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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

School of Management

Leadership of private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman

By

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THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

APRIL, 2012

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Doctor of Philosophy

LEADERSHIP OF THE PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN THE SULTANATE
OF OMAN

By: Ali Handan Al-Balushi

The rapid economic and social development in the Sultanate of Oman has led to an increasing demand for higher education since 1970. The Government is now involved, and is encouraging the private sector to provide higher education services through colleges and universities in order to prepare Omanis with the qualifications and skills required to support the country's future political economic development.

Higher education in the Sultanate of Oman has a range of different challenges, such as educational policies and regulations, the management of universities and colleges, funding, and maintaining quality standards in higher education institutions.

One of the major challenges facing the decision makers in higher education in Oman is the effectiveness of the leadership of colleges and universities. Strong academic leadership is paramount to the effective running of educational institutions, and a professional measurement is needed to analyse the current management of these institutions. There is the need for a proper policy to ensure the recruitment of suitable leaders to run these establishments in order to respond to the dynamic changes within the society.

The public and the government want to maintain a balanced situation where the private higher education institutions are enjoying a good income while providing quality education.

The research aims to analyse the type of leadership required in higher education in Oman by examining government policies and strategies related to higher education. More specifically, it will evaluate the performance of leadership at the level of presidents and deans and their roles in selected private higher education institutions. By doing so, different leadership theories, perceptions of leadership and possible measures for assessing the effectiveness of leadership will be interpreted and analysed.

This research is inductive based on a qualitative and exploratory approach. The findings have contributed to the development of an academic leadership model applicable to the Oman higher education institutions, and have generated some recommendations to develop the performance of presidents and deans of higher education institutions to attain the level which is acceptable to the Government and Omani society.

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Author's Declaration

I, Ali H. Al-Balushi, declare that the thesis entitled Leadership of Private Higher Education Institutions (Universities and Colleges) in the Sultanate of Oman, and the work presented in it is my own. I confirm that:

This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

Where any part of this thesis has previously has been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

Where I have quoted from the work of other, the source is always given; with the exception of such quotation, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself; and

Parts of this work have been published as:

Paper on Higher Education in the Sultanate of Oman

Signed

.....

April, 2012

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Definition and abbreviations

OAC	Oman Accreditation Council
QAA	Quality Audit Agency
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
BOOT	Build-Operate-Transfer
BAC	British Accreditation Body
CBFS	College of Banking and Financial Studies
CNAA	Council for National Academic and Accreditation
CVC	Committee of Vice-Chancellors
CWQC	Companywide Quality Control
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
DFEE	Department for Education and Employment
DIIG	Durham Model
FVTC	Valley Technical College
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
HEC	Higher Education Council
HEFC	Higher Education Funding Council
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Council
HMI	Majesty's Inspectorate
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
INQAAHE in Higher Education	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies
Kish	A government Gas project in North Oman
LBDQ	Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaires
MENA	Middle East, North Africa
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
NPM	New Public Management
Omanization	A programme to replace expatriate labourers with Omani labourers
RAE:	Research Assessment Exercise
ROSQA	Requirements for Oman's System of Quality Assurance
RGOTC	Royal Guard of Oman Technical College
RIT:	Rochester Institute of Technology
Sanad	A Government's programme to support self-employment projects and develop small businesses.
SQU	Sultan Qaboos University
TQM	Total Quality Management
TQC	Total Quality Control
UGC	University Grand Commission

CHAPTER 1

THE AREA OF RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Sultanate of Oman is an Arab country located in South East Asia. Its total land area is 309,500 square kilometres and it has a population of 2,340,815 people (Census, 2003). The country occupies a strategic location connecting Asia, Europe and Africa. (Ministry of National Economy, 1998).

The country was behind in education, health, housing, and infrastructure, and was politically unstable until 3 July 1970, when His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said took office. His Majesty has since put all his efforts into controlling and stabilising the country. Oil is the main source of income since production first commenced in 1967, and the revenue it has generated has been used to develop the infrastructure and to improve the country's social and economic situation (Alyosif, 1995).

Under the leadership and vision of His Majesty, Oman has become a modern developing country , with a modern infrastructure and good educational and health systems.(Al-Saleh, 1998).

The Government has followed a set of five-year development strategy plans using the oil revenue for economic and social development, and aims to diversify the national economy to decrease its dependence on oil as a main source of income. It has developed its economic policy to assure the continuing level of economic and political stability, and to create more jobs for the young Omanis (Al-Gasmy, 1993). In addition, the Government has used different tools to encourage the private sector to contribute more towards the development of the national economy. It has granted various incentives such as free land, soft loans, low tariffs and free industrial estates, and has also subsidised programmes to offer higher education and training through private universities and training institutes. The Government has an Omanisation strategy to feed the economy with young Omanis and to reduce the number of expatriates employed within different sectors (Information, 1998b).

The Public Ministries are in charge of the infrastructure projects which need qualified and trained employees to supervise the implementation process by the private companies.

The Government has an effective strategy to educate and train its employees in order to develop a well-qualified young generation of Omanis. Thus, human capital has become a strategic aim to meet the demands for economic and social development. This in turn has led to an increase in the demands for higher education due to an increase in the number of students every year registering in public and private universities and colleges. The Government has supported, and encourages, the private sector to cooperate in its vision by investing more capital in education in order to train more Omanis to enter the public and private sectors. To enable the private sector to play its role in national responsibility, the Government offers various incentives such as free land, funds and scholarships as it has realised the importance of improving the education system, and of maintaining an affordable and high-standard system to meet the requirements of all sectors. The Government's strategy includes basic education, general education and technical education (Ministry of National Economy, 2006). All the private universities and colleges have good educational programmes and are affiliated to reputable foreign universities.

The aim of the country's leader is to have educated and qualified Omanis who can carry out their tasks professionally. His vision and focus is primarily on ensuring that students attain a high standard of education. The leader's strategy is to develop a qualified, highly Omani workforce through free education and technical training programmes for all citizens (Information, 1998a). The rapid economic and social development in the Sultanate of Oman has led to an increasing need for higher education since 1970. The Government is now involved, and is encouraging the private sector to provide higher education services through colleges and universities in order to prepare Omanis with the qualifications and skills required to meet the country's future political economic development.

At present, The Sultan Qaboos University is the only public University in Oman. Overall, there are six applied science colleges, seven technical colleges, four vocational training colleges and 13 health institutes all of which are supervised by

different government bodies. There are seven private universities and 19 private colleges that are affiliated with foreign universities (ALhajri, 2005) .

The government authorities are introducing policies and strategies to meet the challenges described above. The private higher education institutions are still new and need direct guidance from the Ministry of Higher Education to assure their quality; however, the higher education system must have qualified and experienced expertise in the areas of accreditation and quality assurance and this currently limits the effectiveness of evaluation, accreditation and quality assurance procedures (Al-Bandary, 2005).

The private universities and colleges, in general, are primarily interested in providing higher education and at the same time aiming to make profit, whereas the Government and society ascribe more importance to excellent quality and high standards in education. Efficient and competent management in both public and private institutions is important to decision makers in higher education in Oman, but it is unclear how such performance can be incentivised and measured (Al-Lamki, 2006).

The emergence of a strong private sector in Oman has led to a new strategy to balance the country's goals to achieve financial profit, and the introduction of traditional academic relationships with other sectors, particularly the industrial one, in restructuring their strategies and providing practical and useful solutions to help different sectors in the society.

Higher education in the Sultanate of Oman has faced different challenges, such as in the areas of educational policies and regulations, the management of universities and colleges, funding, and maintaining quality standards, staffing and institutional leadership, as well as increasing participation and equity in higher education institutions. One of the major challenges facing the decision makers in higher education in Oman is the effectiveness of leadership of colleges and universities. Strong academic leadership is paramount to the effective running of educational institutions, and a professional measurement is needed to analyse the current management of higher education institutions in the country. There is the need for a proper policy to ensure the recruitment of suitable leaders to run these

establishments in order to meet the dynamic changes within the society. The Ministry of Higher Education should have a system or set of criteria to evaluate and analyse the performance and the quality of institutions' leadership. Given the importance of leadership within higher education institutions, there are many areas that need renewed investigation, such as the quality of programmes, funding, marketing, the role of institutional leadership, access, equity, the quality of teaching and academic standards, improvement of evaluation of accreditation systems, and affiliations with foreign institutions.

There has been very little research on higher education in Oman and this research aims to address this gap by examining the performance of leadership at the level of presidents and deans and their roles in selected private higher education institutions. Different perceptions of leadership and possible measures for assessing the effectiveness of leadership will be interpreted and analysed. Thus, against the background described above, the following research aims have been formulated:

- 1- To explore and evaluate the performance of leadership at the level of presidents and deans and their roles in selected private higher education institutions.
- 2- To analyse the type of leadership required in higher education in Oman.
- 3- To establish a leadership model suitable for higher education institutions in Oman.

The situation in Oman relating to universities is similar to that in many developing countries. These countries have often adopted higher educational models from the United Kingdom and the United States, but without developing effective local strategies. However, the universities in the developing countries are now facing difficulties due to their limited resources, social inequality in accessing secondary education and poor participation in higher education (Williams, 2003). From this, it could be inferred that the governments of developing and less developed countries (LDCs) have many options for developing higher education institutions if they improve their efficiency to offer competitive prices and better quality; and partnerships with well-reputed, international higher educational institutions can also prove to be effective in achieving these goals. In addition, academic institutions must respond to public and private needs. The pressure from political leaders is to

hold institutions fully responsible and accountable for public needs. The process of monitoring and evaluating institutional performance is therefore a key factor in fulfilling a society's needs.

The higher education institutions worldwide have faced many challenges in responding to the requirements of the world economy, especially after the rapid development of information and communications technology (ICT) since the 1990s. Globalisation, massification and marketisation have all impacted on higher education throughout the world. The traditional and the new entrepreneurial universities in Europe, North America and most developed countries have responded to these pressures through restructuring their strategies and their missions, as a result of which major changes have started to take place in most universities worldwide.

This requires good academic leadership in higher educational institutions to respond to the global challenges and the world economy along with a careful policy which is necessary to deal with complex situations. New pressures have emerged to balance leadership and management, to balance management with collegiality and to balance leadership with the institutional changes and society requirements. It is sometimes suggested that academic leadership differs from other leadership types due to its links with external parties outside the organisations and the specific, particular aspects of the academic culture; it is also suggested that skillful leaders are the indicators for successful organisations (Jennifer, 1997).

This concurs with Altbach (2002); that universities 'management has become more complex due to the expansion to provide services and special programmes which require different types of skills .

According to Altbach and Knight (2011), "

"globalization means the economic, political, social, and other forces that are pushing twenty-first- century higher education toward greater international development. These factors include the growing integration of research, the use of English as the lingua franca for scientist, and, especially, all aspects of information technology (IT) ...The emergence of international publishing, technology, and communications firms has to some extent been exacerbated by the current wave of globalization. (Altbach;Knight, 2011,P109)

It can be concluded that higher education institutions are working in a global-knowledge society; hence, university leaders must put extra effort to produce qualified graduates who can contribute towards national development and to cope with global challenges.

The twenty first century is the right time to restructure and transform the educational strategy of higher education systems to address varied challenges and to compete in the international marketplace. The private higher education institutions are required to strike a balance between their educational expertise and company success in order to maintain their level of excellence (Williams, 2003).

Clearly, in order to achieve goals and meet today`s challenges, effective leadership is important in society, companies or higher education. Leaders introduce the required changes in their organisation to build their nations and their visions contribute to the development of the policies of their countries. For example, policies in higher education are developed based on visions of the academic leaders (Wang, 2010). The leader has to have a clear vision and the ability to motivate the employees and to face all types of challenges in order to fulfill the organisational goals (Hesburgh, 1988). The management of higher educational institutions requires calls for policy and strategy to deal with complex situations, and effective management is required to deal with institutional changes and society`s requirements. The complicated role of leadership in higher education institutions has become a major theme for research during the last ten years.

Wang and Berger (2010) clearly stated the importance of having a direct link between leadership theories and practice to motivate leaders to apply theories in their practice at higher education institutions. They added that “poor leadership in higher education has been caused by a poor educational system and a lack of the correct philosophies” (Wang, 2010,p.6).

Thus, a new type of leadership and management has become necessary for the successful running of universities. According to Northouse (2007), Transformational Leadership is required in higher education institutions where the leaders drive, engage and motivate employees to work effectively and to respond positively to the required changes in their institutions (Northouse, 2007).

In his article “What Leaders Do”, Kotter (2001) concurred with the leadership approach of Northouse on emphasising the role of leaders to create changes in their organisations and to help their employees to manage the process and challenges through the change. Kotter summarised three key responsibilities of the leaders, which are: the skills to build up and implement strategies to lead their organisation to achieve their vision; the ability to align the employees to move forward in the same direction, and the capability to encourage and motivate the employees. It is worth adding here the contribution of Goleman’s (2006) five components of emotional intelligence that are important to leaders : Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and most important social skills (Goleman, 2006).

This quote clarifies the new trend.

The University President in the United States is expected to be a friend of the students, a colleague of the faculty, a good fellow with the alumni, a sound administrator with trustees, a good speaker with the public, an astute bargainer with the foundations and the federal agencies, a politician with the state legislature, a friend of industry, labor, and agriculture, a persuasive diplomat with donors, a champion of education generally , a supporter of the professions (particularly law and medicine), a spokesman to the press, a scholar in his own right, a public servant at the state and national levels, and a devotee of opera and football equally

(Bargh, 2000, p.134).

Today, higher education institutions need to respond to several factors to build their strategy and to respond to market needs. These include increasing competition among traditional universities and the emerging new institutions, changing communications technology, and increasing the globalisation of higher education (Newman, 2004). Thus, Oman is looking to develop its higher education system and institutions within the context of rapid and far-reaching worldwide changes in the sector.

Literature and research are still limited concerning effective academic leadership in the Gulf States, and particularly in Oman, and this research will contribute to the existing body of literature in the field.

1.2 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION

This research will review the current roles and performance of the presidents and deans of some private higher education institutions in Oman, and their outputs. The level of their performance will reflect their responses to the market conditions and to the needs of the society. Therefore, any feedback, comments, and recommendations from faculty members, students, administrators, human resource managers and graduates may form the basis for improvements to the evaluation of academic leadership performance based on this research. Accordingly, the resulting information provided by the survey data and the literature review will be used to develop an academic leadership model that is appropriate for running Omani higher education institutions in line with high quality international standards of academic achievement, teaching and learning, administration and academic supportive services, internal and external relationships and research development.

The research is important because it will help to improve and upgrade the quality of leadership in universities and colleges in Oman by providing a more effective institutional leadership model; this model could form the basis for decision makers to select suitable presidents and deans to lead higher education institutions.

The importance of this research and its contribution to knowledge is summarised as follows:

- To describe, analyse and explain the characteristics of leadership of presidents and deans of private universities and colleges in Oman and the strategies they adopt to run their institutions.
- To identify the necessary leadership skills required to enhance the quality of teaching delivered and to upgrade the quality of graduates.
- To consider the importance of academic leadership in terms of the development of high quality graduates and their contribution to the workplace.
- To establish an academic leadership model suitable for higher education institutions in Oman and for other universities in the Gulf Countries.
- To create new knowledge on higher education relevant to Oman in particular and to the Arab world in general.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

The research highlights the Government's policies towards higher education in Oman and the recruitment process used to select presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges. It investigates the current role and performance of the academic leadership (presidents of universities or deans of colleges) in selected private higher education institutions and their contribution in terms of human resource development by providing the most appropriate programmes, recruiting excellent lecturers and administrators, and providing an excellent educational environment. The research will analyse the relationship between the management of the academic leaders at the selected private higher education institutions and the output of their institutions, especially the ability and skills of their graduates and their performance in the workplace.

The performance of academic leaders and their effectiveness is analysed on the basis of interviews with presidents and deans of three private universities and three private colleges; officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, human resource managers of some public ministries, and graduates of the same private institutions. The research also used data from questionnaires distributed to faculty members, students and administrators. Finally, the experience of the researcher and the views of students' parents and the general public were used to contribute to the collection of more secondary data for the research. The literature review aided the analysis process, especially in the areas of management performance indicators, quality management and the characteristics of effective presidents and deans, and their successful assessment against international standards.

The data analysis led to the development of an academic leadership model to assist the decision makers at the Government or the Board of Governors of private institutions to select qualified and experienced presidents and deans to manage higher education institutions. The model will also help the current presidents and deans to reform their academic and administrative strategies to perform better in their institutions. The academic leadership model was designed to advance the performance and the output of the presidents and deans of Omani private universities and colleges and might be appropriate for academic leaders of public

and private higher education institutions in the other Gulf countries. Finally, the researcher has made some recommendations along with the analysis to help improve institutional leadership quality and to improve the output of universities and colleges in Oman.

The main objectives of the research as briefly previously explained above are summarised as follows:

- To analyse of the styles of leadership demonstrated by presidents and deans of three private universities and three private colleges in Oman.
- To relate the exercise of leadership to the quality of education provided to students and the employment capacity of graduates.
- To identify a model of academic leadership that would be appropriate to further development of higher education institutions in Oman.
- To contribute to the development of higher education studies in the Gulf region.

Major research questions:

- To what extent does the Sultanate of Oman have well qualified and effective academic leaders at its private higher education institutions and do they truly contribute towards wider human resource development for the country?
- To what extent is the role of presidents and deans in private universities and colleges in Oman managerial and responsive rather than strategic and initiatory?
- How is the academic and administrative performance of presidents and deans measured, and by whom?
- What is the strategy/recommendation to improve academic leadership in Oman and how might this be improved in a way that is both desirable and feasible?

Specific Questions:

- How do private higher educational institutions recruit their presidents and deans? Who sets the recruitment criteria?
- How do the private higher education institutions evaluate the performance of their presidents and deans?
- What kinds of relationship exist between presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges and the public and private sector employers, parents and graduates?
- Do private universities/colleges have quality assurance departments/sections or teams to maintain the quality of teaching and research and skills development within their institutions?
- Are the leaders of universities/colleges isolated from the public and the markets?
- What are the characteristics of leadership and management exercised by the presidents and deans in the private institutions?
- How do the presidents and deans maintain financial stability in their private universities and colleges?

Research Methodology

The research methodology is an inductive approach based on a qualitative and exploratory type. The researcher will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, referred to as the mixed method approach. This methodology aims to increase the researcher's familiarity with and understanding of the current performance and roles of presidents and deans of the selected private universities and colleges and their contributions toward human resource development in Oman. The multiple theoretical approaches will help to understand the complexity of leadership in academic institutions.

Data collection method

The research project used a mixed methods approach. For the qualitative phases, 17 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interviewees included the

presidents and deans from three selected private universities and three private colleges, Government officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, human resource managers from public ministries and recent graduates. The quantitative phase was based on three questionnaires distributed among faculty members, administrators and students from the private institutions.

The researcher faced some limitations in his data collection, including restricted access to some government documents, the reluctance of many employees to release certain data, and the absence of bibliographical references on higher education in the Gulf region. Equally, however, the researcher's previous experience in the academic environment and in the public ministries helped in taking the research forward.

The results of this research will help to build a leadership model which will be appropriate for the types of academic leadership necessary and suitable for Omani institutions. The thesis will also open up areas for further research and will contribute to the development of new leadership theories particularly relevant for the Arab world.

The research data were analysed using a coding system and through the computerised system, NVivo 8 (for qualitative data), and a computer statistical program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences or SPSS) for quantitative data.

Capital: Muscat

Geographical Location:

Located in the farthest south east of the Arabian peninsula and extends between latitudes 16° 40 and 26° 20 North and longitudes 51° 50 and 59° 40 East. Its western borders are with the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while the Republic of Yemen lies on its southern borders. The eastern border lies on the Arabian Sea.

Area: 309,500 square kilometres.

Length of coast: Approximately 3,165 kilometres.

Weather: Hot and humid in summer, moderate in winter.

Population: 2,694,094 (Census 2011), with expatriates forming 27.6% of the total.

Population growth rate for Omanis: 2.0%

Gender ratio for Omanis: 102.2 males per 100 females.

Population density: 7.6 persons per square kilometres.

Life Expectancy at Birth: 73.78 years (2003).

Gross Domestic Product: Rial Omani 7.81 billion (At current prices of 2003)

Natural wealth: Petroleum, Natural Gas, Copper, Agriculture and Fisheries

Currency: 1 Rial Omani = 2.6008 US \$ (384.5 Baisas of one Rial Omani = 1 US\$)

Time: + 4 (Greenwich)

Source: (Ministry of National Economy, 2006)

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The objective of this section is to consider the development of the educational system and higher education in Oman, and to identify and discuss the different challenges facing higher education in the country. The section will also indicate possible areas of future research in order to help the country meet the present challenges facing higher education and to provide better quality programmes that will best serve the economic and social needs of the country.

Oman has experienced two types of educational system. The first was a non-formal educational system, used throughout its history until 1970. This system was a traditional way of teaching which focused on religious studies and some basic mathematics. The second system is the Modern Education System, which is used in other developing countries. Tables 1 and 2 below simplify the three stages of the development of the modern educational system in Oman. The first stage of the modern system started in 1970 with major government efforts to expand access to education, opening as many schools as possible in order to get the maximum number of students. The Government put more emphasis on educational quality in the 1980s and 1990s, and introduced several reforms to ensure better quality education.

Table 1: Number of Schools, Classes and Students in Public Education, 1969-2003

Stage of Development	Year	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Girls and Number of Proportion of Girls	Mission and Objective of the Government (Ministry of Education)
One	1969 - 1970	3	909 Male only	0	Quantitative development
Two	1980-81	373	106,032	35,190 33%	Improve the quality of education
Three	1995-96	953	488,797	236,331 48%	Educational reform for better future
	2001	993	554,845	270,335 49%	
	2003	1,022	576,472	279,181 48%	

Source: (Education, 2007)

Table 2: Number of Schools, Classes and Students 2006-2007

Education Type	Number of schools	Number of classes	Number of students
Basic Education	589	8868	250266
General Education	464	10999	313336
Total of Public Education	1053	19868	563602
Private Schools	170	1727	32134
Tarbiyah Fikriyah	1	32	335
Amal for Deaf and Dumb	1	30	274
Omar bin Khattab Institute	1	21	115

Source: (Education, 2007)

The social and economic development in Oman has been rapid since 1970 when the Government implemented and followed a series of five-year strategic plans. Rapid development has led to a higher demand for higher education because the number of students has been increasing annually, and the public colleges and universities cannot absorb all the students. Therefore, the Government has encouraged the private sector to invest in higher education to share the responsibilities and to contribute to the education and training of young Omanis to meet the economic and social requirements of the country. Such support includes various incentives for the investors such as free land, and funds and scholarships for lower-income students who enrol at private colleges and universities to complete their education.

Today, there are 57 Higher Education Institutions in the Sultanate of Oman; 33 are Public Higher Education institutions and 24 are private ones (Education, 2008/2009)

The public institutions in Oman include one Government university, known as Sultan Qaboos University, with eight colleges, and 11 government colleges, four vocational training colleges and 14 Health Institutes supervised by different government bodies.

There are seven private universities and 19 private colleges affiliated to foreign international universities and providing similar teaching and programmes. These are profit-making institutions as measured by the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) (ALhajri, 2005).

All private universities and colleges have to apply for a formal permit to start their educational activities, following an official regulation system, which clarifies the process of establishment and the beginning of educational activities provision. Both the Ministry of Higher Education and the Council of Higher Education issue such official permits. The Accreditation Council is responsible for approving and accrediting programmes for all higher education institutions.

The Higher Educational Council is the regulatory governing body which issues the general policies of education and scientific research.

2.1 EDUCATION SYSTEM

a. General education

Oman followed the general education system from 1970 until 2000. This system had four levels:

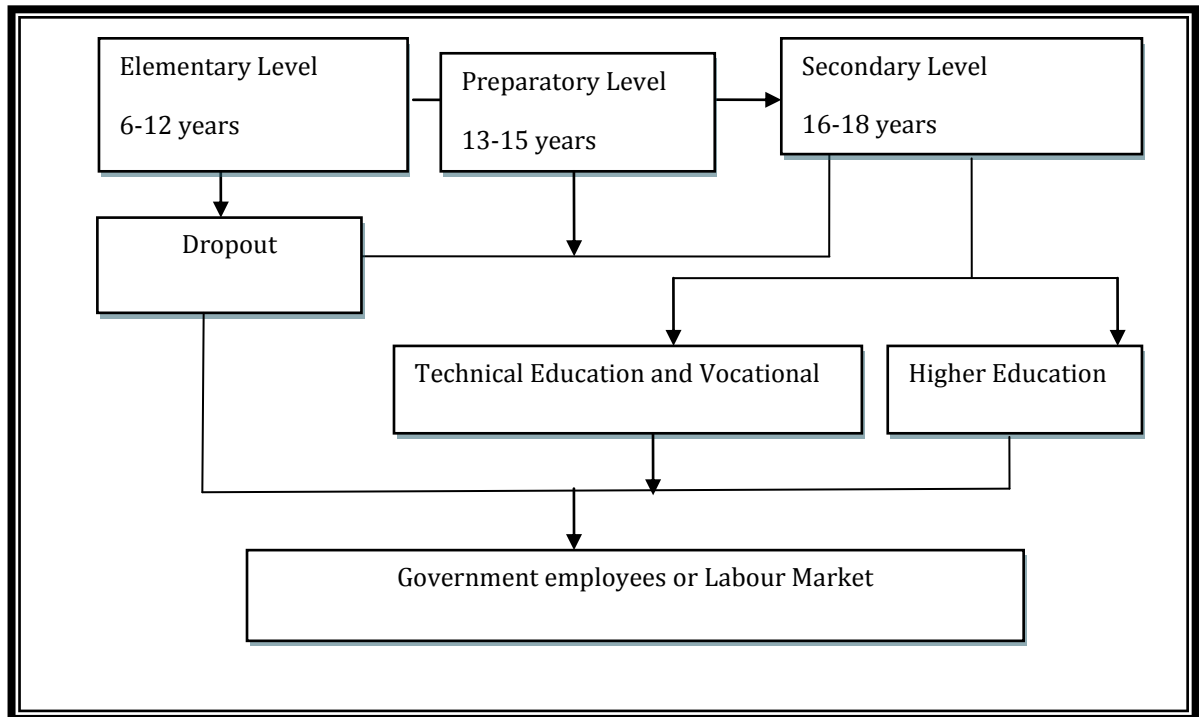


Figure 1. General Education System

Figure 1 above explains how the general education system is classified into three levels. The students spend from year six to year twelve in the elementary level, three years in the preparatory level from ages 13 to 15 years, then another three years in the secondary level from ages 16 to 18. The student at the second grade of the secondary level has to make a choice to follow either science or the arts; this process is called streaming.

b. Basic education

The Ministry of Education introduced the basic education system which is an integrated education system covering the first ten years of schooling in place of the three year general education system. The aim of the basic system is to develop students' skills through engaging them in group work rather than the classical type of learning such as memorising the subjects. The new basic system

enhances students` general knowledge and helps them in their future higher education and technical training (Education, 2007).Figure 2 shows the structure of the new basic education system.

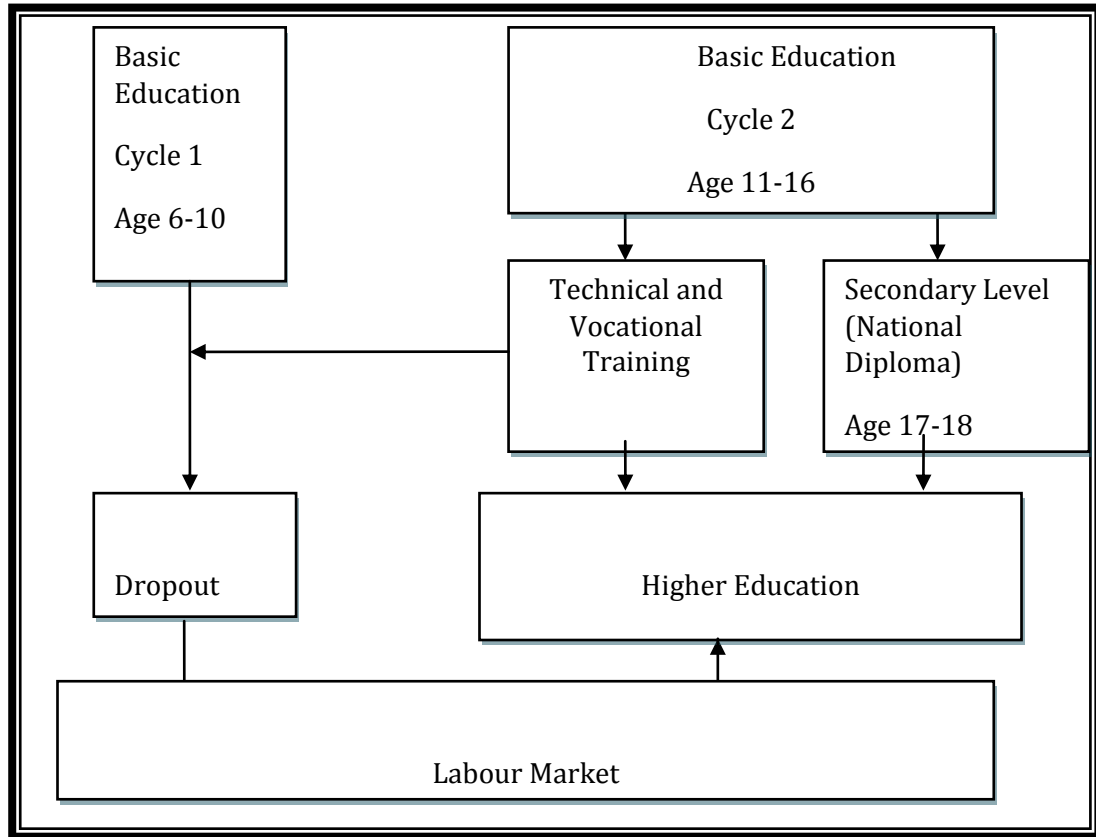


Figure 2. Basic Education Systems

The new Basic Education System was implemented in the academic year 1998/1999. The Ministry of Education had the flexibility to allow the students of the general education system and the new system to continue to their secondary education.

In recent years, the Ministry has introduced several training programmes to educate and train teachers to equip them to implement the new basic system. It has also provided the necessary facilities and has encouraged other reforms, which include development of the school curriculum, English language programmes, reduced size of classes and laboratory development.

The Government's vision for Oman's economy in 2020 has required the development of the educational system to provide equal chances to all citizens. The educational system must be cost-effective and meet the needs of the market. To accomplish the desired educational development, the Government has introduced several policies and strategies to improve all levels of education, starting from basic education through to technical and vocational training and university degrees.

2.2 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The Higher Education Council (HEC) in Oman is the main Government body established to set policies and strategies for the education system, which are implemented by different ministries and by public and private higher education institutions. The Council was formed on 27 September 1998 when His Majesty the Sultan of Oman issued Royal Decree number 65/98 to strengthen the importance and the position of this Council. The Minister of the Diwan of the Royal Court, who holds a high rank and authorised position in the Government, heads the Council. The Council consists of the Ministers of Higher Education, National Economy and Civil Services, the President of Sultan Qaboos University, and representatives of different educational sectors. The importance of the Council is a direct indication of the Government strategy concerning human resource development in Oman.

The main tasks of this Council, as officially announced in the official Gazette, are:

- To draw up general policies for higher education and scientific research in the universities and other higher education institutions in order to meet the national social and economic.
- To achieve objectives of the country, and to follow up the implementation of its policies and decisions;
- To regulate students' admission in higher education institutions;
- To review laws and regulations governing higher education and to recommend areas for improvement;

- To study issues or problems facing higher education and recommend way to solve them;
- To review any proposed draft laws and regulations for higher education;
- To study higher education issues delegated to the Council by His Majesty the Sultan and the Council of Ministries;
- To analyse all annual reports prepared by universities and other institutions on their performance and recommend methods of improvement;
- To prepare annual reports to the Council of Ministries on the situation of higher education (Affairs, 2000,2001).

The Council meets every four months, or as required, and the General Secretary prepares the documentation for the Council meetings. Beside the Council's main responsibilities, it issues decisions to permit the establishment of private universities and colleges and decides on the Government financial support and incentives for these institutions.

The council is a Government authority to set up public policy on higher education in Oman. It also decides on the number and location of higher education institutions and approves the changes to the existing colleges and universities (Nizamuddin, 2010.)

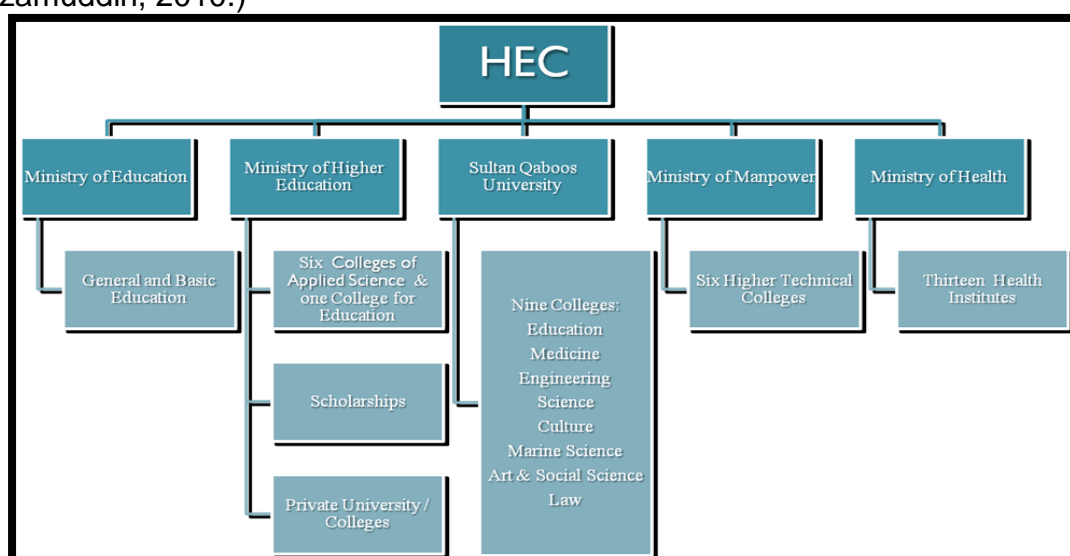


Figure 3. Structure of the Higher Education Council

There are two important factors which have influenced the process and the development of the higher education system in Oman: the process of social and economic development since 1970 and the time required to develop the education system. The Government has placed more emphasis on developing human resources in the lower level of education, mainly school levels and vocational training. Students who graduated from secondary schools were given scholarships to study abroad.

Because of growing numbers of graduate students from secondary schools from the 1980s onwards, as well as the additional costs involved, the Government found it difficult to give opportunities for all students to continue with their higher education abroad. The Government therefore decided to establish local higher education institutions. Scholarships began to decline during the second half of the 1980s and the 1990s due to the establishment of the Sultan Qaboos Universities and other private colleges in Oman.(Al-Bandary, 2005)

Government public institutions have developed from 1986 to the present in different fields of higher education. At present, the Sultanate of Oman has one Government University, known as Sultan Qaboos, a leading higher education institution with eight different colleges: College of Sharia and Law, College of Engineering, College of Science, College of Medicine, College of Agriculture, College of Education, College of Commerce and Economics and College of Art.

Other government higher education institutions include one College of Education, six specialised Colleges, seven Technical Colleges, 13 Health Institutes, one Institute of Islamic Studies, one Oman College of Tourism and Hospitality, one Royal Guard College, and one College of Banking and Financial Studies. Different Government bodies supervise all these institutions.

The above higher education institutions are governed by different Ministries such as the Ministry of Higher Education, Sultan Qaboos University, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Manpower, the Ministry of Defense and the private sector.

Table 2-3 describes Oman`s higher education institutions and governing bodies.

Table 3: Oman`s Higher Education Governance

Higher Education Institution	Governing and Regulatory body
All institutions of higher education	Council of Higher Education
College of Banking and Financial Studies	Central Bank of Oman
Health Institutes	Ministry of Health
Colleges of Education and Private Colleges	Ministry of Higher Education
Technical Colleges	Ministry of Manpower
Sultan Qaboos University	Sultan Qaboos University

Source: Al Lamki, 2002

The above institutions are financed by the Government and the accepted students are not required to pay admission fees. The Ministry of Higher Education also provides scholarships and sends students abroad to continue their higher education at both undergraduate and graduate level; scholarships are only available for good students with excellent academic achievement (AlHary, 2005).

The next section will briefly describe each of the higher education types in Oman will give brief information about the Government higher education institutions in Oman.

The Sultan Qaboos University

The Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) opened in 1985, and is still the only Government university in the country. It is located in Muscat, the capital of Oman. The University runs eight colleges: Education, Medicine and Health Sciences, Engineering, Science, Agriculture and Marine Sciences, and the College of Arts, Law and Social Sciences. The University has developed its programme to reach the required quality to meet the needs of society and now admits more than 2000 students annually. It has linked its programmes to serve the social and economic development of Oman. The University has developed its main areas as education, scientific research, community development and cooperation with scientific institutions, both within and outside the Sultanate.

The Colleges of Education

The Government established Teaching Training Centres in 1976 to admit graduates from intermediate schools and offer three years' training to get a Diploma in Education in order to equip young Omanis to teach at the primary level and to reduce dependency on foreign teachers. Admission to these centres was upgraded to graduates from secondary schools in 1980. In 1984, the Government developed these centres to form teacher colleges to offer a diploma after two years of training for secondary students. The programmes developed were to be four years at degree level.

The Government met its plan to recruit enough teachers in the field of education and decided to retain only one College of Education out of six and change the specialisation of the other five colleges.

The Ministry of Higher Education is now running six regional colleges in the fields of engineering, languages and translation, and technical information.

Technical Education and Vocational Training

The Ministry of Manpower supervises technical education and vocational training in Oman. The Government developed its policies and strategic plans to educate and train its human resources to meet the social and economic development and to replace foreign labour with local citizens. The Ministry opened five regional colleges during the last ten years. The main goal is to prepare qualified Omanis to work in the private sector. Muscat College was established in 1984 to award degrees in the fields of trade, information technology, engineering and science.

College of Banking and Financial Studies

The College was established in 1983 under the supervision of the Central Bank of Oman. The Central Bank of Oman and the Commercial Banks support the annual budget of the College. The College offers professional and academic degrees in accounting, financial studies and information systems to serve the financial sector, as well as a Master's degree in Business Administration.

Health Institutes

The Ministry of Health is running 14 Health Institutes; one is located in the capital and others are placed at different locations in Oman. The purpose of these institutes is to educate and train students to occupy/take up different public health roles, such as, nurses, medical laboratory and x-ray technicians, dental surgeons and pharmacy assistants. There are also specialised diploma programmes in management, health care, dialysis and intensive care of children and obstetrics. Students with secondary certificates can apply and receive the required training for three years, leading to the award of a diploma in the field of training.

Royal Guard College

The Royal Guard of Oman Technical College (RGOTC) was established in 1976 to provide a training environment where young Omanis could combine technical studies with a full academic programme. All technical subjects are delivered through the English medium.

Private Colleges

The Government has encouraged the private sector to invest in higher education and to open colleges and universities to absorb the increasing number of graduates from secondary schools. The Ministry of Higher Education has recognised that there is a gap between the number of high school graduates and the available places at the Government higher education institutions in Oman (Al-Lamki, 2006). The Government offers different types of incentives to encourage the private sector in higher education such as funds, free land to build their premises, tax exemption and scholarships.

The Ministry of Higher Education was established by Royal Decree 2/94 with a vision

to ensure quality higher education that meets the requirements for sustainable development" and a mission "to promote a higher education system that : A) keeps pace with developments and changes in today's world; B) meets the requirements of sustainable development in the knowledge era, while preserving the Cultural identity of Omani society; and, C) Contributes to the progress and development of humankind (Education, 2011).

The overall objectives of the Ministry are to develop its management performance to adapt to the changes and development in higher education, to respond to the increasing demands of the graduates of the General Education Diploma, to assure the quality and efficiency of Oman`s Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), to encourage research and development at HEIs and to update the public of its responsibilities.

Currently, as stated above, there are seven private universities and 19 private colleges affiliated to foreign higher education institutions. The foreign institutions provide complete programmes in different fields, including all curriculum development, assessment and awarding of degrees. The role of local colleges or universities is mainly in marketing and delivering programmes.

The programmes in private higher education range from two-year colleges offering diplomas to four-year colleges and universities offering Bachelor's degrees.

Table 4 below illustrates the local institutions and their foreign partners and types of programmes.

Table 4: Institutions and their foreign partners and types of programmes

	Institution	Location	Established Academic Year	Academic affiliation	Academic Programme
1	Sohar University	Sohar	2001-2002	University of Queensland, Australia Mutah University, Jordan	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree Master's degree
2	Nizwa University	Nizwa	2004-2005	Sultan Qaboos University The Jordanian University Oregon State University Leipzig University of Reading University of Al Grave University of Porto	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree Master's degree
3	Dhofar University	Salalh	2004-2005	American University of Beirut	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
4	German University of Technology in Oman	Muscat	2006-2007	RWTH Aachen University Germany	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
5	Arab Open University	Muscat	2007-2008	Open University, UK	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree

6	Buraimi University	Al-Buraimi	2009-2010	University of Vienna University of Applied Science, Kermes, ,Austria Vienna University of Technology Bradford University (UK)	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
7	A'Sharqiyah University	Ibra	2009-2010	Oklahoma State University, U.S.A Texas Technological University , U.S.A	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
8	Majan College	Muscat	1995-1996	University of Bedfordshire, UK University of Leeds, UK	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
9	Modern College of Business and Sciences	Muscat	1996-1997	University of Missouri, St.Louis, USA,	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
10	Caledonian College of Engineering	Muscat	1996-1997	Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland – (GCU) UK Vellore Institute of Technology University, (VITU) India	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
11	Oman Medical College	Muscat	2001-2002	West Virginia University, USA	Medicine Degree (7 years) and Bachelor of Pharmacy (5 years)

12	Sur University College	Sur	2001-2002	Bond University, Australia	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
13	Waljat College of Applied Sciences	Muscat	2001-2002	Birla Institute of Technology, India	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
14	Middle East College of Information Technology	Muscat	2002-2003	Coventry University, UK	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
15	Scientific College of Design	Muscat	2004-2005	Lebanese American University (LAU) Arab Community College, Jordan	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
16	Oman College of Management and Technology	Barka	2005-2005	Al-Yarmouk University, Jordan	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
17	Al-Zahra College for Girls	Muscat	1999-2000	Al-Ahlia Amman University, Jordan	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
18	Mazoon College	Muscat	1999-2000	Missouri University of Science & Technology, USA Banasthali- Vidyapiyh-Rajasthan, India	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree
19	Gulf College Muscat	Muscat	2004-2005	Staffordshire University University of Hull, University of Reading, UK	4 years undergraduate Bachelor's degree

20	Muscat College	Muscat	1997-1998	The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) The University of Sterling, UK	2 year Diploma
21	International College of Engineering & Management	Muscat	1997-1998	University of Central Lancashire, UK	2 year Diploma
22	Oman Tourism and Hospitality College	Muscat	2001-2002	International Institute of Tourism and Management (ITM) , Austria University of Applied Science, Kerms, Austria	2 year Diploma
23	Al -Buraimi College	Al-Buraimi	2003-2004	California State University/Northridge USA	
24	International Maritime College Oman	Muscat	2005-2006	The Shipping and Transport Group (STC), the Netherlands	
25	Al- Bayan College	Muscat	2006-2007	Purdue University Calument, USA	
26	Oman Dental College	Muscat	2006-2007	A.B Shetty Memorial Institute of Dental Science, India	

Source: (eduaction, 2009-210)

2.3 OMAN ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

Higher education in the Sultanate of Oman is a fast-growing sector, which is owned and governed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), other Governmental bodies, and private owners. The higher educational institutions have different imported programmes as well as locally developed ones. For that reason, the country's licencing and accreditation systems are still in early stages of development and implementation (UNESCO, 2005)

The quality of higher education is a main concern of the Government in the Sultanate of Oman. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said had clearly instructed the Ministry of Higher Education to assure quality in higher education especially in private universities and colleges. He clearly stated in his 2006 annual address to the Council of Oman that

objective studies prove that their high quality programs will ensure that the students will be successful in the workplace, and also guarantee that their certificates are recognized at both national and international levels. Besides the capacity to absorb large numbers of higher education seekers – a matter that we encourage and urge these educational institutions should provide high quality education for students, since quantity is useless unless high standards are maintained in order to advance scientific and applicable skills

(Tribune, 2006, P.8).

The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has set a quality plan to accomplish an effective quality management system for higher education. The MOHE and the Oman Accreditation Council (OAC) worked together to establish a national quality management system in Oman. The quality plan presented a quality management framework for higher education, but it does not include all important issues, such as the strategic allocation of public funds through targeted student scholarships, that are necessary for a successful higher education system. The MOHE, however, along with other representatives from concerned public ministries, developed a strategic plan for education in the Sultanate of Oman 2006-2020 as a general guideline for Oman's education sectors. This strategy addressed many issues, including the responsibilities of the Oman Accreditation Council to review the Requirements for Oman's System of Quality Assurance (ROSQA). It includes a system for classifying institutions of higher education, a qualifications and credit

framework, institutional standards, and processes for institutional and programme licencing and accreditation. The main goal of the OAC is to introduce a complete quality system, which can be implemented gradually in higher education institutions.

The Oman Accreditation Council (OAC) was established by Royal Decree No. 74/2001. Its main responsibility is to set procedures for the assessment and to guide higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman to maintain quality in their programmes. At the same time, the higher education institutions are required to submit to the OAC the required information and statistics to enable the Council to perform its tasks effectively.

The OAC has a board of ten members, appointed by Royal Decree, which has governance responsibilities for the OAC, an administrative Secretariat to carry out daily professional and administrative activities, and a register of External Reviewers which lists well-known people from Oman and other countries to participate in external review panels. The OAC is a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and has benefited from its policies and guidelines. The higher education institutions should follow a Quality Audit process developed by the OAC for higher education institutions to improve their quality assurance and update the OAC of their progress (Oman Accreditation Council, 2008). Figure 4 below illustrates the stages in the HEI Quality Assurance Framework:

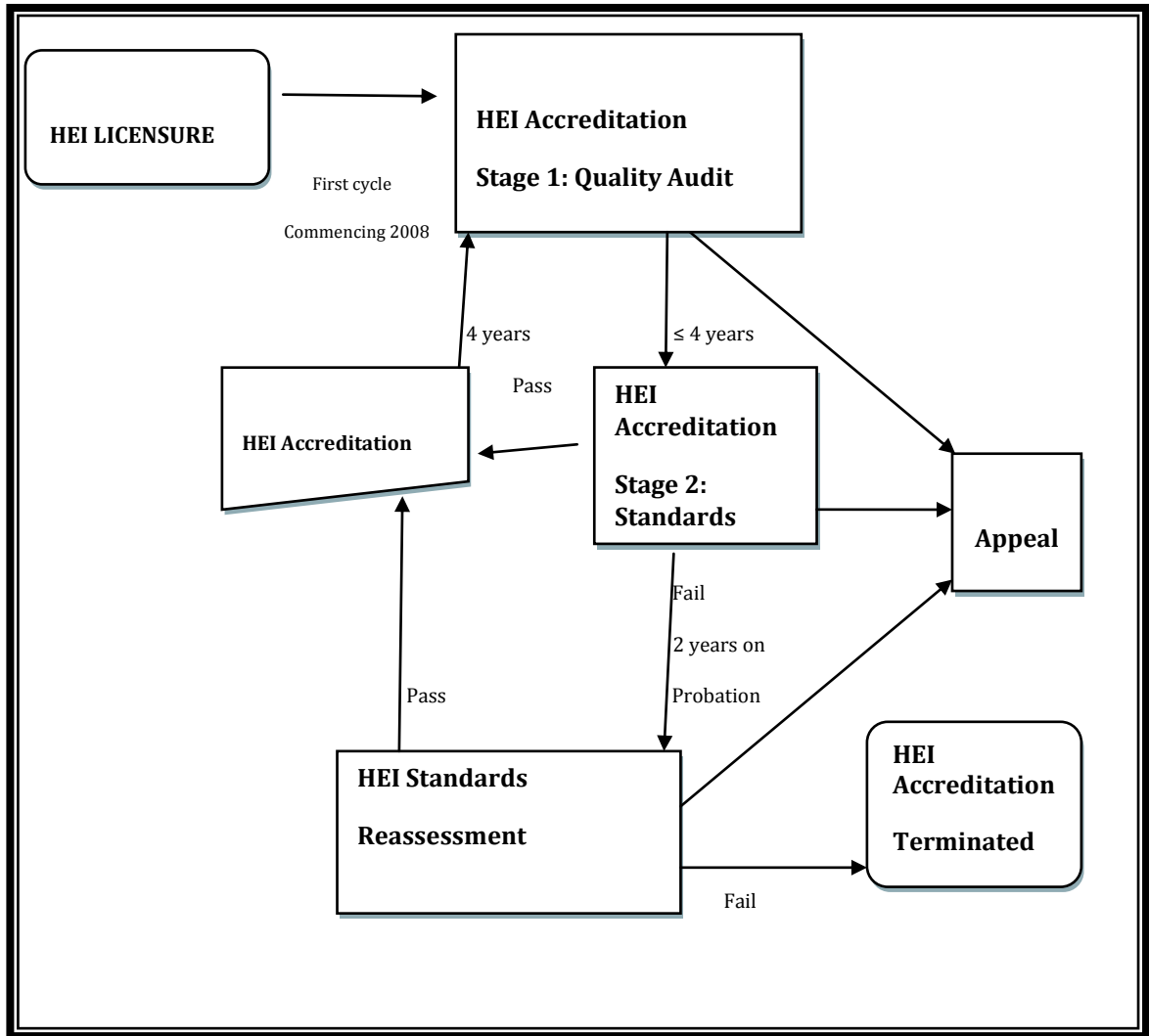


Figure 4. Quality Assurance Framework

All higher education institutions must be licenced by the Ministry of Higher Education to start their academic activities and the OAC requires each higher education institution to undertake a Quality Audit. This exercise helps universities and colleges to evaluate the effectiveness of their quality assurance and quality enhancement processes in order to match their strategies and their goals. It is a self-evaluation exercise and the institutions provide the OAC with a Quality Audit Report, which is evaluated by an external Audit Panel designated by the OAC. The Panel produces a Quality Report.

