



## The Role of Vice Chancellors to Promote Higher Education in Pakistan: A Critical Review of Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan's Reforms, 2002

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of the reforms introduced by Higher Education Commission Pakistan (HEC) in 2002 about selection criteria of Vice Chancellors in public sector universities of Pakistan. The focus of this study is an evaluation of divergent views and concerns of the community about this new system in the province of Punjab as a case study. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world (Nelson Mandela)." Higher education plays a vital role in knowledge creation and dissemination to develop individuals, institutions, societies and nations. The role of an exceptional academic leadership is very decisive to promote higher education. Vice chancellor as an academic leader is a very significant position, who runs academic institutions and he/she is at the core of organizational development, individual development and eventually society's development. A VC job requires an extraordinary individual with exceptional capabilities. The selection procedure of VC therefore, deserves great attention. This study also examines the institutional context in the light of this new framework of reforms and highlights the major problems to be addressed. The future researchers are invited to test the findings empirically and may be replicated in other provinces of Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** Higher education, vice chancellor, reforms, academic leadership, public universities.

### Introduction

Knowledge creation and knowledge disbursement is now creating an environment where competitive advantage is more dependent on human skills, professionalism, comprehension

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and learning than on machinery, tool, factories etc. The report of International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (2000) reveals the knowledge has changed the world economy by replacing the physical capital with knowledge as the source of wealth creation. It further asserts that the higher education is the main source of knowledge creation and dissemination. The role of higher education has never been as important to the future of the developing world as it is right now. According to the World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action, (1998), higher education is directly linked to one's professional development and is affected by emerging global trends as it plays a vital role for society's survival, socio-economic progress, political stability and peace. Higher education also helps accelerating economic growth which will give a better living standard, "development of enlightened leaders, expansion of choices, enabling social mobility and helping the talent to fulfill their potential and the capacity to address local problems with appropriate solution"(Task Force on Improvement of Higher Education in Pakistan, 2002).

Since higher education is very crucial for the progress of a nation, therefore collaborative efforts are required to nurture a conducive culture. A private-public sector partnership however is crucial in contributing in promoting higher education in developing countries (Khan, 2007). The private sector plays its role in improving higher education but we cannot rely solely on it because of several reasons. For instance, firstly, private sector serves different communities often with profit-oriented approach. Secondly, the private sector cannot fulfill public sector's needs thirdly, private sector provides expensive education which is not affordable for majority of developing countries like Pakistan and finally, private sector can only serve some rest of the higher education's burden goes to the public sector. Nonetheless, the public sector is pledged to provide benefits to society as a whole, such benefits cannot be provided by the private sector because of their functioning, operation and striving for purpose other than welfare for all. However, public sector can learn lessons from private sector to overcome its inefficiencies and both the sectors can work in collaboration.

A few challenges to public sector reforms that literature identifies are of balancing, identification, market pressure and cultural cohesion. To meet these challenges through reform not only asks for structural change but cultural change as well, in fact evolutionary changes what are basically required (Christensen & Lægheid, 2007). As in most countries which have focused on higher education and over a period improved upon the system (e.g., UGC India, American Council of Education, Higher Education Commission of UK), Pakistan has also emphasized on the improvement of higher education. In 2002, Pakistan established an independent and autonomous institution titled as "Higher Education Commission Pakistan (HEC) through promulgation of a law. HEC Pakistan has embarked on some initiatives in the form of administrative reforms in the recent past. Among these initiatives the one we are studying is the new system of appointment and selection of vice chancellor. Many stakeholders' interests are involved in the selection criteria of a Vice Chancellor. Therefore, the selection of such a crucial post is very complex and sensitive issue. This study is an attempt to understand, explain and evaluate the selection criteria of Vice Chancellor by exploring several dimensions introduced in the Higher Education Reform Implementation Plan 2002 for reference.

