science and technology. They have inadequate manpower with less or no emphasis on faculty training and development. Quality enhancement cells aims to develop infrastructure of universities and built manpower which is trained in research and technology. HEC has launched Quality Enhancement Cells in public sector universities under the project 'Quality Assurance Agency' to improve standards of higher education in universities (Zafar, 2006).

Higher Education Commission (2013) has defined responsibilities and functions of the Quality Enhancement Cells are to promote confidence of public in university and its degree, to review quality standards in teaching and learning, to review quality standards in term of efficient and effective management, to define clear standards for quality, to develop a framework of qualification, to develop specification for completing the specific program, to develop quality assurance processes and methods of evaluation, to ensure quality assurance process are correct one for uplifting of higher education, to develop procedures for approval of new program, annual monitoring and evaluation including program monitoring, faculty monitoring, and student's perception, departmental review, student feedback, employer feedback, quality assurance of Masters, M.Phil and Ph.D. Degree, institutional assessment, program specifications and qualification framework. There is an increased competition to improve quality in education between higher education

institutes with in the same country and across the countries. They are adopting different strategies and models to improve quality. The ranking of higher education institutes is one of the most commonly used method to determine quality in education (David & Soo, 2005).

In Pakistan, Higher education commission was established and it has introduced ranking criteria for all the Public and Private sector universities in the country. This ranking criterion is purely based on the quantitative data about the research output, qualification of the faculty, books, computers available to the students and other resources (Virk, 2006). The ranking of the university will affect their future intake and funding by the commission. Even accreditation of the university can be cancelled after getting lowest ranking. The ranking of universities show variations because the ranking of few universities has increased while for other universities it has decreased. The University of Punjab was ranked third in 2013, but it was dropped in 2014 to fifth (HEC, 2015).

The ranking criteria of HEC include Students (17%), Facilities (15%), Finances (15%), Faculty (27%) and Research (26%) weight-age (HEC, 2014), which clearly indicates that ranking is purely based on the quantitative data about resources and research output of the faculty. Many important elements i.e. student satisfaction, value addition, employer surveys and quality assurance mechanisms have been totally ignored which create inconsistency between quality assurance initiatives and ranking criteria of the HEC (Halai, 2008)

Higher education commission is an autonomous body and its role is to monitor and improve the quality of higher education and to promote and provide funding for the research and development in Pakistan (Batool, 2008). This notion is also supported by Hendel and Lewis (2005), they argue that government and state agencies play three important role in

quality assurance i.e. providing information, funding and monitoring of institution.

Higher education commission has been monitoring quality enhancement cells from the day it has been established. In order to ensure quality in higher education, quality assurance agency was established under which quality enhancement cells were established. The Quality Enhancement Cells are regulated under the Quality Assurance Agency established at HEC according to rules provision under the "Ordinance of HEC 2002, Section 10e (HEC, 2006). Higher education commission is playing vital role in governance of Pakistani universities, public and private.

According to Halai (2013), higher education commission is working to increase public awareness in education and also creating competition among universities. Higher education commission has established quality assurance committee through which they are monitoring progress and growth of universities. Quality assurance agencies are also using ranking method for this purpose. According to Zia (2006), there are various evaluation standards that evaluate how the higher education institutions are working. Either they are meeting the standards which HEC has set for them? To solve these problems, HEC has made standards through which they can monitor progress of any institution. These analysis is done on the basis of Mission Statement and Goals, Planning and Evaluation, Organization and Governance, Integrity, Faculty, Students, Institutional Resources, Academic Programs and Curricula, Public Disclosure and Transparency, Assessment & Quality Assurance and Student Support Services.

RESEARCH MODEL

Based upon the discussion made in the literature review it is revealed that there seems to be some gap existing in literature