The higher education institutions also carry out a standard assessment to check if they meet the institutional quality standards published by the OAC.

This stage will help the institutions meet the recommendations of their Quality Audit Reports. The institutions should present their Assessment Application to the OAC within four years following the publication of the Quality Audit Report. The Assessment Applications are evaluated by the Assessment Panel which presents recommendations based on whether the higher education institutions have met the standards or not. The OAC Board will decide to award such institutions Accredited Provider status on the HEI and award a Provider Accreditation Certificate; failed institutions will be asked to undertake another Quality Audit within the Provider Accreditation cycle, and should attain a satisfactory level in one or two years as decided by the OAC. If an institution fails, then the OAC may terminate its accreditation status as a higher education institution (Oman Accreditation Council, 2008).

It is envisaged that, in time, the OAC may require a Provider Accreditation Certificate as a prerequisite to the accreditation of diploma and degree programmes.

All higher education institutions are treated in the same way in terms of external quality assurance, and it is assumed that steps taken to maintain their quality will help students, the students' families and society as a whole.

2.4 SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH STRATEGY PROJECT

The Research Council (TRC) was established on 22 June 2005, to be chaired by the advisor to His Majesty the Sultan Qaboos, with membership of a number of ministries, presidents of Oman universities, representatives of the private sector and corporate figures.

The Council is responsible for the encouragement and regulation of all issues associated with scientific research through direct coordination with different bodies and institutions concerned with scientific research, and its main priority is drawing up a comprehensive national strategy for scientific research.

The main objectives of the Research Council are:

- 1- Developing a comprehensive national strategy for scientific research and innovation that assimilates global experiences and is consistent with local provisions.
- 2- Ensuring broad national participation by specialists in the preparation of the strategy to guarantee validity.
- 3- Identifying and arranging national priorities in the field of scientific research.
- 4- Adopting principles and methods for updating the strategy.
- 5- Qualifying national cadres for participating in the preparation of the draft strategy.
- 6- Based on the latest management system, developing a regulatory framework and an effective, flexible and transparent administrative structure for the Council which would include the personnel and resources required for implementing the various activities.

The tasks and responsibilities have been distributed among committees and teams to develop the strategy (Research Council, 2006).

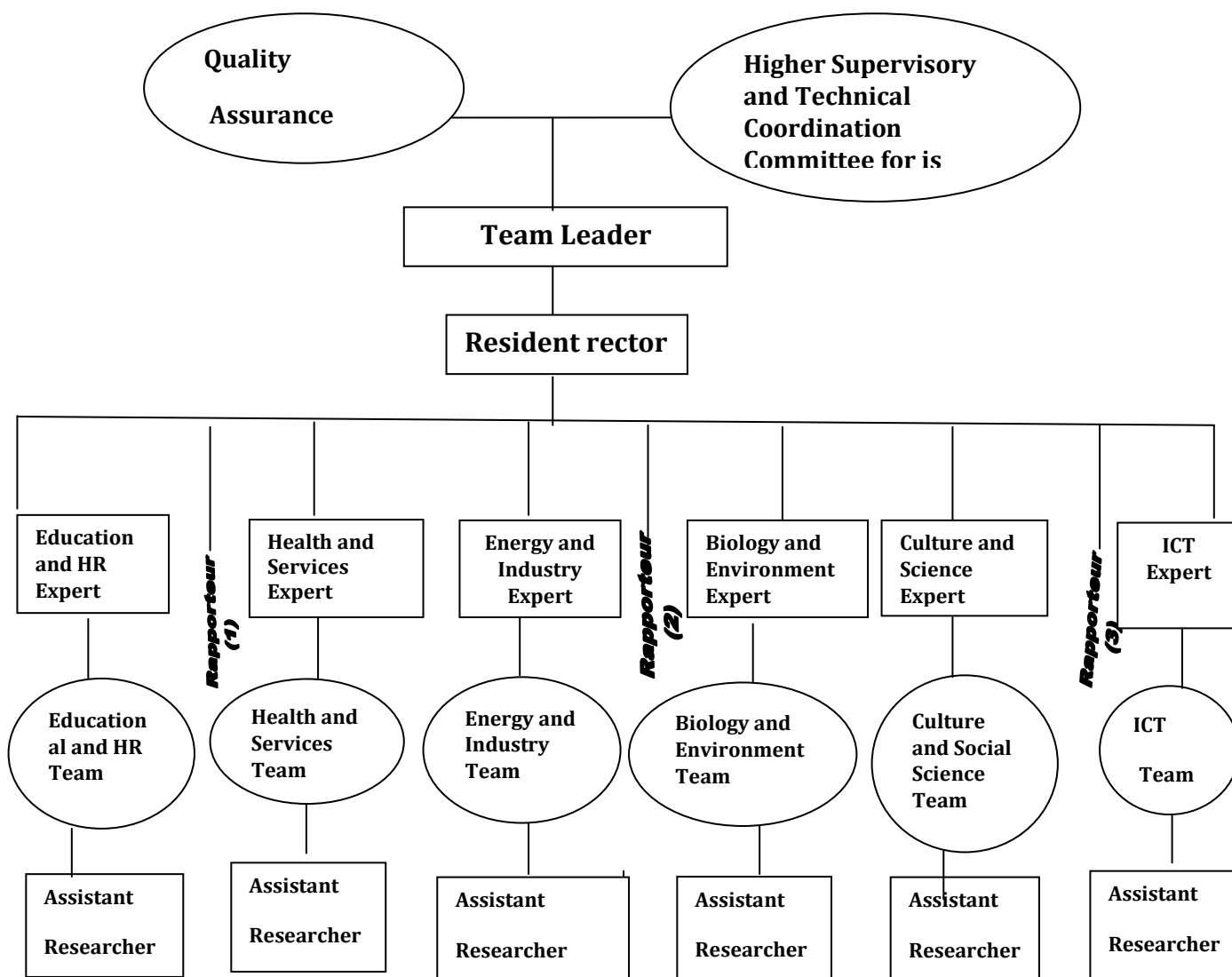


Figure 5. Project organisational structure of the Research Council

Source: Research Council, 2006

Challenges facing Higher Education

Higher education in Oman faces many challenges, including the development of higher education policies and regulations, institutional management, funding, and quality assurance in both public and private institutions. One of the main

challenges is the importance of the government response to the public in ensuring that higher educational programmes meet the needs of society. This can be done through comprehensive research to identify the educational requirements for the society and to recommend solutions.

The private institutions in Oman are facing different challenges, such as funding, equity and quality assurance. The majority of students cannot finance their education because they come from families with low income. The Government is offering free higher education based on student results, but only for a limited number of students. The Government higher education policy therefore needs to search for alternative means to help other students to continue their higher education. (Al-Lamki, 2006)

The Government needs to ensure quality assurance at higher education institutions to match professional international standards. The Ministry of Higher Education established the Oman Accreditation Board in June 2001 to follow up the quality assurance process and accreditation of Oman's private colleges and universities through a standardised quality assurance system in the context of international standards of good practice. The Government needs to clarify further the mission of private higher education (Research Council, 2006).

The private higher education institutions are still new and need direct guidance from the Ministry of Higher Education to assure their quality (Al-Bandary, 2005). In addition, there is a need for qualified and experienced expertise in the field of quality assurance and accreditation. This is a major challenge, and of concern to the Ministry of Higher Education as it seeks to ensure implementation of the Government's policies and to evaluate the Government and the private higher education institutions.

Management and governance of public and private higher education is another major challenge facing policy makers of higher education in Oman. The Ministry of Higher Education needs to measure and analyse the quality of institutional leadership.

The higher education institutions, in general, are more interested in making a good profit, whereas the Government and society require excellent quality. Efficient and competent management in both public and for-profit institutions is important to decision makers in higher education in Oman. According to Al-Lamki (2006), the future development of human capital is strongly linked to the importance of effective management and leadership in the educational sector.

The Government needs to analyse these challenges for higher education in the Sultanate of Oman in order to find solutions and control strategies to meet the challenges.

Some Wider Implications

This chapter has attempted to highlight some of the challenges facing and responses of the Government in the development of higher education in a small, developing country such as Oman. Unlike some developing countries, the availability of necessary financial resources is, in relative terms, less of a problem. The chapter has highlighted the key role of Government in initiating, coordinating, promoting and regulating the expansion of higher education.

A simple model emerges as follows:

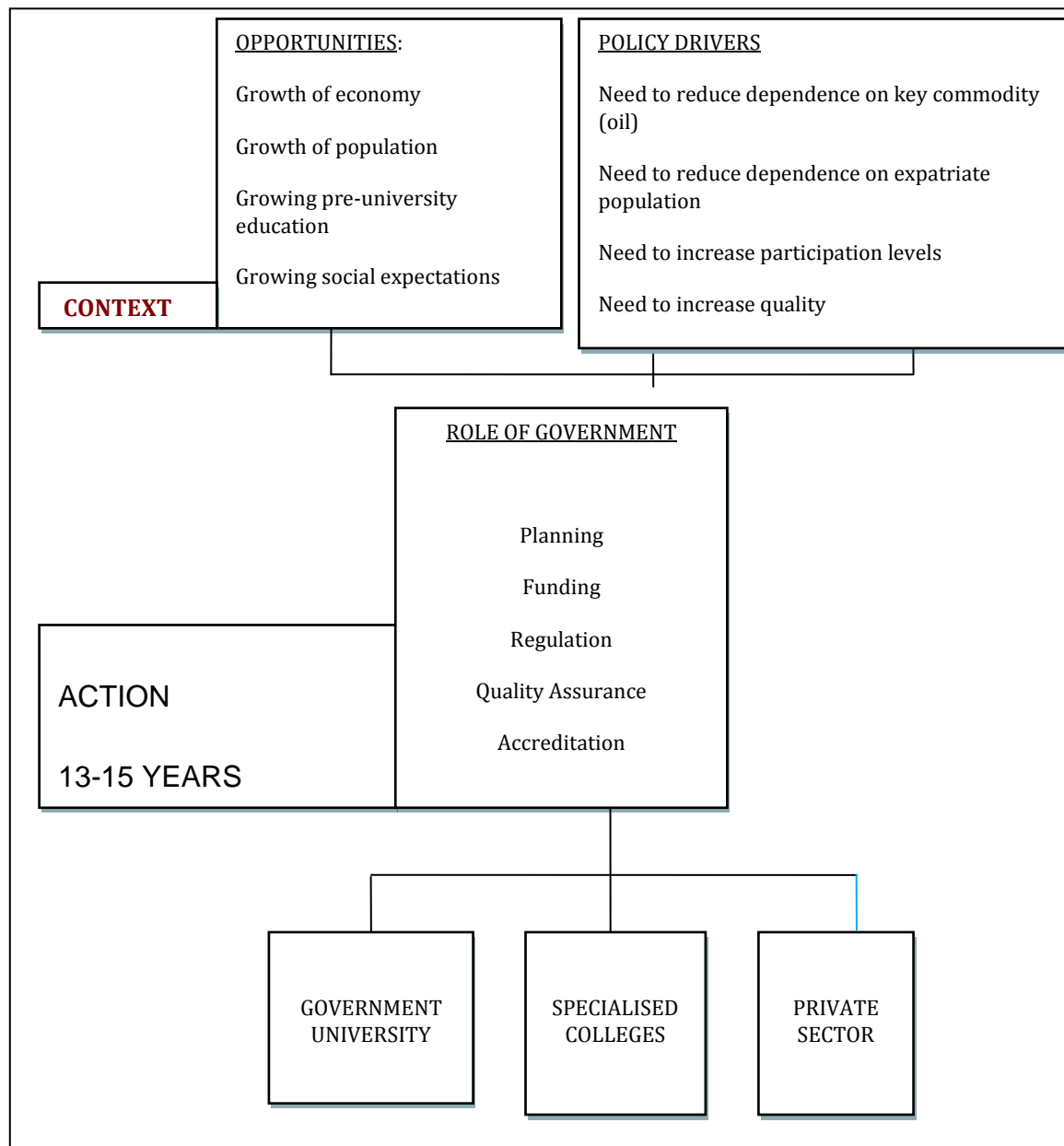


Figure 6. Integration opportunities with policy drivers

The model highlights the interaction of opportunities with policy drivers, the crucial role of Government in shaping the emerging system and the diversity of provision that emerges, including public and private, and broadly based and specialised institutions.

Conclusion

The Sultanate of Oman has experienced rapid educational development during the last 35 years alongside the simultaneous social and economic development. Both general education and higher education have been through different stages of development under the umbrella of government authorities. Human resource development has become a priority policy since the 1970s.

There is dynamic development in both public and private higher education institutions and both are facing challenges. Many areas for further investigation for researchers exist in both higher education and human development in Oman, such as the quality of programmes, funding, competition, the role of institutional leadership, access, equity, and the quality of teaching and academic standards, the improvement of evaluation of accreditation systems, affiliation with foreign institutions, and the need for national research.

The Government of Oman has realised the importance of the higher education sector and continues to invest in it, and encourages the private sector to invest in and establish higher education institutions to achieve its long term human resource strategy. The world economy, globalisation and information technology and communication have placed different demands on higher education institutions to reform their teaching methods and research activities. A new developing nation like Oman needs such an approach to have a competitive economy and qualified human resources.

Institutional leadership and its contribution towards human resource development in Oman is one of the critical areas to be investigated in the future.

CHAPTER 3

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

3.1 DEVELOPMENT PLANS

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos came to power in July 1970 with a new vision to keep Oman ahead of the Arab World by focusing on developing the country, human resource development and diversifying the economy. His Majesty has encouraged the citizens to cooperate, to participate and to work hard to assist him in accomplishing his vision to attain a good future for the generations to come (Al-Kasmy, 1993).

The country's security has become the main priority of the new Government policy. Other government objectives include health care, education and giving equal rights and equal chances to benefit all citizens; diversifying the economy through flexible policy; supporting the private sector; creating a national tendency towards unified goals through positive attitudes and motives, and rewarding the people for good work.

Human Resource Development has become a main goal of the government policy to feed development projects. It is considered more important to have educated and qualified young Omanis who achieve their tasks efficiently to work in different sectors (Information, 1998a). Free education and technical training programmes have been offered to enrich the public and private agencies with qualified employees to carry on the governmental responsibilities. The government has planned to expand and diversify its economy through developing its human resources (Al-Gasmy, 1993).

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos has focused on the issue of education since he came to power as a foundation on which to train the citizens to learn in order to efficiently and productively carry out their work. Since 1970, His Majesty has emphasised the importance of education, and encouraged the citizens to consider education and commitment as the main tools to build the country. Education opportunities are free to all citizens through schools, colleges and universities

both locally and abroad. The educational statistics indicate excellent educational achievement in the country since 1970 up to the present time. There were only three schools with a total of 909 students and only 30 teachers in 1970. Now, there are 1053 schools and 170 private schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Increasing the number of schools is a clear indication of the leader`s educational concerns.

Education has taken priority among the Government's objectives. The Government allocates a big budget to build schools, vocational colleges and universities and to support private schools and colleges. The Government also provides scholarships to students who excel in their high school education to travel abroad to advance their education. The students pursue their higher education in Europe, the USA, the Gulf and some Arab countries.

The first public University, the Sultan Qaboos University, opened in 1986. It offers degrees in education and Islamic studies, medicine, engineering, science and agriculture. The Government also encourages different types of activities and research; for instance, the University is currently compiling the Sultan Qaboos Dictionary for Arabic Names, which is part of the Arabic language and considered the only reference for the researchers and scholars. Experts from Oman, Egypt and other Arab countries shared their experiences to accomplish this project under the Sultan's supervision. It looks in depth at the sources of Arabic names with regard to Arabic language from Arabic historical and cultural views.

Agriculture and fishing products were the main source of income in Oman. The country`s main exports were traditionally dates, wet and dry limes, fish, tobacco, vegetables and fruits; whereas the imports include rice, tea, cotton, fabric, tubes and pipes, furniture, machinery, and medical products. Currently oil and gas have become the main source of income in Oman and the revenue has a major impact on the country`s economic and social transformation. The social and economic development plans started in the 1970s; since then the country has improved its infrastructure, health and education, and people`s standard of living.

The Government has followed a strategy of five-year development plans using its national income efficiently to develop the economy and improve the social life of

its citizens. Each plan has different characteristics. The Government formed the Development Council in 1975 to be responsible for determining economic development policy, and preparing, supervising and evaluating the implementation process of these plans through coordination with concerned agencies. (Pawan, 2002)

The First Five-Year Plan (1976-1980)

The first development plan used the oil revenue to build the country's infrastructure such as the Government buildings, power stations, and communication centres. It provides Government financial support to the private sector to diversify its economy.

The Second Five-Year Plan (1981-1985)

The second development plan moved forwards to complete the country's infrastructure, which is necessary to maintain the development of the national economy and to improve the citizens' standard of living. The Government revenue increased due to the increase in the world's demands for energy and this was used to expand its development projects such as the natural water resources and regional development for the different parts of the country.

The Third Five-Year Plan (1986-1990)

The Government faced difficulties in continuing the development of its projects because of the decline in oil prices; as a result it had to restructure its plans and restrict its fiscal policy at the expense of some investment projects to adjust to such a situation and gradually slow down the development in education, health and social services.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan (1991-1995)

The Government expanded its investment due to the high increase of the world's oil prices. The Government's main aim was to invest more in productive projects such as expanding and diversifying its economic activities, developing the private sector, regional development and developing its human resources (Ministry of National Economy, 1998).

The Government had to counter two main problems: a fast rising population and a decrease in oil resources. The population growth rate average was 2.6% in 1996. There was a need to create enough jobs for younger citizens to keep up with the population growth and the efforts to recruit young Omani in both public and private sectors. The Government implemented two strategies to address these issues: the first strategy is Omanization and the other is diversification. Omanization is a government policy to replace foreign workers with native workers. The companies in various fields, such as transport, insurance, real estate agencies, industry, hotels and restaurants, have to meet a certain percentage of Omani nationals in their total workforce. One of the Government's policies was to introduce a new tax on the employment of expatriates, which is about 7.5% of a basic salary to finance vocational training projects, to encourage private companies to recruit more Omanis and reach the Omanization target as an incentive technique to acquire Government long-term loans.

There are several procedures to enhance the Government's policy. More training skills have become a priority demand to replace foreign workers within technical construction and manufacturing jobs. The Government has emphasised the social attitude of the younger citizens to encourage them to work in the private companies. In most of the Gulf Countries, people prefer to do managerial jobs, and hold professional positions, than to work in technical jobs, which is not enough to respond to the growing demand. The companies' minimum expatriate wage is low compared to the required wage demanded by the local people.

The second Government objective is to diversify the economy to ensure another economic source of national income. In the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the Government encouraged national and international firms to construct the Rusyl Industrial Estate on the periphery of the capital, Muscat. Industries have grown very fast, but their contributions to the Government Gross Domestic Product (GDP) were small and they only employed a limited number of citizens.

The Government discovered a large natural gas reserve and decided to set up a gas-based industry (Gas Liquefaction Facility) in the eastern part of the country. The Government also decided to build an aluminium smelter, a petrochemical

plant and a fertiliser complex. The role of the private sector has increased since 1970 to incorporate all fields of the economy.

In the 1980s, the Government economic policy shifted to give the private sector more opportunities to contribute to the building of the economy. Oman decided to invest in the development of infrastructure and industry. For example, the Government sold some of its shares in Government companies in the Muscat Securities Sector, planned to privatise the General Telecommunication Organization (GTO), and to privatise payphone and phone card services. Immediately, the private sector invested in infrastructure development projects such as the Manah Power Project, which was opened in 1996. This project was constructed on a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) basis. This means that the private firm concerned that built the plant will run it for 20 years, after which it will be transferred to Government control. The Government also intends to build two waste water systems in the capital and in Salalah City on a BOOT basis.

Finally, the Government has invited foreign investment and advanced its domestic competition, through easing the procedure licences, and other incentives such as tax rate reduction for public shareholder firms with foreign partners. Younger Omanis were also encouraged to trade, and were allowed to import goods without the requirement for licencing agreements, as long as the imports were not from the original manufacturers. (Ministry of National Economy, 2009)

The Fifth-Five Year Plan (1996-2000)

The Government aimed to achieve three main objectives during the Fifth Five-Year Plan - human resource development, diversification, and improvement of the private sector. The Government also aimed to restore and maintain fiscal balance through careful fiscal policy, besides achieving a balance between revenue and expenditure to maintain a balanced budget at the end of this plan. The Government decided to diversify its economy and to emphasise other sources of income to preserve its budget. It could not depend totally on the oil prices that are continually changing based on the supply and demand in the world's market.

A high percentage of its revenue has been used to develop its infrastructure. The Government introduced new policies to move the country's economy forward and to shift from a traditional economy to a modern one. The new policies have assisted the country in ensuring that it controls its expenditure to recover from the national deficit in its public budget, to diversify the economy through non-oil resources, to limit the Government's role to strategic supervision only, and to reduce its role in goods and services production. In addition, the Government managed to develop and to train human resources to perform efficiently in both Government and private sectors, to create a stable economic environment in order to attract national and international investment and finally, to encourage domestic saving and investment rather than consumption (Ministry of Development, 1995).

To summarise, the Sultanate of Oman is aiming to achieve fundamental goals by ensuring an effective economy as determined by the Royal Decree number 1/1996. Health, education and training are the main goals besides keeping a balance between revenue and expenditure in order to have a balanced budget at the end of the Fifth Plan. Finally, maintaining the present level of per capita income at a minimum and trying to increase it in real terms in the future to improve the citizens' standard of living are two further goals.

The Government decided to evaluate the achievements, and to examine the new economic challenges for the country's future development; therefore, an economic conference, the Vision Conference: Oman 2020, was held to discuss and to design efficient and effective policies and measures to move the Omani economy towards a higher level of growth in the future.

The Government called in specialist agencies, universities, strategic planners and economic experts from all over the world to help evaluate the country's previous economy, and to contribute to the introduction of a new development strategy for the next 25 years. This was a major economic event in Oman.

The Government's main concerns are to have more economic diversification, human resource development, private sector participation, and economic

globalisation in order to achieve economic and financial stability (Ministry of Development, 1995).

The Sixth Five-Year Plan (2000-2005)

The Sixth Five-Year Plan aimed to fulfil several objectives as extensions of the previous plans. The Government planned to accomplish several objectives during this plan, which include the following:

- To stabilise its average per capita income, to balance between its income and expenditures, and to upgrade tourism activities.
- To control the inflation rate, to increase the percentage of enrolment in higher education, and to continue its human resource programme.
- To develop the educational system, to integrate culture and heritage in its economic and social development, and to support the programmes and youth activities.
- To develop the judicial system.
- To activate its privatisation programmes and to encourage local and foreign investment through creating good business environment (Ministry of National Economy, 2009).

The Seventh Five-Year Plan (2005-2010)

The seventh of Oman's five-year development plans has made important progress in the country's long-term development goals. Diversification of the economy is the main goal of the development strategy. The report of the Oxford Business Group, 2008 showed that the growth of tourism and manufacturing sectors are the main development projects during the Seventh Five-Year Plan. The country also has invested heavily in its infrastructure and new highways were built to connect Oman's growing urban cities and regions. The next main projects are the Government's plan to build four new airports, and a national rail system which is expected to be completed in the next five years.

3. 2 STRATEGY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The actual wealth of many countries is its people. Therefore, human resource development becomes very important in a nation's policies in order that it uses its national resources efficiently. Nations need to maintain their people's health, provide a proper education and use their national resources to improve their national economy. The main purpose of human development for any nation is to have a human capital stock that is capable of handling the production process and which is to be the real asset for the economic growth of that nation.

Human resource development refers to investing in people through good education, efficient training programmes and good health services (El-Sabaa, 1996). Human Resource Development (HRD) as defined by Watkins and Marsick (1995) is a learning field to determine the future work training requirements for the whole organisation. This indeed includes regular training, work development and organisational development (Watkins, 1995).

We can thus infer from the definition that HRD is concerned with learning, training, career development of employees and organisational development.

It is essential to educate and train new employees in order to build their skills and competence to perform their tasks adequately. Human resources are the most important asset in any organisation and well-educated and trained employees will help an organisation to achieve its missions and objectives.

The Sultanate of Oman has paid extensive attention to the development of its human resources to meet its targets towards the development process. Increasing the efficiency and technical capabilities of the workforce have become of paramount importance. Human resource development received greater attention during the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1991-1995), especially the development of the labour force. The emphasis on labour force planning has been considered a key issue to link the output of the educational and training systems to the requirements of the national economy to avoid any distortions in the labour market that might end up in non-conformity between the two sides. This plan intended to reduce the dependency on the expatriate labour force.

Education and training comprise the first step towards human resource development. According to Todaro (1994), a country that is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilise them efficiently in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. Education does not only focus on learning how to read and write but implants values, ideas and attitudes that form the culture of an entire generation (Todaro, 1994).

Human resource development is one of the main principles of the Vision for Oman's economic development. The aim of the Vision is to develop human resources and capabilities of the citizens to be able to do their work very efficiently and to manage the technological changes. Policies and implementation strategies are important to improve the educational and training system to achieve the goals of human resources development as stated in the Vision for Oman's economic and social development, 2020.

According to this Vision, the Government will provide free modern basic education for ten years for all citizens during the primary and secondary stages. The graduates of basic education should be of ages that enable them to work after attending short training courses.

The two year advanced secondary education programme enables its graduates to enrol in university studies according to the terms of admission and competition for the available places. This strategy will provide equal educational opportunities for the maximum number of citizens, besides fulfilling the labour market requirements. Equal opportunities are generated through education at different Government colleges, distance learning, private institutes and colleges and short-term courses available at the vocational qualifications system. This flexible training system has contributed to the upgrading of different skills of Omani workers. In addition, the Government has adopted an advanced technical education and vocational training system to cope with the market requirements and technological development. Finally, women will be encouraged to enrol in suitable technical education and vocational training programmes in order to increase their participation. The Government has already adopted an effective technical and vocational training system to provide the students with different skills to satisfy the needs of the labour market. The General National Vocational

Qualification (GNVQ) is the first vocational training level/qualification, which is done through the Government technical industrial colleges to provide technicians and skilled workers for both the public and private sectors. The second system is the National Vocational Qualification, which is offered by the Government vocational training centres and private institutes. Both systems prepare students for technical, skilled and semi-skilled jobs (AL-Busaidi, 1979).

The Government of Oman established six Vocational Training Institutes in different parts of the country during the First and the Second Five-Year Plans. The first Industrial Technical College was established in 1984 in Muscat. The Government has issued a number of policies with regard to technical and vocational training, such as the issuance of Oman Labour Law by Royal Decree No: 34 for the year 1973, which included a specific and independent chapter about the Technical Training Field. The main section of this Law is article (22) which states that any employer employing 20 or more workers has to participate in training Omanis according to the Minister's decision. It also specifies that a training centre should be established at the worksite, and forward training programmes and evaluation supervised by the Ministry, or cooperating with other employers operating in a similar industry in establishing training centres and undertaking evaluation supervised by the Ministry of Manpower. The private sector has to pay a financial contribution for technical training projects controlled by the Ministry. The percentage of the financial contribution is based on the number of workers employed. The Ministry will decide the amount of contribution, provided it does not exceed 6% of the total salaries of the employees in the year. Article 23 determines the training period based on the training programmes between the Ministry and the specified employer. The employer also has to inform trainees of their ongoing gradual development and to recruit the trainees after their training programme.

The Government formed a technical education and training board under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in 1975. The board was responsible for planning and developing the workforce in order to plan and develop manpower, and in 1977 a new technical education and training board was established to link the policies and objectives of both education and technical training according to

the needs through the development plans. The board has also forwarded executive programmes based on these objectives and policies. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor issued different decisions such as decision No 10/1978 to compensate technical institutions for training young Omanis. The Government also issued a number of licences during the Third Five-Year Plan (1986-1990) to establish technical training institutes to set up technical training businesses in order to provide suitable training for Omani labourers to improve their participation in technical work within different sectors of the economy. To advance the role of vocational training programmes and the development of technical education, the Government decided to establish a Higher Committee for Vocational Training and Labor in 1991 that consists of training experts. This Committee has vocational training authority to convert four vocational training institutes into four industrial technical colleges in four different parts of the country, and during 1993/94 it started to enrol more high school graduates. These colleges also apply a new system of technical education, the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ). This process guided private training institutes to adopt the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) to provide skilled and semi-skilled workers. This policy created a link between the private sector and private vocational training institutions (Ministry of Social Affairs, 1998) .

The training vocational authority developed a vocational training framework by transferring the remaining vocational training institutes to vocational training centres by applying short training courses to prepare skilled and semi-skilled labourers; these courses are implemented by Government Vocational Training Centres and private training institutes. Training for skilled labourers includes theoretical, technical and practical skills for the vocational fields, whereas training for semi-skilled labour is achieved through short-term training programmes. The vocational training system includes two types of training courses to encourage Omani youth to take up the vocational roles, and it provides suitable training opportunities.

The training is either classified as basic courses to prepare a semi-skilled workforce in one academic session or advanced courses to prepare skilled labourers; these courses require two years training at the centre for students

newly admitted on to vocational training programmes, or complete training for semi-skilled workers for one additional academic session to become skilled labour (Ministry of Social Affairs, 1995).

The Government authorities have given more attention to technical education to maintain a supply of labour to the market. The areas of development include both organisational structure and the educational system. The number of Industrial Technical Colleges in Oman rose from just one college established in 1984 in Muscat, to five colleges in 1993, by transforming four Government Vocational Training Institutes into colleges. Technical education has also evolved by applying a modern education system at Industrial Technical Colleges, the General Vocational Qualification System (GNVQ). Through this educational and training strategy, students have become familiar with the vocational knowledge which has qualified them to enter both the public and private sectors. They have become more confident about completing their jobs without the need for direct supervision. The curriculum for the educational specialisation at the Industrial Technical Colleges includes subjects such as commercial studies, engineering, information technology, science, and construction engineering. Human resource development has been the ultimate goal of the development process and all development plans have emphasised the importance of human resources as the Vision for Oman's Economy: Oman 2020. The Government strategy is to offer excellent technical education, vocational training, higher education, health services, and a skilled labour market to provide the service and economic sector with qualified young Omanis. The Government applies practical policies and strategies to build its human resources to prepare Omani society to enter the twenty first century. The success of both the public and private sectors is based on competition in terms of science, knowledge, and skills. There are many challenges facing human resources development in Oman such as the low level of productivity of labour resources as young Omanis are unwilling to join some professions and occupations to meet the requirements of the world economy and to replace expatriate labourers. The other two main challenges are the weakness and inadequacy of basic education to respond to the dynamic scientific changes and the employment working conditions; and between public and private sectors in

terms of working hours, official holidays and pensions. Finally, there is a growing need for the Government to focus on all services such as health, education, housing, water and sewage systems as a result of the population growth as a ratio of the growth rate of national income and Government revenues. The Government policy and strategy has focused on maintaining well-developed Omani human resources with good skills to meet the needs of the labour market. The private and public higher education institutions provide the academic environment needed to fulfill this objective, and the aim of this research is to find the link between leadership and the output of the private institutions.

In summary, the human resource development strategy in the Sultanate of Oman is linked with the Vision of the Oman Economy 2020 through achieving the balance between population and economy by providing good health services, encouraging knowledge and the development of education, establishing a technical educational system to meet the requirements of the national economy, and encouraging applied research in the economic and social fields, thus creating employment chances for Omanis in public and private sectors (Education, 2011).

3.3 EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN OMAN

The Government statistics data have indicated that the private sector in Oman is growing, and there has been an increase in its products and services; therefore, the demand for well-qualified new graduates is also increasing in the private sector. This growth in the number of jobs taken in the private sector reached 935,231 (both Omani and expatriate employees) at the end of 2007, which proves the previous statement. The growth is close to 50% compared to the year 2006 figures which are 625,024 (Ministry of Manpower, 2008).

The main areas of growth in the private sector are the development of major projects (which include ports, industrial facilities, real estate and tourism) and the comparative rise in oil and gas prices. These projects have contributed to this increase, besides Oman's own initiatives to grow enterprises and create jobs. The Sanad programme was established at the directive of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos to provide job seekers among citizens with opportunities to earn their living and to

support self-employment projects and develop small businesses. This notably led to the creation of over 19,000 jobs by the end of 2006. In addition to large industrial developments, small enterprises have also grown in number in Oman (Ministry of Information, 2007-08b).

Unlike its neighbouring countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, the private sector growth in Oman is carried by a strong rise in internal demand and the development of the local economy, whereas the population increases which the UAE saw between 2005 and 2008 were largely driven by an expatriate population delivering projects and products for foreigners and foreign markets. The fundamentals of economics tell us that without a healthy domestic market the reliance on foreign trade in times of crisis in the global economy can lead to the downfall of an economy. Currently Oman has a vibrant domestic market.(Delilkhan, 2009)

Oman's private sector workforce has grown and entrepreneurial intelligence is visible in a multitude of small- and medium-sized ventures which have been classified as highly successful and which make Oman stand out against the rest of the Gulf states, where bureaucracy and interference of the public sector in private sector initiatives pose a potential risk to private sector expansion and growth (Ministry of Information, 2007-08a, NirKshetri, 2008).

The Government has invested more than 12 billion dollars in the Sohar Industrial Port and Industrial Estate, the operational commencement of which has had a substantial impact on Oman's economy. Oman's non-oil exports also grew by 70% in the first half of 2007 to 13% of total exports, and production has increased in both Sohar and Salalah since 2008. It is planned that both Duqm and Sur ports will also become major industrial ports/facilities in the near future and the demand for qualified and skilled manpower for these centres will be intense. This development is underscored by the growth statistics on companies with more than ten employees in Oman (50% in just two years). The Oxford Business Group, 2008 estimates that the Sohar Port project will provide about 8,000 direct jobs.

Industrial development in Oman has been strong and promising, with production topping Rial Omani (RO) one billion in 2006. It is difficult to quantify future demand, but an indication of development is provided by the fact that currently more than 260 firms are on the waiting list for space at industrial estate sites. Industrial estates offer special terms of set-up and tax incentives to new companies, and are thus more attractive than standard office and industrial spaces available for rent. The current 160 firms at Rusayl Industrial Estate employ 9,000 workers, and the 53 companies in Sohar employ 4,000. Therefore, 260 firms or more could easily absorb more than 15,000 employees and more (Group, 2010).

An indicator for the strength of business growth in Oman is the growth of medium and large businesses in the country: The number of companies grew by 50% between 2005 and 2007 – from 500 to 750 (Industry, 2007).

Oman`s workforce in 2020

The statistical records of the employment figures, industrial development and education changes that have been achieved across the country during the period 2005 to 2010 have indicated the success of the healthy and strong strategy of Oman`s Vision 2020.

According to the reports of 2008 and 2010 issued by the Oxford Business Group, the requirements of Oman`s workforce will increase over the next decade. An estimation of 6% per annum increase in the workforce and the net increase in the labour force by 2020 will be over one million, which is double the total projected number of school graduates in Oman for the same period (Ministry of Development, 1995).

Due to the industrialisation drive discussed above and projects including the major airport extensions in Muscat and Salalah, and the developments planned for Duqm, the composition of gross domestic product (GDP) drivers in Oman may well transform dramatically: with the substantial rise in private sector entrepreneurial developments, the circumspect evolution of Sohar as an industrial centre, and the oil refinery, dry dock, transport infrastructure as well as private

sector residential and hotel development schemes under execution (most prominently The Wave), it is difficult to assess which of these driving developments will have the most significant impact on Oman, and will thus also drive employment growth and the needs of the country. For instance, the gas deposits in the Kish project are larger than those of Qatar, so the effect would be that Oman would become the largest gas provider in the world and would need to employ around 100,000 individuals in gas-related projects upstream and downstream. A very conservative estimate is that 100,000 people need support and services, so the greater workforce development may easily top half a million, if one takes Qatar as a measure of workforce deployment needs in a large gas-producing economy. However, if that is not the case, and industrialisation becomes the major development force, then the workforce requirements will take on an entirely different slant (Delilkhan, 2009).

Such uncertainty is not uncommon in growing economies, which differ greatly from mature economies in that the workforce development is not easily predictable or stable. An example: An airport development with an estimated passenger capacity of 10-12 million will require around 20,000 staff in various industries and services to support it directly. Similarly, the development in Duqm will change the face of the entire Al Wusta region and create more employment in Al Wusta than there are residents. Also, the pipeline being built from the Gulf States through to Oman to trans-ship oil from Oman instead of within the Gulf will have an effect on Oman's labour requirements.

At the current stage it is indeed nearly impossible to determine what skill sets and job qualifications would ideally meet Oman's future needs. This also has to do with the fact that manpower projections have not been qualified or quantified for new projects. Even with the large airport development projects in Oman the key stakeholders from operators, to security and police, to carriers, have yet to define the specific resource requirements for the new airport operations, although these new operations are expected in the coming three years.

Education Demand and Workforce Supply to Economy

WHAT STUDENTS WANT:

Current graduations from private universities and colleges:

< 3,000 p.a.

Estimated requirement of graduates p.a. 16,193 by 2020

% of occupational groups usually requiring diploma/university qualifications in total workforce by growth of workforce by 1,163,633 in 2020 = 16.7% of 96,969 = 16,193 p.a.

Top programs (most popular by intake sizes)	
Commerce and administrative sciences	5,938
Computer Science	3,964
Engineering	2,788
Literature	1,459

Oxford Business Group, Oman 2008, p. 194

Most popular programs / types of schools from SMF Orient survey:

S/n	College type	Frequency
1	Engineering College	73
2	Tourism, Business & Commerce College	44
3	Arts College	38
4	Medical College	22
5	Science College	20
7	Education College	4

WHAT THE ECONOMY TAKES:

Occupational groups	Omani	Expatriate	Total	Omanization Percentages
Administration, Directors & Managers	2969	25262	28231	10.5
Scientific, technical, human Matters Specialists	7784	57758	65542	11.9
Scientific, technical, human subjects Technicians	8030	54989	63019	12.7
Clerical occupations	25176	2463	27639	91.1
Sales occupations	9208	38990	48198	19.1
Service occupations	32232	168682	200914	16.0
Agriculture, Stock Breeding, Agriculture and Hunting	1032	90978	92010	1.1
Industrial, chemical and Food industries occupations	8630	45367	53997	16.0
Principle and Auxiliary engineering occupations	40416	315265	355681	11.4
Total	135477	799754	935231	14.5

Source: Ministry of Manpower 2008

Figure 7 Market labour demands (2008)

To date, when companies have submitted their needs to the Ministry of Manpower, skilled resources have proven to be difficult to source within Oman for many jobs in companies, especially in new ones. One of the major points of criticism raised by the corporate sector is that fresh graduates are not job-ready. In interviews with the HR manager from Sohar Aluminum who was responsible for recruitment and Omanization in the early stages of set-up in Sohar, it was found that all Omanis who were employed as fresh graduates needed substantial training and development before they could be deployed in the business. Vale, the Brazilian mining company, also indicated that they were unable to find qualified staff in minerals and factory operations who are Omani nationals, and had to go abroad instead to meet their needs. The rapid changes in Oman's economy bring new challenges and require different types of qualified and skilled graduates.

The skill sets required by the organisations just mentioned were not sought after ten or even five years ago in Oman. Patterns of industrialisation and service sector development have increasingly transformed the nature of employment in this country, as has been the case in several others, for which manpower and education authorities in most countries have been ill prepared to deal with. The job classifications available in Oman today are not up to the differentiation needs of the economy. For instance, in Singapore, 52 relevant job roles have been defined for the banking industry alone, and these classifications have not been introduced by the concerned authorities in Oman yet, although they have been internationally proven and accepted. Again, this is not a failure of the strategy of human resource development in Oman, but attributed to the speed of change that the country has to deal with as its employment sector improves and matures.

The level of Omanization in different professions in Oman is documented and the current demands of the private sector can be estimated.

Table 5: Omanization Percentages per Sector

Omanization percentages per sector				
SECTOR	Job/Occupation	2008	2009	2010
	OR			
	Establishment Classification			
IT	Senior Management	7	8	9
	Sales and marketing	100	100	100
	Technical Support and Infrastructure	13	14	15
	Applications and Services Development	13	14	15
TELECOMMUNICATION	Engineers	52	52	54
	Technicians	65	65	70
	Skilled Labour	70	75	80
	Total Percentage	62	64	68

TRAVEL	Aviation Companies	86	88	90
AND	Tourist Restaurant	75	85	90
TOURISM	Travel and Tourism	75	85	95
	Hotels (3, 4, 5 stars)	75	80	85
	Car Rental	80	85	90
	Hotels (1, 2 stars) and Lodges	45	50	55
OILAND GAS	Productive and Operating	87	90	90
	Direct Services	77	80	82
	Assisting Services	67	70	73
	Local Companies	77	80	82
CONSULTANCY	Engineers	25	25	25
SERVICES	Draughtsman	70	70	70
	Material Supervision Jobs	45	45	45
	Land Survey	80	80	80
	Accountants	60	60	60
	Administrative Posts	90	90	90
CONTRACTING	Category and Above	30	30	30
	Continued Projects	80	80	80
ELECTRICITY	Power plants in Ghubrah, Rusayl, Wadi Al Gizzi, Musandam and Dhahirah			
	Engineers	78	78	78
WATER	Assistant Engineers	100	100	100
	Technicians	76	76	76
	Skilled Workers	100	100	100

	Power plants in Manah, Al Kamil, Barkah and Salalah			
	Engineers	43	43	43
	Assistant Engineers	45	45	45
	Technicians	51	51	51
	Skilled Workers	50	50	50
	Debt Collection Companies			
	Manager/Supervisor/Programmer	39	39	39
	Accountant /Cashier	87	87	87
	Meter Clerk	89	89	89
	Worker / Assisting Occupations	100	100	100
	Total Percentage	90	90	90
AUTOMOBILES		52	55	58
SALES AND DISTRIBUTION		55	60	65
TRANSPORT	Sea Ports	78	78	78
AND	Navigation Agencies	77	77	77
NAVIGATION	and Clearing Offices			
	Marine Transport	95	95	95
	Shipping	84	84	84
ACCOUNTING	Managers	23	26	29
OCCUPATIONS	Specialists	45	50	55
	Professionals	55	60	66
	Clerical Occupations	100	100	100

PRIVATE	Private Schools			
EDUCATION	Academic	11	12	15
	Non Academic	54	56	58
	Private Universities and Colleges			
	Academic	12	14	16
	Non Academic	68	71	74
	Private Training Centres and Institutes			
	Management and Finance	70	80	90
	Technicians and Assistant Trainers	25	30	35
	Trainers	25	30	35

Source: (Ministry of Manpower, 2008)

The private universities and colleges must provide education and training to individuals, which give them a degree of flexibility: e.g. if someone becomes a technician, he or she should have a basic training which covers all options for later specialisation. Technical occupations as can be seen from the distribution above are still low on Omanization. This could become critical in the future, as the demand for technically capable and service sector-trained individuals rises. (Al-Taieb, 1993)

In the overall higher education sector, from Government colleges and universities to private sector higher education institutions, there are approximately 74,000 individuals enrolled for studies at present (Delilkhan, 2009). It may be expected that around 10,000 will graduate per annum, which is about 14%. The need will be for at least 16,000 over the next eight years. Yet besides the actual number of people available for the market, the critical question will be employability of graduates. Oman has already observed a tendency for school graduates to choose vocational and technical education as families perceive the employability options as greater from such an avenue of career path development than straight university education.

As a result, a number of questions have been raised, such as:

How is employability nurtured, and why is it that applied sciences and technical colleges produce more job-market-ready candidates than other higher education institutions? Also, why do many graduates from higher education institutions today change their careers and re-qualify for other jobs and other areas of work?

As far as can be seen, higher education institutions in Oman have been slow in responding to these issues systematically. Studies are being undertaken to assess demand in industry and the civil service, but are there studies or will there be studies in the near future on what prevents universities and colleges from developing job market-ready graduates? That is the issue raised time and again in studies that review education and development in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. It is constantly raised by international organisations (UN, Rand), and something which can and should be addressed, unlike the transformations in actual employment demand, which is a variable and difficult to control. Yesterday there was need for teachers, today healthcare personnel and IT specialists, tomorrow environmental analysts and Web 3.0 programmers (Delilkhan, 2009).

It is a known fact that employability creates demand for individuals from certain universities and colleges or countries: In the hotel industry and aviation industries there is a preference for skilled staff from Sri Lanka, for instance, as they have proven to be highly employable throughout those industries anywhere in the world.

What we do know of the job market with certainty is that any new institution can break into the job market and hold its own despite competition if its graduates are accepted as job-market-ready. In the German State of Baden-Württemberg (which, by the way, registers more patents every year than the United States of America) there are several first class higher education institutions ranging from ancient universities such as Heidelberg, Karlsruhe and Freiburg, to more modern universities and technical colleges across the State. Unknown to many, the industry has chosen Reutlingen, a University of Applied Sciences in a small town, as the top supplier of job-ready graduates based on studies done by industry on

how graduates from various institutions perform in their jobs over a three year period. Similarly, in Singapore, the top three government universities have failed to achieve success with the private sector, as the best provider of qualified graduates for the job market is Nanyang Polytechnic, from which 98% are already effectively employed even before they graduate as companies line up to recruit from the institution (Delilkhan, 2009).

The higher education institutions are required to provide employability life skills to equip students with different skills to meet the changing requirements of the world economy.

3.4 EMPLOYABILITY LIFE SKILLS

Oman`s employment market is undergoing changes with the transformation of the country`s economy. The numbers of employed Omanis in the civil service has been overtaken by the number of Omanis employed in private sector operations, and the trend continues. The shift is a challenge. Formerly, parents could be sure that their children, if well educated, would automatically have the opportunity to work in the civil service. However, the Government budgets are tightening and allocation of positions for ministries are being harder fought for than five years ago. Most fresh graduates are finding it difficult to get a job in their field of specialisation, or to get a job at all. Omani companies are hesitant to employ fresh graduates because they do not have employability life skills; that is, the ability to enter an organisation and adapt to that organisation`s needs in the shortest possible time.

The Oxford Business Group 2010 Oman Country Report refers to dramatic changes in retail and industry environments in Oman with effects on the labour force composition:

The retail profile of Oman has changed remarkably over a period of just a few years, as traditional souks have given way to modern malls full of international retailers. Rising government spending on massive infrastructural projects, increasing Omani involvement in the labour force, improving salaries, growing foreign investment and a rapid expansion in the number of expatriate workers have all combined to boost retail demand to such a degree that for the last few years developers have been rushing to catch up with it. Given the rapid rate of expansion, there was deep concern at the end of 2008 that the global downturn

would reverse progress made. But in fact the economic downturn has had little effect on the Omani retail sector, which has continued to grow throughout 2009 (Group, 2010).

The impact on the workforce due to the change in the composition of sectors participating in the economy is that during the lifetime of any Omani the skills required for professional activity may change several times. This means that a specific discipline knowledge and expertise background alone will not protect an individual and create employability, but it will be the ability of an individual to enter the workforce and adapt to changing conditions that will mark that person as employable for life. Across the globe the concept of “talent” is transforming from the notion of specific capability to broader adaptability and multi-skilling. The term ‘lifelong learning’ has entered the mainstream of education and economic debates (Delilkhan, 2009).