Higher education depends on exceptional leadership capabilities and individual's creative efforts and ingenuity. On the other hand education develops great leaders and reformers. Education gives leader a vision, self-reliance, flexibility and developed skills. These leaders can confront all economic, social and political scenarios. They can develop society better by firstly influencing the teachers, administrators and students, which as a result can develop better governance, flawless infrastructure and secured institutions. When we talk about academic leadership, it means the practitioners in field of education as Boyett,

(1997) calls it as “entrepreneurial vice chancellor”. Vice chancellor is a very significant position, on whom academic leadership depends because he/she is the person who runs academic institutions and he/she is at the core of organizational development, individual development and ultimately society’s development. This is not enough, just to have a better understanding of the role of Vice-chancellor, it is very important to have an idea of how higher education works in the public sector.

A new system of vice- chancellor’s appointment and selection was introduced, which was a reform measure but how was it implemented is a big question. In this study, we have taken one case of reform implementation in higher education. The study investigates the issue from the viewpoint of the stakeholders. The study is organized into four parts. The first section gives the rationale and introduction of this study. The second part covers the literature review while research methodology is discussed in section three. Discussion includes data analysis and interpretation is covered in section four. In the last section, the study provides conclusion and recommendations.

## Literature Review

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” The statement above by Nelson Mandela demonstrates that education plays a key role in the progress of individuals as well as their society which leads to the development of a nation as a whole (Chaudhary and Malik, 2013). Over the last three centuries, it is proved that there is a positive relationship between the economic development and the continuous creation and exploitation of knowledge (Mehar and Ayub, 2005). Knowledge creation and knowledge disbursement is now creating an environment where competitive edge is more dependent on human skills, professionalism, comprehension and learning (Kogut and Zander, 1992; Nonaka, 1994; Decarolis and Deeds, 1999). According to the Knowledge-Based View (KBV) of firm, knowledge has changed the world economy by replacing the physical capital with knowledge-based capital as the source of wealth creation and sustainable competitive edge (Grant, 1996). The importance of higher education has never been as important to the future of the developing world as it is right now. According to the World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action (1998), higher education is directly linked to one’s professional development and is affected by emerging global trends as it plays a vital role for society’s survival, socio-economic progress, political stability and peace.

The role of higher education in the development of individuals, institutions, societies and nations is multidimensional such as human capital, health, nutrition and the development of institutions. Higher education is very crucial for society’s survival, economic progress, political stability and peace (Hoosenet *et al.*, 2009). Society can only prosper if they make financial and managerial effort towards higher education. Higher education also helps in accelerating economic growth, which will give a better living standard, development of enlightened leaders, expansion of choices, enabling social mobility and helping the talented individuals to fulfill their potential and the capacity to address local problems with appropriate solution. The role of public and private sectors is very crucial to cope up with the escalating demand of higher education.

Despite, private sector is playing a significant role in promoting higher education in Pakistan but we cannot rely solely on the private sector for improving higher education climate because they serve different communities with profit-oriented approach. The objectives and scope of private sector are different in several ways such as firstly, the private sector cannot serve public sector’s needs, secondly private sector can only serve about one-third; rest of the higher education’s burden goes to public sector. That is why higher education has an exceptional connection with public sector. Only public sector can provide

benefits to society as a whole, such benefits cannot be provided by private sector because of their functioning and operation and striving for purpose other than welfare for all. But on the other hand the functioning of private sector in its domain is remarkable. Public sector inefficiencies can take some lessons from private sector and these two sectors can work in collaboration to start the reform process.

The success of Reforms is truly based on the motivation and mindset of public service offices and public itself. Transparency, collaboration, accountability can never be successful if it is not realized by all. Few challenges to public sector reform, that literature identifies is of balancing, identification, market pressure and cultural cohesion. To meet these challenges through reform not only asks for structural change but cultural change as well, in fact evolutionary changes what are basically required (Christensen and Lægheid, 2007). All this has been done because of the “change” this world is experiencing. The private sector is no doubt changing because of globalization and it is pushing public sector towards rapid change, change in terms of structure, operations and procedures. The ways of managing people have changed. Nonetheless, the public servant job structure has also changed. Employees at every stage are getting alarming messages; their jobs are not “permanent jobs.” They are looking for opportunities; and opportunities are looking for them.