on role of QEC in uplifting of higher education, particularly with perspective of Pakistan. Higher Education Commission has established quality enhancement cells in universities allover Pakistan. Their purpose is to improve the standards of higher education through different processes and strategies. Their roles and responsibilities are defined by higher education commission. And for this purpose, Higher education commission has been monitoring the quality enhancement cell since they are established. The control and monitoring has improved overtime and it has ultimately improved efficiency of QECs. The improved quality standards in higher education has enhanced the learning of students, uplifted academic program, research and improved teacher's performance and that has improved the ranking and performance of University. Based upon the discussion made in the literature review about the importance of quality enhancement cells in the higher education in the world and in Pakistan too and the factors effecting quality enhancement cells worldwide and in Pakistan particularly we have developed the following research model which is given below in figure 2:
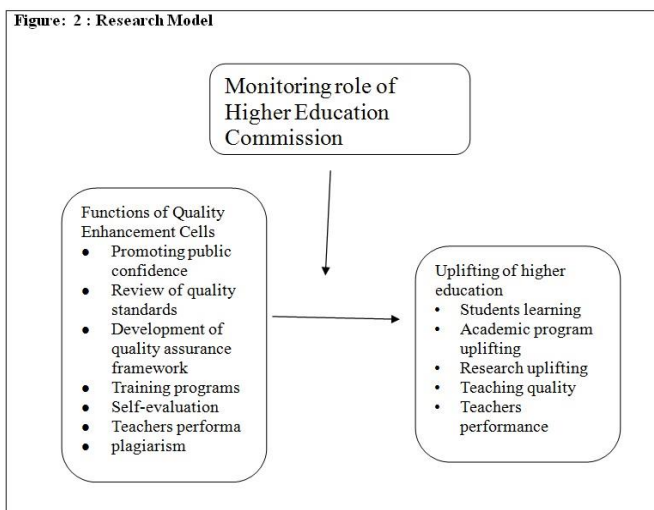

Figure: 2 : Research Model

Figure 2 shows the research model which shows that functions of quality enhancement cell like program teams, Monitoring self-evaluation and plagiarism is dependent variable for uplifting in higher education whereas monitoring role of HEC is moderating variable.

PROPOSITION DERIVATION

In the light of previous literature, following propositions are drawn to achieve the research objectives.

H1: The work of quality enhancement cell has significantly uplifted the standards of higher education

H2: There is significant impact of monitoring role of Higher education commission on relationship of functions of quality enhancement cells and uplifting of higher education.

H3: There are significant differences within groups of respondents

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted to compare the practices of quality assurance that are being used in different higher education institutions. It also compares the working of the quality enhancement cells that are working in these institutions to assure quality procedures. The research is designed so that it is comparing the working of quality enhancement cells in different university. It is descriptive research and we have used qualitative data. Structured questionnaires was developed from OECD (Henard, 2009) and TEMPUS (2009). Cluster sampling is used for selection of respondents.

Population and Sample size

Our study is based on population of universities from Punjab, Pakistan that have Quality enhancement cell working in their

universities but we have focused on the public sector universities which are working on a larger scale and have a great number of student and teacher employed. We chose these universities through purposive sampling this kind of sampling is used so that an unbiased sample is used to represent the whole population. The population includes all the public sector universities of Punjab. Through these five universities were selected through purposive sampling. In these universities it is really difficult to administer quality initiatives in all the departments and also there is a huge cost that these universities are paying so it is really important to know that what is the benefit they are getting out of these cells either the quality has been improved or not. So keeping this in view we have selected 5 public sector universities as our sample size all over Punjab in which quality enhancement cell are working. The universities selected for the sample are University of the Punjab, Lahore, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Government College University, Lahore, Islamia University, Bahawalpur and Sargodha University.

Data collection methodology and procedures

Our research contains quantitative data. The quantitative data has been taken by conducting a survey through research questionnaire with close ended questions. We have prepared three types of questionnaire, one for the students, another for the teachers and the third one is for quality enhancement cells. For students I have taken 50 respondents from each university making it a total of 250 respondents. For teacher originally 20 questionnaires were sent in each university through mail making it a total of 100 but I have received only 73. For quality enhancement cell 10 respondents are taken as there are only two or three people of QEC in each university. The frequency table 1 of the respondents is given below:

Table 1: Description of respondents

University	Islamia university	Bahauddin Zakariya university	Punjab university	Government collage university	University of Sargodha	Total
Students	50	50	50	50	50	250
Teachers	16	18	13	15	11	73
Qec employee	2	2	2	2	2	10

Data coding and analysis techniques

This research is a comparative research of universities of Punjab, Pakistan. The researcher has used SPSS software for analyzing and interpreting the data collected. The researcher used likert scale to measure the data rating from 1 to 5. Where 1 stand for "I strongly disagree and 5 stands for "I strongly agree". The demographic information is also coded in numeric where for gender 1 stands for "male" and 2 for "female". The detail description is given below in table 2.