The general expectation of university graduates anywhere in the world is that their degree will afford them an opportunity to enter management. As organisations develop in modern times, management as a notion is being replaced by specialist expertise as another, whereby specialists shift from one role to another in a lifetime. The career path does not automatically lead to promotion and rise vertically, but shifts can be horizontal. More and more international companies are entering the Omani business environment and they will change the way companies do business in Oman. In particular, they will change the way organisations are run in the country. Here, too, with competition, the face of work and organisational structures will transform. International standards mean that human resource models will shift as well. People will not see promotions upwards but expertise-derived engagements in competitive environments. At SHELL, even very qualified experts are expected to reapply for positions every few years to ensure that people do not get too comfortable, and management postings are extremely rare. Most postings are from one country to another or from one field of expertise to another. (Delilkhan, 2009)

In fact, no individual can expect to be employed by the civil service or by a company for his entire life. Careers may end between the ages of 40 and 55, leaving people with 10 to 30 years of activity. Many individuals will have to learn

to stand on their own feet outside a regulated and organised work environment at some stage of their lives. In Oman there is already a trend among civil servants to seek a second career operating parallel to their Government employment, which should be seen as an aspect of self-employability. Others may want to be on their own from the first day they leave university. The level of flexibility and risk is obviously high in this field, but forms the backbone of a society when it comes to entrepreneurship and business-building locally. Without this ability no society can nurture an industry of its own. Unfortunately, most individuals who enter university lose all appetite for risk and entrepreneurship and are moulded as corporate and civil service employees who depend on others to care for them. Self-employability is also about self-reliance and a degree of independence which modern organisations value. Graduates come to organisations asking not what they can do for them but how the organisation secures their future (Schuler, 2003) .

In many well-meaning institutions across the globe students may be taught and passed without ever being seriously challenged in their learning abilities. In this case, Graduates can lack resilience, which is a key characteristic of employability.

The ability to securing a position in the job market, flexibility in the face of change, the willingness to become a specialist, commitment to self-employment, and resilience are the five key employability skills colleges and other higher education institutions need to impart on individuals studying with them. (Bennett, 2002)

The importance of the five employability factors

The entire Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is struggling with the issue that they are either generating graduates not ready for the job market, or that they are failing to provide skilled experts to the job market – meaning all of the above. Any institution capable of transferring employability life skills to its students will not only provide Omanis with a future but secure demand for Omani specialists in the GCC and further afield as well.

There has often been criticism in the GCC that productivity of the workforce is not up to international standards, and, indeed, the statistics of the International Labor

Organization (2009-2010) show that the region is the only one in the world where productivity has declined, not risen, over the past decade. Productivity losses occur only in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and with the exception of Oman, all economies are suffering from this problem. Productivity loss is like inflation, making products and services more expensive, less efficient, draining the country's resources and capabilities and creating hurdles to genuine growth. Analysis is still needed on how much the current crisis in Dubai is due to falling productivity levels (Delilkhan, 2009).

Many major projects in the Gulf have suffered from productivity drops and from a lack of suitably skilled resources. Despite the recent financial industry meltdown the medium- to long-term projections are favourable for the global economy, which means that global demand for skilled individuals in services and industry will rise.

The projected labour force growth within Oman is around 6% per annum up to 2020, whilst GDP growth will be 7.4% per annum for the same period.

Commerce, which includes most service sector disciplines in the private sector, has been by far the fastest growing discipline globally. Many economies see themselves shifting from industrial to service economies, with a focus on expertise in finance, transport and logistics, or tourism and hospitality. Public administration is also increasingly becoming a service, and universities as well as colleges globally offer programmes in new public management and e-government services. In India, the service sector contributes 54% of GDP, while in China, which still has a strong manufacturing base, it only contributes 5.6%. In order for the global economy to grow, the service sector contribution needs to be between 60 and 65% (Delilkhan, 2009).

Areas of very high growth in the service industry are: Tourism and hospitality, real estate and facilities management, especially in the Gulf region, and public administration, as civil servants increasingly require service sector skills.

Between 2010 and 2016 the demand for technicians and engineers will grow at an average rate of 11% in the USA, according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics

2007. Environmental engineering shows the highest projected growth rate at 25% (at currently 54,000 employed environmental engineers in the USA, a 25% increase means a further 14,000 within the next eight years). The source mentioned that demand in the USA is stagnant compared to developing countries. Demand for technicians and engineers in India, China, Russia and the Middle East is rising fast. Cisco announced in June 2008 that they would train 360,000 network engineers by 2013 to meet rising demand (Booth, 2008).

Regionally and globally, engineering and technical specialisations are becoming areas with fewer graduates but with rising demand from industry. The German Department of Statistics (2009) noted that the current demand for engineers in Germany is over 45,000 per annum, but that the number of graduates falls substantially below that requirement so that engineers from foreign countries are being encouraged to come to Germany. In Russia, similar data are available.

The only country where there are more engineers than there is market demand is the UK, where the conversion of the economy has tended towards services-led industry and thus fewer engineers are required (Delilkhan, 2009).

To summarise, demand projections for well-qualified service and commercial staff on the one hand, and technical and engineering staff on the other, will continue to rise, and as the global talent pool shrinks compared to the needs of economies, a major battle may ensue for talent, and Oman may find itself not only wanting more skilled labour for its projects, but also witnessing its human resource supply being poached by other countries (Delilkhan, 2009). In 2008, India made overtures to skilled Indians employed in the GCC to return home with similar salary packages and termed tax-free status to India as there was a shortage of technical expertise available in the country.

SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

4.1 HIGHER EDUCATION IN GENERAL

The needs for changes in higher education

The aim of this chapter is to construct a solid background to the debate, based on the work of key authors in the field, on issues such as higher education and national development, governance of higher education, leadership theories, total quality management and employability skills in higher education.

The national social and economic developments of the nations have led to the demand for an increase in higher education institutions by the end of the twenty first century. Therefore, higher education issues have become the main priorities in governments' agendas and strategies. The governments continuously modify their higher education policies to respond to demand and socio-political changes, and annually allocate large budgets to their higher education institutions to meet increasing requirements relating to size, number of students, staff, and expansion of programmes. The external pressures also contribute to the changes in higher education programmes and research, and among these forces are economic collaborations as in Europe or Asia, and the adoption of new higher education policies among these countries (Charafeddine, 2006).

Researchers in the field are also heavily involved in studying higher educational theories and the practical activities exercised at higher education institutions to search for new models to help these institutions to produce the best quality programmes, as well as excellent faculties and educational facilities. These are considered compulsory requirements of universities in order to sustain their continuity and satisfy their stakeholders. Universities are under pressure to respond to the market demands and to provide skilled, qualified graduates to solve the social and economic problems within their societies (Clark, 2003).

According to Altbach (2002) and (Johnstone, 2011), the governments increased their public investment in the early 1970s to build more universities and colleges in order to absorb greater numbers of students, and in the late 1970s, the higher education

institutions realised the importance of becoming research-economic drivers focusing on research and development in order to manage their positions in a competitive market. The research strategies of these institutions have taken into consideration important issues such as the retention of highly qualified and experienced faculty staff, recruitment, research and students, and these institutions have also realised the need to restructure and review their strategies and missions.

Following the significant changes in the world economy and development of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) throughout the 1990s, a new type of management has emerged, along with the use of technology, by universities and colleges to deliver their programmes globally (Newman, 2004) .

Adding to the above , A related emerging issue has been the major concerns about the continuing relationship between universities and industry where the institutions need to respond to the industrial and academic needs through new strategies and new applied programmes (Williams, 2003). The globalisation of the economy, the requirements of an international product standard and the widespread availability of information technology has exerted pressure on higher education providers to be more professional in order to succeed in the competitive marketplace of the twenty first century.

As the institutional success is based on strategic matching between business success and education professionals, technological development and maintaining the level of excellence, the traditional universities have to meet the new criteria set by government authorities if supporting funds are required to run such institutions. The enterprise universities are also increasingly forced to follow different strategies and missions to respond to market competition and to satisfy public needs. Further, the rapid changes in the world economy, the requirements for new skills, and the new government policies along with the widespread use of information technology have forced academic institutions to continuously change their strategies to respond to the new market needs.

Middlehurst (2004) clearly stated that the UK's higher education system has changed to respond to international competition and market needs. He concluded that the future system has to diversify in order to maintain its quality and financial stability and to minimise its national risk. The structural changes within the system affected higher education in the United Kingdom in 1992, as the polytechnics became universities, which

resulted in many more universities and more students especially by the mid-1990s. However, the management and control of the polytechnics also shifted from local authorities to overall internal management by the new universities themselves, as a result of which they became fully independent. The new universities implemented a different management structure, and more academic and administrative authority was assigned to the dean or the head of department. The new universities follow a different recruitment process and advertise externally for senior academic positions (Middlehurst, 2004).

The idea of a corporate university has emerged to fill the gap between industries and academic institutions. Corporate universities work as a strategic umbrella concept for the institutions created for developing and educating employees and the company's constituents in order to meet the corporation's purposes; they are systems of teaching and learning rather than institutions of learning in the traditional sense (Williams, 2003)

Williams (2003) illustrated how the Durham Model (DIIG) adopted by Durham University emphasises two main priorities: the strategic and the structural areas of the academic institutions. The aims of the DIIG are to evaluate the strategy applied by the University to achieve its goals in order to provide support to its academic community and to be able to achieve its goals with limited resources. There are many examples of excellent universities which have succeeded in responding to such requirements and which have crossed their boundaries further in terms of their internal and external activities: these are termed "Entrepreneurial" Universities.

Research conducted by Clark in 2003 aimed to investigate the effort of some European universities that managed to convert themselves to "Entrepreneurial Universities" during the 1980s and 1990s after the gradual reduction of government funding. Their efforts proved that their strategies to become financially independent were successful, and that they have strong identities. These universities include the University of Warwick in England, the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, the University of Twente in the Netherlands, the Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, and the University of Joensuu in Finland. Clark (2003) measured the transformation process and success of the above universities by looking first at their administrative systems, with full integration and cooperation between the academic and administration staff. Second, these

universities expanded their external networks with firms and industries, and succeeded in transferring knowledge technology to research projects for mutual benefits. Third, they have diversified their income through research contracts with companies, local governments, fees and students' services. Finally, the universities encourage the academic departments and individuals to introduce new professional programmes to generate more income. Such strategies have led to the building of a strong culture and values which determine the identities of these universities (Clark, 2003).

Middlehurst (2004) concurred with Clark (2003) and summarised the factors that contribute to transforming conventional universities into entrepreneurial ones. These factors include applying business strategies of the private sector strategies, forging links with external organisations and groups and diversifying funding bases. The higher education institutions need to introduce policies with complete records concerning their funding sources, and to reduce their dependence on state funding sources. Hayward and Daniel (2011) agreed with the views of Middlehurst and Clark; that the institutions' strategic plans are required to be flexible and adaptable, and they should be able to exercise their autonomy in current and future operating environments. In addition, these institutions need to have strong administrative departments or teams working collectively to share the responsibilities to raise income and to maintain a spending control system. Institutional expansion, development, and creating research units are other strategies that are applied to attain a self-funding status. Melbourne University and the former Melbourne Private College, and LSE Enterprises are examples of this model (Hayward;Daniel, 2011).

Shattock (2003) added two other important factors that contribute to successful institutional changes. The first is 'entrepreneurialism' in the core departments, which is very important to the staff, students and customers. This administrative strategy creates a good link between the centre and other innovative units. The institution-wide entrepreneurial culture is the second factor, where institutions' values and behaviours are essential for their success.

The entrepreneurial universities benefit from the development of the external markets and competition among companies to attract qualified students. The external development of the labour market affects the progress of the internal transforming of

resources, organisation and culture, and drives universities to conduct market research to distinguish themselves and compete in the world market. The state universities also follow similar strategies to advance their programmes (Shattock, 2003).

The policies and strategies of higher education institutions have changed in the USA, the UK, Denmark, China, Australia and Austria. Political leaders have tried to narrow the gap between public needs and institutions' educational strategies through analysing their missions and directions to respond to and meet public needs. The main duties of the state leaders are to serve the public, to control the institutions' missions, to evaluate institutional performance and to make higher education institutions more accountable to their societies.

Middlehurst (2004) explained different styles and policies of higher education in different countries around the world. In China and Singapore, state authorities are centrally directing institutional entrepreneurialism. American universities have their own systems and policies and rely on the market needs. In the UK, the government authorities fall between these two models; and leaders of the higher education institutions require more freedom to manage without government control.

The institutional competition of the American institutions, especially after the Second World War, was based more on prestige than on enhancing the knowledge and skills of graduates. Universities' prestige has led to a focus on quality of research rather than teaching and learning, to encourage students to achieve their higher qualifications to meet the needs of society (Bettye, 1996). To ensure that a large proportion of the American population attains a general standard of learning is a key task within the American higher education system. Newman (2004) argued that society and employers are looking for skilled and knowledgeable graduates; however, although their degrees have helped many to find jobs, they find themselves lacking some important skills such as being able to analyse data, write reports, exercise critical thinking or work with teams.

Clark's (2003) explanation leads us to understand that universities function in a dynamic environment and their daily operations require different styles of management, effective leadership and time to adapt to the necessary changes in order to compete among other institutions. Funding is another important issue that influences the academic institutions to introduce new policies and strategies to maintain the required funds to run their

activities. Altbach (2002) agreed with the Clark and emphasised that higher education around the world has been considered by researchers as a "complex organization "due to the rapid growth of the universities with an ever-increasing number of students and employees, and which requires complicated administrative structures to manage the capital and human resources.

The funding of higher education is another challenge facing university leaders throughout the world and the universities have experienced dramatic changes as a result of increasing demands for higher education access and the expansion of higher education costs and revenues requirements, particularly institutions which mainly depend on government assistance. Johnstone (2011) clearly stated that the shortage of revenue available to cope up with the greater costs of teaching and research will affect the quality of both areas, lead to limited access, and indeed will influence economic and social development (Johnstone, 2011). Williams (2003) on the other hand indicated that there is also a change in state funding in Europe and UK in three different areas:

- Core funding teaching and research have been disaggregated which leads the university to concentrate on the market.
- Deregulating of funding through competition.
- Deduction on the unit of resource.

The traditional university and the enterprise universities face pressure from different angles. The traditional universities have to meet the new criteria set by government authorities if funds are required for running such institutions, whereas the enterprise universities are also forced to follow different strategies and missions to respond to market competition and satisfy their clients: students, shareholders, government, industries and communities (Newman, 2004). Williams (2003) explained that integrated income generation becomes an important process to maintain the accomplishment of strategic institutional goals.

Both Altbach (2002) and Wang (2010) concurred that a university's main responsibility is provide the required knowledge and skills through different programmes to produce qualified and competent graduates especially in the developing countries, in order that they can compete with those in the developed world. It can be concluded from this that

the future of universities is dependent on transformative leaders to realise that their universities operate in a global-knowledge environment and that their graduates have to work effectively with national development along with global challenges. This is to ensure that transformation leaders are recruited to run higher education institutions and to build a good strategy and to deal carefully with the policy makers who also need experience and knowledge to understand and deal with academic complex institutions (Altbach, 2011, Wang, 2010).

Examples of how universities have responded to the challenges in the field of higher education are discussed below. Newman (2004) cited some of these challenges as globalization, market forces and technology. The leaders (president /dean) of universities, as mentioned above, require their institutions to develop new strategies to deal with such challenges and in response to the requirements of political leaders, the public and, the public and students (Newman, 2004). Further, the challenges and the competition either between private institutions or from business corporations has become a fundamental issue due to different requirements of the global economy; therefore, universities in Europe, the United States and other less developed countries have had to restructure their strategies. The universities have implemented different structures, management strategies, and excellent customer services to meet political, social and economic requirements. For example, universities in the United States and UK have adopted specific admission criteria for accepting students; which differs from the case in other European countries.

Different universities from different countries have faced different types of pressures and challenges. For example, information technologies, fees and graduate results have created challenges and pressures in many colleges and universities in the United States. The Commonwealth Countries have faced other types of pressures such as changes in higher education policies and having to adapt to new cultures. In addition, the rapid developments of private education institutions are generating both opportunities and threats. Therefore, universities and colleges have to restructure their missions and strategies and the way they secure funding in the face of market competition.

Some developing countries have followed this trend and have adopted strategies and models from the UK and the United States without having sufficient capital and academic

and administrative resources; as a result, they face a different set of challenges. South Africa for example faced difficulties and challenges due to the consequences of globalisation and the emergence of private institutions. In addition, less developed countries have faced other challenges such as ineffective participation in higher education due to insufficient resources and social inequalities. This situation has restricted some students from pursuing their further education. It is possible to overcome such challenges and to improve graduate output if enterprises adopt strategies to encourage potential students and to develop their educational qualities (Williams, 2003).

The academic institutions have to develop their strategic planning and to review their strategies regularly to ensure they are meeting educational challenges and to respond efficiently to the competition in the marketplace of higher education. According to Newman (2004), there are three demands on the leaders of colleges and universities in the face of the new era of higher education: first, to succeed in the higher education market place; second, to work with the decision makers to restructure the educational system to meet the market needs, and third, to ensure that the activities of universities are serving public needs (Newman, 2004). The leaders of higher education institutions are continuously facing pressures where universities and colleges need to depend on market forces and quality more than on regulations and prestige, as was traditionally the case. . Some of the good examples of universities which have succeeded in making strategic changes and implementing high levels of technology in higher education are the University of Phoenix, and the British Open University.

The implications of the new competition

The policy makers in developed and less developed countries use their power to shift their educational policies towards a market-oriented system of higher education rather than a regulated system, which leads to the transformation of higher education. There are different factors which contribute to such transformation, such as competition among universities and colleges and new institutions, the use of new technology, the impact of globalisation on higher education, and finally, the pressure of decision makers on higher education institutions.

In response to policy makers, new educational requirements and the new market needs, higher education institutions have started to apply different strategies, such as decentralisation and deregulation strategies, and flexibility and accountability; and the institutional leaders are asked for more autonomy to compete in the market.

Subsequently, New Jersey Institutions adopted different policies at board level; Colorado University freed itself from state regulations, and North Dakota adopted flexibility and accountability. In Egypt, China, Malaysia, Poland, and Germany, universities have become affiliated with international institutions in response to market forces.

There are other implications related to the required changes; institutions need to analyse both cost and performance data in higher education. The perception of the public towards institutions and the importance of holding them accountable for the performance of the students are other issues to take into consideration. Both the public and business leaders have concerns about the skills of the graduates. They are concerned about the operation of higher education institutions, and believe that such institutions are missing creative and practical intelligence. The political leaders are looking for efficiency and control over rising costs, and have focused on monitoring and accountability. The legislators look at the issue of responsiveness towards students' performance, while the academic leaders seek for more autonomy (Newman, 2004). As a result, there has been greater pressure on academic and institutions for accountability and the measurement of student outcomes.

To summarise, the policy makers would like to adopt a successful method to support universities and colleges to serve their societies and the national economy, and at the same time to assess institutions in order to make them accountable concerning their performance. All the aspects discussed above have led to an increase in competition; in response to which institutions must improve their accountability, improve their quality and diversify their programmes. The quality in education indeed plays an important role in achieving the three main demands, and Massy (2003) outlined the seven education quality principles that help institutions develop a culture of quality: clear educational quality, well-defined learning outcomes, effective student assessment, and effective student training, follow best-practice strategy, and reevaluate the process for improvement.

The Ministry of Higher Education in Japan is a good example of a government body that encourages mergers among colleges to meet both market and public needs. There are numerous other examples of institutions which gained their autonomy, such as St. Mary's College of Maryland in 1992, Colorado School of Mines in 2001, and Massachusetts College in 2003, the Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden in 1994, and the University of Denmark in 2000. France had a centralised system until 1984, when the Savary Law was introduced which granted French Universities financial, administrative, academic and teaching autonomy. Germany has encouraged private institutions in order to stimulate government universities to compete and to be more responsive. China and Malaysia, Oman, Egypt, Chile and New Zealand have followed similar policies (Newman, 2004).

Middlehurst (2004) raised several factors to be considered relating to the issue of a society's collective knowledge. The first factor states that higher education institutions are the heart of social, cultural and economic activities through maintaining a high quality of teaching, research and different programmes. The second factor states that universities and colleges have the power to enrich society with the required knowledge through different types of qualifications. The third factor states that the institutions are happy to gain their autonomy and independence from state intervention. The higher education institutions have developed enough ideological authority using different bureaucratic and legal means to create a balance of direct state involvement to cause actual changes (Groves, 2006). Middlehurst (2004) agreed with other writers such as Shattock and Berdahl (1984), Taylor (1987) and Wagner (1995) in considering social and economic development as the source for change in higher education since the mid-1990s. Middlehurst further explained that Pollitt's (1990, 2003) analysis indicated that the New Public Management (NPM) principles have been implemented in many countries such as the USA, the UK, Canada, Japan, Jamaica, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Tanzania and Thailand. The key elements of NPM principles emphasise the outcome of the management system and the effectiveness of the evaluation process; they focus on specialisation, and concentrate on open relationships and efficient ways of product delivery and more cooperation between public and private sectors (Middlehurst, 2004).

Higher education institutions worldwide are either centrally managed by state agencies, for example in China and Singapore, or exercise autonomy and control to respond to the market's needs, such as universities in the USA. The higher education institutions in the UK on the other hand use a mix of the above management systems to either balance the risk or indirectly retain state control. Clark (2003) stated that universities are performing in a complicated environment and need to have various alternatives and solutions to face their challenges. They require flexible policies and strategies in order to respond to changes and to be able to compete. The results of the report by the former Performance and Innovation Unit in the Cabinet Office on the role of Public Sector Leadership showed much eagerness to have the freedom to lead the public sector agencies in the UK, rather than the classical perception of the effectiveness of the leadership if appointed by the Government (Middlehurst, 2004).

To illustrate this further, the researcher for example examined the UK historical experience concerning changes in higher educational management. The Jarratt Report (1985) and the Report of the National Advisory Body (1987) welcomed and supported direct external efforts to influence and introduce changes in the internal authority of institutions in the mid-1980s. The National Advisory Body (NAB) sought to introduce Total Quality Management (TQM) to ensure quality management within the sector of higher education. The NAB supports the business management system and decision-making process and believes in the appropriateness of applying the same in the operations of universities and colleges. The University Grand Commission (UGC) asked universities for high-quality leadership to restructure their institutions in response to the UGC cuts in public funding to universities. The academic leaders must be able to efficiently run the academic and administrative activities of universities.

Resource limitations have created more centralisation of both the system and institutions. The academic leaders such as rectors, presidents, vice chancellors, deans and departmental heads face new responsibilities and challenges for which they may not feel experienced enough to deal with. The UK universities continue to follow the same educational system and diversify their programmes despite funding cuts and quality requirements. They have to respond to the market needs and international competition (Middlehurst, 2004).

The developing countries have many ways to market higher education institutions in the developing countries such as providing quality education, affordable fees and collaboration with reputed higher education institutions. In addition, other positive elements can be applied within institutional strategies to assist the management of higher education institutions to respond effectively to the required changes such as adopting a flexible policy to attract and retain highly qualified faculty staff, developing the best academic programmes, allocating resources more efficiently, and effective leadership.

According to Rob (1996), the future of higher education institutions might specifically become more specialised and focused on product and market to target different groups of students and research interests. The universities need to select their programmes, degrees and type of delivery taking into account other important factors such as the increase in participation rates, long-term learners and real employer requirements.

The roles of universities'/colleges' vice chancellors and deans

The role of leadership in higher education has become increasingly essential to meet today's different challenges and to restructure the institutions to play their role in advancing national development. Educational institutions require strong leadership to build their future visions and to introduce the required changes through the right strategic planning. According to Altbach (2011), effective and skilled leadership and expertise are required to run higher education institutions and to play a major role in today's complex and globalised world (Altbach, 2011). Wang, (2010) holds the same views of Altbach and clearly stated that universities are focusing on their management systems and leadership to feed the market with qualified and competent graduates. (Wang, 2010)

Background

The roles of the university presidents and deans have changed over time to meet the evolving requirements of the market and societies. Historically, the academic deanship in American colleges and universities started in the 1800s, the time of the medieval universities, and was universally acknowledged worldwide by 1913. The dean was typically a white, married male, in his mid-fifties, and with over six years' experience in academia.

The vice chancellors of universities still carry managerial/administrative and professional/academic responsibilities. This however represents a big challenge to the traditional culture of the university (Rob, 1996). The universities' vice chancellors need to be both resource managers and academic leaders, to develop interpersonal and communication skills and to set clear institutional goals; to recruit and retain staff who are willing to commit to these goals, and to maintain the required resources and infrastructure. The leaders need to minimise the administrative tasks undertaken by the academics, develop appropriate timetables, and encourage curriculum designing with an efficient use of teaching facilities. This strategy will enable the academic staff to fulfill their main duties to provide high quality teaching, which requires more time (Rob, 1996). According to Bargh,

The university president in the United States is expected to be a friend of the students, a colleague of the faculty, a good fellow with the alumni, a sound administrator with trustees, a good speaker with the public, an astute bargainer with the foundations and the federal agencies, a politician with the state legislature, a friend of industry, labor, and agriculture, a persuasive diplomatic with donor, a champion of education generally, a supporter of the professions (particularly law and medicine), a spokesman to the press, a scholar in his own right, a public servant at the state and national levels, a devotee of opera and football equally (Bargh, 2000, p.134).

The dean's role is an essential indicator of the success of higher education institutions; however, the expectations of the faculty, administration, and sponsors are a major component of the formation of such a role (Wolverton, 2001). Table 6 shows the dean's roles in an historical context (Montez, 2003).

Table 6: Deans' roles in an historical context

Period	Place	Roles and Remarks
1864	Harvard's Medical School	To maintain friendly and charitable interaction with the students.
1960s		Deans had more responsibilities and their roles concentrated on the results and means of higher education in the institutions.
1970s		More managerial-oriented list of deans. New additional roles of the deanship as strategic planning, fundraising and development, internal and external accountability measures.
1990s		To represent colleges at the community level and recruit a diversity of faculty staff and students. The dean was also involved in the political environment.
Today		To be involved with the college, the president, the faculty and the curriculum in many different ways.

Source: (Montez, 2003)

According to Rob (1996), there are different views of the role of the deans in the literature, but in general, their role as leader is to maintain the overall operations of the university or college, and to reflect the good image and reputation of their institution by maintaining high quality teaching and research (Rob, 1996). The traditional role of the deans was to set academic policy and to coordinate the work between faculty members and administrators, to create a communication network internally, and to build relationships between the institution and both the political and business sectors. The deans are located at the centre of administrative hierarchies in colleges and universities; they undertake the role of mediator between administration and faculties, and arrange the necessary resources to achieve the missions and objectives of the institution (Wolverton, 2001).

It is argued according to Birnbaum that the deans need to spend more time with the faculty and administrators, to exchange and share information with colleagues and to build communication channels with them; however, the faculty, provost, students and the deans themselves evaluated their effectiveness, roles and responsibilities differently. The duties of the deans have changed over time, moving from student-focused to other administrative and academic roles, such as budgeting and fundraising, personnel and work environment management, public oversight and external public relations. The universities' presidents used to appoint deans directly from the faculty members, but today a committee of faculty and administrative members selects the deans (Birnbaum, 1992).

Institutional evaluations from both staff and students' perspectives have become important in checking the performance and the quality of the institutions. This process is required to respond to the policy makers' demands for accountability towards students' performance, and levels of faculty and student satisfaction. Rosser, Johnsrud and Heck (2003) described some systematic approaches for the evaluation of the leadership effectiveness of deans and directors from individual and institutional perspectives. Multilevel structural equation modeling is one of a number of models used to examine the variance in faculty and staff assessments of their own deans from a university-wide perspective associated with the determination of the performance of all deans and directors. This model analyses data from different individuals at different levels in the structure of the organisation at the same time.

Wolverton and colleagues (2001) concluded that multi-dimensional approaches are required to study the leadership effectiveness of the deans. The complex working environment of the deans requires more than biographical, structural, contextual, or psychological factors to conduct a complete study about their effectiveness. Leadership effectiveness is a reliable measure if the purpose of the evaluation process is to hold individuals accountable for the consequences of their actions. Fincher (1996) and Rosser (2003) argued that leadership effectiveness in higher education is mostly a matter of perception which is based on the individual's experience of the leader's behaviour. Rosser (2003) examined leadership effectiveness in higher education through his argument that the deans' responsibilities cannot be measured by a single model of evaluation, and that the theory of psychology looks at leadership as an outcome of

managerial effectiveness. Effective leaders are those who succeed in exerting social influence on their employees to achieve their missions: by treating their employees equitably, gaining their trust and maintaining the required resources for their organisations. They practice two exercises while undertaking their duties at their organisations. First, they exert an influence over the employees and help to fulfill their interests on a strategy of mutual income. Second, the leaders` strategies assist them to coordinate the work of highly educated professionals (Rosser, 2003).

Descriptive studies and observations of the deans` work are the most important methods for evaluating their performance. Descriptive studies are used to study faculty perceptions of the role of the dean. The dean is accountable for the academic standards of the unit and communication is the most important element of their performance. The respect and confidence of the faculty is one measure of an effective dean. Rosser (2003) recommended four steps to conducting multilevel structural equation modeling: these are determining leadership fields as a main criterion for assessment purposes, incorporating the multilevel nature of higher education institutions, using the faculty and staff evaluations of their deans, and finally examining variations in leadership effectiveness at two levels of analysis(Gould, 1964).

Rob (1996) stated that the duties of the universities` leaders should be to ensure high quality teaching and research and the excellent reputation of the institutions; and that institutions should be held accountable for student learning and academic success with respect to the expansion of the population (Newman, 2004, Rob, 1996).

The future challenges facing higher education are to close the gap between schools and colleges and higher education, and to provide high quality programmes through learning and teaching strategies for each programme within the limitations of the funds available. This can be achieved through good academic leadership and applying Total Quality Management (TQM) at the universities and colleges.

4.2 LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Background

Leadership definitions

This section highlights the leadership definitions in general, and the definitions of academic leaders (vice-chancellors, deputy vice chancellors and deans).

Leadership is a broad subject and has different definitions, theories and styles. As noted by Wang and Berger (2010),

Leadership development has been approached from different angles over the years. Leadership training academies have been established everywhere in the country from K-12 settings to higher education settings. Few argue that the leadership skills, expertise and knowledge have been successfully passed on to the next generation from these leadership training academies. The problem is that these exist in the gap between leadership theory and practice (Wang, 2010,p.6).

Leadership theories have developed over time carrying different ideas and concepts. The early leadership researchers were ambiguous and did not share some common characteristics; therefore, the definition of leadership depends on the type of institution (Bass, 1990), the roles concerned and the organisational environment. Northouse (1997) defined leadership as a process and the leader as an individual with the power to convince a group of people to accomplish common objectives. Grover (2002) offered a similar definition and looked at leadership as a process of influencing the behaviour of a group to accomplish certain activities and motivate their efforts towards achieving their goals in a given situation. The most common leadership theories are: Great Man Theory, Trait Theory Behavioral Theories, Role Theory, The Managerial Grid, Situational Leadership, House's Path-Goal Theory of Leadership, Contingency Theories, Transactional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Bass' Transformational Leadership Theory, and Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory.

The key elements in these definitions are that leadership is a process and it achieves a specific goal. Leadership is the ability to influence people, to motivate them to serve a common purpose, and to fulfill the functions necessary for successful group action. It is a function that consists of three main variables - a leader, a follower and a situation. The source of influence may be formal, such as a managerial position in an organisation, and where managerial leadership is more focused on the process of directing and influencing

a group to perform their tasks and achieve their goals. Leaders can also emerge from within a group as well as being appointed. This is known as non-sanctioned leadership that has the ability to create an influence which arises outside the formal structure of the organisation, which is as important as the formal influence (Wang, 2010).

This section will explain briefly the main ideas of the key theories related to the research areas. The main approaches to the study of leadership including Role theory, Leadership Traits, the Behaviour of a Leader and Contingency Approaches to leadership, and Transactional and Transformational Leadership Theory.

Traits Theory - 1930 to 1950

Traits Theory was the first systematic effort by psychologists and researchers to understand leadership and to attempt to identify the personal characteristics of leaders. According to this theory, the researchers adopted two approaches to measure leadership traits. First, they attempted to compare the traits of those who emerged as leaders with the traits of those who did not. Second, they attempted to compare the traits of effective leaders with those of ineffective leaders.

The trait theories highlight the personality characteristics of the leader through developing a comprehensive list of traits to differentiate leaders from other individuals (Stodgill, 1948). The early psychologists who studied leadership looked at several qualities of traits such as intelligence, charisma, enthusiasm, strength, bravery, integrity and self-confidence as characteristics to differentiate leaders from non-leaders. Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King, John. F. Kennedy and Nelson Mandela are examples of inspirational leaders who meet the definition above, but they represent individuals with completely different characteristics. However, it was not possible to identify a set of traits to differentiate leaders from followers, and effective from ineffective leaders. It was somewhat optimistic to believe that this set of consistent and unique traits could apply across the board to all effective leaders. Researchers tried hard to identify traits consistently associated with leadership that have been more successful; and six traits emerged where leaders differ from non-leaders. These traits include drive and ambition, the desire to lead and influence others, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, intelligence and deep technical knowledge related to their area of responsibilities. Traits alone, however, are not sufficient for explaining leadership; their primary failing is that

they ignore situational factors. The most important factor to emerge from this debate related to managerial level and performance was the manager's supervisory ability to use supervisory methods appropriate to the particular situation. Effective leadership did not depend on a particular set of traits but on how well the leader's traits matched the requirements of the situation he or she was facing (Stodgill, 1948).

One can conclude that possession of leadership characteristics is not enough and the individual must consider the appropriate situations suitable for those traits. In spite of the importance of the traits to differentiate leaders from non-leaders, they are inconsistent indicators of leadership. Therefore, the style approaches of leadership that emphasise the behaviour of the leaders became an important issue, and this leads us to the next section.

Behaviour Theory - early 1940s to mid 1960s

The Behaviour Theory emphasises the behaviour of the leaders, their performance and the way they deal with their subordinates in different situations. According to this theory, the leaders mainly follow two general styles of behaviour: task behaviours to help the staff to achieve their goals, and relationship behaviours to help the subordinates to communicate and coordinate with each other in a friendly and comfortable environment. The main purpose of this approach is the strategy used by the leaders to combine the two types of behaviour to create an influence on their staff to motivate them to accomplish their tasks and achieve their goals. The two most popular studies of behavioural styles were the Ohio State Studies and the University of Michigan Studies based on the results of Stodgill (1948).

The Ohio State Studies were the first concerning leadership styles which took place at Ohio State University in the late 1940s. These studies sought to identify independent dimensions of leaders' behaviour, which comprise two categories; to describe the leadership behaviour as either initiating structure or task-oriented leadership behaviour. For the studies, the subordinates were asked to complete questionnaires about their leaders' behaviours at different times. The questionnaires were called the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaires (LBDQ), developed by Stodgill (1963) as LBDQ-X11 and used in many research studies. These questionnaires were used by individuals in industrial, military and educational institutions and the responses resulted in identifying

initiating structure or task-oriented leadership behaviour. The former indicates that the leader defines and structures their role and those of the subordinates in search of goal attainment, which is characterised as a high initiating structure when the leader allocates particular tasks to group members, expects workers to maintain standards of performance and emphasises the meeting of deadlines. The task-oriented leadership behaviour, on the other hand, was described as the desire of a person to have a job relationship characterised by mutual trust and respect for subordinates' ideas and regard for their feelings, and the leader was characterised as being highly considerate, and as one who helps subordinates with personal problems, is friendly and approachable, and treats all subordinates fairly.

The result of the leadership styles studies at Ohio State showed that the leaders who are high in initiating structure and consideration tended to achieve high performance and satisfaction levels among the subordinates. This type of leadership generally resulted in positive outcomes, but there are enough exceptions that indicate that situational factors need to be integrated within the theory especially when related to the military or a company (Northouse, 2007).

The second most popular studies of behavioural styles were the University of Michigan Studies. The objective of these studies was to investigate behavioural characteristics of leaders to measure the performance effectiveness of the employees. The Michigan group came up with two dimensions of leadership behaviours labeled employees' orientation and production orientation. Leaders who were employee-oriented were described as emphasising interpersonal relations. They took a personal interest in the needs of their subordinates and accepted individual differences among employees, whereas the production-oriented leaders tended to emphasise the technical or task aspects of the job.

In conclusion, the Behaviour Theory approach leads us to concur with the scholars that leaders (such as directors and university presidents) must acquire technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills.

The Situational Theories/Contingency Approaches

Although many theories of leadership have been developed, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) introduced the situational approach to look at leadership behaviours in different situations. This approach was broadly acknowledged as relating to leadership as it applies different styles to suit different situations (Hersey, 1969).

The effective leaders will follow directive or supportive ways of managing, or both, as the situation requires, which mainly depends on the leader's evaluation of his or her employees and their commitment to complete their tasks. The approach has been amended and used in training and development for many organisations. Northouse, 2007 stated that this approach focuses on situational influences and emphasises behaviour and environment; and encouragement is given to the possibility of training individuals. The leader's behaviour varies between task behaviours and the leader who directs the works of subordinates towards goal achievements through instruction, with more emphasis on time planning and the task closing date. However, the leaders' relationship behaviour extends their respect for the subordinates' ideas and creates mutual trust through open communication and teamwork (Northouse, 1997). The leader in this case uses various combinations of the two kinds of behaviour - task and relationship - to balance between the employees' objectives of achieving their goals and to strengthen the group itself (Northouse, 1997).

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that leaders use different styles to influence their subordinates, including coaching, delegating, participating, and directing. The effectiveness of leaders depends on whether the style they use is appropriate for their situation. The contingency approaches to leadership match leadership styles with suitable situations and are evaluated by assessing three main leadership styles: staff relations, task structure and position power.

The Path-Goal Theory

Another approach to leadership was the Path-Goal Theory which examines how leaders inspire employees to achieve the organisational goals (Evans, 1970). This theory explains the perception of both leaders and followers in organisations. Every individual plays a role in society, within the group or at institutions, but this role varies from one

person to another due to the degree of influence of each individual. Individuals' roles depend on their expectations, which also determine their behaviours and attitudes while performing their planned or unplanned tasks. The availability of information about the individuals and their roles assists their leaders to know or anticipate the individual's behaviour during the performing of their tasks, and organisations can change individuals' behaviour if they change their roles, which also influences their beliefs and attitudes (Bass, 1990).

House, (1971) followed the same line of thought as Bass, (1990); that the followers' roles rely on their social learning and reading and their expectations about their responsibilities and the responses based on both their decisions and the decisions of their leaders. The leaders can influence their followers if they succeed in managing their relationships, their values, and their culture with their followers to avoid unexpected conflicts, especially if the followers have different expectations from their leaders (House, 1971).

The researcher believes that effective leaders should balance their attitudes to build their relationship with their employees and to motivate them to perform well. The leaders will focus on the tasks while teaching their staff to do the tasks, by playing a directive role with less emphasis on relationships. However, they might investigate the reasons behind any staff incompetence, and exercise different roles with capable, skilled and high competent employees by explaining their decisions and listening to and advising their employees. They need to use different strategies when capable employees are resistant to doing the job they know to bring back employees' commitment through persuasion, trust and cooperation.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership Theory

Many researchers have been contributing to transformational leadership approach since the early 1980s and have differentiated between transactional and transformational leaders.

Transactional leadership in organisations performs through clear instruction and rewards or punishes the employees based on their achievements. This type of leadership is based on the relationship between 'give and take', as in the case of politicians who ask people to vote for them and in return, they promise to make some changes, such as not

increasing the tax rates. The core role of the employees is to do their jobs and take full responsible for achieving their tasks regardless of the resources. The same idea is applied to the managers who reward their employees if they achieve their goals. Transactional leaders work with their followers on the basis of mutual benefits without considering the personal needs of individuals. In an exceptional case, the transactional leaders reward their employees if they perform beyond the normal requirements and deserve praise and reward for exceeding expectations (Northouse, 1997).

Transformational leadership was explained by Northouse, (2007) as a leadership style to engage employees with each other, to increase their levels of motivation and morals, and to encourage them to achieve their goals, which should exceed personal interests and benefit the whole organisation. Such managers lead their organisations differently by inspiring their subordinates through clear visions and strategy. They develop the organisational vision by sharing ideas from managers, senior team members and junior staff of the organisation and finalise it after a series of meetings and discussions to ensure that the organisation's vision and strategy are clear and understandable for all employees. Following this process, the leaders gain the commitment and loyalty of their subordinates by creating trust and autonomy to ensure they follow the same strategy. Both Bass(1990) and Conger (1999) have the same views that transformational leaders are always available to motivate, provide backup to their employees and to appreciate their work on different occasions such as through ceremonies, rituals and other symbolic cultural customs .The transformational leader always raises the interests of their employees and creates an awareness and acceptance of their personal goals along with the organisation's goals (Bass, 1990, Conger, 1999).

James McGregor (1960) introduced the difference between transactional and transformational leaders and stated that the two are clearly opposites. Transactional leaders use rewards to motivate the employees to do the work compared to transformational leaders who participate with the employees and create awareness of the importance of outcome and the most efficient ways to attain organisational goals. Bernard (1990) and Bass(1990) , on the other hand, disagreed that transactional leadership is the opposite of transformational leadership; rather they acknowledged that good leaders demonstrate characteristics of both (Hay, 2005).

The major changes in the global economy since the 1970s have emphasised the importance of transformational leadership, and large companies such as General Motors and AT&T subsequently implemented major changes to how they ran their business due to factors such as rapid technological change, competition, and instability in energy prices. In addition, the changes in organisations are another factor that contributes to the importance of transformational leadership. The organisations restructure the type of work they do, use different ways to motivate the employees and follow a new style of leadership. Transformational leadership was explained by Bain (2005) based on ethical perspectives; his approach considered people's mission and vision, commitment and goal achievement. The relationship and mutual trust between leaders and their followers became an important issue in directing a group's effort and motivation to fulfill their duties to achieve the organisation's goals. The role of transformational leaders is to maintain high levels of commitment of employees to fulfill the organisational objectives.

The transformational leadership strategy indeed leads to increasing the employees' productivity. It also builds trust, respect and loyalty towards the organisation among the employees. The successful leader will always recognise the followers' achievements. This type of leadership requires the leaders to deal with the staff as one family in their organisations. They need to reflect their values and beliefs to their followers. Bain (2005) suggested four factors that distinguish transformational from other leaders. Table 4 below compares Bain's four factors with Leithwood's (2000) six factors that make up transformational leadership.

Table 7 Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

The Four Common I's	Leithwood's Six
<p>1. Idealised influence. Charismatic vision and behaviour that inspires others to follow.</p> <p>2. Inspirational motivation. Capacity to motivate others to commit to the vision.</p> <p>3. Intellectual stimulation. Encouraging innovation and creativity.</p> <p>4. Individualised consideration. Coaching to the specific needs of followers.</p>	<p>1. Building vision and goals.</p> <p>2. Providing intellectual stimulation.</p> <p>3. Offering individualised support.</p> <p>4. Symbolising professional practices and values.</p> <p>5. Demonstrating high performance expectations.</p> <p>6. Developing structures to foster participation in decisions.</p>

Source: Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000

Bernard (1990) developed the "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire" (MLQ) in 1985 to measure leaders' behaviour in both transformational and transactional types of leadership. The results incorporated additional factors, which are considered as indicators of effective transformational leaders and employees. These factors include "Idealised influence "when the leaders act as a model for their followers who feel the leaders are building confidence and trust to enable them to perform effectively, and "Inspirational motivation "when leaders are linked with the organisation as a whole and motivate all employees to carry out their ideas. The leaders are charismatic types who inspire their subordinates to follow their ideas; such an example is Martin Luther King who said, "I have a dream", in his famous 1963 speech. Another example was US President John F. Kennedy's vision to put a man on the moon by 1970. The third factor was "Intellectual stimulation" which means the leaders create awareness to face and

solve different types of organisational problems. Transformational leaders expect followers to be innovative and creative. Finally, the leaders get the best performance from their employees when they motivate them and respond to their needs (Hay, 2005).

According to Iain (2005), the leaders of any organisation should be enthusiastic about achieving their objectives, always keep hope alive, and be an example to influence others to perform well in the organisation. The three main general assumptions about leadership and leaders are: leaders should be acquired and maintained legitimately, should be selected according to their traits and not only by organisation members, and should have an influence on the organisation's members to complete their duties, and participate with the members in the whole organisation (Hay, 2005). The leadership issues include the clear mission and strategy of the leaders, the ability and the skills of effective communication and participation with the employees and the availability of the necessary information (Jennifer, 1997). Effective leaders also motivate employees to perform well through understanding their abilities and the types of behaviour required to achieve high performance and high levels of satisfaction.

Hindy (1989) explained three models of motivation: the first is the traditional model associated with Frederick Taylor and the scientific management school where the managers determine the job to be done and use a system of wage incentives to motivate workers. The second, the Human Relations Model, is linked with Elton Mayo and other human relations researchers who believe that managers could motivate employees by acknowledging their social needs and by making them feel useful and important. The third model is the Human Resources Model which is associated with Maslow (1943) and McGregor (1960), which suggested different factors to motivate: not only money or the desire for satisfaction but also the need for achievement and meaningful work (Hindy, 1989, McGregor, 1960).

Transformational leaders have emerged at different times during mankind's history such as Genghis Khan who, during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, united fiercely independent Mongol tribes to ultimately create one of the largest land empires ever seen. Another example of such a leader is Lou Gerstner, now retired Chairman and CEO of IBM. He turned IBM around from an \$8.1 billion loss in 1993 after identifying part of the company's problem such as customer satisfaction in after sale services, and staff

motivation. The completely transformed the culture of the organisation through modeling desired behaviour and abolishing IBM's notorious dress code to reflect better the attire of their customers. In addition, Lee Iacocca is another example of a transformational leader who managed successfully to save the Chrysler Corporation from bankruptcy and inspire its employees. In turn, that began to remodel its culture (Northouse, 1997).

An example of a transformational leader from the educational environment is Dr Ruth Simmons, the first African American to become President of an Ivy League university in the USA. She worked as President of Smith College Simmons and pioneered an engineering programme. Simmons was a transformational leader who herself attributed her own successes to her kindergarten teacher. General Colin Powell is an example of a contemporary transformational leader within military and government contexts. He overcame entrenched racism (particularly in the US military) and low institutional expectations of African Americans to become Chief of Staff in 1989 and the first African American to become US Secretary of State in 1991, a position some said he filled with vision and the qualities of a transformational leader. Further, Christine Nixon, the Police Chief Commissioner for the Australian state of Victoria, was popularly understood to have transformed the culture of that police force for the good.

Transformational leadership, however, has many criticisms and weaknesses. It covers too many concepts such as vision, motivation, and building trust; it is not easy to define its parameters, and it is hard to separate it from other conceptualisations of leadership such as charisma (Northouse, 1997). The transformational leaders themselves also face some criticisms, one of which is the possibility of the abuse of power. For example, they might exercise a very powerful influence over followers, who offer them trust and respect, to do certain jobs without understanding the consequences. Some transformational leaders have selfish interests and exploit the followers through their power, and also fail to consider the interests of both sides (Hay, 2005).

Iain (2005a) pointed out that transformational leaders are more likely to attain positive results beyond expectations and to cause huge changes within employees and organisations through success factors such as charisma, motivation and training. The transformational leaders have the ability to motivate followers, train them for specific needs and encourage their innovation and creativity to commit them to their vision. This

type of leadership is well matched to respond to the current times of global political and economic changes and instability of organisations, if these leaders also apply moral values in their leadership (Hay, 2005). Knowles (2005) clearly emphasised that leaders can become creative ones if they have the abilities to encourage their followers to participate in decision making, to understand and evaluate their needs, and to trust and appreciate their unique performance abilities (Knowles, 2005).

In short, the transformational leaders will make changes in their organisations if they create an environment of awareness for sharing knowledge and the importance of change among employees, encourage employees' participation in sharing the organisation's vision, lead the change through motivating employees to speed up the process for change and build self-confidence among employees and, finally, follow a clear monitoring and motivation system. The most important approach of the transformational leaders is to introduce their visions clearly, explain their missions to attain their vision, work with confident, accentuated values, lead by example, and give power to followers to accomplish the vision.