The public administration is a basic instrument of providing public policy and services and it also forms the basis of government. Public administration is a key instrument of social and economic development. In the words of Woodrow Wilson “public administration is detailed and systematic execution of law (Sahni and Vayunandan, 2010). Every particular application of law is an act of administration.” He further says, “Administration is the most obvious part of the government; it is government in action; it is the executive, the operative, the most visible side of the government.” An administrative reform is an instrument for adapting and streamlining administrative structures and procedures, to the new policies. Czarniawska-Joerges (1989) with the support of literature, points out that the problem is not with the reform but with those who study them in a wrong direction. There is a difference between the prescription of administrative reforms and its practicality; between theory and description. Better solution is to understand the puzzling pattern of repetitive reform; apparently they do not bring any change.

Globalization is now everywhere and is penetrating at a greater pace. No system can stay aloof from the forces of globalization. Apart from everything else, globalization has also affected public administration (Farazmand, 1999). Because of globalization there is an increased interdependency among the countries. So, this wave of public administration reform is now going beyond boundaries of countries. It does not mean that states are losing their control and relevance while making decisions, or due to globalization, empires are losing their significance. In fact now with the changing system, countries happen to face more accountability and systems are becoming more complex and dynamic (Angelini, 2010). Now the countries’ administration has to adjust to a holistic environment. They cannot work in isolation and whatever happens in one country may influence other countries.

Global competency cannot be developed without knowledge. Wise decisions rest with the fact that the administrator must have a practical and technical knowledge of a field he is in. This will give a sort of assurance of intelligent judgments. There is a need for discussing generalist versus specialist in the local Pakistani context, where some universities are still run by army officers. Although this generalist versus specialist debate has long been settled in favor of a specialist, but in Pakistan a typical bureaucratic structure is still prevalent. VC is not just an administrator, where an army officer is considered ideal. Instead, VC needs to do more than just administer. VC has to keep a link between internal and external environment. Except for that “VCs are expected to combine academic credibility with all the other

competences expected of the leaders of any large commercial businesses that have political significance”(Breakwell and Tytherleigh, 2008). A VC in his current position should also have non-executive links with non-higher education bodies.

On the other hand Education develops great leaders and reformers. But at times education badly needs to reform itself. Education gives leader a vision, self-reliance, flexibility and developed skills. These leaders can confront all economic, social and political scenarios. They can develop society better by firstly influencing the teachers, administration and students, which as a result can develop better governance, flawless infrastructure and secured institutions. Just as any other social science area, leadership deals with human groups and individuals. Leadership has a long history from trait theory to big man theories about leadership. This is not enough as new ideas are adding to the essence of leadership. Higgs(2003)provides a framework of leadership in terms of combining personality and behaviors. For some time the issue has been whether leadership should focus on personality (selection is the main focus) or behavior (development as the main focus). Organizations are volatile, complex and competitive. Multicultural and multinational perspectives are making it trickier. Unfortunately, the literature is short of leadership debate in Pakistan especially in higher education perspective.

Different studies on leadership support that leaders should react according to the situation. In other words no one model of leadership can be proposed (Mello, 1999). Many schools of thought talk about the internal capabilities and situational factors. Still there is not a single formula that justifies the leadership statute. Traditionally leadership was a one man show, but now it's about behaviors and influence on others. The idea is how the leaders influence others to achieve their goals. A leader can influence by directing and controlling behavior or by facilitating and giving support(Birnbaum, 1989).A leader is expected to do more than just increasing the market shares and profits. Firstly, the leader should have consciousness of one's self and the skill and competency to run the organization and to take every one along with him. Higgs (2003) suggests interpersonal and intrapersonal focus through emotional intelligence. This covers quite some aspects of leadership personality and behavior. For instance, it includes future vision, coordination and contribution, authentic, consistence and cognizance etc.