Table 2: Data coding

Scale	Labels				
	1	2	3	4	5
University	Islamia university	Bahauddin Zakariya university	Punjab university	Government collage university	University of Sargodha
Gender	Male	Female	---	---	---
Education	Graduate	Post graduate	HSSC	SSC	---
Awareness about QEC	Yes	No	---	---	---
scale for variables	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

After coding, the data is entered into SPSS for the purpose of analysis. The mean and average of every variable is computed. In addition to it, we have run a regression analysis to check whether the relationship between variables is significant or not.

Description of the respondents of the study

The respondents of the study are studied on three basis their gender, education, and university. The researcher used spss to

calculate frequencies of the respondents and then cross tabulated them to convert it into useful information. The distribution of respondents is given in table 1. While the distribution on the basis of gender and university cross tabulation for respondents, is given below in table 3.

Table 3: Frequency of gender of respondents

	Male	Female	Total
Teachers	41	32	73
Students	143	104	250
QEC	9	1	10

In table 3, the rows show respondents and the column shows gender. The awareness about quality enhancement cell is given in the table below:

Table 4: Frequency of knowledge about Quality enhancement cells

Do you know about quality enhancement cells working in your university		
	Yes	No
Teachers	70	3
Students	87	163
QEC	10	0

For students the awareness level of quality enhancement cell was low most of the students when subjected to this question does not even knew about quality enhancement cells.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EACH QUESTION OF THE SURVEY

The first set of question was related to the function of quality enhancement cells the mean for responses of students with respect to different universities are given below

Table 5: Description of respondents

	IUB	BZU	PU	GCU	SU
Functions of QEC	4.1	3.5	3.37	2.92	2.91
Uplifting in higher education	3.94	3.33	3.24	3.33	2.67
Monitoring of HEC	4.24	2.04	4.35	2.66	3.04

The values which were taken by respondents were ranging from 1 to 5. Where 1 stands for strongly disagree while 5 stands for strongly agree. Here the mean value is taken for all the responses. For functions of quality enhancement cells, it shows a neutral to mildly positive response from Punjab University, Islamia University and Bahauddin Zakariya University which means that quality enhancement cells are working in university but they are not performing up to its full capacity there are still some areas that are left untouched. While the government collage university and university of Sargodha shows an overall negative results which means there is a lot of work that needs to be done in those universities. According to students of Islamia University, the responses for uplifting of higher education are somewhat less positive than response of teacher however they all seem to agree that quality enhancement cells have uplifted the quality of education. However, the responses for monitoring of higher education commission for the University of Islamia and Punjab University shows improvement while for Bahauddin Zakariya and Government Collage shows that there is no significant effect of quality enhancement cells

Hypothesis testing analysis and interpretation:
The relationship between independent, dependent and moderating variable is analyzed by the equation given by David A. Kenny

$$Y = i + aX + bM + cXM + E$$

Where **X** is independent variable and **Y** is dependent variable. M is a moderator variable. The functions of quality enhancement cells are to make program teams, self-evaluation of teachers and students, monitor the quality of education and ensure it. If the quality enhancement cells perform their

functions properly it will improve standards of higher education. And there will be increase in students learning, academic programs will improve, teacher's performance will increase and also number of research done will increase significantly.

H1: The work of quality enhancement cell has significantly uplifted the standards of higher education.

When we analyzed the data in spss the result for running linear regression is given below:

Table 6 a: ANOVA table of functions of QEC to uplifting in Education

ANOVA[b]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.371	1	42.371	212.871	.000[a]
	Residual	49.363	322	.199		
	Total	91.733	323			

The table shows that the relationship between functions of quality enhancement cells and uplifting of higher education is significant as the p-value is less than 0.05 so the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted i.e. *The functions of quality enhancement cell has uplifted the higher education.*

Its correlation also shows a strong positive relationship between functions of QEC and uplifting of higher education. As the Pearson correlation value is 0.680 which indicate a strong positive relationship between these two variables. Which means function of quality enhancement cells will uplift the quality in education. Hence favoring the acceptance of alternative hypothesis which is that that functions of QEC will cause uplifting in higher education.

Table 6 b: table of correlation for functions of QEC to uplifting in Education

Correlations			
		functions	Uplifting
Functions	Pearson Correlation	1	.680**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	323	323
Uplifting	Pearson Correlation	680**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	000	
	N	323	323

And when quality standards are improved for higher education, it will enhance the learning of students, uplift academic program, research and improve teacher's performance and that will improve the ranking and performance of university.