Transformational leadership is the right approach to lead universities and colleges, and such an approach reflects the same principles as Kotter's (2001) ideas, which to date are considered the most popular studies of leadership in higher education. Leaders prepare their employees to deal with change through their vision and effective communication network and relationship within organisations (Kotter, 1998). Goleman, (2006) added five components of emotional intelligence for leaders to Kotter's ideas, which also have been studied in higher education; these are self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and most especially, social skills (Goleman, 2006).

The higher educational leaders must embrace both Kotter's and Goleman's innovative ideas in order to succeed as leaders in their universities and colleges

Leadership theories and academic leadership

The leader of any organisation has to have a clear idea, and the ability to inspire and encourage the employees and to face all types of challenges in order to fulfill the organisational goals. Skilful academic leaders are the indicators for successful institutions. The traditional model of academic leadership could be related to trait

theories of leadership where leaders are required to lead different teams from different departments to perform their tasks; whereas the contingency theory of leadership fits well with different leadership styles. The major changes in higher education in the USA require colleges and universities to reform their management practices and to change their traditional thinking about academic leadership (Jennifer, 1997).

According to Wang (2010), universities need effective academic leaders with particular knowledge, skills and capability to develop good policies and to manage their universities successfully, and to be able to remain competitive. The issue of management and leadership became important particularly after the publishing of the 1983 Nation At Risk report, when all higher education institutions started to focus more on their administration to attract good students and to produce good graduates to compete with other graduates in the industrialised nations. The university leaders are required to do more to meet the coming challenges and competition from talented graduates emerging from rising industrialised countries such as China and India (Wang, 2010).

Academic leadership differs from other leadership types due to the nature of its activities and the requirements to have direct communication within the universities and colleges and with different sectors of society. The duties of the university managers or head of departments are to ensure that high quality performance in teaching and research is carried out by the academic staff; therefore, the institutional managers need to set clear institutional goals, to recruit and retain staff who are willing to fulfill these goals, and to maintain the required resources and infrastructure. To accomplish this task, the university vice chancellors need to be both resource managers and academic leaders and to develop interpersonal and communication skills. Academic staff also needs enough time to undertake quality tasks, particularly in teaching and research. For example, the leaders need to minimise the administrative tasks for the academics, develop appropriate timetables, and encourage curriculum designing with an efficient use of teaching facilities (Rob, 1996).

Academic leaders need to reform their institutional organisational structure and system and to give power to heads of departments to enable them to handle the administration, to lead the faculty, to train their staff and to build external relationships. The heads of departments are to lead the programmes` coordinators, review tasks, monitor the

budgets, implement the institution strategic planning, and act as a focal point between the deans and faculty members (Jennifer, 1997).

The emergence of the Knowledge Society has led institutions to emphasise training and research. The university is an institution for generating knowledge or a knowledge production institution. Management of higher educational institutions needs to apply careful policy to deal with complex situations. A balanced management is required to deal with the institutional changes and society's requirements. Munitz (2000) introduced several genuine factors that have led to the transformation in higher education institutions; these include the information system, the increase in the number of institutions, technology, the Knowledge Society, and the market (Catherinne, 2000). The future direction of higher education towards transformation requires new missions, roles and new cultures in the institutions, but there is still a gap between leadership theory and the application of its practice (Munitz, 1995, Wang, 2010).

Universities are considered to play a range of different roles than providing classical knowledge. Today universities are contributing more towards nation development, and are becoming centres for training, growth and education. Quality in higher education and quality management has become necessary as the management are responsible and accountable for their activities. The government policies also require institutions to provide quality education, to improve productivity and to be financially independent (Liz, 2011, Clark, 2003).

4.3 ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AND TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

This section will explain the importance of applying Total Quality Management (TQM) at universities and other higher education institutions to help academic leaders to be more customer-responsive and to fulfill their duties towards society more efficiently. The success of any organisation depends on the strategies and methods they adopt to apply the general principles of TQM to make the required changes. According to Bergman (1995), quality means customer satisfaction and happiness and includes both internal and external customers in any organisation. Each process in the organisation has customers. Leadership, staff participation and cultural changes in any organisation are the main components to assure customer-focused and continuous improvement in all processes.

The subject of quality issues in management date back to 1920s, the time that Shewart applied some statistical ideas at the process of manufacturing. Quality in management was developed by Deming and Juran(1993), and Japanese companies (Bergman, 1995). The Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers for example formed a committee in 1949 after the Second World War. It consisted of scholars, engineers and government officials and established a team to develop Japanese productivity.

Many factors contributed to the development of quality management in the United States of America. Among these were the expansion of the Japanese market share in the American markets, and the approaches of some scholars such as Deming (1982), Crosby (1987), Ishikawa (1990), Feirgenbaum (1991) and Juran (1995). Their contributions and approaches towards quality management had led to wide acceptance of the importance of the concept of TQM.

The companies in the United States implemented the ideas of TQM by the 1980s and the approach has since become a very important part of their management system to upgrade the quality of their products to compete internationally (Koch, 1998). In the UK, however, the ideas of TQM emerged through the activities of the Department of Trade and Industry National Quality. Its campaign was launched in 1983 and organisations such as IBM implemented the dimensions of TQM. The Total Quality Management dimensions were used in organisations before TQM as a whole became recognised as a tool for enhancing the quality of management in organisations. According to Bemowski (1992), the term 'Total Quality Management' emerged in the mid 1980s, and the Naval Air Systems Command used the term in 1985 to explain the Japanese management style adopted to improve the quality of their products.

Global competition has forced organisations to put maximum effort into improving the quality of their products. Total Quality Management has been considered as the main key for success in organisations. A large number of companies are applying TQM and by the end of the twentieth century, the concept was well established in industry. There are many definitions of the concept, which mainly depend on organisations' beliefs and their business experiences.

Feignbaum (1956) was the first author to use Total Quality Control (TQC). He defined TQC as a complete and effective integrated system to improve the quality of a product.

The development of a quality product was a shared experience and involved the efforts of different employees at the organisations to contribute to quality development, quality maintenance, and quality improvement to produce a service or a product at the minimum economic cost, while maintaining full customer satisfaction. He believed that control has to start with the design of the product and finish when the customer receives the product, and that all the departments in the organisation are responsible for achieving quality. That said, Total Quality Control has limited dimensions and does not include many of the elements such as teamwork, people empowerment and external supplier relationship; however the TQM concept includes the above dimensions and more.

Ishikawa (1989) adapted TQC or Companywide Quality Control (CWQC) to fit Japanese culture. Total Quality Control is a series of connected activities from developing, designing, producing, marketing, and servicing products. The product culture, politics, and firm philosophy are the main differences between Western and Japanese views towards management and quality improvement. Ishikawa identified 14 areas of differences between the two. Among these areas are professionalism, management relationship, and old-style capitalism versus democratisation of capital.

The USA and Western Europe have implemented the Taylor system to improve economic efficiency and to place more emphasis on professionalism and specialisation. The management uses the merit system to motivate and pay their employees, whereas seniority and the ranking system are used in Japan. American and Western European employees change their jobs more frequently than the Japanese do; the latter have a lifetime employment system. The relationship with subcontractors is another difference between Japan and the West, where 20% more of the product cost is paid by the international supplier in Japan than in the West.

Deming (1982), Crosby (1987), Ishikawa (1990) Feirgenbaum (1991), and Juran (1995) were the leaders in the discourse on quality management, although they each adopted different approaches. The other management concepts such as the supplier relationship, the quality data and reporting are not considered by the above researchers

(Barrie, 1998). Crosby (1987) and Deming (1982) focused their approaches on the production route without referencing the design process; however, their views are different, since Crosby defends the achievement of zero defects through employees'

commitment, whereas Deming criticises slogans and exhortations to achieve zero defects. Crosby (1987) explained the concept of zero defects as a systematic method used to implement the right process from the outset when producing a product and to reduce faults that may occur during the process of production (Tony, 2009). Barrie (1998) on the other hand, produced two tables (see tables 8 and 9 below) to present a brief comparison of different ideas raised by the scholars of Quality Management in relation to Total Quality Management, and a historical account of important events in the development of TQM.

Table 8: Total Quality Management

Table 1 Total quality management

Dimensions	Description	Dale <i>et al.</i> (1994)	Saraph <i>et al.</i> (1989)	Flynn <i>et al.</i> (1994)	Ahire <i>et al.</i> (1996)
Top management support	Top management commitment is one of the major determinants of successful TQM implementation. Top management has to be the first in applying and stimulating the TQM approach, and they have to accept the maximum responsibility for the product and service offering. Top management also has to provide the necessary leadership to motivate all employees.	Commitment and leadership of the chief executive officer Planning and organisation	Role of divisional top management and quality policy	Top management support	Top management commitment
Customer relationship	The needs of customers and consumers and their satisfaction have always to be in the mind of all employees. It is necessary to identify these needs and their level of satisfaction.	Culture change	–	Customer involvement	Customer focus
Supplier relationship	Quality is a more important factor than price in selecting suppliers. Long-term relationship with suppliers has to be established and the company has to collaborate with suppliers to help improve the quality of products/services.	Culture change	Supplier quality management	Supplier involvement	Supplier quality management
Workforce management	Workforce management has to be guided by the principles of: training, empowerment of workers and teamwork. Adequate plans of personnel recruitment and training have to be implemented and workers need the necessary skills to participate in the improvement process.	Culture change Education and training Teamwork	Training Employee relations	Workforce management	Employee empowerment Employee training
Employee attitudes and behaviour	Companies have to stimulate positive work attitudes, including loyalty to the organisation, pride in work, a focus on common organisational goals and the ability to work cross-functionally.	Involvement	–	Quality improvement rewards	Employee involvement
Product design process	All departments have to participate in the design process and work together to achieve a design that satisfies the requirements of the customer, according to the technical, technological and cost constraints of the company.	–	Product/service design	Product design	Design quality management
Process flow management	Housekeeping along the lines of the 5S concept. Statistical and nonstatistical improvement instruments should be applied as appropriate. Processes need to be mistake proof. Self-inspection undertaken using clear work instructions. The process has to be maintained under statistical control.	Use of tools and techniques	Process management /operating procedures	Process management	SPC usage
Quality data and reporting	Quality information has to be readily available and the information should be part of the visible management system. Records about quality indicators have to be kept, including scrap, rework and cost of quality.	Measurement and feedback	Quality data and reporting	Feedback	Internal quality information usage
Role of the quality department	Quality department need access to top management and autonomy and also has to combine the work of other departments.	–	Role of the quality department	–	–
Benchmarking	A benchmarking policy for key processes should be in place.	–	–	–	Benchmarking

Source: Barrie, 1998

Table 9: Important events in the development of TQM

Table III Important events in the development of TQM

1924-1932	Hawthorne studies demonstrated the importance of the social and psychological climate in work.
1924	Shewhart developed statistical process control.
1926	The Bell Telephone began to apply statistical control methods.
Mid-1940s	The American army pushed the use of sampling methods during World War II.
1950s	A large number of attempts at work improvement were undertaken (e.g. job enrichment, work redesign, participative management, quality of work life and worker involvement).
1950	First visit of Deming to Japan.
1951	Creation of "Deming Application Prize" in Japan. First edition of Juran's <i>Quality Control Handbook</i> .
1954	First visit of Juran to Japan. Maslow's theories about human needs.
1960	Liberalisation of economy in Japan with pressure to improve quality to compete with foreign companies. McGregor's X and Y theories.
1961	First edition of Feigenbaum's <i>Total Quality Control</i> .
1962	The idea of quality circles appeared in the first issue of the Japanese journal <i>Quality Control for the Foreman</i> .
Late 1960s and early 1970s	
1970s	The pressure of Japanese companies began to be felt in American companies.
1972	QFD was developed at Mitsubishi's Kobe shipyard site.
1973	After the 1973 oil crisis the JIT system was adopted by a vast number of Japanese companies. A small number of American and European companies began to apply this system in the 1980s.
Mid-1970s	Quality circles began to be widely introduced in the USA, the first quality circle programme was launched in Lockheed in 1974 and in the UK it was Rolls-Royce which introduced the concept in 1979.
1979	First edition of Crosby's <i>Quality Is Free</i> . Xerox Corp. started to apply the benchmarking concept to processes. Publication of the BS 5750 quality management series.
1980	An NBC television documentary about the "Japanese miracle" proposed Deming as a key element in this miracle.
1981	Ouchi's Z theory.
1982	First edition of Deming's <i>Quality, Productivity and Competitive Position</i> .
1983	"Quality on the line", published by Garvin in <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , analysed the differences between Japanese and American companies, showing some of the reasons for the better performance of the former. A paper about Taguchi's design of experiments is published in <i>Harvard Business Review</i> .
1985	The Naval Air Systems Command named its Japanese-style management approach "total quality management".
1986	First edition of Deming's <i>Out of the Crisis</i> . It became a bestseller.
1987	First edition of ISO 9000 quality management system series.
1987	Publication of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

Source: Barrie, 1998

The definitions of Total Quality Management depend on the belief and culture of the organisation. The common definition of TQM emphasises the process involved to

achieve certain results and focuses on the quality and economic cost of the product or services.

The Hawthorne studies, and the works of Maslow, McGregor and Ouchi, contributed to the concept of workforce management and leadership management. The dimension has its origins in the USA. The process flow management also started in the USA with Shewart (1931), and in the UK with Dudding (1935). The Japanese came up with the idea of mistake-proofing systems as organisational tools and housekeeping applying the CANDO (cleanliness, arrangement, neatness, discipline and orderliness) principles. The concern about customer needs led to the applying of the marketing theories. The competition among companies and the increasing demands of customers are the main reasons to take this dimension seriously. The design process emerged because of the recommendations from the Japanese procedures and best practices. The Japanese developed two management methods: the Taguchi methods, developed by Genichi Taguchi, and the Quality Function Deployment method, developed by Hauser and Clausing (1988). Both methods are examples of Japanese management tools. The other dimensions as the grounds of the supplier relationship were developed in Japan whereas the quality department and benchmarking were first used and developed by American companies such as Xerox (Barrie, 1998).

To summarise, Total Quality Management (TQM) gradually emerged out of the need to respond to increasing consumer needs. The development of the concept started early in the twentieth century and the Japanese developed and customised the idea to suit their culture. During the 1980s and as a result of Japan's success, the Americans took TQM into consideration as an important key to develop their quality of management. Other countries followed suit to implement the dimensions of TQM. Many countries offered national and international awards for TQM.

The main features of Total Quality Management are combinations of several techniques to develop products or services. Effective leadership is the most important technique of the whole series, followed by staff participation and cooperation, and finally continuous training and development in the organisation. All will lead to good products and services that in the end satisfy the customer. The next section will discuss Leadership and Total Quality Management in Higher Education.

Academic leadership and total quality management

The educational standards in the UK are among the highest in the world. The issue of quality is not new to the UK educational system and was recorded as far back as 600 years. The Government established several agencies to assure quality in its education, e.g. quality assessment, quality assurance and audit. These include the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), the Council for National Academic and Accreditation (CNAA), the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) and the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC). The British Accreditation Body (BAC) was formed in 1984 for the purpose of institutional accreditation.

Currently, the Quality Audit Agency (QAA) carries the responsibility for quality assurance instead of the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC). The HEQC used to assess the quality of education at UK universities through their auditing process and would ask unsatisfactory institutions to solve their problems based on the finding of their reports. The three main quality evaluators in UK universities used to be the university internal quality assurance body, an external auditor and the funding agency. In 1997, the Quality Audit Agency (QAA) replaced HEQC to carry out the same tasks. The Quality Audit Agency presented a framework to the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) to help education quality at UK universities. It designed a framework to evaluate the quality of education using different tools such as self-assessment, external review and benchmarking.

The new quality assurance framework considers different needs of higher education customers that comprise students, employees, employers, government, and industry. Customer satisfaction is very important to build relationships between higher educational institutions and different sectors of the society. In the new framework, the QAA replaced the external examiners with the academic reviewers who carry the same responsibilities as the external examiners to assure the quality and standards of its awards. The QAA also fulfills the requirements of HEFC using new simple rating methods.

The aim of the QAA is to reduce bureaucracy in quality assessment through its strategy which emphasises the internal assessment and peer review. The QAA policy is to retain the autonomy of the higher education institutions. The framework assures the quality of

standards of qualifications, the students` expectations of achievements and benchmark information, and strengthens internal academic reviewers.

Gopal and Tambi (1996) divided customers in higher education into primary and secondary groups, where education is the product and the students are customers.

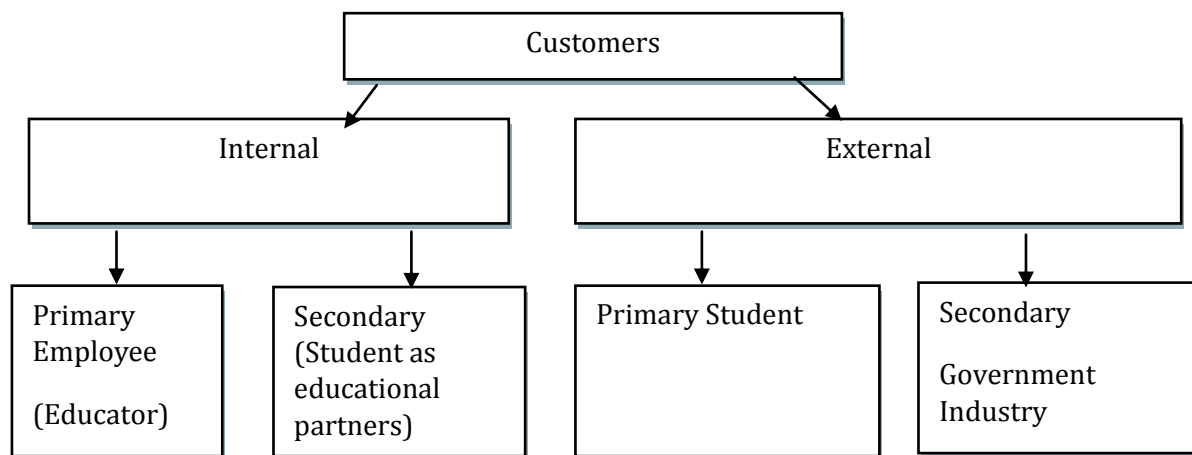


Figure 8. Customers in higher education: The dual-level customer groups of higher education.

The Quality Assurance method was used to evaluate the quality of higher education. This method is built on the quality that depends on inspection and corrective action. This method however was not an effective method due to its high costs of inspection exercise. Total Quality Management is a better management route to improve higher education efficiency and effectiveness at minimum cost.

Total Quality Management elements started to emerge at higher educational institutions in the UK from 1993. Therefore, several universities started by making small efforts in TQM; these included the South Bank University, the University of Ulster, Aston University, and Wolverhampton University . The other HEIs in the UK are well on their way to adopting TQM, by focusing on customer satisfaction, their increased customer focus, their continuous demands on quality management and improvement, and using benchmarks (Gopal;Tambi, 1999).

As Koch (1998) explained, the problem with TQM is that it is a process to produce a product or provide a service and not necessarily to do efficient work or attain customer satisfaction. Companies faced increasing challenges and competition during the 1970s and 1980s and started losing business. Such companies looked for solutions and advice to bring their business back. Among the alternatives, some companies had used the quality principles which were introduced by both Deming and Juran to improve their quality management (Koch, 1998).

Total Quality Management is a process that was applied successfully in industries in the US in the 1980s. Texas Instruments, Xerox, IBM and Motorola were able to improve their business positions by overcoming threats from global competition and other changes in the business environment. These companies won the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award, established by the US Department of Commerce to give recognition to organisations that exhibit high standards of product and process (Lozier, 1996). The US Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) adopted TQM by learning from the firms that had successfully used TQM to emerge out of crisis. Higher education institutions in many developing countries used Total Quality Management as a management process (Gopal;Tambi, 1999).However, currently, Total Quality Management in higher education is not addressing the most important problems at universities such as academic leadership, curriculum, faculty time, cost increases, distance learning, external relationships and cooperation with business, community, and use of technology. Companies or organisations other than universities using TQM are striving to meet their aims to satisfy their customers. Most universities in the USA have established a quality control department or team to carry out similar functions to TQM.

The higher education problems should be addressed through group discussions and consensus, which require time. Many researchers wrote about quality in higher education, such as Bailey and Bennett (1996), Evans (1996). And Coate (1999) Total Quality Management can be implemented in areas such as administration, registration, admission, finance and accounting. During the 1980s and 1990s, universities also considered the importance of making some changes to match the required changes in companies (Bailey, 1996 , Coate, 1999, Evans, 1996) .

The higher education Institutions considered TQM as a tool to improve some of their administrative areas such as admission, registration, finance and fees, campus services, administration and building maintenance. However, the most important area of higher education is the academic side such as quality of teaching and learning, standards, and research. TQM has to adjust to the academic problems to create an impact in the world of higher education. The curriculum and proper use of faculty resources are the most important factors in higher education institutions. There is however some resistance from faculties to apply or adjust TQM due to their fear of losing control over courses and degree requirements or due to the constraints on their time . They also believe that TQM will result in more administrative responsibilities for them (Koch, 1998).

Today, societies, organisations and industries are experiencing rapid changes. The world economies require different types of education and skills; therefore, education and higher education need to restructure their management and leadership policies and systems. Higher education institutions must change their academic and administration strategies to respond to the world requirements. Academic leaders are looking for new ways to manage their universities to respond to the new requirements. Many companies implement the principles of Total Quality Management to fulfill the requirements to be awarded the ISO 9000 standard. The company leaders expect universities' management to adopt the same strategy and implement TQM. University leaders are facing difficulties in accepting the ideas of TQM and implementing them in all activities. The faculties at the academic institutions have strong cultures and values as a base for well known scientific principles such as commitment of academic staff to their duties, and critical and creative thinking. The main concern of universities is to provide knowledge.

Companies should not just rely on their strong culture to compete in the market, but should adjust to their customers` requirements and their expectations and the interests of other external parties. Leaders follow the decentralisation policy and delegate their powers to both senior and junior employees in their companies to achieve a quick response and action to customers' needs. The organisations carry out their activities following certain procedures using a number of statistical methods. Every employee should fully understand the process in their organisations from the beginning to the completion of products or services; the process will only work through the shared commitment of all employees. The leaders and senior managers of organisations have to

commit themselves to achieve quality and create awareness among employees of the importance of quality. Organisations and their leadership need to experience major transformation and cultural changes to implement the dimensions of Total Quality Management.

The academic institutions followed decentralised policies at the professional level, but a mainly centralised management system is implemented to control their activities. The universities are similar to other organisations in how they process their activities and any transformation changes must consider the traditional values of the academic institutions as knowledge, critical thinking, academic freedom, personal integrity and decentralisation.

There are several difficulties which hinder the process of transformation in universities. The faculties and teachers have found it difficult to work as companies do, which aim for customer satisfaction, but they can enhance communication with the industrial sector and put more effort into carrying out applied research to identify the future needs of the students. The universities believe in preparing students to work in different environments and that they have to gain a diversity of general knowledge, but specialisation is essential in the academic applied research field. The universities are willing to work together with organisations and industries to produce curricula to meet the needs of the customers.

The universities' professors are experts; they are powerful in their academic areas and administer other operational subjects to teach their students. They find it difficult to be involved in the operational and administration activities at their institutions or to be customer-responsive. The other challenge is to apply management principles to academic activities at Higher Education Institutions (Bergman, 1995).

Deming (1993) identified 14 points against which to assess the university leaders to find solutions for these obstacles. These points may apply to universities' activities to enhance the performance and transformation process. Deming strongly emphasised the significance of management as opposed to the supervision and administration of the processes' results. Management's task is to understand the needs and expectations of their customers, and to find methods to translate these into product characteristics and

possibilities for process improvements. The management should focus on the staff and the process to get a good result.

Today, the most important task for the leader is to identify personal education and development needs, and support the employees to perform well in their organisations. The main general process at the university as explained by Bergham (1995) is to provide the basic education through diplomas or Bachelor's degrees, postgraduate and PhD education, further research, and transferring different types of knowledge to society. The students, the employers and the society are the main customers of universities. Universities have become part of society and their main aim is to give value to all parties. Universities' leaders need to have strategic plans to strengthen the relations with their customers, mainly students, who might be the future leaders of industries or public organisations. In addition, through their alumni or focus groups consisting of professionals, managers and alumni, or surveys, universities can develop courses to suit the needs of their customers (Bergman, 1995).

Erhan (2000) addressed good example of a Higher Education Institution that applied quality management principles. He explained how the College of Business at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) applied quality management principles to recover from many problems it faced during the 1980s such as low numbers of students and declining enrolment, an increase of the number of students leaving the college, and limited research productivity. The College managed, albeit with some difficulty, to implement some quality management principles. Erhan offered a framework within which to assess colleges to apply quality principles for their activities, which include curriculum design, research, daily operations and teaching. Erhan and colleagues were motivated by several factors to assess how university leaders applied the principles of quality management in HEIs. They concluded that some universities use different principles of quality to improve their administration and academic activities, but not a well-structured framework of quality.

The Higher Education Institutions need to share their experiences of using the successful application of the framework in the college to enhance quality in teaching and quality-related research. The private universities use Quality Management (QM) to compete with state universities that gain government support and charge lower tuition

fees. The commitments towards such a strategy are initiated by leadership of the private universities, and link the quality principles in their missions. This policy will lead to better performance and response to the requirements of the labour market. The College of Business at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), as mentioned earlier, is a good example of the adoption of Quality Management. The mission of the RIT was clearly defined as quality management education, and the implementation of its strategy fell under the supervision of the leadership of its deans. The faculty and the staff of the RIT applied Quality Management principles at all levels at the college. This includes identifying important customers, developing the services process and evaluating customer satisfaction. The College also implemented Quality Management at the administrative level including recruitment, registration and student records, student services and teaching. The changes include introducing quality concept courses for the first year students, where the College introduces the idea of process mapping, continuous improvement, empowered staff, teamwork and creative thinking to meet customer requirements. The RIT won a one million dollar IBM Quality Grant due to its leadership and faculty commitment to implement QM in its activities. The RIT also won the Quality Cup awarded by small business and not-for-profit and organisations. The College used the funds for research and curriculum development (Erhan 2000).

Erhan Mergen introduced a model to help colleges in maintaining quality in their operational activities and their research. This model has three main elements consisting of a number of components. The model first looks at the quality of design to examine the characteristics of the services or product. Second, it looks at the quality of conformance from both the organisational and supplier perspectives, and within the design. Finally, the model inspects the quality of performance to ensure the success of the service or the product in the marketplace. Accordingly, there were some similarities identified between this model and the one introduced by Juran's (1993) theory to manage quality through planning, control and management. The three elements are connected and the changes in or feedback on one of them affect the other two, which ultimately results in improvement.

Table 10: Quality dimensions and college missions

Quality of design		Quality of conformance	Quality of performance
Operations	Redesign of student registration process	Retention of students	Placement of graduates
Teaching	First-in-class initiative-- - that class of universities that forms real, effective and meaningful partners with industry (MM&L, pd 21)	Evaluate teaching effectiveness	Alumni/employer feedback
Research	Pay for performance	Number of research publications	AACSB accreditation / number of publications

Source: Erhan, 2000.

The quality of design, conformance and performance motivates the higher education institutions to restructure their strategies to improve the success percentage of new services or products. The new structure helps an institution to have a better plan for its processes and procedures. Erhan`s model will open areas for research and activities improvements. To illustrate the implementation of the above model, for example, the college integrates quality into its activities, curricular and research. The model could help the researchers to choose the most suitable factors to organise their work and their interests. This could apply to classroom teaching to tie-in the faculty's discipline to quality and to design/redesign the curricula courses, and other daily activities of the college (Erhan 2000) . Higher Educational Institutions in the United States faced pressure from different sectors of society such as the government, industries and businesses because of the lower quality of their Baccalaureate graduates. Universities began to realise their

accountable and responsible to society, and the resulting need to build strategies to improve their quality in their services.

Another good example applied TQM is Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC), which was the first US higher education institution which applied TQM and made a good success of it. The College became more efficient in its operations and academic activities, such as teaching and learning, high qualities of its graduates, and employer satisfaction. More than 160 higher education institutions followed the same pattern in applying TQM. The University of Wisconsin-Madison, North Dakota University System, Delaware Community College and Oregon State University are other good examples of the successful implementation of TQM (Gopal;Tambi, 1999).

It is important to explain some models of Total Quality Management in higher education, as some institutions developed their own TQM models to match their needs. These models rely on different assumptions and beliefs and many research studies were conducted to test their validity. The higher education institutions use TQM to verify the applicability of quality elements, success and improvement in their institutions, and to identify whether or not they are facing challenges or problems. TQM models have been developed in many higher education institutions such as Stamford University, Leicester Business School, Auburn University, and Aston University.

Kanji (1998) developed and recommended the Business Excellence Model to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education institutions in analysing the critical success factors to achieve business excellence .This model consists of four principles: delight the customer, management by fact, people-based management, and continuous improvement. Each principle is divided into two core concepts as shown in figure 9 below (Gopal;Tambi, 1999).

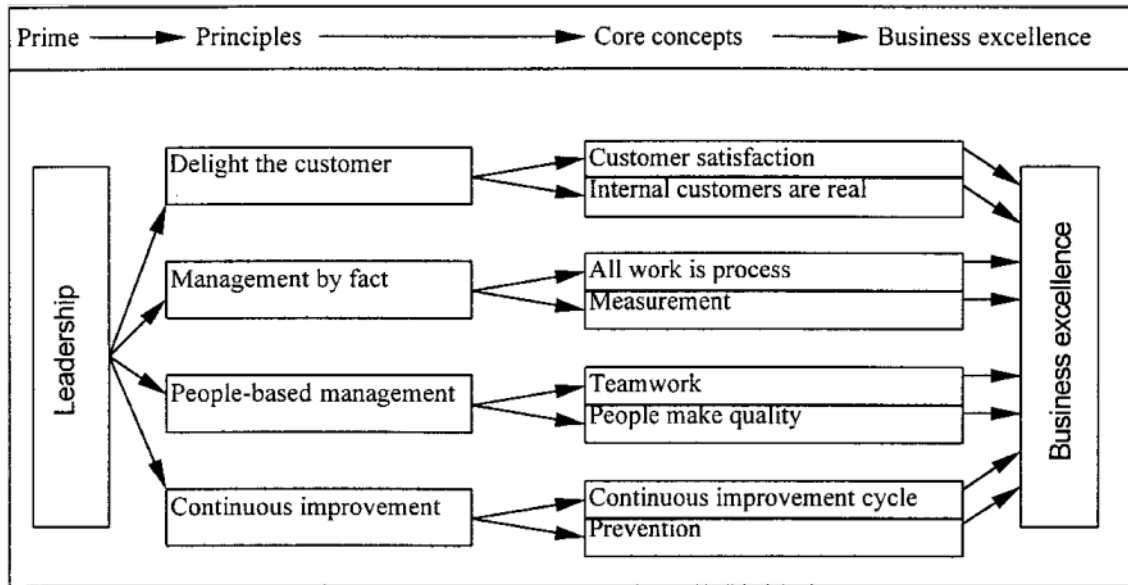


Figure 9. Business Excellence model. Source: Kankji, 1998

The main aim of Kankji's model is to achieve high customer satisfaction, and the institutions need to continuously improve all aspects of the model's activities (continuous improvement). The success of implementing this model in higher education institutions depends on the effectiveness and strength of their leadership by making decisions to solve the practical problems or to improve the activities based on objective facts of the real situations (management by fact). The leader must involve all employees in quality improvement activities (people-based management) to attain success and business excellence in their institutions. It is essential that leadership in higher education institutions implements the above model, as well as the TQM principles and concepts within the higher education system in order to achieve business excellence (Gopal;Tambi, 1999).

The continuous quality improvement cycle is a good model to improve quality in higher education institutions. There are six phases of this model as shown in figure 10 below:

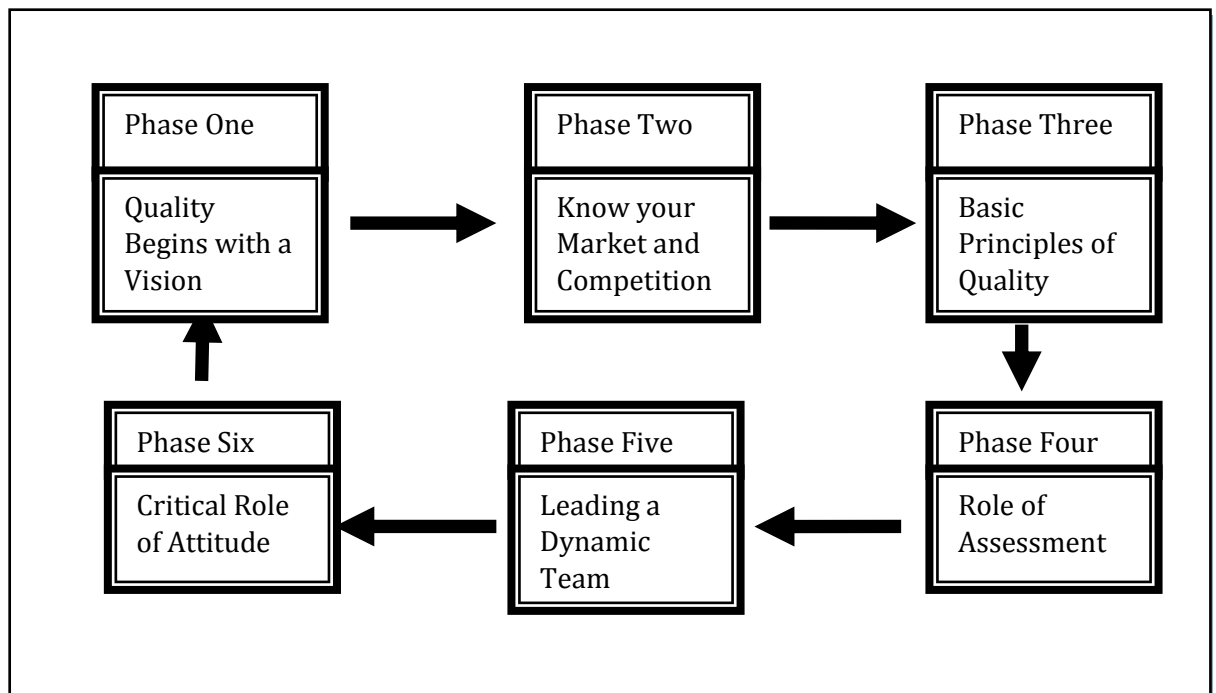


Figure 10. Continuous Quality improvement cycle. Source: (Bettye, 1996)

The higher education institutions build their visions with the effort of all employees, and the leadership of educational institutions plays a major role to develop quality through the quality teams of these institutions. The president or dean of the institutions usually chairs the council or team for quality improvement to ensure commitment and accountability by sharing the responsibility of all units. Bettye (1996) explained the need to assign a senior experienced employee to liaise with the top management and to have full access to the right information to advise different departments and individuals to implement the university's plan. The higher education institutions are required to empower their employees and to introduce different kinds of motivations and incentives to maintain their employees. They also need to train their staff to enrich their knowledge with the principles of quality management.

The success of the economy of the country depends on the stability of its political system and the quality of education. The universities with quality programmes provide skilled graduates for different sectors of society. The universities with clear visions, objectives and cooperative efforts among students, faculties and administration will improve their learning outcomes. The successful leaders of higher education reward the faculty for

their classroom performance as well as their research and publications outputs. This leads to improvements in the quality system of education (Bettye, 1996).

In short, the quality assurance system was introduced into higher education institutions in the early 1980s to strength the internal working environment, and in response to the pressure from stakeholders (students, parents and employers). The institutions were held accountable and subjected to internal and external audit reviews. The quality assurance system started with specific criteria to evaluate and provide the required information for the government and the stakeholders. Such information has helped to identify areas for academic and management improvement. For example, the US higher education system put more effort into its “input” such as number of teaching and faculty with PhDs, the size of library and information centres, faculty ratio compared to number of students, graduation ratio, faculty publications and citations and faculty awards. The inputs alone, though, do not guarantee the quality of the universities and colleges (Harvey, 2004).

Quality in higher education institutions can be measured by different methods which include accreditation, audit, assessment, and external monitoring; however, quality needs more than responding to fixed standards and criteria. It is instead a continuous process with full cooperation and involvement of all departments at the universities and colleges (Newton, 2000, Harvey, 2004). Trow (1998) on the other hand focused on the outcome that mainly the quality of the graduates and their lifelong skills is the applicable measurement of quality in higher education institutions (Trow, 1998)

Quality in higher education and quality management and leadership are the necessary keys to restructure higher education institutions to meet the new changes in the world economy. Leadership and all members of institutions are responsible and accountable for providing quality education to their customers. Quality of higher education and access are the main concern of boards of trustees or agents, governments, employers, parents and students, stakeholders and society in general to assure acceptance in the labour market. The institutions are expected to supply good services, higher quality programmes and reasonable fees. The institutions have to respond to their customers' needs, and both students and employers need to be satisfied about the efficiency and flexibility required for the marketplace. The world economy requires trained graduates

with a variety of skills who can perform well in competitive markets. The higher education institutions need a collaborative approach to improve their quality and their systems.

To conclude, institutional leadership and culture of institutions are key to the pursuit of quality. Quality assurance has to be fully integrated into institutional management and operations (Liz, 2011).

4.4 EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Definitions of employability skills

The recent expansion in higher education around the world, the growth in global market competition and the new skills requirements of the employers has resulted in continuous pressure on higher education institutions to prepare graduates with a diversity of skills in addition to the normal academic skills which are required to undertake degrees. The employers of different organisations search for new graduates with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes, and who are business-oriented, and able to contribute to organisational objectives immediately after joining the organisations. Organisations encourage universities to equip graduates with different types of skills, which suit various levels of employment. For instance, employers expect graduates in engineering and science to have work experience, to be business-oriented and to have personal capabilities to develop themselves through their working time; and who can commence the work without lengthy training programmes.

The Dearing Report (1997) recommended a number of key skills to help graduates in their careers, and throughout their lives. These skills are communication, information technology, numeracy literacy, problem-solving, team working and general knowledge of the world of work. Governments and companies support such recommendations and have funded universities to design these skills within their programmes, which in the end improves the employability of graduates.

University responses

As a result, the universities have responded to the governments' and the companies' requirements to equip graduates with necessary skills along with their normal academic courses. The universities have introduced new learning strategies to develop the

employability skills of the graduates; for example, modifying the content of the existing courses, introducing new ways of teaching and presentation and offering additional chances for work experience. The universities teach new skills within courses, or independently and sometimes use a combination of the two. To ensure these initiatives the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) introduced indicators to measure the percentage of graduates entering the labour markets such as the probability of new graduates finding employment from the time of their graduation. The universities' employability skills initiative on graduates and labour market performance will succeed if different departments are involved in both teaching and evaluating students' employability skills, employers' participation in course design and delivery, and students in work experience.

The faculty awareness of the skills requirements and work experiences for the labour market is essential especially in science and business studies. The employers' participation in course design and delivery helps universities to modify course contents to meet future job requirements. The cooperation between employers and universities extends to the sharing of ideas, participating with advisory committees and supporting students' projects.

Success in the graduate labour market is measured by securing jobs for graduates who successfully use their skills and knowledge developed in the course of their university studies. The failure of the labour market to fit graduates to the right jobs or fully utilise their skills in employment resulted in mismatches between graduates and employers. This situation may happen due to inadequate information about matching potential candidates, taking into consideration time and cost. The labour market requirements force graduates to accept jobs that underutilise their skills, such as babysitters among female graduates, and this leads to a mismatch between job seekers and employers.

In the Netherlands and the UK, for example, some employers do not measure skills differences between degree-holders at the time of recruitment and some job-holders have applied despite the fact that their formal qualifications are higher or lower than required. The employers' selection criteria affects graduates' success in securing jobs where the employers choose candidates based on several factors such as work

experience, gender and social background that vary among different degrees, and are distributed unequally within educational qualification categories.

In conclusion, the universities should assess their teaching, learning and evaluation of employability skills at different departments to enhance skill capabilities of the graduates and to help those finding jobs in the labour market.

Results

This will lead to the improvement of the quality of employer-graduate match in the labour market for skilled graduates particularly when employers participate in the design and delivery of a course. In addition, employers will have more information about job applicants through their relationship with different departments or from facilitating work experience for students. The students are aware of employers' expectations and the requirement for different skills such as problem-solving, team working and communication skills for securing jobs after graduating. The findings of several studies of the labour market outcomes for graduates concluded that planned work experience during courses and employer involvement in course design and delivery contribute to an excellent outcome to develop employability skills in colleges and universities (Geoff, 2006).

All students in further and higher education need to develop their employability skills. These skills are frequently specified by employers in the job advertisements they publish to recruit new employees from colleges and universities. At the job recruitment and selection stage, employers pay careful attention to ensure that the young people they recruit are able to communicate well both orally and in writing, work as a member of a group, solve problems, manage projects, handle and manipulate data, and gather information.

The graduates use their qualifications to enrol in jobs, which are often different from their core qualifications and not necessarily applicable to their jobs. Some skills, however, such as the data recovery and analysis skills are required and transferable into different types of employment. Industries and business are moving towards becoming more technology-driven and are continuously changing in response to market needs, and the traditional types of business are gradually disappearing, as is the case in the United Kingdom. The employers search for graduates to run their new jobs without further

training especially in the small and medium enterprises. This proves the need to train students to acquire different skills for their lifetime learning to become transformational leaders for the future. For example, the United Kingdom and the European Commission strongly recognised the importance of personal development through professional training to prepare their citizens for current and future life. The concepts 'lifelong learning' and 'Learning Society' are well considered in the United Kingdom and Europe, taking into consideration the rapid changes in information technology and globalisation, and the need to find solutions for their economic and social problems through education and training their people. The focus of higher education institutions is to feed their societies with well-qualified and skilled graduates who meet the challenges and market requirements of a changing environment. The UK National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (Dearing Commission, 1997) stresses the importance of graduates' skills for them to be able to work professionally within changing working environments. The employers require graduates to have self-reliance, confidence and accountability in their work; at the same time, however, the graduates need to understand that their degree is not a automatic licence to get a job and it is not necessary for them to use their entire degree curriculum during their work, but they can utilise some of their skills during employment. Finally, graduates must prepare themselves for lifelong learning.

Skills Implementation

The universities and colleges worldwide use different approaches to enhance skills development for their students such as encouraging students to lead different activities, applying information technology, using case studies, implementing the national Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) model and supporting lecturers who are responsible for implementing skills programmes. This section will explain the different approaches of a number of universities worldwide, such as the University of Luton, located in southeast England, and its mission to provide skilled graduates to meet the local, national and international requirements. The University recognised the importance of its teaching quality to prepare students with both subject knowledge and transferable skills for their future employment. Students' skills development has become a main priority on the University agenda. The University has extended its links with employers and both have agreed to equip students with knowledge and proper skills to help them in their transition into the real working environment. The University has a detailed plan to

build students` skills gradually and each student is expected to learn different skills during their time with the University.

The senior management of the University decided to insert transferable skills into the curriculum for every student, and the lecturers adjusted their models to ensure students mastered the core skills and were able to handle the necessary information, communicate effectively, solve problems using knowledge and creativity methods, and were capable of working and interacting within groups. The Luton skills initiative has succeeded due to the full support and commitment of senior management of the University and a strong managerial team that assures full participation and commitment of all departments. The Luton graduates have a good record in finding employment because of their broad subject knowledge and their skills abilities.

According to Stephen (2000), Alverno College is a liberal college for women in Mileakee, Wisconsin, in the Midwestern United States, which has set another example of how to equip students with different abilities such as communication, analysis, global perspectives, problem solving, effective citizenship, valuing in a decision-making context, aesthetic responsiveness and social interaction. One major factor of the success of the Alverno College is the commitment of its academic staff to maximise their efforts to maintain the teaching and learning quality as a core responsibility. The continuous efforts from the faculty members to identify the eight abilities through a series of discussions across departments contributed to the success of the strategy of this College. The College applied cross-checked plans to ensure that students acquired these abilities by benchmarking each ability. The Alverno College assesses its students before the start of the classes to check their levels in different skills such as reading, writing, analysis skills, communication and computer skills. The students then commit themselves to develop their skills and monitor their progress after each assessment and feedback. The College also established an Office of Education Research and Evaluation and a Research and Evaluation Council with members from faculty and administrators from different departments to evaluate students` achievements and acquisition of different skills to the required level of satisfaction. The College is continuing its efforts to improve its strategies to provide quality education to its students through working with the students, and cooperating with national schools and international higher education institutions.

Napier University in Scotland has a strong tradition of working closely with the employers to discuss the issue of employability skills. The University took a few years to set up the methods of developing and delivering generic skills, the implementation and evaluation of its toolkit initiative, and the strategy for mapping and enhancement of key skills across all years of the curriculum. It has formed a powerful programme team to incorporate skills into courses that were further developed as a 'Toolkit', shown in table 11.

Table 11: List of Toolkit Skills

Study skills	Communication skills	IT skills	Library information skills	Quantitative skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management • Taking notes • Identifying resources • Group working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling and grammar • Essay writing • Giving presentation • Using the telephone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using PC or MAC • Using a word processor • Using email • Using spreadsheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding information • Using keywords • Finding current information • Searching the World Wide Web • Compiling a bibliography 	<p>Arithmetic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple statistic (averages, percentages) <p>Interpreting graphical data</p>

Source: (Stephen, 2000)

The University delivered the 'Toolkit' programme either as a stand-alone unit or as an embedded one depending on the subject. For example, most of the Faculty of Social Sciences, especially in the area of Information Technology, chooses to have embedding modules due to their link to the subject area rather than developing these skills as stand-alone ones. However, those that prefer to have a stand-alone model desire to ensure students' awareness of these skills. Napier University has reviewed its employability skills strategy by engaging and encouraging its faculty members and creating a broad internal and external network to contribute to the development of this strategy for the improvement and delivery of students' employability skills. The Napier University devised an employability and attributes model (Figure 11) to enhance and motivate an open

dialogue among staff, students and employers to coordinate and develop the curriculum, skills programmes and delivery to improve the quality of students for future generations.



Figure11.Napier University's employability skills and attribute model. Source: (Stephen, 2000)

The University of the South Australia is fully responsive to both the Government and its customers. Quality of its graduates has become an important mission of its strategy. The University of South Australia followed a development strategy to enhance the quality of its graduates through implementing seven graduate qualities that consist of a series of key skills.

The graduates are expected to master the following seven skills to be able to work in a professional way:

- Able to continue their professional development at their workplaces due to preparation for lifelong learning.
- Able to solve problems effectively applying the necessary skills such as logical, critical and creative thinking.
- Able to adjust to any working environment and ready to work alone or with others in a professional manner.
- Able to administer professional communication internally and externally as a member of community.
- Able to work globally and to manage international perspective as a skilled and professional (Stephen, 2000).

The University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom is a traditional university with a strategy to accomplish a high ranking both in research and in teaching and learning. It has achieved excellent results in both the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) assessment of teaching quality. The employability skills development has become an important part of the University teaching and learning strategy. The University built its own project embedding Key Skills, which has become the main requirement of all modules. This project was financed by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). The project aimed to embed key skills within undergraduate and postgraduate courses and to evaluate graduates' skills achievements. All departments participated in feeding the project with their skills requirements and the mechanisms to develop these skills. Table 12 explains the department contributions to specify their problems, and the required key skills.

Table 12: The problems that provided the starting points for key skills development

Department	Initial problem	Key skills
Biological Sciences	Improving written communication skills of year 1 and year 2 students	Communication
Education	Meeting the key skills requirements of the TTA (Teacher Training Agency) for PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) students	Application of numbers Communication Information technology
English Studies	Developing oral presentation and team working skills of year 1 students	Communication Working with others
General Practice	Improving oral communication skills for year 4 medical students in the context of doctor-patient consultations	Communication Improving own learning performance
Mathematical Sciences	Improving oral presentation and team working skills of year 1 and year 3 students	Communication Working with others
Nursing	Improving oral and written communication skills of post-registration nurses	Communication Improving own learning and performance
Physiotherapy	Improving the information technology skills of year 1 students	Information technology Working with others
Social Sciences and Social Policy	Developing greater learner autonomy in Year 1 students	Communication Improving own learning and performance Working with others

Source: (Stephen, 2000)

The experience of the University of Nottingham showed the commitment of all departments to embed key skills into their curricula and student involvement, which moved towards a student-centred style of teaching and learning.

The experience of Middlesex University in the United Kingdom started with the students' experiences by evaluating their current skills and encouraging them to develop different skills to match their personal and academic needs. The University has followed an awareness strategy to inform new students about the employers' new skills requirements. The academic staff members are encouraged to modify and develop their skills models as a strategy to share their commitments and to retain their ownership and control over the courses. Finally, the University of Wollongong in Australia is a good example of having a direct relationship between transferable skills and quality of graduates. The University's mission is to prepare students for lifelong learning and for employment through a skills development strategy. This was achieved by sharing the responsibilities with the stakeholders to select the attributes of the graduates, explaining the attributes in the curriculum, gathering data about students' capabilities to learn these attributes and developing continuous programmes. The University followed the same strategy as the Higher Education Council in Australia to link generic skills with graduate abilities, which exceed the university course requirements.