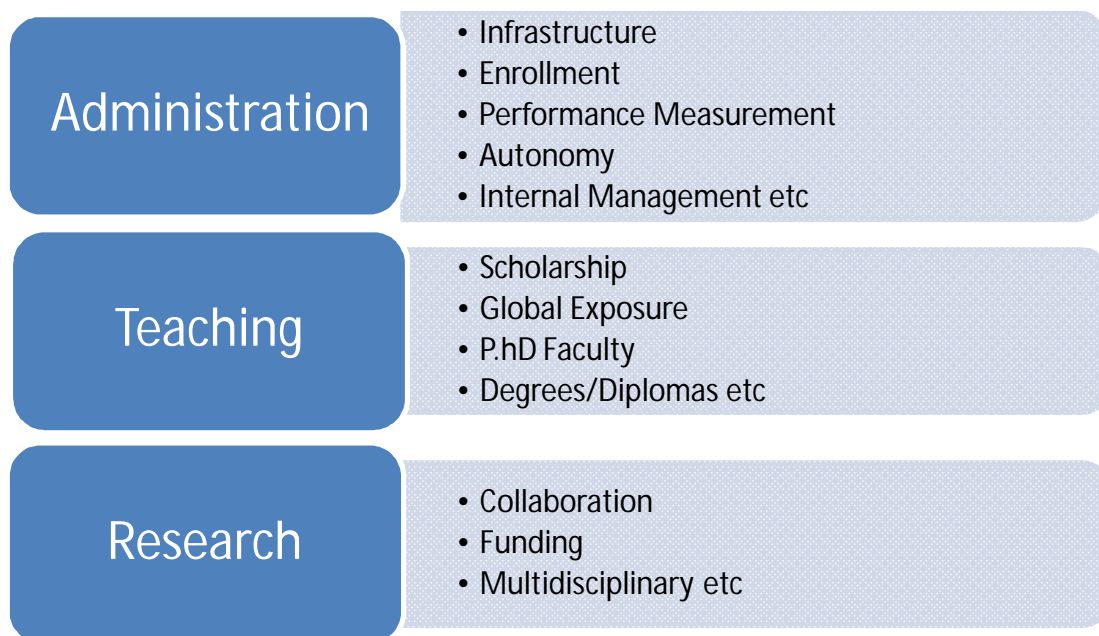
The leader in a university setting needs to have multidimensional expertise. University operates in an environment where education and research goes along with administration. Some might argue that university administration can be run without research and educational qualification. This is our point of investigation. This is where specialist versus generalist comes in. It is a long debate, whether leadership should have a generalist approach or a professionalism approach. The diversified nature of university administration might need a blend of both professional and generalist. Still this is a point of further investigation. Pakistan's higher education holds a different focus with its own complexities and analyzing it from leadership lens is altogether a challenge. Political scenario in Pakistan makes it further difficult for higher education leaders to function. In our local setting a leader not only has to influence, motivate and polish the subordinates but also has to adjust himself according to the political pressure and unrest which creates uncertainty and lessens expertise and effects competency. The “professionalism is a certification of knowledge and expertise” cited by(Gornitzka and Larsen, 2004). Hence, for a university the leader should be a PhD professor.

Pakistan's current system of reform is knotty, weak and serves the purpose of only a few. Groups that gain advantage and are happy with the current arrangements, they will have to bear a cost which is why they will probably oppose new reforms. These costs could be in the form of “pay reduction, low self-esteem or loss of position”(Makinde, 2005). Except for

an individual facing cost, there may be some other larger pay offs as well. High pay-offs may turn efficient implementation into inefficient ones (Cheng and Cheung, 1995). Therefore, to handle this situation reform has to be arranged in a system, not in some technical formula, rather as a “social initiative.” The new system of Vice-chancellor’s appointment and selection is part of the reforms undertaken by higher education commission in 2002. The selection of vice-chancellor or chief executive of public organization through search committee is widely practiced in the developed world. However, in Pakistan this is a new practice. How this has been implemented and what are the results of this new initiative is the purpose of this study. Exceptional leadership capabilities, creative efforts and ingenuity play a significant role in promoting higher education.

Running an educational institute is very tricky as it requires administration, teaching and research expertise. The universities need an individual who has a first class command over administration to handle university affairs, and a good command over teaching to understand the value and fundamentals of the organization he is handling i.e education, and an effective knowhow of research to make sense out of complex environment and to regulate universities in global environment. Vice chancellor is an educational entrepreneur. Entrepreneur is used as an alternate to leaders as the nature of universities is changing due to globalization. Boyett (1996) calls it “entrepreneurial vice chancellor.” All of us can experience the emerging trend of economic processes (Boyett, 1996). Vice chancellors are seen as a prime minister or a premier in a university community, “university as a community” because they have high level of interest within society (Aitkin, 1998). The following figure indicates the required skill-set for a VC and their suggested utilization.