H2: There is significant impact of monitoring role of Higher education commission on relationship of functions of quality enhancement cells and uplifting of higher education.

Table 7: Moderation regression of uplifting in quality enhancement cell and monitoring of Higher education commission

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.643a	.214	.209	.27851	.214	83.002	2	333	.000
2	.678b	.240	.253	.26035	.026	19.908	1	332	.000

The regression analysis, as given in table 7 a, show that the p-value is less than 0.05 i.e. p<.0005 so the relationship is significant and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Which means the monitoring of higher education commission has a moderation effect but it is comparatively weaker. Its moderating impact is 2.6%. This means that although the

relationship exist but it's weak. We also analyze the differences between groups to know that either both groups have similar result or difference exist between both groups.

Table 8: t-test for comparison within groups:

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Function	Equal variances assumed	.680	.410	-.882	321	.379	-.07502	.08510	-.24245	.09241
	Equal variances not assumed			-.841	109.859	.402	-.07502	.08920	-.25180	.10176
Uplifting	Equal variances assumed	13.968	.000	-.288	321	.774	-.02813	.09772	-.22038	.16412
	Equal variances not assumed			-.216	86.12	.830	-.02813	.13027	-.28709	.23083
Monitoring	Equal variances assumed	6.543	.011	-3.307	321	.001	-.34075	.10304	-.54347	-.13803
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.976	102.213	.004	-.34075	.11451	-.56788	-.11362

The comparison between groups shows that the significance for function of quality enhancement cells 0.410 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore the variance is assumed to be equal. The t-value for functions of quality enhancement cells is -0.882. Hence there is no significant difference regarding students and teacher in the response of uplifting of quality enhancement cells. Whereas, for uplifting of education and monitoring of higher education commission there is a significant difference between groups because the p-value is less than 0.05 so we reject the null hypothesis. The t-value of uplifting in education

and monitoring of higher education commission is -2.976 and -3.063 respectively. The mean shows the average score of teachers for functions of quality enhancement cells is 3.24 which is higher than students which is 3.16. The mean value of students for uplifting in quality enhancement cells is 3.14 which is lower than mean score of teachers which is 3.17. The mean score for monitoring shows that teacher have higher score than students.

Effectiveness of Quality Enhancement Cells:
Table 9

University	Uplifting in Higher Education		Reasons
	Moderate	Low	
Islamia University Bahawalpur	☐		Incomplete data, lack of manpower
Bahauddin Zakariya University		☐	Lack of Manpower, Lack of Training
Punjab University	☐		High Political Pressures, lack of training
Government College University		☐	lack of training, incomplete data
Sargodha University		☐	Lack of Infrastructure, Underqualified Personnel

Table 9 shows three columns and six rows the first column shows the name of universities while the second column shows uplifting in higher education which ranges from moderate to low because none of the university showed higher uplifting in education. The study shows that in Punjab and Islamia university Bahawalpur the quality enhancement cells are moderately effective while in While the other universities showed very little improvement. The reason behind the problems is lack of manpower the universities have delegated the responsibility to a permanent faculty teacher of university who was previously handling many responsibilities. These people are unable to give proper attention to the cells and initiate changes so informally the daily operations and decisions of quality enhancement cell are made by a single person from clerical staff, lack of training and high political

pressure is one the reason that the quality enhancement cells lag behind Moreover there is lack of accountability from the staff of quality enhancement cells from the side of higher education commission which further elevate the problem. The result for this carelessness are lack of program teams , fewer training sessions with a limited resources so they cannot provide training for all, timely collection of data on teacher assessment, faculty survey, employee survey is never done. Due to this reason the ranking of Bahauddin Zakariya University shows a decline or in case of Islamia and Government College University shows a little improvement.

CONCLUSION

After conducting the research and reading the literature the researchers have concluded that the awareness about the quality enhancement cell is low. In students the awareness is so less that we have to provide them with the detail information about quality enhancement cells before administrating the questionnaire. Quality enhancement cells are new comers in university. They are performing their tasks but there is still a gap which needs to be filled. They are new comers and the process of change is slow. It will take a while before their efforts show some significant improvement. This is one of the reason for little improvement in ranking of universities despite of working of quality enhancement cell.