The graduates' attributes within the University of Wollongong is another example for developing different skills of its students as was clear in its Strategic Plan 1997-2005:

- A commitment to continued and independent learning, intellectual development, critical analysis and creativity.
- A coherent and extensive knowledge in a discipline, appropriate ethical standards and, where appropriate, defined professional skills.
- Self-confidence combined with oral and written skills of a high level.
- A capacity for, and understanding of, teamwork.
- An ability to logically analyse issues, consider different opinions and viewpoints and implement decisions.

- An appreciation and valuing of cultural and intellectual diversity and ability to function in a multi-cultural or global environment.
- A basic understanding of information literacy and specific skills in acquiring, organising and presenting information, particularly through computer-based activity.
- A desire to continually seek improved solutions and to initiate, and participate in, organisational and social change.
- An acknowledgment and acceptance of individual responsibilities and obligations and of the assertion of the rights of the individual and the community) Stephen, 2000(.

The University attributes strategy show the importance of teamwork to develop the required skills integrated with the curriculum and to find the most appropriate teaching methodology to ensure that the graduates are acquiring these attributes. The student learns skills, which in turn makes them more confident in responding to employers' requirements and more able to progress their learning after leaving the University.

The above examples show the importance of enhancing the abilities of students to acquire different types of skills to help them for their life and their future employment. The universities' leadership has a direct relationship with the issue of employability skills within their mission and educational strategy. The university leaders motivate their faculty members and provide the necessary facilities to embed the skills in the subject areas or to teach them separately. There are several factors that contribute to the success of the employability skills in the universities and colleges such as the support and commitment from top management and different departments, the efforts of teamwork, and the contributions and responsibilities of the stakeholders to choose the attributes of the graduates. Employers worldwide are searching for graduates who have lifelong skills and have already developed communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills (Stephen, 2000).

In conclusion, universities and colleges have to equip their graduates with lifelong skills to enable them to compete in the market as the employers are looking for new graduates with skills, knowledge and attitudes. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) introduced an important measure of graduate learning outcomes applying international scale and expected to implement by 2016. The approach was

called Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO), which include four types: general skills (critical thinking, ability to apply theory, data analysis, writing skills, leadership), specific skills, "learning environment (physical and organisational characteristics, student faculty communication, psychosocial attributes, behaviour and attitudinal results) and "value added to the development of individual students. (Liz, 2011).

Indeed, institutional culture and leadership is essential to develop effective systems for the assessment and improvement of graduate outcomes, which requires full cooperation and institutional commitment that motivate faculty and other supporting employees of the academic community. This is supported by Dill (1997) who emphasises the importance of cooperation among faculty and encourages them share experiences and new knowledge to improve teaching skills and student learning. (Dill, 1997)

The above review of the world of higher education and leadership has contributed to extend the knowledge of the researcher and to develop the interview and survey questions for the study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH PHILOSOPHIES AND RESEARCH

Methodology

5.1 RESEARCH AND THEORY

Every society is facing different types of problems in its social, economic and political life environments. We build our knowledge by solving these problems and introducing models through research to provide methods to solve these problems. Research is a structured process to collect and analyse information (data) to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the problem or the situation that captures our interest. The research is not only about collecting information, or shifting facts from one place to another; it requires an interpretation of the data to find solutions of the problems that evoked the research. The research process starts from identifying the research problems and research questions, choosing the theoretical framework and the research design, collecting data and finally analysing the data and presenting findings.

The research process or the research methodology has several important characteristics such as clarifying the research problems, goals, plan to conduct the research, determining research questions or hypotheses, assumptions and methods to collect and analyse data. The final process involves setting of priorities for future research. The methodology of the research determines different methods or combinations of methods to create the research data to answer the research questions (Michael, 2004).

The methodology manages and organises the data and creates coherent relationships in order to reach a logical result that leads to an expansion of knowledge.

In short, research is a systematic process of systematic, methodical and ethical investigations to solve practical situations or problems and generate or enhance knowledge.

Theories explain different observed regularities but vary between middle range and grand theories. Grand theories offer few indications to researchers as to how they might guide or influence the collection of empirical evidence; however, they might have limitations when they are applied to social research.

The middle-range theories are intermediate to general theories of social system which are too remote from particular classes of social behaviour, organization and change to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all ... Middle- range theories, then, fall somewhere between grand theories and empirical finding. They represent attempts to understand and explain a limited aspect of social life...Theory is something that guides and influences the collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2004).

The literature review and accumulated knowledge gathered from different sources and the researcher's experience are essential to build up a theory on a specific subject, but the research may have changed their vision of the literature or theory after analysing the collected data. To examine the relationship between theory and research, let us look at the deductive and inductive approaches.

Deductive and inductive approaches

Deductive and inductive are two main approaches to examine the relationship between theory and social research. The researcher will draw hypotheses based on certain facts and start to collect information to test and judge the findings to confirm or reject the proposed hypotheses.

It is very important to determine the means of collecting data, and their relationships with the facts, which make up the hypothesis (Bryman, 2004).

The deductive approach starts with broad ideas or theories and heads towards a specific one. It is linked with quantitative research. We can conclude that deduction is investigating reasons to reach a conclusion about certain phenomena. The inductive approach, on the other hand, moves from a specific situation to formulate and conclude general ideas or theories. Such theories are generated out of particular examples of observation and experiences. The grounded theory is used to analyse data and to generate theory. The inductive approach is associated with qualitative research.

Figure 12 illustrates the process of deductive and inductive approaches and the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2004).

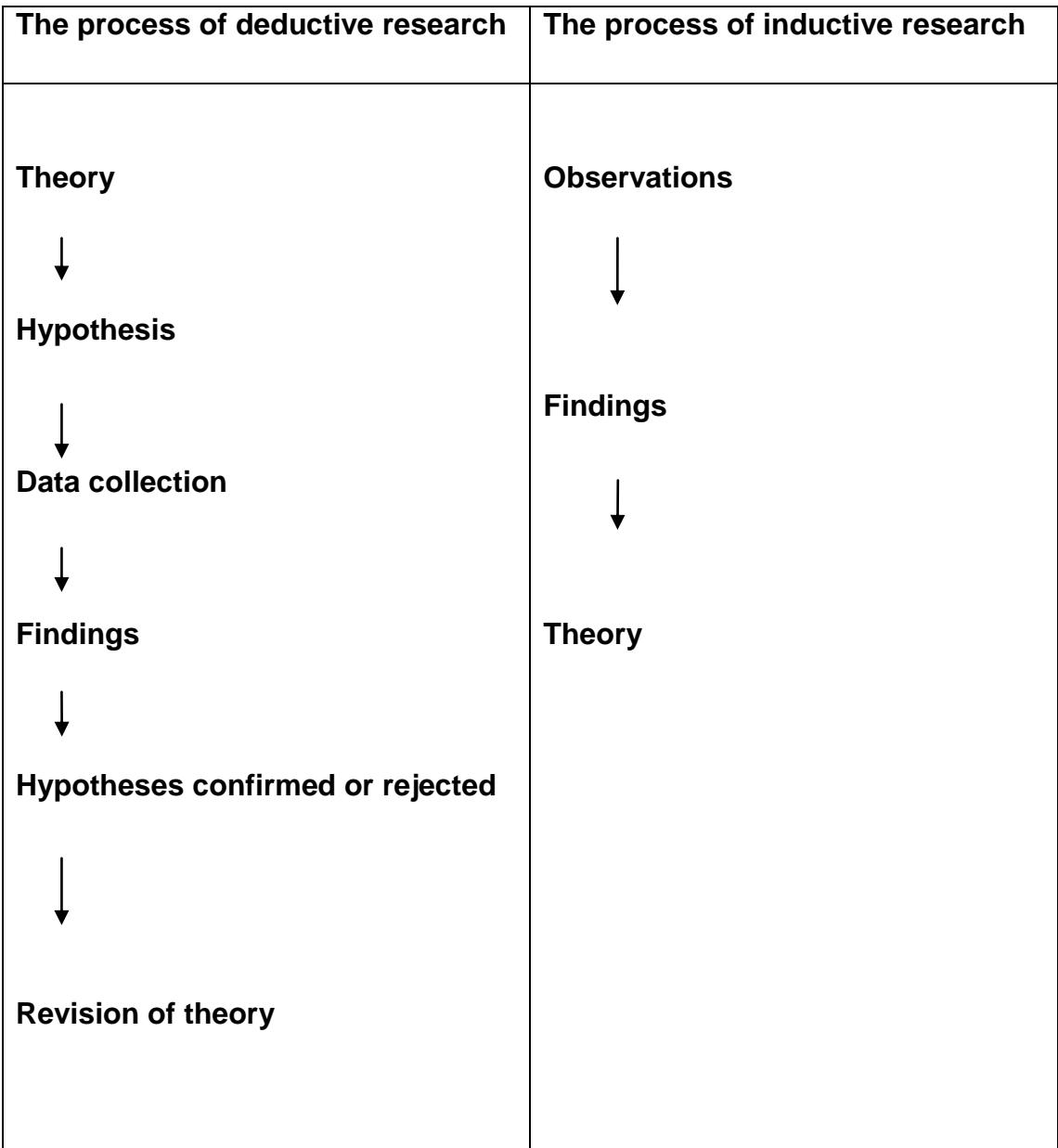


Figure 12. Deductive and inductive approaches

5.2 STORY BEHIND THE RESEARCH TOPIC

This research is intended to use both deductive and inductive approaches. In the former, it is clear that I have a theoretical position prior to collection of data.

Working in academic institutions is different from other public or private organisations. I worked at an academic college handling corporate support and mainly dealing with administration, finance and faculty/student support. The college had good experience of running its activities without a clear and specific strategy. Acting deans from different nationalities managed the college with limited staff allocated to serve almost 1000 students. The dean has very limited financial authority and runs the college through committees, and there were tensions among the members during most meetings. These committees did not make decisions and only issued recommendations to be approved or to be re-discussed based on the chairman's decisions. This process had an impact on the working quality of academic facilities, administrators and students' services. Students, for example, suffer more if the college recruits unqualified lecturers or fails to provide support services to students and staff. The situation at the college raised many questions about the role of the dean, strategies and graduates' skills, which led to investigation of this problem among other private universities and colleges to come up with a leadership model for the higher education institutions in Oman. This might help decision makers of other countries to select qualified candidates for their institutions. This research adopts an inductive approach based on qualitative and exploratory data. The aim of the study is to investigate the role of leadership at three private universities and some colleges and to investigate how they run their activities and strategies, and compare their output in terms of the quality of their graduates.

In summary, the area of research will initially focus on the performance of institutional leadership at the private universities and colleges in relation to their output quality. The information required was collected through conducting interviews with presidents, deans and senior administrators, Questionnaires were distributed to faculties, administrators and students.

Epistemological consideration

Epistemology is defined as "the division of philosophy that investigates the nature of knowledge" (Houghton, 1985). It examines the nature, origin and scope of knowledge. Searching for knowledge has been a major concern of researchers since the era of Plato. The researcher decides the type of epistemology and the methodological approach after settling up the research question and the expected answer. Positivism and quantitative research is the right choice for descriptive and explanatory research questions, whereas social constructivism and qualitative research is suitable to answer interpretive research questions. It is of a more subjective nature compared to the former which is of an objective nature (Michael, 2004) .

Table 13: Epistemological consideration (Positivism and Constructivism)

	A positivist approach	A constructivist approach
What is 'reality'?	A definable 'reality' or 'truth' exists and is observable	There is no 'reality' or 'truth' beyond our experiences
What is the goal of academic enquiry?	Acquisition of the 'truth'	A more informed construction of the world
How are the researcher and the 'researched' related?	The researcher is independent of the 'researched'	The researcher is not independent of the 'researched'
What should be the role for values?	None - objectivity sought	Part of 'reality' - subjectivity celebrated
What kind of approach?	Predominantly based on observability or measurability and with the aim of seeking 'evidence'	Predominantly based on discourse and meaning with the aim of seeking a more informed understanding of the world
What kind of data are preferred?	Predominantly quantitative	Traditionally associated with a predominantly qualitative approach
Examples of such studies in Development Studies	Dollar and Kraay (2002) Growth is Good for the Poor	Narayan et al. (2002) Voices of the Poor

Source: (Michael, 2004)

Research in general reflects the researcher's personal aims, values, interests, abilities and ambitions. This research indeed reflects combinations of the above elements and influences the research approach. The aims of this research are to increase the researcher's familiarity with the performance of institutional leadership towards human resource development in Oman, and to investigate the relationship between the role of the institutional leaders and human resource development. Working in an academic environment for more than nine years has enriched the researcher's experience and ability to carry out of this project.

Social science research can be approached from three main research philosophies (or paradigms): positivism, interpretivism and constructivism, which can overlap, but these theories might be identifiable in any research project (Gephart, 1999, Newman, 2000).

Social science research has been approached differently from different schools of thought. Since paradigms or theories are set of hypotheses, the researcher uses different frameworks to distinguish between the research paradigms (hypothesis) and their research methodologies (Punch, 1998).

Indeed, the research philosophy influences the research methodology or the research process which includes collecting data, sources of data, methods, and data analysis.

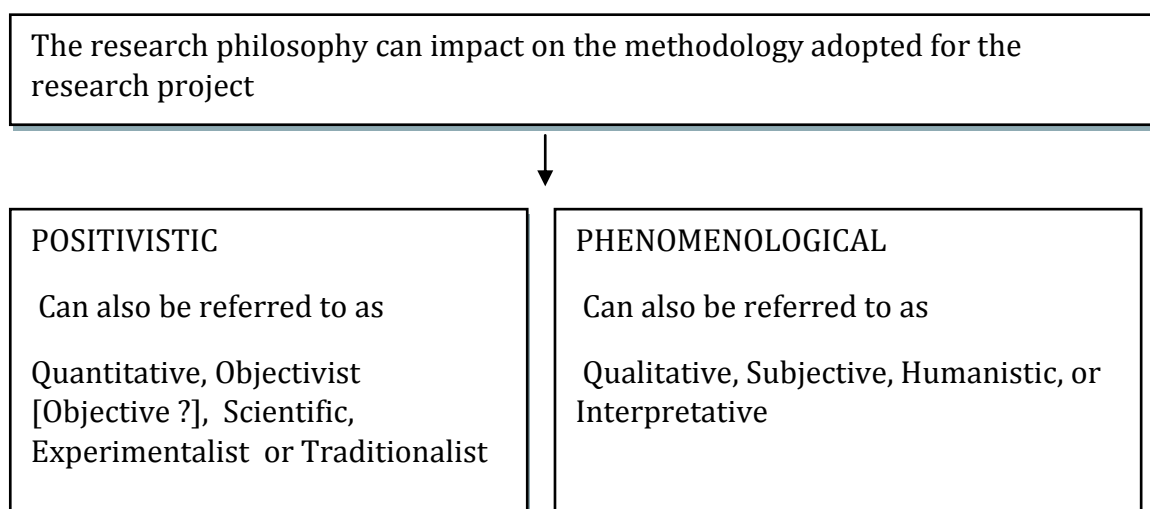


Figure 13. Research Philosophy

The theoretical perspective defines the whole phenomenon and only focuses on a specific area taking into consideration the fundamental assumptions of a certain aspect of that phenomenon to create specific questions about it. The theoretical perspective sets the philosophical ground for logical explanation of the phenomenon to categorise the research (Keane, 2005)

Positivism, interpretivism and critical theory are the main three categories of the theoretical perspective. Positivism is a research philosophy associated with the natural sciences. It is based on research methodologies mainly applied in science. One of the main features of this approach is that the researcher remains detached, unbiased, and objective from the investigated subject. This means that the research searches for facts or causes of any social phenomena in an organised manner. It also appears that this approach looks at the study of human behaviour as it is conducted in the natural sciences.

The positivist approach depends on systematic methodologies to build a relationship between the rational deductive logic and human behaviour to confirm the causes of human activities. This can be done by identifying, evaluating and explaining certain phenomena in order to create fundamental links and relationships between the different variables and align them to a particular theory or practice.

The positivist researchers have an objective view of the world. They believe in objectivity, measurement, and repeatability. They apply quantitative analysis, confirmatory analysis, deduction, laboratory experiments, and nomothetic experiments as their methodology approaches (Fitzgerald, 1998).

The positivist perspective helps the researcher to find and explain causes to support their prediction of certain phenomena and to test their results or theories to reach a precise conclusion based on reliable information.

Interpretivism is a research philosophy associated with the social sciences and the social world which require research principles and different philosophies from those in the natural sciences in order to measure or to understand something. It is an organised analysis of a socially meaningful activity based on direct

observations of people to understand and interpret their actions in their social world. Therefore, this approach is hard to measure as phenomena in the natural sciences because human behaviours are not easy to interpret or to generalise. People explain and interpret events from their own perspectives which are completely different from other interpretations.

Researchers choose their research methods to explain and interpret events from their own subjective points of view. People sometimes influence events and act differently from the normal roles and take action using many variables.

The main features of this approach are that the researcher is part of what is observed linked to the research and may be considered biased and subjective to the investigated subject. Among other assumptions related to this approach, the people who share the same working environment and share similar systems may have similar behaviours and the researchers should interpret their behaviour according to their situations and present their data (Newman, 2000, Collis, 2003).

To summarise, social phenomena are considered highly complex and interpretivists argue that our approach reflects our knowledge and belief of the world we live in

The researchers need to dig deep, not only use basic laws to understand the complexity of social phenomena. Human behaviours and actions require time to observe and interpret in order to develop knowledge and ideas; thus objective observation is impractical in the social world due to the interpretation of meaning by human beings, and only the subjective approach is possible to seek the realities and provide meaningful explanations to the participants. The researcher's participation and close cooperation with the concerned participants is more visible to investigate specific problems and to find solutions.

The interpretivism approach declined the idea that research is value-free where human interest is an important issue to guide the researchers to examine the world and to build their knowledge to reflect their aims and beliefs and investigate the social phenomena as a whole. The interpretivist researchers apply qualitative analysis, exploratory analysis, induction, field experiments, and idiographic

experiments as their methodology. The main aim of the interpretivist is to understand and explain the phenomena by examining individuals' views that are linked to the phenomena (Fitzgerald, 1998).

Several factors lead us to interpretivist research, such as interviews, observations, ethnography and grounded theory (Glaser, 1967).

Table 14: Comparisons between positivism and interpretivism

	Positivism	Interpretivism
Basic principles		
View of the world	The world is external and objective	<i>The world is socially constructed and subjective</i>
Involvement of researcher	Researcher is independent	<i>Researcher is part of what is observed and sometimes even actively collaborates</i>
Researcher's influence	Research is value-free	Research is driven by human interests
Assumptions	-	-
What is observed?	Objective, often quantitative, facts	Subjective interpretations of meanings
How is knowledge developed?	Reducing phenomena to simple elements representing general laws	Taking a broad and total view of phenomena to detect explanations beyond the current knowledge

Source: (Pamela, 2005)

Critical theory

Critical thinking is another form of analysing data that opens up the researcher's mind rather than restricting their analysis to either the positive approach or the interpretive one. This approach challenges questionable assumptions about the phenomena and specifies/identifies contradictory facts, taking into account the views that the social phenomena are associated with our experiences and a single truth is not acceptable to explain the reality of the world. The critical social research is a subjective and qualitative type seeking to understand the meaning of human activities (Crotty, 1998).

Since the relationship between the researchers and research participants is of great importance in acquiring the required data from its origin, the goal of critical theory is to examine such a relationship and build cooperation between the two. The theory also investigates the influence of the authorised people over resources.

Indeed, such cooperation between researcher and participants builds up their own new reality of the social world. According to this theory the social actors are the initiators of phenomena and their meanings (Cohen et al., 2000, Newman, 2000, Gephart, 1999, Bryman, 2004).

5.3 RESEARCH STRATEGIES

There are different methods available to the researchers such as laboratory studies which are characterised as highly controlled as opposed to other types such as observation studies which are hard to handle. On the other hand, experimental and case studies fall in between the two types. The degree of control depends on the research methods. Quantitative research is characterised as highly controlled and the researcher is confident about the methods and the results. This type of research tends to imply a high degree of internal validity and low external validity, whereas qualitative research is less controlled and characterised by lower validity internally and higher validity externally. No one research method is better than the others; rather it depends on the researcher's

choice of the most appropriate one by examining in depth the nature of the study, the availability of resources, previous research and personal prejudices.

Quantitative research

The researchers use quantitative research to measure variables to assess or compute the situation under analysis. The researchers normally choose a sample from the population of interest and correlate statistical measures in order to test their hypothesis and accept or reject the theories. Some other ways to test a hypothesis might be through experimental studies. Some researchers use survey techniques by applying different types of questionnaires or attitude measures. Health research studies are good examples to measure the association between variables; or to look at simple linear relationships as correlations, or for using multiple regression techniques to examine the complex interrelationships between several factors related to a specific subject.

To summarise, the quantitative methods assist the researchers to understand the phenomena to enable them to forecast the real world and to use specific techniques to measure such phenomena, taking into account a certain degree of control of data.

Quantitative research relies on the deductive approach to determine the relationship between theory and research by testing theories. These types represent social reality as external and objective because it integrates the practices and norms of the natural scientific model of positivism.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research is the interpretive approach to explain, understand and interpret the social world. This can be achieved by understanding the social meaning and interpretations of the social world. The qualitative research study generates its data in a flexible and sensitive manner through meeting people at their real practical work environment, and uses a detailed analysis to conclude the results. The researchers put their efforts into understanding behaviour rather than seeking answers for specific questions or hypotheses to examine.

Qualitative research mainly examines social phenomena through the meaning or the definition which means that the qualitative data such as words, sentences and narratives are the bases of qualitative studies (Pamela, 2005).

The researcher's preference for doing either quantitative or qualitative study is based more on their own capabilities and experiences than on a broad idea of the most practical one. The researcher normally cannot determine in advance the type of study they are going to use to search social sciences areas such as management studies, sociology, psychology and other subjects (Bryman, 2004).

Qualitative research does not test hypotheses and the researchers collect their data following academic structure; then analyse and interpret these data to find an answer to the research questions. Individual experiences and responses of the research participants are essential to enrich the researchers' 'understanding of the social phenomena'. Therefore the researchers themselves are deeply involved in collecting the information and trying hard to build good relationships with the participants. The main goals of the researchers are to collect and record as much detailed data as possible. There are many tools to collect qualitative data which include keeping notes, using technology (audio, video), focus groups, and so on. In general, qualitative research is considered as a research strategy that places more emphasis on words, and the ways in which individuals interpret their social world rather than quantification to collect and analyse data, while rejecting the way and the norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism. However, it emphasises an inductive approach to investigate the relationship between theory and research in order to generate theories (Bryman, 2004).

The qualitative research methods are difficult and require several methodologies and research practices because this approach covers a huge diversity of data. There are various positions which need more than one dimension with respect to paradigms. The paradigms most commonly chosen within qualitative research are positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism (Punch, 1998).

Mixed methods

The combination of methodologies is normally used when the researchers decide to use more than one method to collect two or more sets of data as required to back up the research questions or to investigate certain phenomena. The research questions and context guide the researchers' decision to use either qualitative or quantitative approaches, or both (Bryman, 1998).

The researchers may prefer to use a combination of methods to come up with better answers for the research questions (Punch, 1998). In addition, the combining of qualitative and quantitative methodology does occur since qualitative and quantitative approaches are not forever rooted in their different epistemological positions (Bryman, 1992).

There are different types of mixed research approaches which result when the researchers integrated both interpretivism and positivism methods. These styles are known as "methodological complementarism" (Yolles, 1998,P.527), "multiple research strategies" (Brannen, 1992, P.11) and "triangulation" (Denzin, 1970, p.310). According to Denzin (1970) the triangulation style uses different methods in the same study, and includes the use of multiple theories to assure quality control. The combination of methodologies assists the researchers to differentiate between paradigms and their related methodologies and link them together in "a complementary way for certain phenomena" (Yolles, 1998,P.527).

As indicated by Brannen (2005), the researchers use a multi-method strategy in one or more phases of the research development of different stages as in the research design, data collection, and interpretation and contextualisation of data

5.4 CHOICE OF RESEARCH METHODS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

In this section, I will explain the contextual aspects of the study and clarify the rationale for using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The section outlines the area of research, the objectives, the reasons for the use of multiple research strategies and the research questions.

My area of research initially will focus on the performance of the presidents and deans of some private universities and colleges and their contribution towards the provision of quality education and skills to students in Oman. The research will explain the Government policies and strategies towards higher education and human development in Oman. Then, a closer look will be taken at the role of institutional leadership to provide the best needed programmes; to recruit excellent lecturers and administrators; to provide an excellent educational environment, and to link universities' and colleges' missions with the public needs to end up with skilled educated graduates.

The research will also analyse the academic and the administrative performance of the leaders taking into account the views of staff, faculties, students and the public. The management performance indicators, quality management and characteristics of good leaders will be included in the research analysis. The research is intended to link the international standard of academic leadership and the leadership performance of the selected private institutions. Finally, the researcher is aiming to introduce a leadership model suitable for higher education institutions in Oman, and to make some recommendations and suggestions to improve institutional leadership quality and the output of universities and colleges.

In order to achieve the above objectives, a combination of methods is used and the study will be divided into both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The use of both approaches will enrich this study. The literature review and experiences in the field of management in the higher education sector helped me to develop the survey questions; therefore, the qualitative method will open up other ideas and will give me confidence in the findings, not just limited by the items determined by me in the literature study. The qualitative data are collected and interpreted. The researcher has used structured or semi-structured interviews. The purpose of using quantitative methods in this study is to reach more participants in and outside private higher education institutions in order to establish a link between the factors identified in the literature review and from personal experiences and the data analysis output. The expected methods to achieve the above purpose include an in-depth literature review, the survey results and documentary reports of the private institutions. Therefore an intensive

field study was conducted at six different private universities and colleges, and with interested parties such as the Government authorities, the media and the public, to collect data and explain observations.

The qualitative method assisted the researcher to achieve different objectives, such as to understand Government policy towards higher education in Oman, the Government and the private sector selection policies and procedures adopted to recruit institutional leaders (presidents of universities or deans of colleges) and the role of institutional leadership towards human resource development.

The qualitative approach of this study was achieved through conducting semi-structured interviews with different officials at the Government agencies, private universities and colleges, and the private sector. The interviewees include the Director General of the private universities and colleges at the Ministry of Higher Education, human resource managers of some private firms, the presidents and deans of private universities and colleges and a few parents and graduates.

The researcher collected data from interviews, from questionnaires distributed to students and staff of the selected private universities and colleges, and from official documents.

The researcher is aiming to find out the government policies and procedures involved in recruiting institutional leaders in the private sector (presidents of universities or deans of colleges), the performance of the presidents and deans of private universities and colleges and their contribution towards human resource development in Oman. The analysis of such information will inform the researcher in the introduction and design of a leadership model to run private institutions in Oman. In addition, the researcher will make some recommendations and suggestions to improve institutional leadership quality and to improve the output of universities and colleges in Oman.

The researcher faced some difficulties in accessing some government documents, and employees' fears about releasing certain valuable information. NVIVO 8 and the Statistical Data system were used to analyse the data by applying a coding system.

Major research questions:

- To what extent does the Sultanate of Oman have well qualified and effective academic leaders at its private higher education institutions and do they truly contribute towards wider human resource development for the country?
- To what extent is the role of presidents and deans in private universities and colleges in Oman managerial and responsive rather than strategic and initiatory?
- How is the academic and administrative performance of presidents and deans measured, and by whom?
- What is the strategy/recommendation to improve academic leadership in Oman and how might this be improved in a way that is both desirable and feasible?

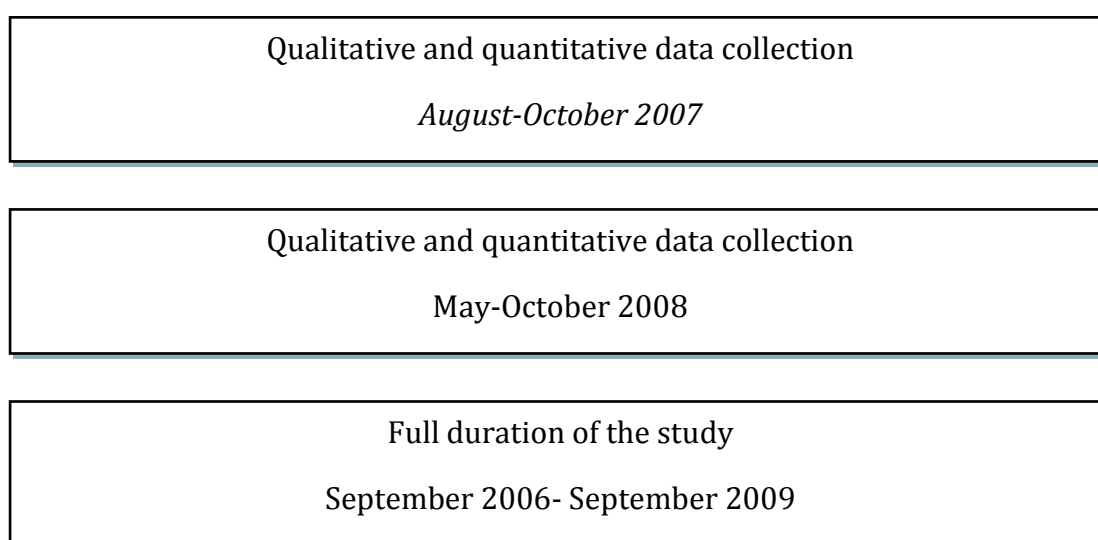
Specific Questions:

- How do private higher educational institutions recruit their presidents and deans? Who sets the recruitment criteria?
- How do the private higher education institutions evaluate the performance of their presidents and deans?
- What kinds of relationship exist between presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges and the public and private sector employers, parents and graduates?
- Do private universities/colleges have quality assurance departments/sections or teams to maintain the quality of teaching and research and skills development within their institutions?
- Are the leaders of universities/colleges isolated from the public and the markets?
- What are the characteristics of leadership and management exercised by the presidents and deans in the private institutions?
- How do the presidents and deans maintain financial stability in their private universities and colleges?

CHAPTER 6

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND LEADERSHIP MODEL

This chapter describes the practical actions taken during the fieldwork. The research plan, data collection and data analysis took three years starting in September 2006 and ending in September 2009. Figure 1 below illustrates the study's timeline plan.



The study began with both the qualitative and quantitative phases due to full cooperation from the three private universities and three private colleges. Data interpretation and analysis took place during the data collection of both times periods and writing up the chapters of this thesis was done throughout the study after analysing the results.

A- Qualitative Data

The main objective of the qualitative data was to understand the type of leaders at the selected universities and colleges and the strategies they employed to manage their academic and administration activities at their higher education institutions. I wanted also to highlight their output in terms of real contributions to feed both the public and private sectors with well-qualified and skilled graduates.

The other objectives of the qualitative data generated from inside the selected institutions are summarised in the following points:

- To understand the visions and missions of the selected private universities and colleges and how they set up and implement their strategies to run their current academic and administrative activities and what their plans are.
- To be able to know the current and the future status of planning at the selected universities and colleges and to what extent the staff participate in setting up these plans.
- To understand the structures of the private universities and colleges and the communication strategies between the management and the staff.
- To look at the role of committees at these institutions and the centralised and decentralised roles of the presidents and deans.
- To examine the relationship between the boards, council members and the presidents and deans in terms of power and authority.
- To understand the strategy employed by the universities and colleges to maintain the quality of their programmes to meet the requirements of the development projects of their communities.
- To see the link between the universities' and colleges' visions and their industrial relationships.
- To understand the universities' and colleges' policies, management system and motivation to encourage their faculty members to build mutual relationship with external sectors in the societies.
- To look at the universities' and colleges' policies towards teaching and conducting research at the same time, the link between teaching load and research and quality, and to find out how their leaders deal with the lecturers' problems concerning teaching loads. To also understand the

universities' recruitment policies and their strategies to retain good lecturers, especially Omani lecturers.

- To examine the universities' and colleges' concerns about government policies and procedures and to check if the private universities prefer to have their complete independence without Government intervention. Also to determine what the private universities want from the government.
- To look at the financial strategies of the selected private universities and colleges.
- Finally, to see if the leaders are concerned about the cultural issues at their institutions, and how they deal with them.

The objective of the quantitative survey was to get feedback from the academic members, administrators and students about their universities' and colleges' management and leadership.

I conducted a survey among faculty members, administrators and students of the selected universities and colleges for the following reasons:

- To see if the faculty members are aware of and participate in setting up the visions and missions and strategic plans of their universities and colleges.
- To examine the university students' motivation policy, the relationship between lecturers and management and to see if the university's policy encourages its employees to work as one team to achieve the objectives.
- To check the availability of the educational tools, library services and students' services, and the lecturers' initiatives to develop their own curriculum, the types of additional skills the lecturers are teaching students, and students' motivation strategies.
- To check if the lecturers were happy about the motivation policy of their universities and colleges.

- To understand the work relationship between the academic members and the administrators, faculty external relationship and the faculty perception towards changes.
- To seek students' views about their relationship with the lecturers, quality of teaching, students' services and student records.
- To look at the efficiency of the finance departments.
- To understand the information technology and administrative support at these institutions.
- To seek staff feedback about universities' and colleges' management, working environment, and the importance of social activities.

The other objectives of the qualitative data generated from outside the selected institutions through interviews with the director general of the private Universities and Colleges, human resource managers of some public Ministries and few graduates are summarised in the following points:

- 1- Director General of the private universities and colleges at the Ministry of Higher Education
 - To understand the recruitment criteria set by the Ministry of Higher Education in order to approve the appointments of presidents, deans and lecturers at the private higher education institutions.
 - To look at the roles of academic leaders at private universities and colleges from the point of view of the Ministry of Higher Education and to seek their views on the qualifications and experience of academic leaders and their contribution towards human resource development.
 - To become familiarised with the process of evaluation of the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education.

- To check if the Ministry of Higher Education interferes in the recruitment process of the private institutions to recruit Omanis to the top positions.
- To seek advice about future leaders for the private universities and colleges as required by the Ministry of Higher Education.

2. Human Resource Managers at the public Ministries

- To get answers from human resource managers about the level of quality of the graduates in their field, and level of common knowledge.
- To check the types of the graduate skills and match them with the skills required in the workplace.
- To understand the graduates' behaviours in the workplace.

3. Graduates at the public Ministries

- To understand graduates' levels of satisfaction in their workplace, and how they apply their knowledge and skills in their jobs.
- To understand the relationship between the university and college management, and the public and the private sectors.
- To check the graduates' opinions on quality at their universities and colleges.
- To understand graduates' perspectives on the administration of universities and colleges in the future.

6.1 DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRE

The qualitative stage of the study was divided into two parts. The first part started during August-October 2007 and focused on interviewing three presidents of the selected private universities and three deans from the private colleges. The second part took place during May-October 2008 and interviews were conducted with human resource management of some public Ministries involved directly with recruitment and training, and with a few graduates from the selected institutions.

The University of Southampton provided me with formal letters addressed to the presidents and the deans of the private universities and private colleges and signed by my supervisor, explaining the purpose of the research and requesting that they granted me the interviews.

The University of Southampton also provided me with a letter addressed to the Ministry of Higher Education to facilitate my interviews. Therefore, the interviews went very smoothly with full cooperation from the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges (See appendix 1).

At each interview, I explained my research objectives and the purpose of the interview and requested permission to use the verified data for my PhD thesis. I informed the interviewees that the data would be analysed qualitatively and they kindly agreed to share their own experiences on management and leadership. I did not audiotape the interviews due to cultural reasons, but I took notes during the interviews. The responses from the presidents and the deans were very satisfactory, which indicated that the interviewees trusted me with their data.

I used open-ended questions throughout the interviews to give more opportunities to the interviewees to present their ideas and experiences to avoid directive conclusions. Interviewees were focused on their experiences and what was related to their management and leadership at their institutions.

The questions that were raised with the presidents and dean during the interviews were to answer the research questions.

The remarks of the presidents of the selected private institutions confirmed that they have similar structures with minor differences with regard to the financial authority of the universities' presidents.

Institutional Structure

Private Universities

The president of private university A explained that the board of trustees appoints the president of the university. The assistant presidents for administration and academic affairs are appointed based on the president's recommendations to handle the administration affairs, academic affairs and learning and quality. He added that the university works as one team aiming to provide quality education to Omani students. The relationship between the presidents of these universities and their board council seems very positive. The board of university A always supports the university management and there is a good relationship between the two as long as there are transparency and clear objectives, as explained through the interview with the president.

University B works through a vertical structure consisting of a president, and two assistants - one to handle the academic affairs, and the other to run students' affairs. Each dean runs their college affairs and takes decisions according to the staff regulations. The council of the university consist of deans of different colleges, director of the library, director of information systems and seven lecturers from the Government university which known as Sultan Qaboos University (SQU). The university president has the academic and financial authority to run the university and present annual reports to the board of trustees about the university activities.

University C also has a vertical structure that starts with the university president, and two assistants to run the academic affairs and students' affairs. Each dean is fully responsible for running the college affairs and takes decisions based on written authority and academic job descriptions. The board of trustees is the highest decision maker and both the president and the shareholders are members of the board. The university is financially supported by an external company,

which has its own council and will continue to offer support for a few years until the university is able to finance itself. The university policy and university curriculum are discussed first at the college level, then get approval from the board of trustees. The president has limited authority and limited freedom. The president proposes the annual budget and discusses this with the council and the board of trustees to get it approved. The university operations are audited internally and externally; in addition, there is a legal consultant.

Universities B and C do not have a horizontal structure, which creates more flexibility and eases cross-board communication; such a structure is more preferable to having independent departments.

Private Colleges

The three private colleges have different structures that depend on their councils' strategies. The colleges' structures fall in between the horizontal and vertical ones. The dean of the private college A said that the chairman of the college supervises the college's activities directly especially the financial side and the external relationships. However, the dean is handling all the academic and administrative affairs at the college, but without financial responsibilities. He added that the financial power of the council members exceeds the dean's authority. The dean of college B said that the system in the college is an upside-down system and the structure in his opinion reflects the structure in the society that forms such a system. In this college the dean has no authority and uses his personality to influence/motivate the employees to run the academic and administrative activities. The college's system, as he explained, is influenced by the shareholders who control the operations of different activities. The dean has limited financial authority; whereas a member of the shareholders has more authority than the deans.

The dean of college C prefers a horizontal structure to a vertical one. The senior staff of this college consists of the dean, assistant dean and managing director. The dean runs the college's activities through teams such as a senior managing team, an academic managing team and a programme managing team. The dean manages to get the funding resources from the council of this college.

The colleges' structures and the strategic plans are not very clear despite the structure charts of these colleges. The deans of the selected private colleges have no financial authority and either the president of the college or the council member can exercise the financial power to make financial decisions. Therefore, the deans of these colleges are facing difficulties in running the activities of their colleges and have lost control especially in the administration and financial side of activities. The councils of the selected private colleges need to restructure their colleges and to authorise their deans to run their colleges efficiently without direct intervention from the council members.

The relationship between the council of the three selected private colleges and their dean is more or less moving in the same direction. The dean of college A stated that the college management had faced problems in the past due to the interference of a member of the council in the operations and even in the academic activities of the college. The dean prefers not to have ultimate financial power, and prefers only to handle the academic affairs of the college independently without council involvement. The dean of college B is facing problems from the members of the college's council and college's administration. The dean does not have financial authority and his role is limited to having an influence on the employees based on his personality and his style of management. College C does not have a council and the owner is the president of the college. There is a good relationship between the president of the college and the dean, who is mainly involved in the academic side of the college. The dean said that the interference of the council members of the private colleges is the main problem facing these institutions today. The three private universities have their own plans, which cannot be considered as complete strategic plans, which were implemented completely internally in these universities.

Plans and Strategies

Private Universities

The three private universities have built in short-term plans to run their academic and administration activities.

The president of university A explained that the university prepared its plans with the participation of the faculty members and administrators, taking into consideration the local market needs, Omani laws, Ministry of Higher Education policy and regulations, and religious principles and traditions. The strategic plan was drawn up and reviewed internally first, then it was approved by the affiliated international partner. The university management also consulted the affiliated international universities for any changes or amendments to the plan. University A has no complete strategic plan, but there is an agreement on some plans.

The president of university B, however, mentioned that they had a complete plan which was reviewed by one of the affiliated partners, and the university has since implemented this plan. The university formed a committee that consists of the General Secretary of the Board of Trustees, deans of the colleges and the international consultant to review this plan in detail; there is also continuous follow-up from the president of the university.

The president of university C stated that they have a complete plan which was reviewed by its international partner and the university has been implementing such a plan since it was established. In addition, the university regularly reviewed its plan through a working committee that consists of the General Secretary of the Board of Trustees, deans of the colleges and the international consultant with continuous follow-up by the president of the university himself. University C and its international partner collaborate to prepare, review, and amend the university's strategic plan. First, the university prepares its plans with participation from the faculty members and administrators taking into consideration the local market need Omani laws, Ministry of Higher Education policy and regulations, and religious principles and traditions. I concluded that the above private universities have their own plans with the full cooperation of their international partners; however University C seems to have a proper system to draw its plan and to involve the related departments.

Private Colleges

The situations in the three private colleges are different because they either have limited business plans, or no plans at all. The dean of college A stated that there

is no written strategic plan, but he stated that he always kept several plans hidden in his head. He gave an example of his new buildings. He added that the college has an auditing procedure approved by the Accrediting Council at the Ministry of Higher Education; in addition, the college has its own business plans to measure its performance.

The dean of college B mentioned that the college has a five-year plan, which includes a corporate strategic plan, a market plan and a quality strategy. The dean of the college said that there is no strategic plan. The academic committee at the college makes recommendations and suggests a future strategic plan, but the decision makers prefer to follow their own ideas, which they do not discuss clearly with the dean or the college committees.

College C does not have a strategic plan on the international standard. However, the academic committee at the college makes recommendations for its future strategic plan. The dean explained clearly that the decision makers of the college prefer to follow their own ideas that they do not discuss clearly with the dean or the college committees.

I concluded that the three private universities have their own plans with complete academic guidance from their international partners, but they still have not developed their own independent plans. The three private colleges have their own business plans rather than academic plans and they need to work further to make proper strategic plan with full engagement of their academic and administration staff.

These institutions do not have enough experience and need time to build their own academic and research activities. The three colleges need to restructure their own plans and to be more independent from their councils. The private universities agreed in general upon the importance of different committees, especially the academic committees, to discuss and share the development of the academic performance at the universities. Each private university has its own type of committees and responsibility.

Academic Committees

Private Universities

The president of university A mentioned that it is important to have the academic committees in the universities to ensure the participation of the faculty members and to share their experience to develop the academic performance. He added that the university is planning to have a special unit for quality and its members will be selected from among the faculty members. The academic affairs of the university have been audited by the external auditor to ensure quality with regard to administration and finance.

University B has several councils across its colleges and each college has its own council that consists of a representative from each section. The executive council consists of the dean of colleges who are authorised to take decisions except with regard to introducing new programmes which must be approved by the University Academic Council. The president of university C explained the importance of having committees at universities, stating that there is a committee at each college that deals with academic affairs, administration, curriculum, admission and students' services. The dean has the authority to take decisions based on university regulations but not to introduce new programmes or modify the current programmes if required by different sectors in the society. The three private universities have well organised committees and their academic members are sharing their ideas and participating at different academic and administrative activities.

Private Colleges

The three private colleges have different views about forming committees at their institutions. The dean of college A clearly stated that the college has an academic board to discuss different issues and to make decisions. The college has two committees: one is the purchasing committee and the other is a marketing committee. However, the dean expressed his opinion that having more committees would be time consuming, especially if the committees cannot take decisions; whereas the dean of college B preferred to have an academic board

rather than committees. College B has an academic board that consists of the dean, assistant dean and head of sections to discuss different academic and administrative issues and raise recommendations to the chairman of the college to make decisions. The staff of the private colleges is limited compared to those in American or European universities; therefore, the same members attend different committees. Such committees' members are not specialised in their subjects. The dean indicated that the college has a plan to form the College Council with members from faculty members and heads of administrative sections to discuss and write a policy for the college.

College C has different views about committees. The dean appeared unhappy about the topic, saying that although there are a number of committees in the college, their members are facing problems because they are not used to such a system. The exception is the quality assurance committee which was activated due to a request from the Ministry of Higher Education. He added that the committees can function well in Oman if there is a full understanding among their members and availability of information; also the leader of higher educational institutions must be active and represent a model for them to follow.

The perception at the college level is different due to its limited number of staff; the fact that most of them are not used to such a system, and the direct involvement of the members of the council of these colleges. I agree with the deans and their opinions with regard to the situation and the structure of the committees at their colleges, but it would be better if the deans are given more authority to form small groups to deal with the different activities within their colleges. Both faculty members and administrative staff need to be more coherent and work together to develop the performance of their colleges.

Quality and Skills of the Graduates

Private Universities and Colleges

The quality of graduates and their skills are very important factors in finding suitable jobs to attract many students to join the private higher education institutions. I raised this subject when I interviewed the presidents and deans of

the private universities and colleges. The presidents and deans agreed on the importance of producing quality graduates and the need to offer them the best programmes and training to their students. The private universities and colleges are facing difficulties with the type of students enrolled in their institutions due to their low level in the English language and general knowledge. They strongly disagree with the students' distribution system among universities and colleges. Qaboos University and other public government colleges admit students with good marks at their national diploma high schools; however, the weak students are pushed to join the private universities, and colleges absorb the students, with good high school grades. The weak students need several preparation programmes and normally they stay at least two years to complete the foundation programme.

Quality, skills and experience are important issues concerning parents and employers within both the public and the private sectors. I raised this matter during my interviews with the presidents and deans of the private higher education institutions and the responses were as follows.

The president of university A said that the students who gain their diplomas have acceptable skills but not at the level required by the university or the public and private sector. He added that the university's vision is to create a new generation of graduates who have ethical and leadership skills and this can be done if the university manages to recruit and select excellent faculty members and to train them to develop quality education and learning, job behaviour and respect for the ethical and religious principles. This answer indicates the commitment of the president to produce quality graduates to feed different sectors of the society. On the other hand, university B placed more emphasis on the importance of student training which was considered compulsory at the University for Jobs such as nursing, teaching and business. The university has an assistant dean to coordinate with the private sector to train the students.

The president of university B was specific in his answer and he stated that the university philosophy depends on integrated training where the students of engineering and nursing undertake the minimum skill development. The students

of other specialisations undertake the general requirements which include skills development (including writing skills).

The president of university C explained that each subject has its specific syllabus, which includes the course objectives and the expected outcome, and the system of observation and evaluation carried out by the faculty members.

The answers from the presidents of universities B and C indicated similar views about graduates' skills and the criteria used to measure students' abilities to handle these skills, especially in the workplace; whereas the employers and the graduates gave different responses to the views expressed above.

The deans of the private colleges cannot confirm the level of the graduate skills due to the lack of the feedback about graduates' performance in the workplace and the inadequate evaluation techniques used to measure and evaluate the skills of the graduates. The deans expressed their opinion about the difficulties they face in ensuring the skills levels of the graduates because the students build their skills during their academic studies. The dean of college B mentioned that their own quality assurance process ensures that the students acquired the required skills for future employment. The college builds students' skills through three stages: first, students start learning some skills during the foundation programme; second, through communication, which is one of the key priorities at the college, and third, students learn computer and business skills as specialised courses.

The dean of college C mentioned that the college graduates have the right skills but that there is room for improvement and a need to better understand the market needs. It seems that both the universities and the colleges are trying to feed the public and the private sector with qualified and skilled graduates, but they need more cooperation from both sectors to adapt the best and most required programmes for their students.

The only way to assure the level of different skills is to assess professionally the graduates' skills. This requires a good evaluation system and well-trained faculty members at the private institutions.

Relationship with the Private Sector

Private Universities

The president of university A stated that the university always communicates with the private sector and business firms which also encourage the university to undertake research with those in the private sector. He added that the response from the private sector is positive about developing courses for the requirements of the Omani market. There are mutual benefits from the cooperation between the university and the private sector, which includes consultancy contracts to undertake research for companies and factories, and cooperation to recruit graduates of the university into different sectors of the economy.

University B has a special centre for research services and human resource development. Students are required to attend during their academic studies, especially those who are seeking degrees in nursing, teaching and business studies. The university has an assistant dean to coordinate with the private sector to train the students. The university also has business relations with the Government sector, specifically the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education, to carry out joint work in nursery, pharmacy and education.