**Figure 1:**



*(The dark blue area identifies the competences VC should have and the light blue area tells how these competences can be used)*

## Research Methodology

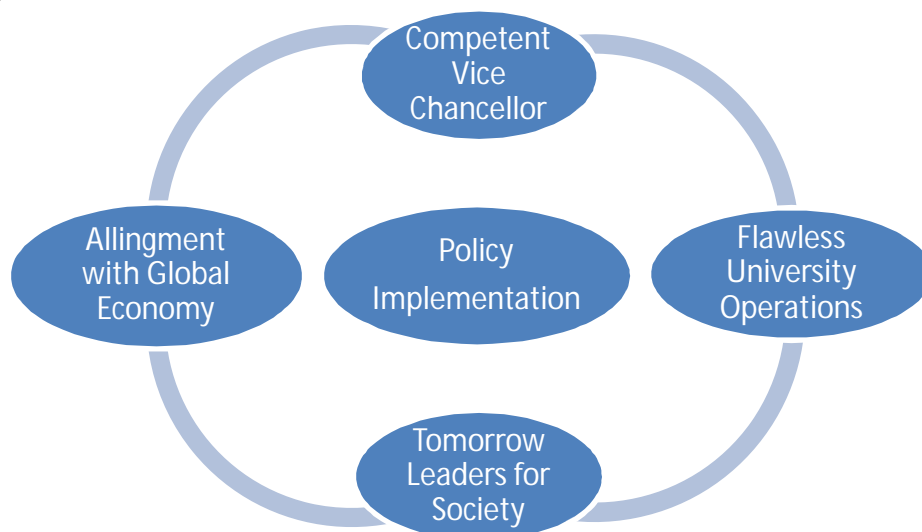
This study is basically concerned with the new system of appointing a vice chancellor for a public sector university. It is a case study which examines a change in procedure of vice chancellors' appointment and selection. The unit of analysis is a group of individuals associated with the appointment procedure of VCs. The observation tools were interviews, focus groups, ministry of education documents and newspaper cuttings. The interviews were open-ended and semi-structured. Manual notes along with automated recording were taken because we cannot solely rely on technology. Opinions of those were respected who did not want their interviews to be recorded. In that case we had to stick to our notes only. Video conferencing was also done with the higher education representatives and a few of the interviews were telephonic. The people who were interviewed were either directly related to this new system of VC appointment and selection or affected by this system. Purposive sampling was done for this study. The data covers all the aspects of applicants being interviewed.

Almost all the members of search committee included VC, Ex-VC, Governor, Directors/Deans, and Higher Education Commission. Directors /Deans were interviewed so that their perception could be noted down, as these people have direct concern with VC appointments and the procedure. They see themselves at a same place after few years down the road. Themes were identified from the transcribed interviews through thematic analysis. These themes were highlighted and given title.

## Criteria for Selection of a Vice Chancellor

A competent vicechancellor can bring change in the ideology of a community to serve the nation at its best. A vice chancellor can be a source of inspiration for both the faculty and the students. This inspiration and brainwave can then travel to individuals' houses and families as well. The biggest connection between VC and society is the students and their teachers. A good VC will make sure that the teachers and students are following an upward graph with the help of policy implementation. He will make sure that his university is developing better citizens, and this will happen only if he directs his university very well, performing all those roles with the qualities mentioned before. This important concept can be depicted with the figure given below. This concept can also serve as an area for further research/ study. The VC should have both, management and finance skills.

Figure 2:



There are two issues very crucial in VC selection process. One who should be appointed and the second, how it should be done. This current study tries to answer these questions in Pakistan's set-up. Who should be appointed has already been discussed in the qualities of vice-chancellor and how will be covered by the end of this study. There are four possibilities on how to fill up the vacant position of a vice chancellor.

- Extend the tenure of a current VC. This will depend upon the past performance and the mutual consent of all the interested groups.
- Promotion from within the university. This can be done by succession planning, but a proactive training and planning is the main element. Universities with this pattern may lose the change-potential of a new-comer (Breakwell and Tytherleigh, 2008)
- Select someone outside the academia. This will give rise to a generalist versus professionalist approach. Discussed in detail in the next section.
- Search globally for a VC. The only problem that can be perceived in this procedure is the lack of understanding for native issues. This approach might insist some policies that are not meant for indigenous solutions.