However, there are some areas which have been improved under the supervision of quality enhancement cells. For example, the study shows that the research output has overall been improved since the establishment of quality enhancement cells, the program teams have been established but this area is not fully covered in almost all of the universities. Some departments have their program teams working. While many departments have not established quality

enhancement cell. The study of effectiveness of quality enhancement cells in university revealed that only Punjab University shows better results and its ranking has shown improvement but political pressures has a significant negative effect on them. Islamia university of Bahawalpur also showed positive results but their ranking has not been improved significantly. While the other universities showed very little improvement. The reason behind the problems could be the delegation of responsibility to a permanent faculty teacher of university who had many responsibilities previously. They are willing to take more administrative jobs because they enjoy the perks and the powers associated with administrative jobs. For example the director of quality enhancement cell of Bahauddin Zakariya university is enjoying multiple administrative position. He is a faculty member of department of physics, controller of examination and director of quality enhancement cell. Due to this reason they are unable to give proper attention to the cells and initiate changes making a person from clerical staff handling all the roles and responsibilities of quality enhancement cells. The study also found out that higher education commission is aware about the situation but they have not taken any initiative to rectify this situation. Rather its expenses have created an extra burden on university. Moreover there is lack of accountability of the staff of quality enhancement cells from the side of higher education commission which further elevate the problem. The result for this carelessness are lack of program teams , fewer training sessions with a limited resources so they cannot provide training for all, timely collection of data on teacher assessment, faculty survey, employee survey is never done. Due to this reason the ranking of Bahauddin Zakariya University shows a decline or in case of Islamia and Government College University shows a little improvement.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

After conducting the study we found out that the knowledge about quality enhancement cells vary for every set of respondents. When the students were subjected to the question that either they knew about quality enhancement cells or not then only 87 out of the 250 knew about these cells while the 163 have no idea of their existence. When the respondents were asked about the functions of quality enhancement cells all of them agreed that they are performing their tasks. But for 3 out of 5 universities the work was just started. And there was a negative response of students about training sessions that those training session are less frequent and covers less topics. Program teams are made for few departments. The mission and visions statement of most of the department has not yet been established or the previous one is intact there is no change in these statements from many years.

About the uplifting of education, most of the respondents agreed that the research output of universities has been improved, policies and procedures have been developed but for employ ability of graduates the response is negative. The improvement of quality standards of education is less than expectation. The reason behind this is multitasking and lack of manpower in quality enhancement cells. Higher education commission seems to be aware of this situation but they are not taking any strict action against these cells.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored the impact of quality enhancement cell on uplifting of higher education taking in account student and teachers' engagement and organizational and systemic factors. However, during research we have come across several topics that can be further discussed. The ranking of universities has

been initiated by higher education commission which is one of the very good initiatives for making the general public aware of performance of universities but there is little linkage of quality assurance initiatives and ranking criteria. Because quality assurance is trying to improve overall performance and administration of the higher education institute while the ranking mostly focus on the output of the research.

i.   Higher education commission must take initiative to improve the working of quality enhancement cells. Regular audit of quality enhancement cells must be done by higher education commission to properly monitor the performance of quality enhancement cells

ii. An in depth analysis is taken into account for various kind of activities taking place in organizations (*e.g.* increased load of documentation on faculty and administration, *etc.*) these kind of activities are considered very important and crucial for quality assurance and analysis on the practical benefit of these activities can be used as a future research work.

iii. Study can also be conducted to critically analyze different quality assurance models to check which one is better and then we can also check its validity in the setting of developing country like Pakistan.

iv. An in depth study regarding the perception of different stakeholder about quality reforms can be taken into account to know their expectations and the validity of the quality framework and to study either one model should be used for all kind of higher education institutes or not.

v. This kind of study must be used for lower level of education such as higher secondary, middle school etc. the time series study of the quality reforms, its implementation and results must be studied thoroughly and carefully.

LIMITATIONS

Just like every research study, this study also has some certain limitations. These limitations are as follows: The data was heavily dependent on the perception of respondents and the respondents were reluctant in giving information. Size and nature of Institutes were not considered important factors in the sampling process. Including the feedback from other stakeholders especially non-teaching staff employees and employers may also be important to explore other dimensions of quality assurance. The time of the study was limited so we cannot carry a time series analysis of the impact of reforms that are being implemented in universities.

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