The president of university C stated that they have direct communication with the business people and companies to keep on networking to provide training programmes for both the public and the private sectors. The university encourages its faculties to build relations with society, to provide the university's services, and to seek feedback about university performance and its graduates.

The universities already have such relationships and encourage their faculty members to built external relationships through their management, based on the agreement with the Ministry of Health to use their facilities, and the universities will provide services in return. The presidents admitted that there is no written policy set by these universities, specifically for their faculty members' external relationships and contracting directly with different sectors to conduct research or short courses, but that the faculty members seek permission from their management, and such efforts will take into account their annual evaluation.

The universities encourage their faculty members to build external relationships with different sectors in society as long as the faculty member obtains prior approval from the management and as long as such activities will not affect the core responsibilities of the lecturers.

Private Colleges

The selected private colleges have a reasonable relationship with the private sector. The dean of college A explained that there has been cooperation with the private sector to undertake its five-year review of its programmes. The dean believes in the importance of strengthening the relationship with the private sector; he feels the employers are much more open and accessible but that they need to understand more about the importance of higher education. The dean was not happy about the responses from the private sector concerning feedback on the graduate performance. He was also not happy with the level of cooperation with the private companies due to their resistance to give feedback about the performance of the college graduates, and the fact that the companies do not have a proper system in place to evaluate the employees. The college is experiencing difficulties in following up the graduates' work performance because of the lack of communication between the college and the private sector.

The dean of college B said the college is building its relationships with both the public and the private sectors through its marketing unit to advertise its programmes and its plan to follow up the performance of its graduates. However, the dean shares the same concerns as the dean of college A about getting weak responses from the public and the private sectors. He added that the private sector is still small in Oman. All private universities and colleges contact the same limited numbers of big companies and banks for almost similar requirements. The college has no research contracts with the private or the public sectors.

The dean of college C suggested forming committees between the college and the private sector to help build relationships between the two. This will facilitate different mutual concerns especially cooperation in getting information about the college graduates and their performance at work. The deans of the private colleges encourage their faculty members to undertake consultancy and

networking as long as their management is aware of such external activities. The colleges also provide short courses from time to time to market their activities and generate additional income.

Research and Development

The private universities and colleges have limited research contracts and provide short courses to banks and some companies. The universities do not have the information about their graduates' performance and their skills level. There is a need for Government policy to extend the cooperation between higher education institutions and the private sector. The selected universities and colleges are willing to strengthen their relationship with the private sector, to encourage their faculty members to conduct research and to design training programmes. The universities and colleges have the research facilities and qualified faculty members. Both the private universities and colleges will benefit from such relationships. The three private universities and the three private colleges have tried to strengthen their relationship with the public and the private sectors and strongly agree over encouraging their faculty members, especially the specialised ones, to build external relations with different sectors of society. Their external relationships will influence the success and reputation of the universities locally, regionally and even internationally, and both the university and the society will mutually benefit from such cooperation.

Social Activities

Private Universities and Colleges

The selected private universities and colleges extend their relationship with their societies through different social activities. For examples, university A organises different lectures at public schools, organises an annual dinner during Ramadan, participates in the annual National Day, and supports top students at high schools annually. The university is intending to introduce a fellowship and scholarship programme in the future. The president explains that all the university members are working as a team towards university development and community services. He specifically praises the faculty members as the main part of the university, and

their contributions and participation are taken into account during their annual evaluation.

University B has its own educational community programme to provide basic education to society, and another programme to qualify volunteers who teach at special needs schools. The university also organises and participates at different sports activities, exhibitions, and seminars.

The deans of the private colleges organise and participate in different social activities, but not at the same level as the private universities. The private colleges still face difficulties in building their relationships with different sectors of society; for example, there is no direct communication with students' parents, which he believes is essential, as expressed during the interviews.

The dean of college A explained that the families are not appreciating the importance of higher education and the college has tried to help parents who are interested to send their children to study abroad for further education.

The selected private colleges still need to develop their strategies to build their relationships with the private and the public sectors and to expand their social activities. One way is to introduce some programmes to train the public to run their activities more effectively.

Teaching and Research

Universities

The interviews with the presidents and deans of the selected private higher education institutions included a few questions to seek their views and understand their policies concerning teaching and conducting research at the same time, and to establish the link between teaching load and research, and quality.

The main concern of the research point was to find out how the universities' and colleges' management deal with the lecturers' problems concerning their teaching loads.

The presidents replied that the faculty members are always looking for the minimum teaching load. The universities at present are concentrating on teaching, which is the first priority, but the management is encouraging its faculty members to undertake research in order to progress in their careers. There are several requirements to helping the researchers, such as creating a good environment, availability of tools and communication facilities, and cooperation of the faculty members. The private universities might not have all these requirements at present, but the management assists the faculty members to participate in conferences either locally or internationally, especially if they present a paper. The research environment is very important in any educational institution and the faculty members *are* willing to conduct research besides their teaching load. However, the private universities are still too young to have developed a research environment/culture, and they focus more on teaching and learning.

The private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman are running franchise programmes in general. They provide facilities such as buildings, students' services and teaching faculties, but the curricula are still offered by their international partners. The private university A does not have its own programmes or curricula. It runs franchise programmes of other international higher education institutions. The president of the university stated during the interview that he believes in the university having its own curricula based on the market needs and it is moving in this direction, which he admitted has taken some time. The president of university B does not believe in running other international programmes or franchise programmes, but he believes in extending professional and academic cooperation in the near future. He gave examples of such cooperation, such as the relationship with the Sultan Qaboos University.

There is no clear answer from the president of university C and it seems the university is running franchise programmes with cooperation from other international universities.

The private colleges have similar strategies to the private universities with regards to curriculum development and offering franchise programmes of other international higher education institutions. The dean of college A stated that the

college is preparing and reviewing the contents of its programmes, but the core academic courses will continue depending on external international higher education partners. The dean of college B, however, stated that the system is not clear as the Ministry of Higher Education is encouraging private colleges to run franchise programmes and there is a need to continue collaborating and cooperating with international universities to ensure the quality of programmes. In addition, the students are happy to get their degrees from international universities and to pursue further study in Oman.

The private universities and colleges depend on their international partners' curricula and publications, and the criteria established to select their teaching faculty members. These institutions have recruited few qualified Omani citizens to teach different subjects. The qualified Omanis are hesitant about applying for teaching jobs at the private higher education institution due to the remuneration or the strict recruitment policies at these institutions. I raised this issue during the interviews with the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges and the responses were logical and acceptable.

Faculty Recruitment and Omanization Policy

The president of university A replied that the university's policy to recruit qualified Omanis is clear and they are welcome to apply to work at the university after approval from the Ministry of Higher Education. The university followed the same policy and procedures to recruit international academic lecturers from different countries. The university welcomes qualified Omanis to join to work at the university. It also gives priority to its graduates to progress to higher education and to give them chances to work at the university. However, university B is facing difficulties in regard to lecturers' recruitment, such as the delay in obtaining approval from the Ministry of Higher Education, and strong competition from higher education institutions from other Gulf countries, which are also looking to recruit the best lecturers, and have good remuneration policies. The university has its own plan to send its top graduate students abroad to get their Master's and Doctoral degrees and then recruit them as lecturers. He added that the university recruits qualified Omanis if there are available vacancies.

The president of university C stated that remuneration is the main problem when recruiting and retaining faculty members at the university, as well as the strong competition in the Gulf region from universities and colleges to attract qualified lecturers, as is happening in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. He added that one of the most attractive ways to get good, qualified lecturers is to have a good working environment for the academics at the university and to create a good family environment by providing entertainment and sport facilities and a good remuneration policy. The university has its own policy to attract qualified Omanis with better criteria, but qualified Omanis prefer to work at the public universities and colleges, especially in Muscat, the capital of Oman. The president encourages qualified Omanis to work at the university and one way to feed all private universities with qualified Omanis is to send young Omanis abroad to get their Masters and PhDs. The president of university C suggested that each university should send ten candidates annually; as a result, more Omanis are likely to enrol in the academic institutions.

The responses of the three presidents are very encouraging about absorbing qualified Omanis to teach at these private institutions, but the recruitment policy and the requirement of their international partners hinder the process to recruit Omanis as faculty members.

The recruitment policy at the three private colleges is tending towards the recruitment of qualified Omanis in areas such as information technology, English, public and business studies and management. The dean of college A confirmed that more than 90% of the college's administrative staff are Omanis; however, he stated that the qualified Omanis who are interested in teaching join the public university, and there are only a limited number of them. The colleges send a few students to study for their Masters and PhDs to become lecturers as part of the college's obligation to meet the minimum requirements of the Ministry of Higher Education.

Financial Status of the Private Institutions

The financial stability of higher education institutions is a very important issue to ensure continuing administration and academic development. The main income of

the private universities and private colleges is generated from students' fees and government's support. The presidents of universities A and B explained that their universities' financial situations are stable and their main income comes from students' fees and university investments.

The president of university C replied that students' fees are the main source of income besides the financial support from the university council, but there is limited annual deficit and this is related to the first phase of the university where the management will rely on a loss for seven years until it breaks even, after which the number of students should start to increase. The university is not currently worried about its financial situation, and there are some other sources of income from various programmes such as continuous education, the Arabic language programme, future expected consultancy and research projects, and voluntary contributions, since the university is not a profit-making institution. The three private universities are managing their financial resources, which is a good indication of their administration and financial strategies.

The three private colleges are also handling their financial resources. The dean of college A replied that the college's main source of income comes from students' fees, short courses and consultancy. The college has contracts with some companies such as the Petroleum Development of Oman, Oman International Bank and Bank Muscat to run special courses for them. The other two colleges depend on students' fees and their financial investments to support their activities. The Government of Oman supports private universities and colleges by giving them free land and funds to build their infrastructure. The Government also sends low-income students to these institutions and pays their annual fees. One of my interview questions is to seek the presidents' and deans' opinions about such support and whether it has contributed towards improving these institutions.

The presidents of the private universities share the opinion that the Ministry of Higher Education takes a long time to process the requirements of private higher education. The Ministry needs to review its policies and procedures to ease such processes, and the way employees deal with the private education management, in a professional way. The Ministry also needs specialised staff in higher

education who can contribute towards higher education development in Oman. They also agreed that the policies and procedures of the Ministry of Higher Education need to reconsider the urgent needs of the private higher education institutions. They suggested having regular meetings between the officials of the Ministry and the officials from the private higher education institutions to come up with a mechanism to release the funds granted by His Majesty's financial support to private universities and to release these institutions from having to depend on private funds and thus having to pay interest to the private banks. The private universities need the Government's financial support to assist these institutions to develop their infrastructure and to introduce other programmes. The presidents have realised that there is no clear mechanism to apply for the release of funds. The president of one of the private universities was of the strong opinion that the employees at the Ministry of Higher Education tend more towards holding the private institutions accountable rather than contributing to the development of these institutions. The dean of college A was of the opinion that the Ministry of Higher Education's policies and procedures impose more control on the activities of private institutions, which is not supporting the development of development of these institutions. In addition, the Ministry and the Accreditation Agency do not have qualified staff to follow up the policies and the requirements of the Ministry. The colleges have difficulties with getting approval from officials at the Ministry to release advertisements or to distribute marketing leaflets. The colleges also encounter difficulties in teaching students who are financially supported by the Ministry due to their weakness in general knowledge and the English language.

The dean of college B agreed that the Ministry policy and procedures are not helping the development of private higher education institutions. The college is facing difficulties in solving many issues with the Ministry, such as the length of time it takes to get financial incentives, introduce new programmes and approve the recruitment of new lecturers. The private colleges in Oman are facing difficulties in recruiting academic lecturers due to market competition especially from the Arab Gulf states.

Academic Working Environment

The Ministry of Higher Education and the Accreditation Body need to amend their policies and procedures to solve all the problems of the higher education private institutions. The private universities and colleges always need government support and cooperation to advance their programmes, recruit the best lecturers, serve their communities and finally help the economy. The last interview question addressed to the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges is about the culture environments inside these institutions: how these leaders deal with the culture issues, especially the private institutions which have multi-national lecturers working and dealing with students who have strong traditional and cultural principles. The organisational culture is one of the main challenges to all academic institutions; therefore, it is very important to have a policy, regulations and a department to maintain a healthy and professional working environment inside the universities and colleges. The private university A creates a good working academic environment, respects other cultures, and organises upgrade seminars to explain to lecturers the principles of culture and to give background knowledge about culture and the importance of respecting other religions. The president of university B confirmed that they have a policy and administrative system to deal with the culture environment. The university organises continuous workshops and orientation for the academic members from different nationalities to enlighten them about the Omani culture and the attitudes of the students, and about ways to handle different problems. In addition, the university asks the students at the end of each course to evaluate the lecturer and the course in general to get feedback; however, although students' opinions are well considered, they are not counted as a high percentage when it comes to renewing lecturers' annual contracts. The university conducts special seminars calling different well-known speakers to present about Islamic culture and tradition to build up the cultural knowledge of both the academic members and the students.

The president of university C stated that the university is trying to create a good academic working environment for both the staff and students through encouraging the deans and the faculty members to build mutual relationships and public relationships with different people and groups in society to understand their

needs in an informal way. The university coordinates with a hotel to provide their facilities to the staff free of charge.

The university developed a database website to provide the staff with useful and necessary information on shops, restaurants and tourist attractions within the region. The universities also organise sessions to enlighten the academic members on how to deal with the students.

The presidents of the above private universities handle the culture issues at their institutions in a very professional way starting from general awareness and moving on to creating a friendly working atmosphere in their institutions. The three private colleges have created a good working environment and the staff and students are happy, but they need to work more on the culture issues.

Summary Remarks of Interviews

The interviews indicated that the selected private universities and colleges have clear visions and missions that are mainly to provide quality higher education at affordable cost and provide talented and skilled graduates to feed the economy of the country. The universities have similar structures and only minor differences with regard to financial authority of the university president. The universities have plans developed with the cooperation of their international partners with whom these universities are affiliated. There is no complete strategic plan relating to international standards. The universities however are reviewing their plans to match with the higher education policies and regulations and market needs taking into consideration the cultural and religious principles. These universities have the full support of their council boards and it seems that both the universities' management and boards have clear visions, objectives and strategies to reach their goals. The colleges' structure and the strategic plans are not very clear despite the structure charts; the deans of the selected private colleges have no financial authority, and neither the president of the college nor the council member can exercise financial power or make financial decisions. Therefore, the deans of these colleges are facing difficulties in running the activities of their colleges and lose control especially at the administration and financial levels. The private universities agreed upon the importance of different committees, especially the

academic committees, to discuss and share ideas and experiences to develop the academic performance at the universities. The perception at the college level is different due to the limited number of staff, most of who are not used to such a system, and the direct involvement of the members of the council of these colleges. The relation between the universities and colleges and the private sectors is not up to the required level of satisfaction. The research contracts are very limited and only short courses are provided to banks and some companies. The universities do not have the required information about their graduates and their skills level. There is a need for government policy to extend the cooperation between higher education institutions and the private sector. The selected universities and colleges are willing to strengthen their relationship with the private sector, to encourage their faculty members to conduct research and to design training programmes. The universities and colleges have the research facilities and qualified faculty members. Both the private universities and colleges will benefit from such relationships.

B- Quantitative Data

The objective of the quantitative survey was to get feedback from the academic members, administrators and students about the management and leadership of their universities and colleges. I conducted a survey among faculty members, administrators and students of the selected universities and colleges.

Population and Samples, Instructions, Language translation and Pre-testing

A total of 125 faculty members, 105 administrators and 235 students participated in the survey from three private universities and three private colleges. This sample was considered a good response to this research for several reasons: (a) the support of the presidents and deans of the selected institutions and their interests in the research, (b) the faculty members, administrators and students were randomly selected from different fields, and (c) the private universities and colleges share similar activities such as students' admission policies, faculty recruiting procedures and regulations, organisational structures, curricula and study systems. The selected private universities and colleges were chosen based on their location, size and years in business.

Today, there are seven private universities and 19 private colleges affiliated to foreign higher education institutions. The foreign institutions provide complete programmes in different fields, including all curriculum development, assessment, and awarding of degrees. The programmes in private higher education range from two-year colleges offering diplomas to four-year colleges and universities offering Bachelor's degrees. The role of local colleges or universities is mainly in marketing and delivering programmes.

The questionnaires were carefully checked and edited and clear instructions were given at the beginning. A short introductory paragraph on the first page of each form contained an explanation about the purpose of the research, a statement expressing appreciation to the participants in the study, instructions for the participants, and an assurance of confidentiality. The questionnaires were pilot-tested at one private college before being distributed to other private institutions.

Because the survey of the research was conducted in an Arabic-speaking environment, the questionnaires were translated into the Arabic language from English, and then translated back to English to ensure that the questions had the same meaning and interpretation in both languages. The participants selected the version they preferred to ensure that their responses were based on a clear understanding of the questions.

The questionnaires were well organised to move from general questions towards more specific ones. These were multiple-choice items and participants were asked to choose the appropriate answer as follows:

Agree (), strongly agree (), disagree (), strongly disagree ()

Faculty Members

The survey questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members of the three private universities and three private colleges and I received 116 forms out of 125 distributed forms. Each form has 31 questions starting from broad inquiry to more specific ones. The presidents and deans of the private universities and private colleges willingly agreed to distribute the questionnaires through their offices after I explained the purpose of the survey and I assured them of the

confidentiality of the research. The presidents and the deans were very cooperative and interested in the research project and requested copies of the research on completion of the project.

The questionnaires were categorised to cover the following headings and each category contains specific questions:

University/College vision, mission and faculty participation

University/College strategic planning

University/College staff policy and human resource development

University/College teaching, learning quality and research

University/College student services

University/College external relations

The total response received from the faculty members was 92.8%. The researcher analysed the combined data of all faculty members, instead of analysing the answers of each respondent separately one and the answers were coded and analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 15: shows the question/inquiry, options, percentage, and total of the highest percentage and rank of the responses.

No	Question/Inquiry	Option	Total responses	Per cent	Total The highest percentage	Rank
1	University Vision	Agree	74	59.2	97%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	47	37.6		
		Disagree	3	2.4		
		Strongly disagree	1	.8		
2	University Mission	Agree	56	46.3	77%	Good
		Strongly agree	37	30.6		
		Disagree	17	14.0		
		Strongly disagree	11	9.1		
3	University Long-term Strategic Plan	Agree	96	76.8	87%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	13	10.4		
		Disagree	12	9.6		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.2		
4	University Short-term Strategic Plan	Agree	60	49.6	73%	Good
		Strongly agree	28	23.1		
		Disagree	30	24.8		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.5		
5	Students' Motivation leads to Hard Work	Agree	56	48.7	88%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	45	39.1		
		Disagree	12	10.4		
		Strongly disagree	2	1.7		
6	Providing Course Syllabus	Agree	37	29.8	99%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	86	69.4		
		Strongly disagree	1	.8		
		Agree	37	29.8		
7	Happy with Teaching Load	Agree	63	51.6	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	27	22.1		
		Disagree	22	18.0		
		Strongly disagree	10	8.2		

8	University Encourages Teamwork	Agree	65	52.8	68%	Poor
		Strongly agree	19	15.4		
		Disagree	33	26.8		
		Strongly disagree	6	4.9		
9	Lecturers - Happy with Educational Facilities	Agree	55	44.4	89%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	55	44.4		
		Disagree	10	8.1		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.2		
10	University Provides Staff Training	Agree	70	56.5	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	22	17.7		
		Disagree	28	22.6		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.4		
11	University Encourages Lectures to design Curriculum	Agree	64	53.3	76%	Good
		Strongly agree	27	22.5		
		Disagree	20	16.7		
		Strongly disagree	9	7.5		
12	University Maintains Availability Book on Time	Agree	65	52.8	64%	Poor
		Strongly agree	14	11.4		
		Disagree	37	30.1		
		Strongly disagree	7	5.7		
13	University Requests Lecturer to Teach and undertake Research	Agree	73	60.8	91%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	36	30.0		
		Disagree	8	6.7		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.5		
14	Building Quality Teaching Without Research	Agree	56	44.8	94%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	62	49.6		
		Disagree	7	5.6		
		Agree	56	44.8		
15	University Encourages Research and Teaching	Agree	58	46.4	70%	Good
		Strongly agree	30	24.0		
		Disagree	30	24.0		
		Strongly disagree	7	5.6		

16	Lecturers' Teaching Curriculum without External Resources	Agree	17	14.2	18 %	Poor
		Strongly agree	5	4.2		
		Disagree	72	60.0		
		Strongly disagree	26	21.7		
17	Lecturers Encourage Students to use the Library	Strongly agree	5	4.2	92 %	Excellent
		Disagree	72	60.0		
		Strongly disagree	26	21.7		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.5		
18	University Updates Library Resources	Agree	67	56.3	66%	Poor
		Strongly agree	11	9.2		
		Disagree	29	24.4		
		Strongly disagree	12	10.1		
19	Lecturer Teaches Different Skills	Agree	73	60.8	88%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	33	27.5		
		Disagree	11	9.2		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.5		
20	University Motivates Lecturers Professionally	Agree	60	52.2	58%	Poor
		Strongly agree	7	6.1		
		Disagree	30	26.1		
		Strongly disagree	18	15.7		
21	University Motivates Lecturers Financially	Agree	36	32.1	38%	Poor
		Strongly agree	7	6.3		
		Disagree	52	46.4		
		Strongly disagree	17	15.2		
22	University Encourages Lecturers' Relationship	Agree	63	53.8	68%	Poor
		Strongly agree	17	14.5		
		Disagree	33	28.2		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.4		
23	University Admin Staff support Lecturers	Agree	69	56.1	80%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	29	23.6		
		Disagree	19	15.4		
		Strongly disagree	6	4.9		
24	Lecturer Solves Students' Problems without University Management	Agree	28	22.8	56%	Poor
		Strongly agree	41	33.3		
		Disagree	49	39.8		
		Strongly disagree	5	4.1		

25	Administration and Lecturers sharing Experiences	Agree	75	61.0	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	16	13.0		
		Disagree	27	22.0		
		Strongly disagree	5	4.1		
26	Lecturers and Administration have no Relationship	Agree	21	17.2	20%	Poor
		Strongly agree	3	2.5		
		Disagree	71	58.2		
		Strongly disagree	27	22.1		
27	University Leadership Task-Oriented	Agree	40	34.5	43%	Poor
		Strongly agree	10	8.6		
		Disagree	51	44.0		
		Strongly disagree	15	12.9		
28	University Strategy of No Change	Agree	16	13.6	16%	Poor
		Strongly agree	3	2.5		
		Disagree	76	64.4		
		Strongly disagree	23	19.5		
29	Lecturers run Department Independently	Agree	46	38.7	56%	Poor
		Strongly agree	21	17.6		
		Disagree	44	37.0		
		Strongly disagree	8	6.7		
30	Lecturers Depend on Management to Run their Departments	Agree	60	49.6	73%	Good
		Strongly agree	28	23.1		
		Disagree	30	24.8		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.5		
31	University Motivates Administrative Staff more than Lecturers	Agree	18	16.2	26%	Poor
		Strongly agree	11	9.9		
		Disagree	75	67.6		
		Strongly disagree	7	6.3		

The researcher percentage evaluation scale for faculty members' responses (Agree and Strongly Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) is as follows:

Percentage	Rate
50-69%	Poor
70-79%	Good
80-89%	Very Good
90% and above	Excellent

Table 1: Faculty's` responses and percentages

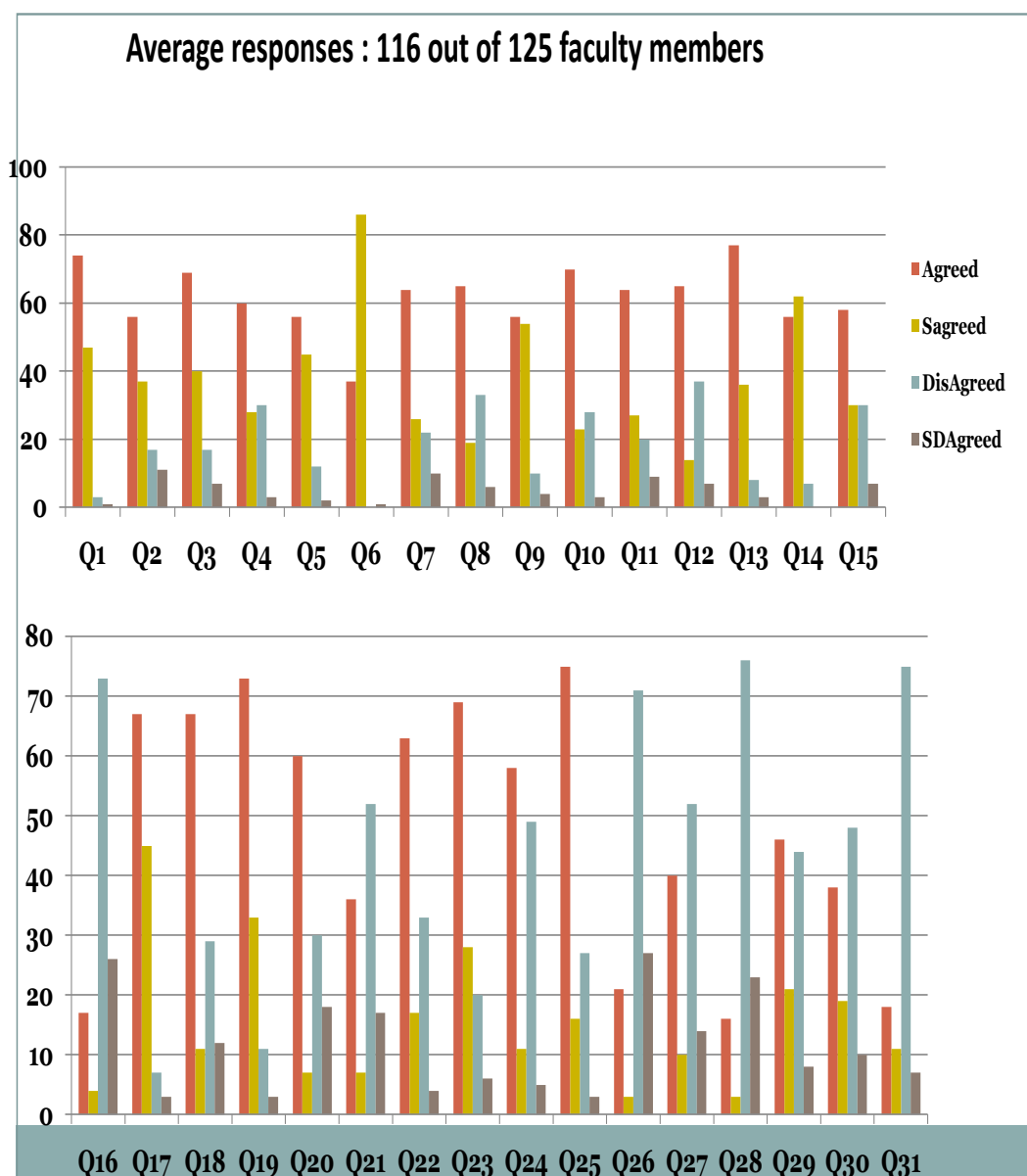


Figure 13: Response rates from Faculty Members

Data Analysis of faculty response

The responses of all the faculty members for each question were coded on a computer sheet and analysed using SPSS.

The responses from the faculty members in figure 13 above indicate that they believe that their universities and colleges have clear visions and missions and they are aware of that, which means that universities and colleges are clear about

their current and future plans. The faculty members also have rated good in their participation in setting up their colleges' and universities' vision statements and mission plans. The responses of the faculty members match the responses of the presidents and deans who clearly explained the visions and missions of their institutions.

The faculty members disagreed that their private universities and colleges have followed the same old strategies, but their educational strategies have been modified to fit the new economic and social changes. The faculty members positively agreed that their universities and colleges have short- and long-term strategic planning especially those respondents who are working at the private universities. As I mentioned earlier, the colleges tend more towards business planning than strategic planning based on international standards. The details of the presidents' and deans' views have already been explained earlier in the chapter.

Quality of teaching and research, quality of programmes, and student skills development were the major issues. They were covered through the survey and the faculty members' responses were positively rated as the following details show. The faculty members strongly agree on the importance of teaching students different types of skills, and the percentage rate was 88%. These skills include critical thinking, computer skills and negotiating skills. This is a very good indication to check skill abilities of students after getting feedback from the graduates and their managers in the workplace. The faculty members held the view that the level of students' motivation was due to the management methods used to encourage them to study hard. The rate was also 88%, similar to faculty agreement to enhance students' skill development, and that was a direct indication of the lecturers' concerns to enhance students' performance.

There was an excellent response from the faculty members on the importance of having a course syllabus, which rated 99% of strongly agreed, and this of course indicates quality teaching. The course syllabus explains the course objectives, outcomes and evaluation criteria. The faculty members believe that the quality of teaching is enhanced if they are actively engaged in research and strongly agree

with undertaking different types of research in addition to their teaching responsibilities if they are asked to do so by management. This confirms that the private universities and colleges focus their activities on teaching and learning because they are new and not yet research-oriented. Therefore, faculty members were not asked to do research besides their teaching tasks and as a result feel that they feel that their institutions` management have put their efforts towards teaching and learning and less towards research-related activities, and do not encourage their faculty members to conduct research activities. The faculty members rated 91% agreed and strongly agreed to conducting research if they were asked to do so.

The faculty members (lecturers) enhanced students` skills through supporting the curriculum with external resources. They disagreed with the idea of using only the curriculum without additional resources, and the survey showed 91% positive response to encourage students to use the library resources; however, they were very unhappy with current resources and study materials available in their libraries. The libraries must update their resources, advance electronic facilities and offer access to local and international libraries and electronic resources. Unfortunately only 65% of the respondents agreed that their libraries have updated resources and study materials. I myself visited a few libraries during my interviews with the presidents and deans of the private institutions and agreed with the concerns of the faculty members.

The faculty members and the students were not comfortable with the private universities` and colleges` management inefficiency when it came to ensuring the availability of textbooks before the start of the semester.

The survey showed poor responses towards the availability of textbooks and study materials, which should be available before the start of the academic year. Only 64% agreed and strongly agreed that their universities and colleges had the study materials and books on time. This means that the universities` and colleges` management need to put more efforts into planning earlier and to get students` books and materials on time. Failing to do so will result in an unsatisfactory situation, which will pose problems for both students and lecturers.

The faculty members were unhappy with the interference of the universities' and colleges' management when it came to solving students' academic problems; they considered such interference unprofessional and that it created great gaps between students and lecturers. They preferred to solve the students' problems themselves through direct communication with the students.

The lecturers seemed fine with their teaching load in general and rated 74% of the agreed and strongly agreed responses. They also agree to take on some administrative work, especially when the management of the private universities and colleges provide the necessary educational tools such as overhead projectors, laptops, and smart boards to facilitate their teaching. The university management also provides good training and IT support to the staff. This subsequently creates a good working environment where the lecturers rated 76% of agreed and strongly agreed that their institutions' management encourages the academic staff to develop their own curriculum.

The universities' and colleges' management are not flexible when it comes to encouraging their faculty members to build external relations with different sectors of society, and to exchange different ideas or to conduct seminars and research without formal and routine processes. The response rate was 68% to support that the university's management encourages its faculty members to build external relations with different sectors of society; this rate is ranked at a poor level.

The staff policies, regulations and decision making were the main concerns of the faculty members and the administrative staff.

The survey showed that 87% of the faculty members disagreed that the management of their universities and colleges are considered to be more task-oriented and their main concern is to have the job done without motivating their employees.

The faculty members are very disappointed with their universities' and colleges' staff policies and management systems; in particular the motivation aspect. From the survey exercise, there were poor responses; and 68% rated that the university's management motivates them through moral and professional

expectations as rewards for their teaching efforts. The faculty members responded negatively with 84% who disagreed that their universities and colleges motivated them financially for their teaching efforts. This indicates that the faculty members are waiting for any opportunity to leave their universities or colleges, which will then affect the recruitment procedures/process. It seems that the universities and colleges do not have a policy to retain their good lecturers. The faculty members are aware that they are not getting any financial incentives, bonuses or rewards for their good performance. They also did not feel that their universities' and colleges' management motivates the administrative staff more than the academic staff. Hence, the leadership of these institutions should change their motivation strategy to retain their good employees. In addition, the faculty members rated 56% with regard running their departments independently as they prefer to run their departments independently; at the same time, their responses rated 91% preferring to handle their departments' budget independently without referring back to the central management. This explains that the managements of these institutions are not giving heads of departments enough authority and trust, but prefer centralised policies that in the end lead to dissatisfaction of their management and leadership.

Faculty members indicated poor responses towards universities' and colleges' policies to encourage their employees to work as a team, especially when this involves both academic and administrative staff. Only 68% of the faculty members agreed and strongly agreed that private universities' and colleges' management encourages teamwork activities. This indicates that there is a need to come up with a policy or strategy or to create a suitable working environment to motivate both sides to work together and share their responsibilities to develop the performance of their institution. It seems that the follow-up from the presidents and deans of these institutions is low and the tension between both is growing. This is a very critical area and needs a proper management strategy to bring both sides of the institution to work together and cooperate to develop their institutions. The faculty members and the administrative staff are willing to work together and share their experience if the universities and colleges create a good working environment and put in place a good institutional system.

The general situations of the faculty members at both private universities and private colleges are satisfactory for them to carry out their teaching responsibilities; however, they are still interested in having clear staff regulations, motivation systems and full cooperation between faculty members and academic staff.

2- Students

The second survey questionnaires were distributed randomly to students in their final years and from different specialisations at the selected three private universities and three private colleges; 235 students responded to the survey.

The questionnaires were categorised to cover the following headings and each category contains specific questions:

Students' awareness with regard to quality of programmes, qualified lecturers, good administrative staff and fees

Universities'/colleges' quality of teaching and academic advice

Students and skills development

Students' academic records

University/College efforts to help students to find jobs after graduation

There were 235 responses received from the students and the researcher analysed the responses of each question put to all students instead of analysing the answers of each student separately.. The responses were coded and analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The researcher percentage evaluation scale for students' responses (Agree, Strongly Agree, and Disagree and Strongly Disagree) is illustrated as follows:

Percentage	Rate
50-69%	Poor
70-79%	Good
80-89%	Very Good
90% and above	Excellent

Table 16: below illustrates the question/inquiry, options, percentage, total of the highest percentage and rank of the responses.

Table 16 : Students` responses and the percentages

No	Question/Inquiry	Option	Total response	Per cent	Total of The highest percentage	Rank
1	Students' Awareness of University Programmes	Agree	142	60.4	82%	Very good
		Strongly agree	50	21.3		
		Disagree	32	13.6		
		Strongly Disagree	11	4.7		
2	Students' Awareness of University Fees	Agree	114	48.5	78%	Good
		Strongly agree	70	29.8		
		Disagree	39	16.6		
		Strongly Disagree	12	5.1		
3	Students' Awareness of University Quality Programmes	Agree	121	51.7	76%	Good
		Strongly agree	57	24.4		
		Disagree	42	17.9		
		Strongly Disagree	14	6.0		

4	Students' Awareness of Good Faculty	Agree	115	48.9	69%	poor
		Strongly agree	46	19.6		
		Disagree	58	24.7		
		Strongly Disagree	16	6.8		
5	Students' Awareness of University Good Staff	Agree	94	40.0	53%	Poor
		Strongly agree	30	12.8		
		Disagree	72	30.6		
		Strongly Disagree	39	16.6		
6	University Students' Orientation Day	Agree	95	40.6	63%	Poor
		Strongly agree	53	22.6		
		Disagree	57	24.4		
		Strongly Disagree	29	12.4		
7	Getting Students Academic Advice	Agree	82	34.9	60%	Poor
		Strongly agree	60	25.5		
		Disagree	65	27.7		
		Strongly Disagree	28	11.9		
8	Getting Course Syllabus	Agree	122	51.9	75%	Good
		Strongly agree	54	23.0		
		Disagree	42	17.9		
		Strongly Disagree	17	7.2		
9	Lecturers Work Hard to Help Students	Agree	46	43.0%	90%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	21	19.6%		
		Disagree	9	8.4%		
		Strongly disagree	2	1.9%		
10	Students Happy with Quality of university Teaching	Agree	120	51.3	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	52	22.2		
		Disagree	41	17.5		
		Strongly Disagree	21	9.0		

11	Lecturers Encourage Student Teamwork	Agree	120	51.3	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	52	22.2		
		Disagree	42	17.9		
		Strongly Disagree	20	8.5		
12	Students Learn Different Skills	Agree	104	44.4	69%	Poor
		Strongly agree	57	24.4		
		Disagree	56	23.9		
		Strongly Disagree	17	7.3		
13	Supervisors Solve Students' Problems	Agree	110	46.8	66%	Poor
		Strongly agree	44	18.7		
		Disagree	48	20.4		
		Strongly Disagree	33	14.0		
14	University Updates Students Academic Record	Agree	100	42.9	67%	Poor
		Strongly agree	55	23.6		
		Disagree	49	21.0		
		Strongly Disagree	29	12.4		
15	University Organises Job Fair	Agree	103	44.2	64%	Poor
		Strongly agree	47	20.2		
		Disagree	54	23.2		
		Strongly Disagree	29	12.4		
16	University Job Fair Helps Students to Find Jobs	Agree	113	48.9	67%	Poor
		Strongly agree	42	18.2		
		Disagree	50	21.6		
		Strongly Disagree	26	11.3		

17	Lecturers and Admin Staff Help Students Find Jobs	Agree	107	44.8	55%	Poor
		Strongly agree	24	10.0		
		Disagree	77	32.2		
		Strongly Disagree	31	13.0		
18	Lecturers use Text Book Only to Teach	Agree	114	48.5	64%	Poor
		Strongly agree	37	15.7		
		Disagree	60	25.5		
		Strongly Disagree	24	10.2		
19	Lecturers use their Research to Teach	Agree	111	47.2	68%	Poor
		Strongly agree	48	20.4		
		Disagree	56	23.8		
		Strongly Disagree	20	8.5		
		Strongly agree	23	21.5%		
		Disagree	20	18.7%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		

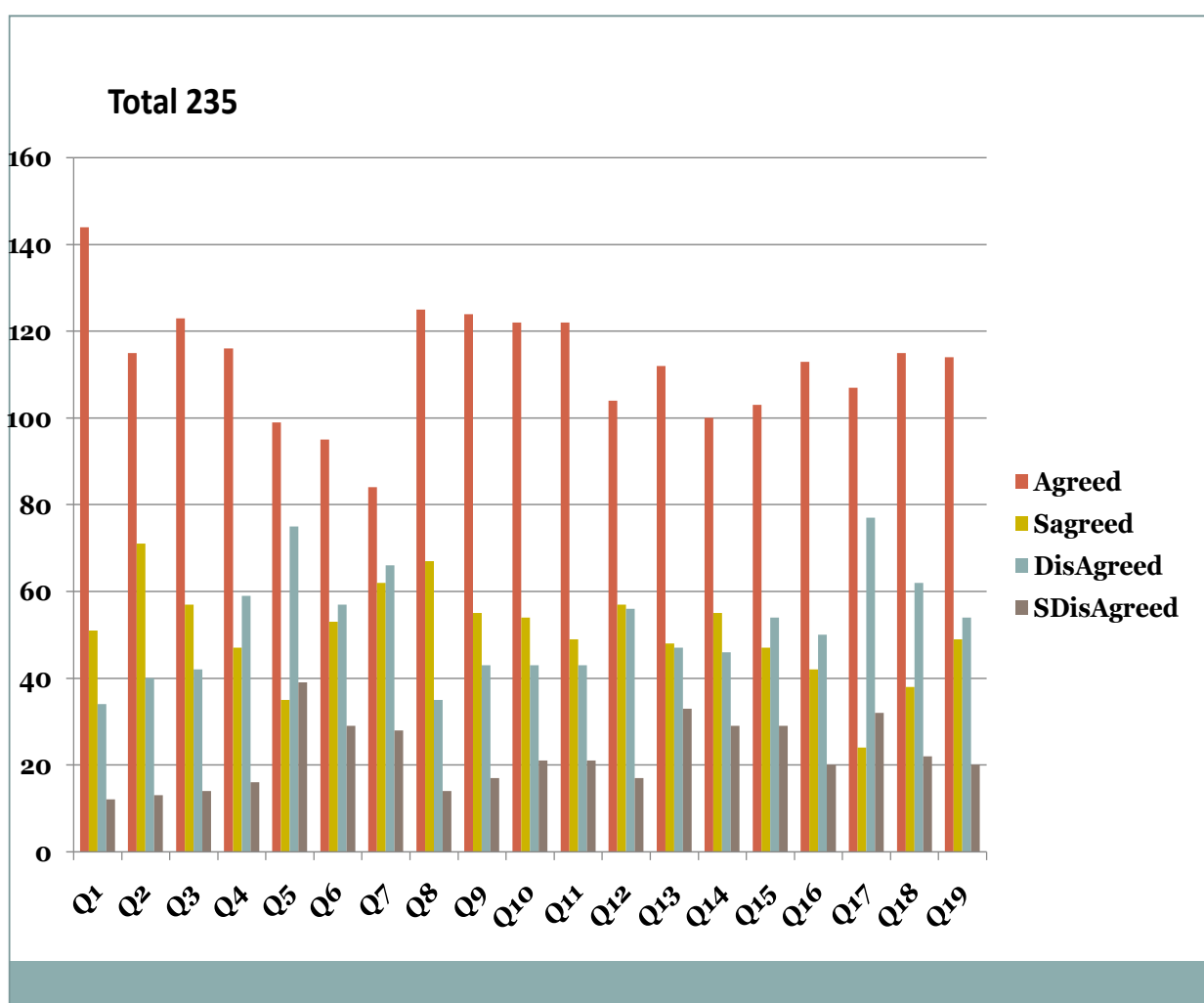


Figure 15: Response rates from Students

Data Analysis of Students` Responses

The students` general knowledge of the higher education institutions and their programmes, quality of teaching, and reputation of their lecturers are very important for them to choose the right universities and colleges.

The general awareness of students at the three private universities and three private colleges rated 80%, which was very good as an indicator of their familiarity with the available programmes and fees at these institutions before applying. This is an important stage for the students as well as their parents to choose the higher education institution. The students also rated very high in knowing the quality of the programmes of their universities and colleges before they enrol. They had

heard about the institutions' reputation of the quality of the programmes, which is a good indication of the success of the marketing plans of the private institutions. However, the students' perception has changed after joining these private institutions and their responses rated poorly - 68% only with regard to their familiarity with the faculty members and administrative staff at their institutions.

The universities' and colleges' orientation (or open) days help students to better understand the programmes, curriculum, library and available facilities of the institution concerned. The survey includes this inquiry to understand the benefits students gain on this day, but surprisingly, the responses did not seem encouraging; the percentage rate was poor and only 63% agreed and strongly agreed that this day helped them to learn more about their universities and colleges.

The students responded positively with regard to having the course syllabus at the beginning of each course and their agreed and strongly agreed responses were rated 78%. It seemed that the students understand fully the course objectives and the outcome expectations at the end of the term. They also agreed that most lecturers work hard to create a good classroom study environment and to make students enjoy their studying. The lecturers made use of their own research to support the students' textbooks – this was supported by 70% of the students, which indicates that they received good feedback on their performance after each assessment and expressed their happiness about the quality of teaching at their universities and colleges. The lecturers do engage students to work in teams and assign them to do group projects.

One of the most critical problems facing most of the students at the private higher education institutions in Oman is the academic advising system. The students' responses were rated quite low; 60% agreed and strongly agreed that students receive academic advice to choose their courses and to register in the right courses, which leads to some confusion when choosing their specialisations. The universities and colleges are weak in this area and do not have a proper advisory system to guide their students to the right courses. The students rated poorly advisors' efforts to help students solve their problems. The student advisory

system is an important and critical area within the academic institutions and the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges must restructure their strategies to develop such a system as is the practice at other successful institutions.

Another important area is the development of students' skills. The responses of the academic faculty showed their efforts to teach students different skills; however, the students rated poorly learning different skills, such as communication, computer and negotiation skills. The students who agreed and strongly agreed rated 69%, which is acceptable, but not up to the expectations of the students and the employers.

The registration departments at the universities and colleges are important to maintain and update students' records using an automated system. The institutions use a complete integrated system to run different academic and administrative activities. The results of the survey showed that the students were unhappy about the registration departments of their universities and colleges. They faced difficulties in obtaining the required information on time and their responses rated as 67% satisfied; therefore, there is a need to improve students' services and automate students' data through a complete network system. The registration departments need to train their staff to bring their performance to a satisfactory level as set by international standards.

To summarise, it seems that the presidents and deans of the selected private universities and colleges need to put effort and time into evaluating the performance of different departments at their institutions to better deal with students' difficulties. There is a need for follow up procedures to ensure there is a proper advisory system, student development and good student services. There is a need to meet students' requirements through proper communication channels among lecturers, management and registration.

3- Administrators

The third set of survey questionnaires were distributed randomly to administrators at the three private selected universities and three private colleges and 105 responses were received.

The questionnaires were categorised to cover the following headings and each category contains specific questions:

- The administrative staffs' awareness of the private institutions
- The staffs' opinions on the visions and missions of the institutions
- The role of the personnel department, and staff skills development
- The university staff policy, motivation, and teamwork
- The performance of public relations and social activities at the institutions

The researcher analysed the responses to each question from all administrators collectively, instead of analysing the responses to each one separately.

The responses were coded and analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The researcher's percentage evaluation scale for students' responses (Agree and Strongly Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) is as follows:

Percentage	Rate
50-69%	Poor
70-79%	Good
0-89%	Very Good
90% and above	Excellent

Table 17 below shows the question/inquiry, options, percentage, and total of the highest percentage and rank of the responses.