Now connecting it to who should be appointed and how, gives rise to complexities. To handle this dynamic environment of higher education, universities need more than just a professor or just a leader. Universities need a blend of academic experience, administrative experience and research experience. Academic experience will help in understanding the nature of academic operations. This will give a better understanding of insides. Academic credibility is very important in developing a trust between stake holders and VC. Administrative experience will help in polishing managerial and leadership skills. This will also help in making sense out of global and business trends, which are the biggest threat to a society's survival. Administrative experience will help in a competent usage of academic experience. Research experience will help in realizing the importance and benefits of developing research culture. It will also help in developing and disseminating knowledge. Goodall (2006) showed a "positive correlation between the lifetime citations of a university's president and the position of that university in the global ranking. He further states that "better universities are run by better researchers".

Selection of a perfect fit between university and the whole world is a very critical and sensitive task. "Finding people who have the desired profile – and who would wish to become a VC - is not simple. It requires great professionalism in search and selection". (Breakwell and Tytherleigh, 2008). Past experience and current expertise of an individual is at the threshold of VC appointment. The above discussion gives an impression that a vice chancellor should be truly an educationist. This trend was also observed in this new system of vice chancellor selection. The analysis would give a true picture of what people think about this issue. But going further I think that we should have a discussion on generalist versus professionalist view as well.

## **Results and Discussion**

The process of Vice Chancellor's selection is comprised of three parts; an education secretary, search committee and governor (chancellor). It starts with education secretary who gives the advertisement, invite applications, by allocating weight to applicant's education, experience etc. and then they are called for the interviews. Now the next sensitive part is the constitution of search committee. The governor suggests three names, and ensures that the



search committee is independent and uninfluenced by the government. The search committee's members are the individuals who have experience of society at large. These people have already dealt with university's selection processes. Every province has different search committees. Our study focuses on Punjab only. The Punjab search committee was comprised of Mr. Babar Ali , Mr.Sartaj Aziz, Gen. M. Akram , Additional Chief Secretary and Education Secretary. Then the applicants appear for interviews in front of the search committee. This is now an important part to be played by the members of the search committee.

The results of the survey shows that many respondents were uncomfortable with the procedure and structure of the advertisement given for the post of VC. One of the directors of University of the Punjab commented that it is very disrespectful to advertise in such a manner that people will volunteer themselves to become a leader. He proposed that it should be an advertisement for people, asking if they knew someone who was appropriate for the job. He added that if this is the case we would also get to know whose name is given the most. One of the respondents was not comfortable with the size of the advertisement in the newspaper. He said if an advertisement is to be given then it should be differentiated from rest of the advertisement. It should cover more space than usual, just to convey the impact of the post. Some other people also showed reservations, they thought that an advertisement is not a feasible method for inviting applications. They commented that it is not a small post for which people have to advertise and wait for turn. One of the interviewee tried to justify that an individual who is not popular and who is not known by the public should not be given the chance to become VC. Now if we are looking for a known person then there is no question left to give an advertisement. An unknown person has no right to become a VC, because this job needs links to communicate to higher authorities, for funds, for operations. Many other issues are there cause it's a big, important post.

One of the respondent said that the secretaries who advertise this post are not linked to the education sector in true spirit. They just come here to complete their tenure and move on. Many other respondents raised a question that the search committee is here to interview a Ph.D degree holder Vice Chancellor but they themselves are non-Ph.Ds. Responding to this question search committee members argued that the VC is not only for an academic post it is also responsible for the administrative aspects. The administrative duties that a VC has are more important than the academic duties. A VC should be one who understands the environment and has strong leadership capabilities. Higher education commission justified that the search committee is not supposed to teach or research, they are supposed to simply select a vice-chancellor. Which is more of a human resource activity and for this the search committee should be sound enough to judge the people. He added that the search committee in those terms is very strong because all of them are dignified people and their performance is extraordinary in their fields. Almost majority of the respondents were not comfortable with the composition of the search committee or the function being performed by them. The higher education commission representative favored the idea of researchers that there is no harm in adding one PhD into the committee; he said that in fact it will add value to this system.

Many identified this current search committee as a bureaucratic committee, sitting at home making appointments. All the stakeholders other than search committee members had this view that the search committee should be more active in identifying an individual. They need to do quite a lot of homework before starting this process. Homework means that they should keep a record of a perspective individual and not just rely on documents. Great men are not hidden; they are visible out there and performing extraordinary things. On this note education secretary told that last time it was decided that the search committee would also search for people who were eligible for this post. If they find some competent person the

Search Committee members would ask him to apply. Higher education commission representative also verified this. Again there is a great divergence in the views of search committee and the academic world. Excluding search committee members and those who constituted them, only 4 respondents said that they are fine with the composition of the search committee. Many had strongly suggested that members should be PhDs and also from the public sector. This way they can relate themselves to the search committee.

It is very important that the criteria and procedure of this system should also be discussed. Now when we talk about criteria, here we find a wide shift in our administrative structure. The search committee in their meeting decided the criteria and then gave marks accordingly. The eligibility criteria clearly hold that the candidate should have a Ph.D degree. At one glance it seems like we are coming out of the bureaucratic and dictatorship culture to more open and academically strong culture. We used the words open and docile because professor's career development is entirely different from that of an army individual. Professors are more open to discussions and encourage decentralization. Apparently this can be said that it is a shift from a generalist approach to professional approach. Many respondents share that an army individual is there only to rule, they are not much aware of educational settings. It should be a PhD doctor himself so that he can supervise other PhD students. They said that we should be come out of colonial system and VC should be a specialist. But on the other hand some people called army officer era a golden era, they added to the conversation that this is very unfortunate that an army individual is handling us well. The teaching community couldn't prove themselves strong enough to bring drastic and worthy initiatives. One professor said that it is very tragic, "why a non-educationist suits us well?" Educationists did not prove themselves to be fair VCs. Unfortunately professors are not well connected to the top.

Almost all the academic community was in favor of a professional VC, the professor community sees VC as their dream and ultimate post and they think that it's their right as well. The governor justified this shift in a very logical manner. He told us that all the systems is developed according to the need of society. Many respondents emphasizes on the personal qualities, commitment and honesty irrespective of PhD degree. One possible option was given by a respondent that universities need a true leader and community should accept it. Higher education representative gave a very comprehensive and realistic view. He said that it's not important that only professional can perform better and not the generalist. This advertisement mentioned "preferably PhD" to not to keep generalist away or to undermine their efforts. It is done because it's the requirement of our education system right now. He added when we stress faculty development and research culture then it's important that the VC should be a PhD, as he knows the importance as well.

Second important part of criterion is that local PhDs weighted less than foreign PhDs. which is very misleading. If we do not trust our own degree then who else would. Giving fewer marks to local PhD as compared to foreign PhD would discourage both the degree provider and the degree holder. The respondents added, if they want to keep a difference then they should not offer local PhD. The news papers also mentioned that when short listing was done for final interviews many local PhDs were left out, awarding lesser marks as compared to foreign PhD. Many people did not like this criterion. A candidate went into lawsuit against the HEC over the advertisement stated "preferably foreign PhD" as basic criteria. This undermines the local PhD. The case is still pending in court.

One of the applicants who applied for this post was rejected because he had a vast experience of research but not administrative experience. He added that the advertisement gave weightage to person already holding some administrative position and there was no true evaluation for person's research capabilities. But majority of the respondents supported that

what really matters is his academic and administrative experience. Higher education representative said that a little experience of research can be compromised on high administrative experience. One of the VC of Women University commented on the criteria and it seems that she was not happy with the application of this criteria. She said that the committee, although set a criteria, but to fill the space they called every one, either eligible or non-eligible. This gives a negative image, although non-eligible was not selected but they should follow the criteria very rigidly.

One of the applicants, who was selected as VC, told that it is very embarrassing to be in a crowd of VC applicants. One of the reasons may be the chance of their failure or maybe it is somewhat rude for the prestigious post of VC. People were very offended that they should be waiting, carrying CV for the submitting documents to a section officer of grade 16 or 17 and standing in the line waiting for the call is intolerable. Secondly, the respondent added, any clerk can knock the applicant out e.g. if someone's photograph is missing or there are spelling mistakes, or if there is a document missing, or if due to technical shortcomings someone could not download the form, they will be denied the chance to apply for the post. What is this? This anger ended up in the conversation like "that maybe CV has been received by only "C" category people and "A" category might not have applied. It is possible that all the CVs received are not up to the mark because the people who were eligible might not have applied. In that case the committee should sort out from the CVs received from category B or C".