Table 17: Administrators` responses and the percentages

No	Question/Inquiry	Option	Total response	Percent	Total of The highest percentage	Rank
1	Staff Job Awareness	Agree	72	67.3%	89%	Very good
		Strongly agree	20	18.7%		
		Disagree	9	8.4%		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.8%		
2	Employees have Easy Interviews	Agree	47	43.9%	65%	Poor
		Strongly agree	11	10.3%		
		Disagree	31	29.0%		
		Strongly disagree	6	5.6%		
3	Employees have Easy Tests	Agree	57	53.3%	95%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	39	36.4%		
		Disagree	0	.0%		
		Strongly disagree	5	4.7%		
4	Personnel Department explains Recruitment Procedures	Agree	57	53.3%	69%	Poor
		Strongly agree	16	15.0%		
		Disagree	28	26.2%		
		Strongly disagree	5	4.7%		
5	Personnel Update New Recruits	agree	52	48.6%	64%	Poor
		Strongly agree	16	15.0%		
		Disagree	27	25.2%		
		Strongly Disagree	11	10.3%		
6	University has Staff Job Description	Agree	39	36.4%	54%	Poor
		Strongly agree	17	15.9%		
		Disagree	29	27.1%		
		Strongly disagree	20	18.7%		
7	University gives Staff Policy to Staff	Agree	30	28.0%	39%	Poor
		Strongly agree	10	9.3%		
		Disagree	52	48.6%		
		Strongly Disagree	13	12.1%		

8	New Staff Trained to do Job	Agree	46	43.0%	61%	Poor
		Strongly agree	17	15.9%		
		Disagree	28	26.2%		
		Strongly disagree	13	12.1%		
9	Old Employees Help New ones	Agree	46	43.0%	90%	Excellent
		Strongly agree	21	19.6%		
		Disagree	9	8.4%		
		Strongly disagree	2	1.9%		
10	Personnel Department Updates Skill Development Report	Agree	35	32.7%	54%	Poor
		Strongly agree	7	6.5%		
		Disagree	28	26.2%		
		Strongly disagree	21	19.6%		
11	Personnel Department Updates Leave Record	Agree	47	43.9%	60%	Poor
		Strongly agree	16	15.0%		
		Disagree	31	29.0%		
		Strongly disagree	11	10.3%		
12	Staff Attend Skills Development Courses	Agree	33	30.8%	48%	Poor
		Strongly agree	12	11.2%		
		Disagree	33	30.8%		
		Strongly disagree	22	20.6%		
13	Staff Never Attend Skills Development Courses	Agree	26	24.3%	43%	Poor
		Strongly agree	16	15.0%		
		Disagree	31	29.0%		
		Strongly disagree	29	27.1%		
14	Staff Happy about Performance of the Finance Department	Agree	47	43.9%	83%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	40	37.4%		
		Disagree	9	8.4%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		
15	Staff Happy about Performance of Public Relations Department	Agree	47	43.9%	72%	Good
		Strongly agree	26	24.3%		
		Disagree	21	19.6%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		
16	Public Relations Department Links University with Society	Agree	60	56.1%	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	5	4.7%		
		Disagree	19	17.8%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		

17	Staff have New Office Equipment	Agree	48	44.9%	87%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	39	36.4%		
		Disagree	10	9.3%		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.7%		
18	University Provides IT Support	Agree	47	43.9%	84%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	43	40.2%		
		Disagree	7	6.5%		
		Strongly disagree	3	2.8%		
19	University has Clear Visions and Objectives	Agree	51	47.7%	84%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	31	29.0%		
		Disagree	14	13.1%		
		Strongly Disagree	3	2.8%		
20	Staff Participate in Setting Visions and Missions	Agree	48	44.9%	87%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	39	36.4%		
		Disagree	10	9.3%		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.7%		
21	Universities Encourage Team Work	Agree	52	48.6%	74%	Good
		Strongly agree	24	22.4%		
		Disagree	15	14.0%		
		Strongly disagree	13	12.1%		
22	Staff Participate at Management Committees	Agree	52	48.6%	71%	Good
		Strongly agree	15	14.0%		
		Disagree	24	22.4%		
		Strongly disagree	7	6.5%		
23	Staff Work Professionally as One Family	Agree	53	49.5%	80%	Very Good
		Strongly agree	24	22.4%		
		Disagree	12	11.2%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		
24	University Encourages New Ideas	Agree	52	48.6%	76%	Good
		Strongly agree	23	21.5%		
		Disagree	20	18.7%		
		Strongly disagree	6	5.6%		
25	University Respects Staff Opinions	Agree	49	45.8%	76%	Good
		Strongly agree	26	24.3%		
		Disagree	22	20.6%		
		Strongly disagree	4	3.7%		

26	Human Resource Department's Main Job is Staff Skills Development	Agree	31	29.0%	56%	Poor
		Strongly agree	13	12.1%		
		Disagree	37	34.6%		
		Strongly disagree	10	9.3%		
27	University Fair Promotion Motivation to Employees	Agree	29	27.1%	43%	Poor
		Strongly agree	10	9.3%		
		Disagree	32	29.9%		
		Strongly disagree	28	26.2%		
28	University Organises Social Activities for Staff Families	Agree	45	42.1%	61%	Poor
		Strongly agree	16	15.0%		
		Disagree	31	29.0%		
		Strongly disagree	10	9.3%		
29	University leaders are task oriented	Agree	23	21.5%	40%	Poor
		Strongly agree	17	15.9%		
		Disagree	44	41.1%		
		Strongly disagree	19	17.8%		
30	University Balances Tasks and Human Relations	Agree	55	51.4%	73%	Good
		Strongly agree	22	20.6%		
		Disagree	22	20.6%		
		Strongly disagree	7	6.5%		
31	Staff Happy about University Work Environment	Agree	49	45.8%	73%	Good
		Strongly agree	23	21.5%		
		Disagree	20	18.7%		
		Strongly disagree	9	8.4%		

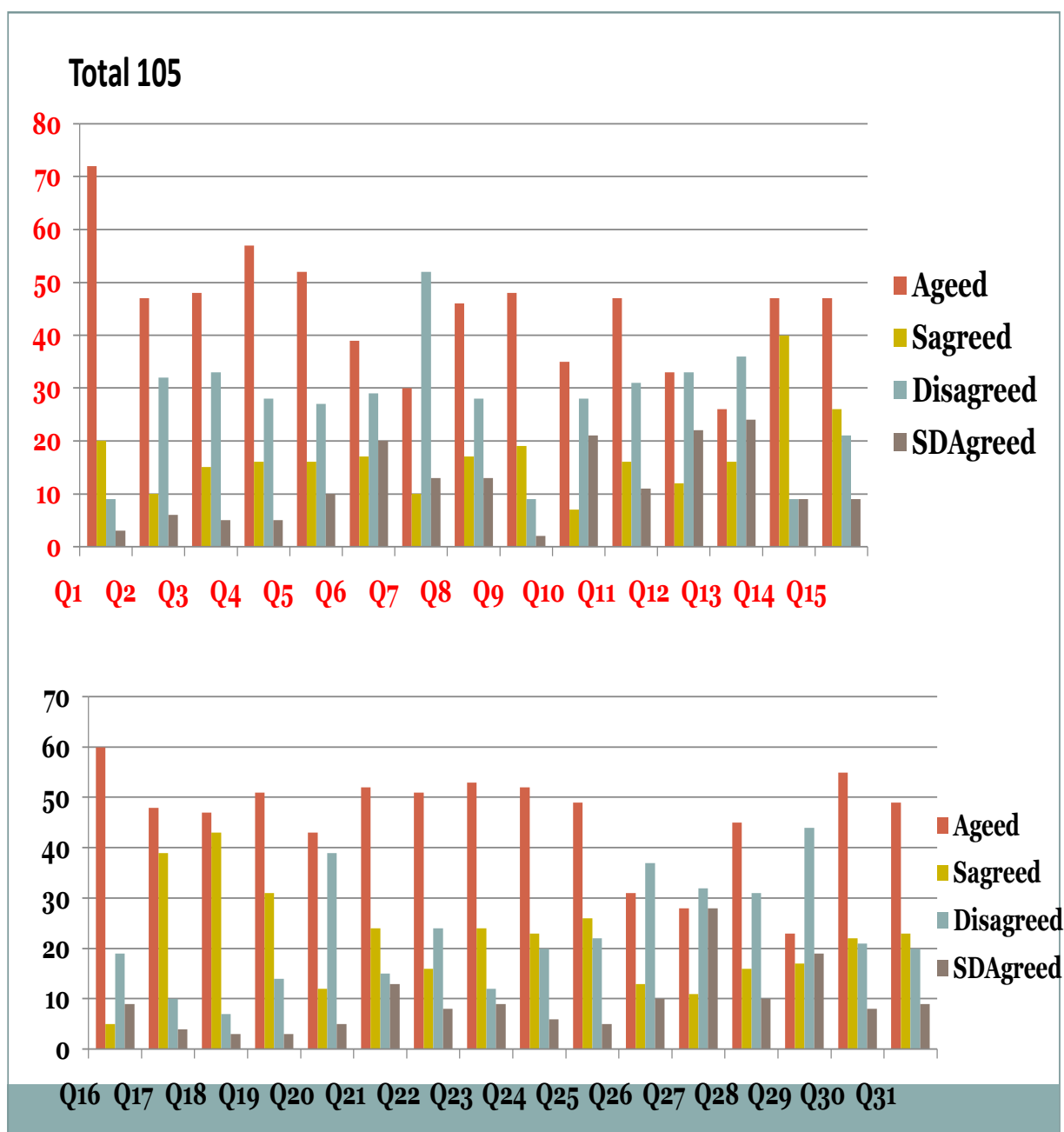


Figure 16: Response rates from Administrators

3- Data Analysis of Administrators` Responses

The administrators' responses were very good and rated 89% with regard to the data available about universities and colleges to enable the applicants to decide to work at these higher education institutions; thus, the administrators are aware

of their workplaces before they apply. This indicated that the universities' and colleges' management release the necessary information about job vacancies and the working environment of their institutions. The new employees are happy to join the private higher education institutions and 95% out of the total number responded agreed and strongly agreed that they went through an easy test, but difficult interviews.

The administrative staff were poorly rated of the role of the personnel departments of the private universities and colleges in terms of explaining the recruitment procedures in full at the time of recruitment, or updating them about their recruitment process. This situation has led to unclear recruitment strategies within these institutions.

The private universities and colleges do not have clear staff policies as confirmed by the survey, and the rate was very poor with a score of 38% of agreed and strongly agreed responses; that institutions give staff policies to the employees. This is extremely difficult to accept and the staff policies must be clear as part of the guidelines of these institutions. In addition, the administrators do not have clear job descriptions; as a result, their responses rated 53%. The administrators were not very clear regarding having clear jobs descriptions and guidelines to assist them in doing their jobs. They were not aware of their new staff policies and regulations because their management was not interested in passing on such policies.

The new employees of the private higher education institutions were not familiar with their new jobs and did not have clear job descriptions, as mentioned earlier. The survey showed that only 61% strongly agreed that they did not have in-house training and had to seek assistance from other employees who were willing to offer moderate help until the new employees had settled in at work. The managements of these institutions should restructure their strategies to train new employees until they adjust themselves to learn how to carry out their duties.

The administrative employees were unhappy about the performance of the personnel department and human resources departments at their higher education institutions. The result of the survey in this regards showed that 48%

strongly agreed that they attended skill development courses while 43% stated they never attended any training.

The administrators were unhappy about their training and development at their institutions. The low percentage shows poor responses from the administrators who learned to do the required tasks by themselves, or who were taught by other employees of the same department. Staff orientation and providing short training for new employees were ignored at these private universities and colleges, and the role of the personnel departments or human resources departments was not as effective as it should be. For instance, they did not have proper plans in place to train their employees to upgrade their skills, or keep records of their skills development. The administrators were unhappy because their universities' and colleges' management were not considering staff development as one of their priorities to develop their skills. This explains the real need to improve the staff policies and the role of human resources departments at these institutions. Human resources departments were not able to develop proper plans to train their employees to enhance their performance. The management of the private universities and colleges has to develop the skills of their employees to achieve better performance and to compete with other institutions.

The administrators also responded positively in terms of getting their salary and leave allowances on time, so they are happy about the performance of their finance departments. They appreciated the new office equipment such as computers, scanners, faxes and printers and updated systems that are available at the selected private universities and colleges. The administrators are happy about having such equipment to assist and enhance their performance. These universities and colleges have skilled IT technicians to help the staff to help the staff with IT-related problems, and to maintain the computer system.

The responses were good with regard to universities' and colleges' working environments; it seems that the staff are happy and sometimes they share information and decisions in flexible and respectful manners. The administrators also agreed that their universities' and colleges' management encourage new

innovative ideas and respect staff opinions. This is a good indication of good management at these private institutions.

Finally, the administrators felt that the management of their universities and colleges were providing new facilities, offices, and office equipment, to help employees perform their duties. The administrative employees were still unhappy about the motivation policies at their institutions.

C: Second Set of Qualitative Data

The second set of qualitative data from this study is the outcome of several interviews with the Director General of the private universities and colleges at the Ministry of Higher Education, human resources managers of some public ministries, such as the Ministry of Service, the Ministry of Housing, and the Ministry of Communication, and with a few graduates from the selected universities and colleges already working in the public sector. The main objective of the interviews was to collect data and get feedback on the performance of the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges, the quality of the programmes, and the skills of the graduates from external parties.

The first interview was conducted on 14 May 2008 with the Director General of the private universities and colleges, and took place at the Ministry of Higher Education. The data were collected during the interviews with the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges and my practical experiences contributed in asking the right questions. First, I introduced myself to the interviewee and presented my research topic, which is the performance of the presidents and deans of selected private universities and colleges and their contributions to society by providing skilled graduates to feed the national economy. In addition, I explained the importance of having good academic leaders to run both public and private universities and colleges, and that their role is to offer quality programmes to meet the requirements of society and to satisfy different interested parties such as parents and students, and the public and private sectors.

Table 18 explains the type of questions addressed to the Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education and the rationale behind such questions.

Table18: Questions addressed to the Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education

No	Questions/Statement	Justification for asking questions
1.	<p>As you are aware that the importance of academic leaders to run both public and private universities has become an important issue to satisfy different interested parties such as the Ministry of Higher Education, students, parents, communities, and the public and private sectors.</p> <p>The Ministry of Higher Education gives approval to the appointments of presidents, deans and lecturers at private universities and colleges. What are the criteria set by the Ministry of Higher Education in order to approve such important appointments? Is it mandatory to provide a guideline for private universities and colleges to recruit for their senior academic positions?</p>	To understand the government policies and criteria to appoint presidents and deans at the private higher education institutions.
2.	Do you approve of the advertisements of the private universities and colleges to match the required criteria of the Ministry of Higher Education before releasing them, and if so, why?	To look in detail at the role of the Ministry of Higher Education as regards releasing advertisements from private universities and colleges.
3.	In your opinion what is the role of the academic leaders at private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman? Do you think private universities and colleges have qualified and experienced academic leaders who contribute towards human resource	To check if the officials at the Ministry of Higher Education understand and follow up the role of the academic leaders at

	development?	the private universities and colleges.
4.	How do you evaluate current presidents and deans at private universities and colleges? Are they really qualified and experienced academic leaders or only managers employed to run the business activities rather than higher education institutions? Do you have the right to ask private universities and colleges to look for another president or dean if their performance is not as expected or if the Ministry of Higher Education does not interfere?	<p>To understand the evaluation policies and strategies of the performance of the presidents/deans of the private universities and colleges.</p> <p>To know the role of the Ministry of Higher Education if the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges fail to fulfil their responsibilities.</p>
5.	Are you happy with regard to the performance of the presidents and deans at the private universities and colleges in terms of quality of education and quality of their graduates?	To understand the current views of the officials at the Ministry of Higher Education.
6.	Some students and parents prefer to see Omanis as university presidents and deans if they have the right qualifications and experiences even they are less than those of non Omanis. What is the role of the Ministry of Higher Education concerning the Omanis' senior academic posts at private higher education institutions?	To check the role of the Ministry of Higher Education to replace non-Omanis (expatriates) to handle senior academic posts at private higher education institutions.

7.	What are the criteria in your own opinion to appoint presidents and deans at the private universities and colleges especially if you are directly supervising both public and private higher education institutions?	To know the opinion of the officials at the Ministry of Higher Education about the type of presidents and deans they want to have at the public and private higher education institutions.
8	What is the role of the Ministry of Higher Education if it identifies that a president or dean is unsuitable in the post?	To understand the policies of the Ministry of Higher Education.

Analysis of the response of the Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education

The policy of the Ministry of Higher Education is to approve the appointments of presidents, deans and lecturers at private universities and colleges. I asked about the policy and the criteria set by the Ministry of Higher Education to approve such important appointments.

The Director General answered that the main requirement of the Ministry is to accept candidates with PhD qualifications and academic experience or those who have attained the level of professor and who have had academic experience at higher education institutions. If the candidates meet such requirements, the Ministry of Higher Education gives its approval to appoint presidents and deans at private universities and colleges.

The second question posed to the interviewee was about the role of the presidents and deans of the private higher education institutions and whether they have the right qualifications and experience that enable them to contribute toward human resource development in the Sultanate of Oman. He replied that the roles of the president and deans are to run their universities and colleges effectively and to be responsible for the academic programmes as well as the administration

and the financial stability of their institutions. Their qualifications and experiences in higher education management are important factors towards the success of their institutions.

A key issue was raised while I was interviewing the Director General about the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges. This issue was about the policies and the procedures of the Ministry of Higher Education to give its approval to release advertisements to appoint lecturers for the private higher education institutions. The Director General replied that the Ministry of Higher Education does not approve advertisements to appoint academic lecturers at private universities and colleges; however, the Ministry interferes if the private universities and colleges want to introduce new programmes. The Ministry requires details such as the general requirements of the programme, expected number of students, lecturers' qualifications, and the availability of facilities.

I discussed with the Director General the reasons behind recruiting a few qualified Omanis as lecturers in the private universities and colleges. He answered that the Government encourages qualified Omanis to work as lecturers and there is an Omanization Committee chaired by the Ministry of Manpower, which has members from other Government sectors who are responsible for determining the percentage of the Omani academic staff working at private institutions. However, most of the available qualified Omanis are working in the Government institutions and few of them work on a part-time basis at the private universities and colleges. He added that the private universities and colleges are keen to send their top students to get higher qualifications and to become lecturers if the Ministry of Higher Education covers the fees. The Ministry of Higher Education encourages and supports this idea, but still, some financial constraints hinder its implementation.

The Director General stated that improving higher education is costly and time consuming and the Government is trying to help the private institutions. One of the difficult questions was about the evaluation of current presidents and deans at private universities and colleges and if they really have the right qualifications and

experience as academic leaders or only managers to run their institutions in the form of business activities and not as higher education.

I also asked about the policy and the power of the Ministry of Higher Education to instruct the private university or college to replace the president or dean if their performance is not as expected. The Director General replied if there are valid remarks about any leader at the private higher education institutions and if we find he is unable to lead such an institution, or has culture and loyalty problems, the Ministry immediately advises the council of the institution concerned to find a replacement. He added that the success of the academic leaders at the higher education institutions depends on their levels of authority and the long-term vision of their council members. Therefore, the influence of the council on the administration of these institutions is a very critical issue. The presidents and deans must have enough academic and financial authority to enable them to take decisions on time and to run their institutions effectively. The presidents of the private universities in Oman have been given the authority by their councils to run their institutions with trust and flexibility from their councils. Therefore, these universities are moving in the right direction.

The deans` degree of authority varies from one college to another. The deans of some colleges have given a great deal of authority to run their activities, but most of the private colleges still limit the authorities of their deans and administrations.

The Ministry of Higher Education continuously advises the private universities and colleges through its representatives at the council of these institutions and always advises them to grant much more authority to their presidents and deans.

The performance of the presidents of the private universities is good according to the opinion of the Director General and he hopes to see the same performance at the private colleges.

I raised a critical question about the opinion of some students and parents who prefer to see Omanis as university presidents and deans if they have the right qualifications and experience even if it is less than non-Omanis. He replied that the Ministry of Higher Education supports qualified Omanis to be leaders at

private higher education institutions. The Omani presidents and deans understand the tradition of the society and students' needs, and they are increasingly keen to ensure quality higher education. However, most qualified Omanis are working at the public universities and public colleges and prefer to continue at their present jobs.

The councils of the private universities and colleges are supporting the Ministry's policy if they find suitable and qualified candidates and respect the Ministry's opinion, but some council members are looking more towards profit when appointing a non-Omani for the leadership posts.

Finally, I asked the Director General about the criteria to appoint presidents and deans and he replied that the suitable candidate must have the following:

- PhD qualification in higher education, experience in administration and finance; and should have a long-term vision and mission to lead the future of the institution.
- Independent and authorised decision maker without interference from the council members.
- Fully aware of new trends in higher education through their participation at international conferences.
- Prefer the candidate to be Omani if they have the qualifications, experience, and leadership skills.

The interview was an open-ended semi-formal one. It was a successful interview and I managed to get the required information from the interviewee, which contributed to build the main principals of the leadership model. The president's or dean's post is very important to determine the success of the private higher education institutions and careful criteria need to be considered, especially the candidate experience, culture awareness and skills development. The Ministry of Higher Education supports qualified Omanis to run private universities and colleges.

Interviews with Human Resource Managers in the public sector

I interviewed four managers, from public Ministries, dealing directly with employees' development and training. They share the same concerns with regards to fresh graduates, skills and behaviour. I introduced myself first, along with my research aims, and assured them of the confidentiality of the discussed data.

I was aiming to understand the level of quality of the graduates in their field and common knowledge, and the current skills and types of required in the workplace and for the graduates' performance at work.

The first table will explain the type of questions addressed to Human Resource Directors and training head sections at the public Ministries and the reasons behind such questions. The second table will show the response of the interviewees and the researcher's remarks followed by the data analysis.

Tables 19: Questions addressed to the Human Resource Managers in the public sector

No	Questions/Statement	Justification for asking question
1.	As you are a key member of your organisation to interview select and train graduates from different fields to fill different kind of jobs? How do you evaluate the quality of private local universities' and colleges' graduates in terms of their specialisations and their general knowledge?	To get opinions of human resource managers about graduate level of quality in their field and common knowledge.
2.	Students learned different skills beside their specialisations, which enable them to carry out their work immediately without the need for additional training.	To check what types of skills most graduates acquired and what skills are required at the

	Do you agree, or how do you see universities' and colleges' graduates in terms of having the necessary skills? How long does it take for university and college graduates to be ready to perform well at their jobs?	workplace.
3.	What are the important administrative and technical skills necessary to be taught to students?	To get some ideas about the types of skills required in the workplace.
4.	Have you faced any kind of problems with graduates with regards to being unwilling to perform certain basic duties, and also insisting on implementing their own new ideas and projects?	To check graduates' attitudes towards jobs.
5.	Is there any communication between the management of private universities and colleges and government ministries to exchange views and experiences to develop programmes or amend the current programmes to meet the real job requirements in the public sector? If such networks exist, do you think universities and colleges will use them?	
6.	How do you see quality in higher education and quality of those who graduated from private universities and colleges?	
7.	What advice would you like to give to the management of private universities and colleges to have the best-qualified students?	

Interviews with the following government officials

- Director of Human Resource Department at the Ministry of Civil Services (A)
- Director of Human Resources at the Ministry of Transportation and Communication (B)
- Head of the Training Section at the Ministry of Housing (C)
- Director of Recruitment at the Ministry of Civil Services (D)

Questions/Statements

Q1- As you are a key member of your organisation to interview, and select graduates from different fields for training to fill different kind of jobs, how do you evaluate the quality of private local universities' and colleges' graduates in term of their specialisations and their general knowledge?

A	<p>"The graduates in general vary in their levels of general knowledge and their education. It depends on individual capabilities. We find the differences in terms of skills among graduates of the same qualifications from the same university. Skills development and familiarity with general subjects depend on individuals' capabilities to gain such knowledge... There is a serious need to evaluate the monitoring strategies of the Ministry of Higher Education to assure quality of education and skills development of students."</p>
B	<p>"We have few local colleges...Most of the employees are diploma holders and they complete their studies on their own during the evening without full concentration on their studies which affects the quality of the graduates. The public Ministries do not have enough budgets to train their employees and it takes time to get approval from the Ministry of Civil Services."</p>

C	“We don’t have enough support from the Ministry and most of us join evening classes after a long working day. We don’t have enough time to study and our aim is to have a certificate for promotion purposes.”
D	“The psychological willingness and clear objectives of the student are important to have quality graduates even if universities and colleges vary in their quality standards. The quality of programmes at the universities contribute to the quality of graduates...The Ministry of Civil Services advertises for job vacancies regardless of the reputations of the universities, and the selection of good candidates depends on the results of interviews and exams. We find a good quality of graduates from the University of Sultan Qaboos due to government support, good lecturers and quality of programmes, and the quality of graduates varies between local universities and universities abroad.”

Remarks of the researcher:

- There is a need to enhance the role of the Ministry of Higher Education to maintain quality standards at higher education institutions.
- The universities need to create awareness among students of the importance of different skills such as presentation skills, communication skills and behaviour skills.

Q2- Students learned different skills beside their specialisations, which enables them to carry out their work immediately without additional training. Do you agree, or how do you see universities’ and colleges’ graduates in terms of having the necessary skills? How long does it take university and college graduates to be ready to perform well at their jobs?

A	"The graduates have no skills in general; however, some individuals have additional skills beside their majors ...the graduates need further training when recruited for a job."
B	"The graduates` skills depend on individuals and some of them are doing well ... The role of universities and colleges are to upgrade the general knowledge of students in addition to the required courses."
C	"Students are responsible for developing different types of skills beside their specialisations."
D	"The Ministry of Civil Service developed an evaluation exam which counted as 60% of the final result to test the cleverness and self assessment of the candidates, whereas interview committees test the personality and the general knowledge of the candidates concerning their subject areas."

Remarks of the researcher:

- Direct communication between universities and human resource departments of both public and private sectors is required.
- The university`s management needs to enhance students` capabilities to analyse different cases in different situations and to develop the personal characteristics of students.

Q3- What are the important administrative and technical skills necessary to be taught to students?

A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and computer skills - Presentation and linguistic skills - Behaviour skills and traditional principles - Writing skills
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B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business skills like companies' operations, market and finance activities. - Internet and computer skills - Behaviour skills
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business skills. - Internet and computer skills - Behaviour skills
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and computer skills - Presentation and linguistic skills - Behaviour skills

Remarks of the researcher:

- The universities need to develop such skills for their graduates.

Q4- Have you faced any kind of problems with graduates with regards to being reluctant to undertake certain basic duties, but who instead insist on implementing their own new ideas and projects?

A	<p>"Yes we have this problem; some graduates are showing off their social status after getting the jobs and look down on the employees with less qualifications and lower-level jobs... The universities need to coordinate with both the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Civil Services to introduce behaviour courses and invite government officials to give lectures about the nature of work in the public sector."</p>
B	No answer
C	No answer

D	“We select graduates for jobs based on their abilities and confidence and give them chances to enable themselves to prove their capabilities and confidence in the jobs. However, we do face a few difficulties with some graduates who intend to change from one job to another.”
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Remarks of the researcher:

- The university should have direct communication with the public sector to find solutions for graduates` problems after recruiting.
- The universities need to train their students to develop their personalities and to become confident and knowledgeable.

Q5- Is there any communication between management of private universities and colleges and government ministries to exchange views and experiences to develop programmes or amend the current programmes to meet the real job requirements in the public sector? If such networks exist, do you think universities and colleges will adopt this approach?

A	“Effective communication channels are required to get the real requirements of different sectors.”
B	“Marketing of programmes is the main aim of universities. There is no direct communication between university management and the public sector and both communicate through formal letters and reports.”
C	Same remarks as B
D	“There is no communication between the public sector and the universities and colleges, but there are representatives of some government ministries at committees of the Ministry of Higher Education... He suggested that universities` management should open up such issues with the public sector.”

Remarks of the researcher:

- The universities should have direct communication with the public and private sectors and discuss their educational programmes and training, and seek advice on the type of programmes required by both sectors.

Q6- How do you see quality in higher education and quality of those graduating from private universities and colleges?

A	"Quality in programmes depend on the courses, qualifications and experience of the lecturers."
B	"Yes, some colleges have quality in their programmes due to their good lecturers who are motivated to do well and play the role to educate and upgrade the general knowledge of the students... I suggested a unified recruitment and motivation system for all colleges."
C	Same as B
D	"The role of the personnel department is to select and recruit graduates; however, the quality of the graduates should be evaluated at their workplaces."

Remarks of the researcher:

- Universities should implement international standards to improve the quality of their programmes.

Q7- What advice would you like to give to the management of private universities and colleges to have the best-qualified students?

A	"To provide more academic and business advice to students."
B	"Qualified Omanis are more suitable to lead higher education institutions and will give more attention to students...Students` behaviour should be a major aim of universities beside the quality of their programmes."

C	<p>“Preferred to have Omanis in colleges and universities as they are familiar with the culture and more responsive to students` demands.</p> <p>Students` behaviour should be a major aim of universities besides the quality of their programmes.”</p>
D	<p>“Universities need to know the market requirements of different areas.</p> <p>Universities should place emphasis on engineering and medical programmes</p> <p>Universities should equip their students with different skills, and encourage and support them to do small to medium projects</p> <p>Suggest having qualified Omanis to lead higher education institutions due to their awareness of the culture and society</p> <p>Universities should put more effort into student behaviour and building their personalities.”</p>

Remarks of the researcher:

- These are good suggestions and will be injected when designing the Leadership Model for higher education in Oman.

The human resource managers at the public ministries look at the private higher education institutions in general as for-profit organisations accelerating their students` annual fees. They expressed their opinions that the private higher education institutions have limited necessary facilities like modern libraries and efficient internet services. They were of the view that there is no real quality at the private universities and colleges and the Ministry of Higher Education strategy fails to respond to the market requirements. However, some managers stated that some colleges have quality in their programmes due to their good lecturers who are motivated to do well and play their role to educate and upgrade the general

knowledge of the students. The human resource managers agreed with other opinions that the universities and colleges are under pressure to respond to the market demands and to provide skilled and qualified graduates to solve the social and economic problems within their societies (Burton, 2003).

To retain good lecturers, who can contribute to student skills development, the human resource managers suggested a unified recruitment and motivation system for all private universities and colleges to hinder lecturers' movements and to create staff settlement at their work. They consider their personnel department as a place to select and recruit graduates, but the quality of the graduates should be evaluated at their work stations. I believe there is a need to enhance the role of the Ministry of Higher Education to maintain quality standards at higher education institutions. The management of universities and private colleges need to create induction programmes to help students determine their future objectives, to choose the right programmes and to build students' skills such as presentation skills, communication skills, and behaviour skills. The universities also need to create awareness among students of the importance of different skills. I asked the interviewees about the level of different skills of the fresh graduates and if they require additional training. The answers indicated that the graduates in general vary in their levels of general knowledge, which all depended on individual capabilities. The human resource managers noticed the individual differences in terms of skills among graduates of the same qualifications from the same university.

The human resource managers added that most of the employees are diploma holders and they complete their studies on their own during the evening without full concentration on their studies, which affects the quality and the level of their skills development. The public ministries do not have enough budgets to train their employees and it takes time to get approval from the Ministry of Civil Services. The Ministry of Civil Services advertises job vacancies regardless the names or reputations of universities and the selection of good candidates depends on the results of interviews and exams. The human resource managers appreciated the quality of graduates from the University of Sultan Qaboos due to the government support, good lecturers and quality of programmes.

One of the key issues raised by the interviewees was the importance of preparing fresh students psychologically to accept the idea of quality education. The psychological willingness and clear objectives of students' future education is an important factor to acquire quality education even if universities and colleges vary in their quality standards. The quality of programmes at the private universities and private colleges contributing to the quality of graduates varies between local universities and universities abroad. The human resource managers emphasised the need to evaluate the monitoring strategies of the Ministry of Higher Education to assure quality of education and skills development of students. They would like to see the graduates mastering different skills, which are needed for them to work effectively in the public and the private sectors. These skills include business skills, writing skills, presentation and linguistic skills, communication, internet and computer skills, and behaviour skills.

I agree with the views of the human resource managers about the need to enhance the role of the Ministry of Higher Education to maintain quality standards at higher education institutions. On the other hand, the private higher education institutions need to create awareness among students of the importance of different skills such presentation skills, communication skills, and behaviour skills. For example, the management of private universities and colleges need to create induction programmes to help students determine their future objectives and to choose the right programmes and skills development.

Students' behaviour was raised during the interviews with the human resource managers because some public institutions face such a problem. Some graduates were proud of their social status after getting the jobs and tended to look down on the employees with less qualifications and lower-level jobs. These attitudes have affected their performance and led to inefficient and unprofessional communication among employees. The interviewees assured me that their selection of graduates for jobs was based on abilities and confidence and the new employees were given chances to prove their capabilities and confidence relating to the jobs. However, public agencies have faced a few difficulties with some graduates who intended to change from one job to another. The human resource managers want the private universities and colleges to introduce behaviour

courses and to conduct seminars on the same subject with full participation from public ministries.

The private universities and colleges should have direct communication with the public sector to find solutions for graduates' problems after recruiting. These higher education institutions also need to train their students to build their personalities and to become confident and knowledgeable.

The relationship between the management of the private universities and colleges and the public and the private sectors is very important. One of the key indicators of good academic leadership is to have a wide range of relationships and to exchange ideas with the business people in order to build good programmes and to provide quality graduates. Since the objective of this research was to investigate the performance of the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges, I asked the human resource managers about their relationship and levels of cooperation with these higher education institutions.

The Director General from the Ministry of Higher Education already indicated that there is no direct communication between the public sector and the management of the private universities and colleges, but there are representatives from the public ministries at different committees at the Ministry of Higher Education. The human resource managers agreed that the private universities and colleges should have direct communications with the public and private sectors and discuss their educational programmes and training, and seek advice on the type of programmes required by both sectors.

The final question addressed to the human resource managers was to check their preference between national Omani leaders and non-Omanis (expatriates) who can run private universities and colleges. The interviewees replied that qualified Omanis are more suitable for leading higher education institutions as they will give more attention to students. They also added that the presidents of private universities and deans of private colleges should meet students regularly and discuss with them different academic and administrative issues.

The interviewees recommended several pieces of advice to help the decision

makers to choose the right presidents and deans for their private universities and colleges. The presidents and deans of institutions should have higher qualifications in management and leadership, good experience in teaching and research and be able to handle administration and financial issues.

The other points raised by the interviewees focused on the importance of openness and open dialogue between private universities and colleges and the Ministry of Higher Education to exchange ideas and experience to develop the quality of the programmes, the quality of the graduates and to review the educational strategies so as to respond to market needs.

To summarise the key points and the recommendations of the human resource managers and the officials of the Ministry of Higher Education, the candidates for the post of presidents or deans of private universities and colleges should have a PhD in leadership and management, and to be familiar with the market needs, and preferably should be qualified national citizens to lead higher education institutions due to their awareness of Oman's culture and society.

The presidents and dean should concentrate more on offering science and engineering majors in their institutions. In addition they should upgrade students' skills and direct them to proper behaviour, which is needed in the workplace.

Interviews with graduates working in the public sector

The following tables 6 and 7 show the type of questions put to some graduates and the justifications for asking such questions, the responses by graduates, then the analysis.

The aim of these questions is to check the level of satisfaction of some graduates at work.

Table 19: Interview questions addressed to graduates

Name: _____ Major: _____ Graduation Year: _____

Name of Universities : Sohar (), Nizwa (), Dhofar ()

Name of the Colleges: Majan (), Muscat (), Modern College ()

No	Questions	Justification for asking the question
1.	As you aware there are differences between studying and doing real work, are you satisfied with your work and do you enjoy what you are doing?	To understand the graduates' satisfaction with their work and their work situations.
2.	As you aware there are variances among universities and colleges with regards to quality of teaching, teaching materials and quality of faculty members? Is there any relation between the courses you studied and your current work?	To check the link between what students learned at their universities and colleges and their practical work.
3.	Students learned different skills beside their core courses during their studies at universities and colleges. These skills include: communication skills, negotiation skills, performing reports and computer skills. The students need such skills to get a job and to compete with other students. Did you learn such skills while you were at university or college? Are these	To check the graduates' opinions about the importance of skills at their workplaces and if they learned such skills at their universities or colleges.

	<p>skills important for your work?</p> <p>Would you like to advise universities' and colleges' administration in this regard?</p>	
4.	<p>The types of work you are doing are matching or close to your area of specialisation at your university or college. What are the important skills you wish you had learned at your university or college that will help you in your workplace?</p>	<p>To understand the types of skills required for both the public and the private sectors.</p>
5.	<p>Basic training is essential at the beginning of your work, and then gradually you are supposed to be offered more training courses to develop your work performance. Have you done any training courses up to this point? Was it possible to have such training courses at your university or college if there was a communication network between higher education institutions and both public and private sectors?</p>	<p>To learn the type of training programmes provided at the workplace and if possible to inject them within university and college courses.</p>
6.	<p>Some graduates face difficulties in dealing with their managers or supervisors due to different qualifications and experience between the two, and on occasion, some graduates try to impose their ideas and projects on their boss. Have you faced such difficulties with your managers</p>	<p>To understand the relationship between university / college administration and the public and private sectors.</p> <p>To understand the difficulties between graduates and their supervisors from practical point of</p>

	and if yes what is the solution in your opinion? Do you think that universities and colleges can play a role to solve such problems?	views and the role of universities and colleges.
7.	The difficulties between graduates and their managers and supervisors may be related to the educational gap between them and their managers; therefore some graduates start looking for other jobs that match their majors and their ambitions. Do you agree and are you looking for another job you think you could perform better?	To understand if the educational and experience gap between graduates and their managers can be reasons for work problems between the two.
8.	Government jobs are more secure and have less pressure than jobs in the private sector which offer better salaries. Could you express your opinion and which sector you prefer?	To know the opinion of graduates of which sectors they prefer to work with.
9.	Quality in higher education and training is very important at higher education institutions to attract students' enrolment. Do you think your university or college has quality in their programmes? If yes please explain? If no do you relate the problem to: - The president of the university or dean of the college	To check the graduates' opinion about quality at their universities/colleges.

	- Curricula or lecturers, or both	
10.	What is the advice you would like give to presidents of private universities and deans of the colleges to provide qualified graduates for both the public and the private sectors?	To understand what is in the minds of graduates to see what their future universities' and colleges' administration look like.

Interviews with the following graduates of different specialisations and from different universities and colleges

1. Adulhakeem Albalushi, Electrical Engineering, University of Sohar, 2008. **(A)**
2. Alya Algafri, Accounting, Modern College - Graduation Year: 2007. **(B)**
3. Fayga Alzakwani, Accounting, Modern College, 2002. **(C)**
4. Ahmed Alkindy, Business Administration, University of Sohar, 2008. **(D)**
5. Sami Almushrafy, Business Administration, Majan College, 2006. **(E)**
6. Salim Alharasy, Accounting, Majan College, 2007. **(F)**

Questions/Statements

Q 1. As you aware there are differences between studying and doing real work. Are you satisfied with your work and do you enjoy what you are doing?

Students' responses

Table No.8 Interview questions addressed to graduates

A	There is a big difference between practical work and study at the university and I only use 10% of the knowledge I learned and used at work which is mostly basic. The university's curriculum was not updated to match work requirements.
B	Yes, satisfied with her work and she is doing taxation. Her skills are mainly in accounting reports and math.

C	She is satisfied with her job and rated this as 95%; she is dealing with salaries and allowances which she stated are far removed from her specialisation, but she had previous experience in these previously. Also she is happy about the organisation system at her work.
D	Yes, he said he is satisfied with his work and has ambitions to do better in the future. His work is mainly registration and admission with limited authority and his new ideas and recommendations are not taken into consideration by his manager, but he is not facing work pressure and there is cooperation among the employees despite their low salary and long working day.
E	<p>He said business administration includes courses such as Human Resources from which I benefited much in my work, but other subjects such as Finance and IT applied little to the workplace.</p> <p>He added that studying different courses influences the students' thinking and there are ideas and concepts which can be implemented at the workplace but most of such practices have been done in the private sector.</p>
F	Higher education provides additional knowledge to students to help them to be creative in their thinking. Higher education is not a direct reflection of the students' abilities at their practical work and it only develops personal abilities.

Q 2. As you aware there are variances among universities and colleges with regards to quality of teaching, teaching materials and quality of faculty members. Is there any relation between the courses you studied and your current work?

Answers

A	The students vary in their understanding and they learn more if the university conducts workshops to implement the literature side of the scientific courses. There is more focus on the literature side than the practical aspects which is known by the lecturers themselves. He suggested tying in the curriculum with the work requirements and creating awareness among students with regards to job requirements and the expected outcome of the graduates.
B	She agreed that there is a link between what she studied and the work she is doing. She was happy about the quality in the college, both materials and lecturers.
C	No direct relation between the courses she studied and her work and the college only contributed to building her personality and how to handle issues. What she appreciates more is her English language and the skills to communicate with others.

D	The most important subject applied to his work is organisational theory especially organisational charts; also other subjects such as human resources, accounting, electronic business, marketing and economics.
E	He said the college did not organise field visits to either the public sector or the private companies, which are very important to enlighten students about the real practical work.
F	There are some courses that are considered important in the private sector such as Operations Management, and Organisational Behaviour.

Q 3: Students learned different skills beside their core courses during their studies at universities and colleges. These skills include: communication skills, negotiation skills, performing reports and computer skills. The students need such skills to get a job and to compete with other students. Did you learn such skills while you were at university or college? Are these skills important for your work?

Would you like to advise universities' and colleges' administration in this regard?

Answers

A	<p>The students learned only the basic IT skills. Other skills are essential for students for their life and their practical work.</p> <p>He said the university must give full attention to its students more from the practical side than just the academic side only.</p> <p>The academic staff should not be from the same nationality, but a mix of lecturers with different experiences, and from different nationalities. Most of the lecturers are from Arab countries.</p>
B	She said yes, she learned some skills during her field training at some companies. She advised students to participate in the college activities to build their personalities and their skills and to be more open towards society.
C	<p>Skills are very important and the college at this time does not separate teaching different skills, and students only learned through attending different courses. The college also did not have student activities at that time, possibly because it was a new college.</p> <p>Advice :</p>

	<p>-The college needs to put more effort into student activities to build their skills.</p>
D	<p>He said he did not learn any skills at the university, and only a limited range from different courses and agreed with regard to the importance of learning different skills. He mentioned that he is not happy about his English skills; however he was told not to pay attention to learning English during English courses because he would catch up when he registers on other subject courses which were mainly in English.</p> <p>Advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students` satisfaction is very important and the university should provide all possible facilities to the students. - The university should not put so much pressure on students to pay their fees. - The importance of coordination between students and registration department to ensure students` are not unsettled.
E	<p>Advice:</p> <p>To include civil service law and regulations, labour law and social law as part of the core courses for all majors.</p> <p>Majan College is one of the first colleges in Oman and in general there is no quality in its higher education. The college depends on cheap lecturers from Asia. Sometimes one good lecturer reflects good quality at the college. Sometimes the student is good, but the study system is not helping to provide a good education.</p> <p>The college accepts the minimum grade at high school with a low English level.</p>

Q4. The types of work you are doing are matching or close to your area of specialisation at your university or college. What are the important skills you wish you had learned at your university or college that would have helped you in your workplace?

Answers

A	I wish I had learned all types of skills. I wish I had undertaken more field studies, and I had no practical experience in my final semester.
B	The most important skills, she said, was how to deal with companies, meetings skills either as a member or chairman, time management and communication skills.
C	<p>She prefers to separate skills development courses from the main courses and she thinks this will be more enjoyable for the students.</p> <p>Communication, interviews and presentation skills.</p> <p>Report- and memo-writing skills.</p> <p>Using new technology.</p> <p>Computer skills.</p> <p>Upgrade general knowledge for students through different presentations.</p>
D	<p>English language is very important.</p> <p>Computer, information technology and electronic business.</p> <p>Communication.</p> <p>Business writing and reporting.</p> <p>Writing formal letters.</p>
E	There is a difference between study time and practical work. Students rarely attend workshops or short courses to upgrade their skills. A workshop in human resources is very important.
F	<p>The quality problems are divided between students and lecturers who have Master's degrees. The student's aim is to get a qualification without considering the quality of education provided.</p> <p>Learning different skills depends on the students themselves. During the Master's degree the students learn more skills.</p> <p>Skills are very important and students must learn different skills.</p>

Q 5. Basic training is essential at the beginning of your work, and then gradually you are supposed to attend more training courses to develop your work

performance. Have you done any training courses up to this point?

Was it possible to have such training courses at your university or college if there is a communication network between higher education institutions and both public and private sectors ?

Answers

A	He said most of the private companies are willing to cooperate with academic institutions as long as their students have good practical ideas. Also the university management should support its students.
B	She had three months training to do different types of work. She also had internet courses.
C	She said she had basic training to familiarise herself with different types of work and also she attended other training courses related to her job.
D	He said that he joined his work directly without any training. He did attend different training courses and he felt most of them were not practical.
E	Mr. Sami did not learn any skills while he was in the college and he had preferred to learn different skills as separate programmes.
F	<p>He said he is working as an auditor but he did not study auditing during his study. He did learn accounting.</p> <p>Mr.Salim did not attend a training course and he said staff training depends on the organisational culture concerning the importance of training.</p> <p>Colleges need to conduct different specialised courses.</p> <p>Different sectors require different types of training.</p> <p>Students are assigned to practical training at different ministries ,but do not have full cooperation from government agencies</p> <p>What is the advice from the students` points of view?</p> <p>There is a need to have formal contact between universities and both public and private sectors to assure good training for students and to create an awareness of the importance of practical training.</p>

Q 6. Some graduates face difficulties in dealing with their managers or supervisors due to different qualifications and levels of experience between the two, and sometimes graduates try to impose their ideas and projects on their boss. Have you faced such difficulties with your managers and if yes what is the solution in your opinion? Do you think that universities and colleges can play a role to solve such problems?

Answers

A	Yes, I had three months training when I joined work and then the companies provided training courses to develop its employees` skills. The university intends to advertise and market itself when it selects training places for its students. The university should select practical training places very carefully.
B	The relationship between higher education institutions and both public and private sectors is important to share the experience and to discuss the qualifications and the training needs of both sectors.
C	Yes, she prefers to have direct communication between public and private sectors and higher education institutions to have a better arrangement to enrol the graduate easily to do both short training and work in these sectors in the future.
D	He strongly agreed with the need to strengthen the cooperation and communication between higher education institutions and both public and private sectors to share mutual needs in terms of quality education and skilled labourers.
E	He said more workshops are required. To put more efforts towards students` skills in the English language. To teach students how to write letters, reports and emails.
F	He did not face difficulty with his supervisors and he advises new graduates to be patient in order to appreciate the efforts done by the employees and the manager who are already running their department.

Q7. The difficulties between graduates and their managers and supervisors may be related to the educational gap between them and their areas of expertise; therefore some graduates start looking for other jobs that better match their majors and their

ambitions. Do you agree and are you looking for another job you think you could perform better at?

Answers

A	<p>Yes, some graduates face such difficulties especially with experienced managers and other employees. The graduate student has to motivate themselves to cope with managers and other employees.</p> <p>The solution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Full cooperation should be built with private companies is required to conduct workshops and seminars should be held for mutual interest. -The university should benefit from its top and distinctive students who are successful in their work. -The university should have a student affairs unit/department with a clear strategy to serve students and to care about their future. He felt that the university is focusing more on marketing than caring about their students. -He replied that he agrees that he will look for another job in which he can perform better, and have better opportunities.
B	<p>She did not face any problems and she is doing the required jobs. She added that the communication between the employees and their managers is limited.</p>
C	<p>Yes there are difficulties with the Civil Service Law and regulations which limit the implementation of new ideas. She recommended changing such law and regulations to be more flexible.</p>
D	<p>Mr. Ahmed is not facing any difficulties with his supervisors and all the managers at his workplace are educated and cooperative.</p>
E	<p>He faced no difficulties with his managers and there is communication and encouragement for training.</p>
F	<p>The problem with graduates is that they feel that they have knowledge and want to implement it as soon as possible. They need to benefit gradually from such knowledge.</p> <p>Most of the colleges are trying to link theories and real work at ministries and inform students about mismanagement at these agencies. There is a need to create awareness among lecturers to make sure of their examples and to be responsible about the data they are communicating to students.</p> <p>Follow up students' training programmes with government ministries through having a special department or unit in each college.</p>

Q 8. Government jobs are more secure and experience less pressure than jobs in the private sector which offer better salaries. Could you express your opinion and which sector you prefer?

Answers

A	Mr. Abdualhakeem prefers to work in the private rather than the government sector which has more routine work and which means he cannot develop his skills.
B	She is not thinking about moving from the private sector to the public sector. The only difficulty is the times she is on duty, which is in the morning and the evening. The private sector is fine with her.
C	The higher education institutions can play a major part in developing such a system if there is a higher decision from the government.
D	Yes, he said he is looking for another job to satisfy his ambition. He prefers government jobs. He said only big companies are good in the private sector.
E	The relationship between university and students ends after graduation, but sometimes some students go back to their lecturers to get help in the workplace. The college maintain a network with its graduates. The college gives more attention to students from a higher social and makes more effort to help them to help them pass the courses and to find jobs for them after graduation. Salary is not always the motivation to shift from one job to another. The private sector gives a chance to its employees to be creative and to advance in their careers.
F	He advises graduates to work in the public sector especially those with higher education qualifications such as Masters and PhDs. The private sector provides more chances to graduates to be creative.

Q 9. Quality in higher education and training is very important at higher education institutions to attract students' enrolment. Do you think your university or college has quality in their programmes? If yes, please explain? If no, do you relate the problem to:

- The president of the university or dean of the college
- Curriculum and lecturers
- Both?

Answers

A	He said he was not happy about quality at this university and related the problems to the management, curriculum and the lecturer. He added that the university focused on the literature/academic part of the courses and practical training still needs further development. He believes that the university has to develop and the market needs play a major part to motivate students to learn better.
B	She felt the college has quality in its programmes. Students have a good command of the English language and most graduates are smart in their jobs.
C	There is a good working environment. She is not thinking about changing her work or looking for another job.
D	There is quality in higher education and the modern college is providing excellent education.
E	A quality of education exists at Majan College, but it is rated at the middle level. Lecturers are not always qualified. English language should be taught by English speakers.
F	Unequal salary among colleges. The common understanding of the lecturers is that the students are looking for degrees rather than good qualifications. Lack of follow-up from the Ministry of Higher Education to maintain quality at the private colleges.

	<p>Lack of qualified staff at the Ministry of Higher Education.</p> <p>Students are sent from other public agencies to pursue their higher education in the evening.</p> <p>Students should attain a good level of English before enrolling in academic study.</p> <p>Direct follow-up from the dean of the college and direct contact with students.</p> <p>Assure the quality of the lecturers and retain good ones.</p>
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Q10. What is the advice you would like give to presidents of private universities and deans of the colleges to provide qualified graduates for both the public and the private sectors?