Respondents were asked to make comparisons between the two systems. One of the respondents explained that in terms of theory this one is much better but in terms of practice there is no difference because all selections are not perfect. Some said that previously there was no system and this system is much better than the previous one as this system is more objective. But again respondents hold the view that this system does not serve the purpose to which it was made for. Previously bad appointments were made on the seniority bases but surprisingly the same patterns were observed in this new system as well. Now there might be two possibilities may be the senior people actually performed best or the search committee members had some inclination towards senior members. So many people think that this system needs to be improved a lot.

One professor very rightly said that there are two aspects in decision making 1) attitude of those who are searching and 2) the forces that influence these decisions. These two are very critical points and if these are taken care of, this system can outperform the previous one. A Higher education representative identified one more issue in this system. He said that the vice chancellor selection process starts when the last vice chancellor has already left. He added that this process should start way before the tenure ends. The new vice-chancellor should sit with the current vice chancellor and the transition should be very smooth.

This system was actually meant to deliver transparency and a merit based selection. According to many respondents this system does make merit based appointments, but on transparency matter there is a big question mark. This system doesn't ensure transparency at all. When the criteria set is not applied to all, when some appointments are made out of blue, then yes people do question the transparency of the system. Everyone who favored the system had reservations on a few appointees that were not competent enough to become a Vice chancellor, but such cases are only 5%.The remaining 95% appointees are competent people. But even to take a 5% chance hurts the transparency of this system. One of the VC commented that the system should be vigilant in terms of its policies. Many people had the hunch of politics being embedded in the administrative culture. One of the respondents said, although the people are eligible for the appointment but the appointment are made only on political basis or some relationship with the chancellor or some relationship with the political

parties or some other influential people. This idea clearly identifies that they are not comfortable with the system.

## **Conclusion**

Higher education has been moving away from the traditional structure, towards a more transparent and business like system. The very reason of this shift is globalization and competition. The knowledge based economy has made a bond between higher education institutions and economic growth in the country. This bond can be seen in the policy goals. These policies are usually prescribed by international donor agencies. The least developed countries are then bound to adopt these prescriptions because the promised funds are dependent upon acceptance. The colonial and post-colonial structure of governance in these countries is an emulation of foreign model rather than a native context.

Many reforms are introduced from time to time to find solutions for Pakistan's overall problems but the results are not very encouraging. Implementation is the basic problem in public policy and managing organizations. Implementation is affected by many factors and institutional conditions are the major reason. The same is evident in higher education reforms introduced in 2002. A competent VC can develop a stable and a healthy nation for all. A VC job requires an extraordinary individual with exceptional capabilities. With these deep responsibilities the selection procedure of VC surely deserves great attention and requires fruitful results. This study was done so that the community can show their concerns and the divergent views can be analyzed. The main aim was to see the institutional context in the light of new reforms. These new initiatives were on the basis of market driven model of governance and they were supposed to increase administrative efficiency by transparency, accountability and merit based appointments of vice chancellor.

In the light of findings carried out in this study it may be suggested that search committee should hunt for competent people themselves, rather than just relying on the CV. Secondly, this system needs to be more transparent so that the non-policy makers can also trust this system. Thirdly, consistent criteria for VC post may be developed. Fourthly, politics may be kept away from the selections. Law needs to be amended, this would give an impression of justification and this would also lessen the bureaucratic interference. Lastly, all senior respectable professors' confidence and their opinion must be given weight so that their dignity is not hurt. The VC post demands the same. The professors and VCs should be more focused, honest and vigilant in their offices. They should serve the community and bring change so that the nation's future can be secure.

We can see the application of this system of VC appointment and selection in other provinces of Pakistan. This could be taken further as a research area. Another area of research could be to analyze the performance of a VC on quantitative terms. Then a comparable study could be generated which would reveal the effectiveness of this new system of VC appointment and selection as compared to the previous system.

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