Answers

A	<p>The university should concentrate more on the practical training especially on the scientific majors such as the engineering and electronic fields.</p> <p>Encourage the recruitment of lecturers of different nationalities in the academic side.</p> <p>Provide more skills programmes to help students in their studies and their practical life.</p> <p>Motivate Omani lecturers to enrol as lecturers in different fields.</p>
B	<p>She recommended more training courses and to diversify students' fields of work.</p>
C	<p>She preferred to work in the government sector.</p> <p>She stated that course quality was excellent. The only concern from her point of view was the college management which focused a great deal on students' fees.</p> <p>She recommended having one orientation event/activity to familiarise students with the college laws and regulations, courses and the study system, rather than just giving students a tour of the college.</p> <p>The college should have qualified academic leaders to be fair to all students, and not to look after students from a social status point of view.</p> <p>The college management should be transparent with the students.</p>
D	<p>The college should concentrate on quality of education rather than the</p>

	<p>financial profit.</p> <p>Students need good treatment.</p> <p>To strengthen the communication and cooperation between higher education institutions and different sectors.</p> <p>To feed students with different practical training to qualify them with skills.</p>
E	<p>The college has to give more attention to its students than their fees, and profit should be a long-term objective.</p> <p>More attention to the practical side especially during summer time.</p> <p>To conduct additional short courses during the summer break.</p> <p>To invite government employees to give presentations about their work at the government sector.</p> <p>To continue to communicate and cooperate with the private sector.</p>
F	<p>The main problem at the colleges is that it is the council that chooses the lecturers, not the deans.</p>

6. 3 SUMMARY OF THE GRADUATES' RESPONSES (FINDING)

Several questions were raised during my interviews with some graduates of the selected private universities and colleges to seek their opinions about the knowledge and skills they learned and their situation in the workplace.

The first question was about the graduates' satisfaction in their work. The graduates explained the big differences between practical work and the study at the private universities and colleges, stating that, in basic terms, only 10% of the skills and knowledge they learned are used at their work. The courses' materials did not match work requirements, and the students preferred to have practical and training sessions in addition to the literature they learned. They suggested there should be a closer link between their curricula and the work requirements and that these should include civil service law and regulations, labour law and social law as part of the core courses for all majors. The graduates wanted additional awareness sessions about job requirements and the expected outcomes of their performance. They would like their private universities and colleges to organise

field visits to both the public sector and private companies to expose students to real practical work.

One of the interviewees explained that the type of work determines the required skills and knowledge and his courses at the university helped him introduce different ideas that can be implemented at his work. He added that he benefited from some courses and he applied some ideas at work, but other subjects such as IT and finance were rarely applied. However, the graduates appreciated the concepts and ideas of some courses such as Operations Management and Organisational Behaviour as important, and that they are required both in the public and the private sectors. The graduates explained that higher education offers additional knowledge to students to help them to be creative in their thinking; however, higher education in itself is not a direct reflection of the students' abilities in their practical work and it only develops personal abilities.

The second interview question was about the direct relationship between the courses at the universities and colleges and the current work of the graduates. The graduates' answers showed different views, and some of the graduates agreed on the relationship between the study materials and work requirements, which leads to graduates' satisfaction with the quality their private universities and colleges are offering. Other graduates, however, felt that there was no direct relationship between the courses they studied and their work with the exception of their English language and communication skills. The students learned only the basic IT skills as explained by one graduate, but other skills such as communication skills, negotiation skills, performing reports, computer skills, analytical thinking, and business writing are also important to help the graduates in their life and their practical work. The graduates appreciated their institutions that offered important courses in the field such as organisational theories (especially organisational charts), human resources, accounting, electronic business, marketing and economics. Learning these subjects helps the graduates to gain an overall general knowledge about the important issues in the public and private organisations.

The graduates came up with some advice for the management of their universities and colleges; this includes implementing the necessary strategy to give more attention to practical training than just theories. They wanted their universities and colleges to put more efforts into students' activities to build their skills and to separate skills development courses from the main courses' requirements. The students need to be aware of their capabilities, skills and qualifications to meet their future job requirements. The graduates wanted to see the academic staff of their universities and colleges from different nationalities with good qualifications and experience to enrich their general knowledge. Finally, the graduates wanted to see improvements in the quality of teaching and the study systems of their private institutions.

The graduates made other important remarks about what could enhance their skills, such as their practical training and their final year projects. For example, the selection of the right training places is a very important step to get the maximum benefits and most of the private companies are willing to cooperate with academic institutions as long as their students have good practical ideas. The graduates felt that some private universities and colleges tend to concentrate more on advertising and marketing their programmes when they send their students for training rather than achieving the main purpose of training, which is to build students' skills.

The students should participate in the universities' and colleges' activities to build their personalities and develop their skills and to be more open towards society.

One of the important pieces of feedback I received from the graduates was the issue of relationships between the private universities and colleges. Universities should develop their relationships with both the public and the private sectors by organising seminars, committees and conferences to share their ideas and experience, which would help universities and colleges to choose the proper programmes, develop their quality of education, and produce skilled and qualified students. This strategy will minimise the graduates' difficulties and problems which they are facing at their workplace. There are issues between the higher education institutions and the public and private agencies, which affect the

perception of both sides and communicate the wrong message to the students. For example, most of the lecturers at the universities and colleges are trying to link theories and real work at government agencies by telling students about management problems at these agencies without checking their resources. The graduates accept these perceptions and want to implement their theories and knowledge immediately after getting their jobs. Therefore, they face difficulties with their managers who have the experience, but who may not have the same qualifications as the graduates.

I agreed with the graduates' remarks that there is a need to strengthen the relationship between the universities and colleges and both the public and the private sectors. The universities and colleges should advise their lecturers to confirm the data, which they present to students and avoid criticising the public and private sectors for their management and operations.

In general, the graduates were happy at their work at the public sector, but they would like to have jobs which match their areas of specialisation and for their employers/managers to appreciate their new ideas and proposals to develop their jobs. The views raised by the graduates are important and will be taken into consideration in building the Leadership Model and making the final recommendations.

CHAPTER 7

7.1 CONCLUSION, ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP MODEL AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Higher education institutions require a transformational visionary leadership due to their complex working environment. Thus leaders are required who can motivate administrative and academic staff, introduce changes and solve problems and conflicts. The situation in higher education seeks to have both effective managers and leaders. According to Kotter (2008), managers deal with planning and solving staff problems through applying rules and regulations; while leaders build organisational vision, manage the change, and motivate employees to achieve the vision through proper delegation and appreciation. The role of the leaders is more effective to manage conflict, develop policies and procedures, and to communicate well with the stakeholders (Weiss, 2008, Kotter, 2008). Therefore, it is important to develop current and future leaders to maintain the success of universities and colleges and their students (American Association of Community Colleges, 2005). The rapid development in the Sultanate of Oman has required qualified academic leaders with a vision to build skilled graduates to meet public social demands requires for the labour market.

The research has explored the current situation of academic leadership in three private universities and three private colleges by seeking internal and external views and opinions which already described and analysed in the previous chapter. The findings, with reference to what the literature say on various aspects in higher education, contribute to develop the Academic Leadership Model of the study, and to introduce some recommendations. This model will assist the Ministry of Higher Education and the decision makers to develop their policies and to review the selection criteria to choose qualified candidates for the position of presidents and deans to lead Omani higher education institutions.

Several authors and scholars presented different types of leadership models for educational leadership, such as the one introduced by Robert (2005) who explained a model of educational leadership (WICS), with the synthesis of three key components of leadership: wisdom, intelligence, and creativity. The WICS

theory of educational leadership analysed leadership as a decision-making activity rather than a set of traits. A successful leader takes their decisions at the right time and in the right circumstances (Robert, 2005, P. 348).

An effective leader needs creative skills and attitudes to generate powerful ideas; analytical intelligence to determine whether they are good ideas; practical intelligence to implement the ideas effectively and to persuade others to listen to and to follow the ideas; and wisdom to ensure that the ideas represent a common good for all stakeholders, not just for some of them (Robert, 2005, P. 348).

The current type of academic leadership (mainly presidents and deans of higher education institutions) has to adjust to the required situations and changes accordingly. The type of such a leader here is linked to the contingency approach where the leader is managing in different directions as the work situations dictate. There is a continuous communication between the leader and the academic environment to respond to different requirements and to be more effective (Jouni, 1998).

The literature review, the Business Excellence model and practical experience of the researcher highlight the key seven principles of the Academic Leadership Model. The main contributor from the literature was Clark (1998) and his ideas about and characteristics of academic entrepreneurialism. Among these features were to maintain and diversify the financial resources, research development, external networking, and to integrate entrepreneurial culture.

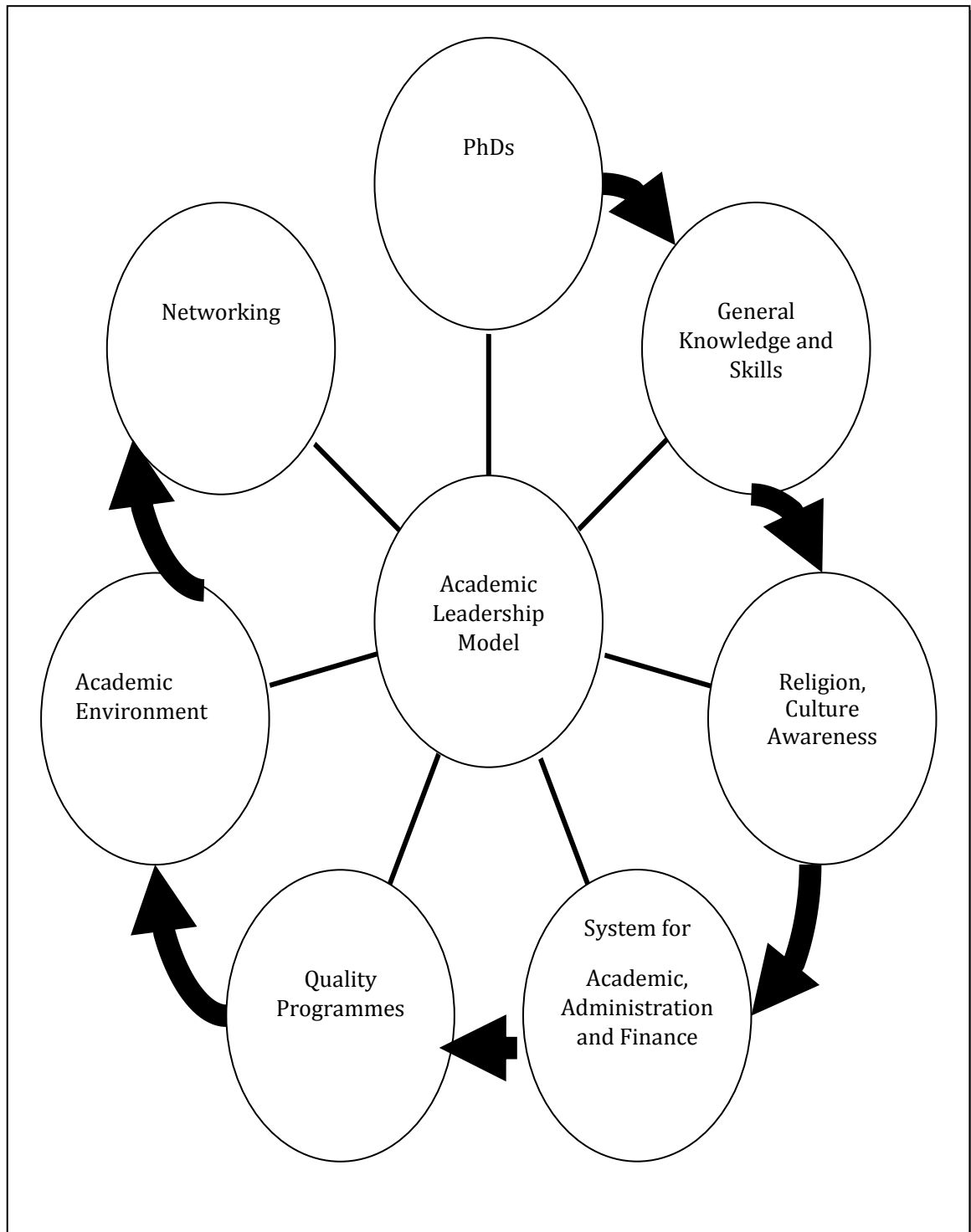
The findings of this research highlight the current academic and administrative environment in the selected private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman. The presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges have tried to bring their institutions up to international standards; however, there are a number of gaps that still have to be filled if the leadership of these institutions are to achieve their objectives, such as : clear criteria and proper procedures to appoint universities 'presidents and deans (currently the Board of Trustees or the councils appoints the president of the university without public announcement, as practiced in the western world), quality of education, relationship with the boards and council, external relationship and cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and the public and private sectors, research and development, and

efficient management . The Academic Leadership Model is formed to bridge the gaps and to improve the performance of the presidents and deans of the private higher education institutions in Oman.

As noted previously above, the empirical study conducted among university presidents, deans, academic staff, administrators, official and human resource managers in the public sector, and students, and the overview of the literature in higher education, has contributed to develop the Academic Leadership Model applicable for the universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman. The model has seven main elements: Presidents'/deans' qualifications, knowledge and skills, religion and culture, administration and academic system, quality programmes, academic environment, and networking. The Academic Leadership Model is illustrated in figure 4 below.

7.2 ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP MODEL

Figure 17: Academic Leadership Model



Albalushi Academic Leadership Model

The above Academic Leadership Model should be applied with its complete circle starting with the qualifications of the leader (president of the university or the dean

of the college). The president or the dean must have a PhD in one of the following fields: educational leadership, leadership and higher education, higher education, or strategic management. These fields fit the requirements of the academic leaders of the higher education institutions. The candidates for the leadership positions in higher education institutions should be educated in different important issues in higher education such as: vision, missions and strategic plans of higher education institutions; quality of academic programmes; quality of teaching and learning; human resource and professional development; structures for higher education institutions; building teams, and financing and funding higher education institutions. The candidates should also be familiar with different strategies applied at highly reputed higher educational institutions globally to enable them to build an effective and complete strategic plan for their own institutions to meet the requirements of their society and the labour markets. The academic leaders also need to be familiar with good examples of both successful and failed universities and colleges, and the reasons behind their success or failure help the university leaders to build evaluate their current activities and build their future strategy. The leader`s experience in areas such as management, finance and marketing is considered to be one of the key requirements to select suitable presidents and deans for higher education institutions. The financial management will help the leader to manage and maintain the required funds for sustainable development, and the daily normal administration and academic activities of the institutions.

Adding to the leaders` qualifications and experiences, skills become another essential requirement for a successful academic leader. McNair (2010) stated that the practical experiences of presidents and deans, the type of professional training programme they attended and working with a mentor throughout the lifetime of their careers help to prepare these leaders for such positions, which also required different types of skills (McNair, 2010). The importance of leadership skills was supported by Clark and Gottfredson (2008), who emphasised the concept of “learning agility where the leaders strive for and are willing to update their knowledge and skills to be successful and win the race in today's global market (Clark, 2009).

Learning agility was determined by five main connected factors which comprise the external environment where the leader has limited control, leadership behaviour, information technology, organisation learning approaches, and organisational support. To achieve these elements, an effective communication and good leadership management will motivate employees to accept the change at all levels in the organisation. Indeed, universities and colleges must apply their learning agility to compete in the global economy (McBride, 2010).

Leadership development has become a major concern of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), particularly in the light of a noticeable turnover among community college leaders. The AACC introduced a competency framework in 2005 for university and college leaders. The framework has been widely accepted in higher education institutions. It refers to six main areas: organisational strategy, community college support, resource management, communication, teamwork, and professionalism (American Association of Community Colleges, 2005). As noted previously, the right qualifications, experiences and skills are well connected and required and the president or the dean must have these. The literature also supports such an approach.

The findings with regard to this particular area of this research which were described and analysed in the analysis chapter, lead us to conclude that the three presidents and three deans of the selected private universities and colleges have clear visions and missions, with the major focused on providing quality higher education, skilled graduates and the faculty members participated in setting up and applying their colleges and universities visions' statement and missions' plans. However, the visions of the six institutions failed to cover other important areas; for example, management and leadership, research and development, extending external relationship and serving their communities. The interview with an official at the Ministry of Higher Education indicated that the Ministry has general criteria to guide the decision makers to select their presidents and deans for their higher educational institutions. The Ministry of Higher Education in Oman is not directly involved with the selection of the presidents and deans for the private institutions; its role is mainly to approve the recommended candidates.

The analyses of the remarks made by the faculty, administrators, students and the employers clearly proved that there are management gaps in the performance of the current presidents and deans of the selected institutions. Thus, the right qualifications and the skills of the current president and deans of the selected institutions is another area to examine in the future.

Religion and cultural awareness is another important area of the Academic Leadership Model which the presidents and deans of Omani institutions need to consider carefully, especially if a non-Omani holds such a position. Cultural competence is not only organisational culture as cited by Rhoads and Tierney (1992), but also linked with the culture of the society as a whole. (Rhoads, 1992).

The Sultanate of Oman is a Muslim country with strong historical heritage. The non-Omani presidents and deans are not fully aware of Omani culture and tradition when they communicate with students and their parents. Indeed, the students and their parents have faced difficulties in dealing with some presidents and deans of the private higher education institutions due to cultural and attitude issues. The following example illustrates the importance of welcoming and answering the inquiries of the parents especially those who live in rural areas and who come to see the president or the dean of universities and colleges without prior appointment. The president or the dean has to set aside some time to meet them and listen to their needs. Otherwise, they feel insulted and go to complain to the Board or to the Ministry of Higher Education. During the interviews with the Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education and human resource managers at the public ministries, they agreed with the preference of having qualified Omani citizens to run universities and colleges as they are more familiar with the traditions and culture of the society. If a non-Omani is appointed as president or dean at the public or private universities and colleges, they need to be fully aware of and knowledgeable about religion, culture, and different traditions. The management of universities and colleges should hold continuous workshops to create cultural awareness among the faculty members. The culture and traditional knowledge experience will help the non-Omani leader to better deal with both students and their parents and to avoid unexpected circumstances.

The third element of the Academic Leadership Model focuses on the importance of having an updated academic and administrative system (with maximum use of the information technology) in higher education institutions. Such a system will help the leader of the university or college to manage affairs effectively and will help the academic and administrative employees to establish proper communication channels and tools to perform their activities to very high standards.

Today, higher education institutions require well trained and skilled academic administrators as these institutions become more difficult to run. Academic leaders such as presidents and deans do not have enough experience or training to take over administrative roles as they shifted from their senior professorates for a certain time and will return to the professorate, with the exception of the United States academic administrator who normally does not return to their professorate. The higher educational administration has become an important field which is managed by schools of education in the United States. Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and Japan have introduced different programmes to train academic administrators (Altbach, 2002).

The findings in this particular area showed that the presidents of the selected private universities apply similar structures with minor differences with regard to the financial authority of the universities' presidents, as the Board of Trustees is the highest decision maker and both the president and the shareholders are members of the board. The problem here is that these institutions do not have a horizontal structure, which creates more flexibility and eases cross-board communication; such a structure is preferable to having independent departments. The colleges' structures on the other hand fall in between the horizontal and vertical, and the set-up depends largely on their councils' strategies. The deans have limited financial authority and find it difficult to administer their colleges. The college's council plays a major role in the administration systems of the colleges and, as stated earlier, the shareholders control the operations of different activities. This emphasises the importance of having a horizontal structure in these institutions with an effective management

system where the deans are authorised financially and are able to work independently from their councils.

The responses from the faculty members, administrators and students with regards to administration and management of the selected institutions are a clear sign of an unsatisfactory working environment. The faculty felt that their institutions need to work better to develop their strategies to sound more academic rather than business-like.

The responses of the faculty members indicated that their universities and colleges have clear visions and missions and they are aware of these; which means that universities and colleges have clear direction about their plans. They also participate in setting up their college and university vision statements and mission plans. The faculty members agreed on the importance of research to enhance the quality of teaching, and indicated their willingness to undertake research besides their teaching. The management of the private universities and colleges need to motivate their faculty members to carry out research beside their teaching tasks. The management should also consider the research activities as a priority of these institutions. The primary focus of the private institutions is teaching and learning and the faculty members were keen to teach students different skills such as critical thinking, computer skills and negotiating skills. This is a very good indication to check skill abilities of students after getting feedback from their places of work and from the graduates themselves. The faculty members were not sharing their experiences with the administrators and it seems, from their points of view, that the universities' and colleges' policies did not encourage their employees to work together as one team, particularly when this involves both academic and administrative staff. This explains the need for new policies and strategies and good academic working environments to motivate both groups to work together and share their responsibilities to develop the performance of their institution. In addition, it appears that the monitoring system from the top management of these institutions is not up to a satisfactory level. The faculty members were disappointed in their management system in relation to the motivation aspect. They felt that universities and colleges do not have clear motivation policies to encourage them, or even professional rewards for their

teaching efforts. This indicates that the faculty members are waiting for any opportunity to leave their universities or colleges as soon as they get better offers. It seems that the private universities and colleges do not have adequate policies and strategies to retain their good faculty members. Finally, the head of departments and faculty members preferred to work independently to run their departments and to control their budget without referring back to the central management. This explained the respondents' dissatisfaction with their central management systems.

The students expressed their opinions about their level of knowledge of their universities and colleges and degree programmes, fees and quality. They were happy about their lecturers' attitudes, teaching quality and feedback on their performance. However, they were unhappy about the universities' and colleges' advisory system and their advisors. They stated that they did not have proper study plans from the beginning of the first year and they registered on some courses which were not relevant to their area of specialisation. The students were strongly dissatisfied with their skills levels such as communication, computer and negotiation skills.

The administrators were unhappy about their staff policies. They clearly stated that their job descriptions were unclear, and they did not have skills training development programmes. They evaluated their universities' and colleges' management as unfair to all employees in terms of motivation and promotion.

The presidents and deans of the selected institutions need to develop their staff policies, regulations and their decision-making processes to overcome their management problems at their universities and colleges. This highlights the importance of having good administrative and management systems at these institutions.

Quality programmes is the fifth element of the Leadership Model. Quality of education delivered is the main concern of all higher education institutions. The graduate skills attribute is an important concern raised during the interviews and the surveys. Society as a whole in Oman is keen to have the best quality

programmes at the universities and colleges to equip the youth with good education.

The leader should have the ability and willingness to directly follow up the quality of the programmes and students' skills development. This can be monitored through a special unit or department to carry out the responsibilities for ensuring and following up quality assurance, in addition to bringing in an external evaluator every few years to evaluate the performance and the output of the institution. The leadership of the private higher education institutions should implement the procedures of the Oman Accreditation Council (OAC), the government body to assist the development of the Omani higher education sector through institutional quality audits and institutional and programme accreditation processes. The OAC has responsibilities for establishing academic standards, and providing training and networking opportunities. Some private universities and colleges still need to improve the quality of their programmes to meet the needs of the market.

The findings with regards to quality programmes indicated a commitment from both the presidents and deans on the importance of producing quality graduates and the need to offer the best programmes and training to their students. The reality, however, proves that the skills level of the graduates still need further development as both the graduates and the employers have noticed a major lack of the necessary skills especially after the graduates join the work place . Another problem facing higher education institutions as mentioned earlier is an ineffective assessment method to evaluate the skills of the graduates in the workplace which required a well developed evaluation system, trained lecturers and leadership efforts.

The results of the sixth area of the Academic Leadership Model showed the importance of having academic committees in the universities and colleges as stated clearly by the presidents and deans of the selected private institutions. The universities seem to have organised committees but still staff remain dissatisfied with the management as explained on the fifth element. The deans of the private colleges expressed their real feelings about their situation; that they find it difficult

to have proper academic committees due to their small number of their employees beside their inefficient administrative systems.

The academic environment at the higher education institutions is one of the most important elements to complete the Leadership Model cycle, and this can be achieved if the institution has a clear policy, regulations, and job descriptions for the academic and administrative staff. The president or dean should have the ability to motivate the faculty members and the administrators towards organisational loyalty, teamwork and cooperation. The social activities add a flavour to the creation of a healthy and friendly working environment for all the staff; all employees will feel like one family and be happy to work together.

The last element of the Academic Leadership Model is to build a network and relationship with both the public and private sectors. This is indeed one of the main tasks of the presidents and deans of the private universities and colleges. The purpose of higher education institutions is to feed different sectors with skilled graduates of different specialisations and to conduct research to help the development of the economy and the environment. Therefore, both society and the higher education institutions need to work together as both share mutual interests; however, the output of the survey and interviews indicated a weak relationship between the two at the present time. The universities and colleges put more effort in teaching and learning and try to absorb as many students as they can. However, it is the right time to establish a unit or a department at each private university and college which directly reports to the president of the university or the dean of the college to build relationships with the public and private agencies and to organise meetings, seminars and training courses. The private universities and colleges should conduct different types of research to help the private and public organisations to develop their activities. It is the duty of the presidents and the deans to present the services of their institutions to the organisations and to society. Such relationships help the universities' and colleges' management to recruit their graduates from different sectors and to follow up their performance. In addition, the presidents and deans should also build external relationships with, and ensure cooperation with, well-reputed academic institutions worldwide.

The researcher proposes that the ALM is the right approach to lift higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman to a similar standard as that of the reputable institutions worldwide and will help to produce well qualified and skilled graduates.

Recommendations

The research concludes with the following recommendations to help the presidents and deans of the selected private universities and colleges to perform better and to produce highly skilled graduates:

- To develop visions and missions in a professional way to match the international standards and to cover the elements stated in the Academic Leadership Model.
- To have good administrative systems and to apply a horizontal structure at the selected institutions to smooth out cross-board communication among departments.
- To develop long-term strategic plans with full participation engagement of their academic and administrative staff.
- To have a strategy and determined criteria to select leaders for higher education institutions and to award the presidents and deans the autonomy to apply flexible systems to lead independently and to have complete authority and financial power as practiced internationally at similar institutions.
- To determine the role and responsibilities the Boards and the councils and the roles of the presidents and deans of higher education institutions.
- To maintain the quality of the programmes and to introduce proper evaluation systems to test the graduates` skills.
- To have a long-term strategy to build relationships with the public and private sectors in society and to motivate faculty members to conduct research and consultancy services.

- To strength the relationship with the Ministry of Higher Education, students and their families.
 - To assess the role and the capabilities of staff at the Ministry of Higher Education.
 - To encourage qualified Omanis to work at the private institutions and to provide good financial incentives and a good working environment.
 - To have an evaluation system to measure the performance of presidents and deans of higher education institutions.
-

Answers to the major research questions:

Q. To what extent does the Sultanate of Oman have well qualified and effective academic leaders at its private higher education institutions and do they truly contribute towards wider human resource development for the country?

The selected private universities have well qualified academic leaders to the level required currently and accepted by the Ministry of Higher Education and the Boards of these institutions; whereas the analysis of the collected data linked with the higher education literature strongly indicates the need to restructure and develop the level of performance of the leaders.

The deans of the selected private colleges as leaders have good qualifications; yet their councils have limited their financial authority which has an immediate impact on their management of their colleges. Therefore, there is a pressing need to need to restructure the role of the council and the roles of the deans.

The responses from the employers and the graduates indicate dissatisfaction with the general performance and the skills of the graduates. As a result, the contribution of the presidents and deans of the selected institutions demand careful consideration and further research in the future.

- Q.** To what extent is the role of presidents and deans in private universities and colleges in Oman managerial and responsive rather than strategic and initiatory?

Unfortunately, it proved to be the case that the former applied, and the results proved that the presidents and deans are more managers than leaders. They need to acquire a wide range of skills and experience to become effective visionary academic leaders.

- Q.** How is the academic and administrative performance of presidents and deans measured, and by whom?

There are no clearly determined management criteria currently available in Oman, but there is the potential to develop an evaluation policy as a result of the internal audit exercise which applied to most of the universities and colleges. This process will however take a long time.

- Q.** What is the strategy/recommendation to improve academic leadership in Oman and how might this be improved in a way that is both desirable and feasible?

The Academic Leadership Model and the recommendations are the answer for this question.

Note: The answers to the specific questions have already been addressed in the research analysis, and the conclusion.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

1. University of Southampton Official letter addressed to Presidents and deans of private Universities and Colleges



The President
Muscat University

16 July 2007

Dear President

Invitation to participate in Ali Hamdan Albalushi's research project

Mr. Ali Hamdan Albalushi is a PhD research student at the Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton, University of Southampton, UK. He started his PhD programme in October 2006.

Ali's research focuses on the relationship between university leadership and the outcomes from higher education, especially the skills and knowledge gained by undergraduates and how they perform in their work after leaving university. Currently, Ali is doing his field study approaching university leaders, senior managers, faculty members, students and employers. The data collection methods include document study, interviews and questionnaire surveys.

Sohar University is selected along with other institutions for his fieldwork. We fully appreciate your kind contribution and support to facilitate his mission. The study is conducted in accordance with the University of Southampton ethics guidelines. All the information about your university and personnel during the course of research will be kept strictly confidential. All results will be anonymous and it will not be possible to identify individual participant's data.

In due course, once the research project has been finished, a copy of the complete thesis will be delivered to your University; hopefully it will be of benefit to yourself and to your University.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you require any further details, please feel free to contact me.

With best wishes

Professor John Taylor
Director: Centre for Higher Education for Management and Policy at Southampton

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Appendix 1

2. Ministry of Higher Education official letter (Arabic Language) addressed to Presidents and deans of private Universities and Colleges

Sultanate of Oman
Ministry of Higher Education
Directorate General of Private
Universities & Colleges
Office of the Director General

No. :

Date :



سلطنة عُمان
وزارة التعليم العالي
المديرية العامة للجامعات والكليات الخاصة
مكتب المدير العام

الرقم : ٢٠٢٠/٧/٢٤٦

التاريخ :

الموافق : ٢٠٢٠/١١/١٩

المحترم

الدكتور /تي.آر.ناريانان
عميد كلية الشرق الأوسط لتقنية المعلومات
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،،، وبعد

الموضوع: طالب الدراسات العليا(الدكتوراه) / علي بن حمدان البلوشي

نود أفادتكم بان المذكور أعلاه طالب في جامعة (Southampton) بالملكة المتحدة للحصول على مؤهل الدكتوراه ويقوم خلال هذه الفترة بإجراء بحث في مجال العلاقة بين قيادة مؤسسات التعليم العالي والمخرجات.
نرجو التكرم مشكورين الإيعاز للمختصين لديكم نحو تسهيل مهمة المذكور في ما يتعلق بجمع البيانات وإجراء المقابلات مع ذوي الاختصاص وأي أمور أخرى تتعلق بمجال دراسته ، حيث يرغب المذكور أعلاه بمقابلتكم وتوزيع استبيانات علي أعضاء هيئة التدريس والطلبة.
يسرنا أن نرفق لكم بالطي الرسالة الموجه إليكم من قبل المشرف الأكاديمي للمذكور أعلاه

شاكرين ومقدرين لكم كل عون ومساعدته

وتفضلوا بقبول وافر الاحترام،،،

د.خميس بن صالح البلوشي

نائب مدير عام الجامعات والكليات الخاصة
للبرامج وضمان الجودة



Appendix 1

3. Interview Table with Presidents/Deans of Private Universities and Colleges

A. Interview Table – Universities and Colleges

1. Universities

Institution	Coordination date for interviews	Confirmed date/time for interviews	General Remarks
University A	30 October 2007 3 November 2007	6/11/2007 4 - 4:45 PM	<p>Personal relationship to fix interview date</p> <p>Cover all interview questions</p> <p>Full cooperation from staff at the president's office</p> <p>Agreed to distribute questionnaires to faculty, administrators and students and for them to be collected in two weeks, from 6 November 2007</p> <p>Interviews points were written for future analysis</p> <p>Follow up on 4 December 2007 to collect the answer for the questioners, still to be filled by the concerned employees and students</p> <p>- Follow up: 5 and 6 January 2008</p> <p>Received end of January</p>

University B	3 November- 2007; 10 November 2007	17 November 07 9-11 am	<p>Was very successful and covered all the questions</p> <p>Fully transparency to exchange and discuss the required information</p> <p>Agreed to distribute the survey questionnaires to students, faculty members and administrators and for them to be collected two weeks after the interview date</p> <p>Notes were taken for future analysis</p> <p>Follow up on 27 November 2007 to send the Arabic version of students' questionnaires</p> <p>Follow up on 5 January 2008; confirmed ready to be collected</p>
University C	November 2007; 10 November 2007; 20 November 2007; 4 December 2007	9 December 07 9-11 am	<p>The interview was successful and done in a happy environment</p> <p>All interview questions were covered in addition to other issues raised by the president to enrich the research</p> <p>Agreed to distribute questionnaires to students, faculty and administrators</p> <p>Received on 23 December 2007</p>

B. Colleges

Institutions	Coordination date for interviews	Confirmed date/Time for Interviews	General Remarks
College A	27 October 2007	30 October 2007 9-10 am 4 November 2007 9-10 am	Covered all interview questions Full cooperation from staff at the president's office The dean agreed to distribute questionnaires to faculty members, administrators and students
College B	30 October 2007 Visiting the college 3 November 2007 Call Called again on 10 November 2007 and confirmed the appointment on 11 November 2007 at 10 am		The interview was very successful and I covered all the questions The dean was very cooperative and willing to distribute other questioners to faculty members, students and administrators Follow up: 25 and 27 November 2007, and ready to be collected this week

College C	Call on 11 November 2007 and 12 November 2007	12 November 07 3 pm	<p>The interview was successful and covered all the questions.</p> <p>The college has its own curriculum with coordination with</p> <p>Communication with the private sector has been developed to inject the requirements during course designed</p> <p>Attractive salaries to recruit and retain faculty</p> <p>Fulltime Omani lecturers in IT & Business</p>
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Appendix 1

4. Interview Questions addressed to Presidents/Deans of

My name is Ali H. Al-Balushi; I am a PhD student at the University of Southampton, UK, under the supervision of Professor John Taylor, Director of the Centre of Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton (CHEMPaS).

Interview Questions	Justification for asking Questions	Code
<p>1. Universities have clear missions, objectives and strategies to carry on their activities.</p> <p>Could you please set out the overall mission and objectives of the university in general?</p>	<p>The answer will give general ideas about the university, and key points to start the interview</p>	<p>Vision and mission</p>
<p>2. Some universities prefer a horizontal structure to a vertical one.</p> <p>Vertical structures place an emphasis on hierarchy and strong central leadership.</p> <p>Horizontal structures are more flexible and tend to</p>	<p>The answer to this question will indicate the type of communication between the management and the staff and decision-making process</p>	<p>Organisational structure</p>

<p>use more developed decision-making. Staff can communicate and share the responsibilities with the management .They discuss and share their experiences and their ideas through committees.</p> <p>Where do you see your university? Is it more inclined towards a horizontal or a vertical structure?</p>		
<p>3. University management often establishes committees to have collective opinions. Staff who participate in these committees are willing to share in decision making and in implementing the management's decisions. However, in some universities, the management feels committees are delaying issues and taking a long time to discuss matters without reaching conclusions.</p>	<p>The answer will include whether the leader manages the university through committees</p> <p>The role of committees in the university</p> <p>The existence of team work in the university</p> <p>The role of the leader and the role of committees</p> <p>Roles of the committees</p>	<p>Committee</p>

May I have your opinion please, and what are the roles of committees in your university?		
<p>4. Strategic Planning is a very important route for successful universities, and the right process to build such a strategy is essential to ease its implementation.</p> <p>Could you please brief me on how you build your strategic plan, and is it a short- term or long-term plan?</p>	<p>The answer will indicate the current and the future status of planning the university</p> <p>If there is strategic planning in the university, it will show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who is responsible for preparing the plan? - Does staffs participate in preparing such a plan from the early stages? 	Strategic Planning
<p>5.The University Board/ Council are the main decision-making body with regards to universities' policies and missions. The good relationship between the management of the university and the board members is a sign of their success.</p> <p>6.How would you like to see the relationship between the management and the board, develop,</p>	<p>To examine the link between the roles of the board and the university management</p> <p>To understand the leader's authority</p>	University Board

especially if you want to have full autonomy and authority to run the university ?		
<p>7. As you are aware, the government invests development projects mostly all over the country, which requires employees with various skills to do the work.</p> <p>1) Does your university offer the required programmes?</p> <p>2) Does the university train its students to acquire the necessary skills?</p>	<p>To know the link between government development projects and its strategies</p> <p>To know if university has good programmes</p> <p>To find out about the types of skills for students' development at the university</p>	Quality of Programme
<p>8. Thank you, this is very useful information and leads me to ask about the relationship between the university and private organisations.</p> <p>-How do you build your relationship with industries and business organisations?</p> <p>-Does your university build relationships with the</p>		External Relationship

<p>private industrial sector ? If so, how is this process undertaken?</p> <p>Are their research contracts between the university and companies?</p> <p>Does the private sector cooperate with the university to design proper courses?</p>		
<p>9. What are the benefits you are gaining now from such a relationship? What is your expectation about how such relationship might develop in the future?</p>	<p>To understand the current position of university-industrial relationships</p> <p>To analyse the future policy of the university</p>	<p>Mutual Interest</p>
<p>10. Faculty members and other professionals in their fields in some universities build their own external relations either to conduct short courses or to do applied research.</p> <p>These extra activities will add financial income to the institution or to the lecturers.</p>	<p>To see if the management is flexible with their faculty members at the university</p> <p>To check the motivation of policy at the university</p>	<p>Faculty external relationship</p>

<p>Do you support this initiative, and if not, why?</p> <p>Do you have a policy for income earned in this way?</p>		
<p>11. Since we are talking about research and development, faculty members often complain because of their teaching loads especially if the university requires them to do research without incentives or rewards.</p> <p>How do you deal with such a situation?</p> <p>Do you believe that a lecturer should undertake both teaching and research?</p> <p>If the faculty member agrees to carry a full load and to do research, do you support such initiative?</p>	<p>To see how the leader deals with the lecturers' problems concerning teaching loads</p> <p>To look at the university policy towards teaching and conducting research at the same time</p> <p>The link between teaching load and research and quality</p>	<p>Teaching load and research</p>
<p>12. Social activities are ways to build the university's relations with the public and to build or exchange ideas with</p>	<p>To understand how the university serves the society</p> <p>To understand the type of activities run by the university</p>	<p>Social Activities</p>

<p>different sectors in the society.</p> <p>What type of activities did your university host during the academic year?</p> <p>Do you require academic staff to participate in such activities as well as their teaching and research?</p>	<p>or college</p>	
<p>13. Graduate skills and experiences have become an issue raised by the parents and the public. This means in particular skills such as communication skills, critical thinking, computer skills and negotiations skills.</p> <p>I am sure you agree about the importance of these skills. Would you like to comment, and would you kindly highlight the means at your university to assure that the graduates acquire these skills?</p>	<p>To understand the University's policies towards parents and public concerns</p> <p>To check if, the university has programmes to train and develop skills of its students</p>	<p>Graduate skills</p>
<p>14. The Government's support for private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman include incentives such as</p>	<p>To examine the university's views with regards to the government policies and procedures</p>	<p>Government policies and regulation</p>

<p>free lands, funds and scholarships. However, the Government through the Ministry of Higher Education has some policies and procedures, which make private universities and colleges unhappy because the support and incentives take a long time to be received.</p> <p>Do you share such concerns?</p> <p>Does it take too long to get such incentives from Ministry of Higher Education or other Ministries? What are the alternatives in your opinion please?</p>	<p>To check if the private university prefers to have their complete independence without government intervention</p> <p>To determine what the private universities want from the government</p>	
<p>15. All private universities in Oman provide programmes of other international universities in order to assure the quality of these programmes. This is necessary and required by Ministry of Higher Education.</p>	<p>To look at the long-term plan of the university</p>	<p>Strategic planning</p>

<p>Are you happy with this arrangement?</p> <p>What is your plan to introduce your own programmes and curriculum or do you prefer to continue depending on external partners?</p>		
<p>16. Most of the private universities and colleges in Oman are facing difficulties in recruiting and retaining good lecturers. Omani lecturers have proved their teaching capabilities and they have the required qualifications, but universities are hesitating to recruit them.</p> <p>Could you please highlight this issue in your universities and what is your opinion of Omani lecturers?</p>		Faculty recruitment
<p>17. To maintain the financial stability is essential to sustain the university survival. What are the university's sources of income currently?</p>		Financial status

And what are the future investments you think might help to keep the university financially strong?		
<p>18. Organisational culture affects performance, especially of educational institutions.</p> <p>How as a leader of this university do you create or maintain an acceptable culture especially if you have Omani employees and multi nationalities among both faculty members and students</p>	<p>To understand the university's policy about recruitment and its strategy to retain its good lecturers if any</p> <p>To understand the view of the university about Omanis working as lecturers</p> <p>To look at the financial strategy of the university</p> <p>To see if the leader is concerned about the culture issues, and how to deal with them</p>	Cultural and tradition

My PhD research topic is about the role of leadership in private higher education institutions. The key areas of my research are leadership, internal management, external relations with the public; and private organisations and university output. Thank you for giving me the chance to meet you and your staff. The information I am gathering will be confidential and I will use it only for the research analysis. Thank you

Appendix 1

5. Questions addressed to faculty members

Agree (), Strongly Agree (), Disagree (), Strongly Disagree ()

No	Questions/statements	Justification	Code
1.	The university/college has a clear vision?		
2.	I participate in setting up the mission statement		
3.	The university/college has a strategic plan		
4.	4. The university/ college has a short strategic plan		
5.	Students' motivation is the management methods to encourage students to study hard.		
6.	Lecturers always explain course objectives and hand out the course syllabus at the beginning of each course.		
7.	As a lecturer, I am happy about my teaching load, besides doing administrative tasks.		
8.	The university's management encourages teamwork between the academic and the administrative staff to share their experiences.		
9.	The university is providing the necessary educational tools such as overhead projectors, laptops, and smart boards to facilitate our teaching.		
10.	The university provides necessary support and training to use these tools.		
11.	The university's management encourages the academic staff to develop their own curriculum.		

12.	Books and study materials are always available before starting the academic year.		
13.	Academic staff should be requested to undertake both teaching and research.		
14.	The quality of teaching is enhanced if academic staff are actively engaged in research.		
15.	The university is encouraging the academic staff to do researches beside their teaching responsibilities.		
16.	The lecturers use only the curriculum without referring students to online and library resources.		
17.	The lecturers encourage students to use the library resources.		
18.	The library has updated resources which are useful books and study tools.		
19.	We teach our students different types of skills such as critical thinking, computer skills and negotiating skills.		
20.	The university's management motivates us through moral and professional expectations as rewards for our teaching efforts.		
21.	The university's management motivates us through financial incentives, bonuses as rewards for our teaching efforts.		
22.	The university's management encourages its faculty members to build external relation with different sectors of the society.		
23.	The administrators of the university always provide their maximum support to facilitate our teaching responsibilities.		

24.	The lecturers handle and solve students' problems without referring to the university management.		
25.	Both the administrative and the academic staff share experiences to achieve the university's objectives.		
26.	There is no cooperation between the academic and the administrative staff at the university.		
27.	The management of this university is task-oriented and only looking to get the job done without motivating its employees.		
28.	The management of the university has been following the same strategy for a long time and no changes have been introduced to compete with other universities.		
29.	We as faculty members prefer to be independent to run our departments.		
30.	We as faculty members prefer to be independent to run our own budgets.		
31.	The university's management motivates the administrative staff more than the academic staff.		

Thank you

Appendix 1

6. Questions addressed to students with four options to answer

Agree (), Strongly Agree (), Disagree (), Strongly Disagree ()

No	Questions/ statements	Justification	Code
1.	I knew about the university's programmes before applying.		
2.	I knew about the university' fees before applying.		
3.	I applied to the university because I was aware of its reputation for high quality.		
4.	I applied to the university because I was aware of its good faculty.		
5.	I applied to the university because I was aware of its good staff.		
6.	The student orientation day help me to know more about the university and its programmes.		
7.	I was given good advice in choosing my courses and it was easy to chose my specialisation and to register the right courses		
8.	The lecturers provide the syllabus at the beginning of each course introduction.		
9.	The lecturers provide the syllabus at the beginning of each course introduction. And explain objectives /outcome expectation at the end of the term.		

10.	The lecturers have a good relationship with the students and help them even outside their working hours.		
11.	The lecturers work hard to make our study enjoyable.		
12.	We receive helpful feedback on our performance after each assessment and we are happy about the quality of teaching at the university.		
13.	The lecturers encourage us to work in teams and assign us to do group projects.		
14.	We learn different skills such as communication skills, critical thinking, computer and negotiation skills, besides the required courses.		
15.	My supervisors/ group tutor always help to solve my problems and advise me to move forwards towards my education.		
16.	The registration department ensures that our records are up to date and that our information is available on time.		
17.	Students 'services are very active and introduce a variety of activities such as sport competitions, scientific trips, and outdoor activities during the academic year.		

18.	The university is organising a job fair annually to encourage public and private organisations to recruit students.		
19.	The job fair is helpful in sharing opportunities for my employment after university.		
20.	The lecturers and the administrators are trying their best to help me to find a job.		
21.	My lecturers teach mainly from textbooks.		

Thank you.

Appendix 1

7. Questions addressed to Administrators with four options to answer

Agree (), Strongly Agree (), Disagree (), Strongly Disagree ()

No	Questions/ statements	Justification	Code
1.	The information available met my requirements in deciding to work at this university.		
2.	I had an easy interview to join this university.		
3.	I had an easy test and I passed and joined this university.		
4.	The personnel department explained to me the recruitment procedures.		
5.	The personnel department updated me about my recruitment process.		
6.	I have a clear job description and guidelines to assist me in doing my work.		
7.	I was given a clear and detailed staff policy which helped me to familiarise myself with the staff regulations		
8.	I was trained to do the job at this university.		
9.	The employees in my department are supportive and helped me to do my work.		

10.	The personnel department keep me updated with regard to my skills development.		
11.	The personnel department keep me updated with regard to my leave record.		
12.	I have attended several courses to develop my skills and update my knowledge in my field. These courses have been helpful in my career development.		
13.	My department is not encouraging me to develop my skills and never suggest or send me to training courses.		
14.	Our finance department always releases our salary and leave allowances on time.		
15.	The public relation department keeps us informed about new activities at the university.		
16.	The public relations department at the university performs as a focal point between the university and the society		
17.	We always have new office equipment such as computers, scanners, faxes, and printers, and updated systems to help us perform our work efficiently.		

18.	The university has a good IT technician to help us fix our PCs and maintain our computing systems.		
19.	The university has a clear mission and objectives.		
20.	I participate in the initial stages to develop the University's mission and objectives.		
21.	The university's management creates a happy and healthy working environment and we all work in teams to achieve our objectives.		
22.	We participate in different management committees to share our ideas and experiences.		
23.	We work as a family and share information and decisions in flexible and respective manners.		
24.	The university's management encourages new innovative ideas.		
25.	The university's management respect staff opinions.		
26.	Staff skills development is one of the main priorities to develop human resources at the university.		

27.	The university's management is fair to all employees in term of motivation and promotion		
28.	The university's management organises social activities for the staff and their families during the academic year.		
29.	Our managers are task-oriented and are only concerned about doing and finishing the work without considering the human factors. Task-oriented		
30.	Our managers are balanced between finishing the job and considering the human side. task-relation oriented		
31.	We work in a happy and healthy environment at this university.		

Thank you.

Appendix 2

8. Interview questions addressed to the Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education

No	Questions/Statement
1.	<p>As you aware that the importance of academic leaders to run both public and private universities has become an important issue to satisfy different interested parties such as the Ministry of Higher Education, students, parents, communities, and the public and private sectors?</p> <p>The Ministry of Higher Education approves appointments of presidents, deans and lecturers at private universities and colleges. What are the criteria set by the Ministry of Higher Education in order to approve such important appointments? Is it mandatory or a guideline for private universities and colleges to recruit their senior academic positions?</p>
2.	Do you approve advertisements of the private universities and colleges to match the required criteria of the Ministry of Higher Education before releasing and why?
3.	In your opinion what is the role of academic leaders at private universities and colleges in the Sultanate of Oman? Do you think private universities and colleges have qualified and experienced academic leaders who contribute toward human resource development?
4.	How do you evaluate current presidents/deans at private universities and colleges? Are they really qualified and experienced academic leaders or only managers to run business activities and not higher education institutions? Do you have the right to ask private universities and colleges to look for another president or dean if their performance is not as expected or if the Ministry of Higher Education does not intervene?

5.	Are you happy with regard to the performance of presidents and deans at the private universities and colleges in terms of quality of education and quality of their graduates? The opinions of some students and parents prefer to see Omanis as
6.	university presidents and deans if they have the right qualifications and experiences even if these are less than those of non-Omanis, What is the role of the Ministry of Higher Education in Omanis' senior academic posts at private higher education institutions?
7.	What are the criteria in your own opinion for appointing presidents and deans at private universities and colleges especially if you are directly supervising both public and private higher education institutions?
8	What is the role of the Ministry of Higher Education if it identifies an unsuitable president or dean?

Appendix 2

9. Interview questions addressed to Human Resource Directors and training head sections at the Public and the Private sectors

No	Questions / Statement
1.	As you are a key member of your organisation to interview, select, and train graduates of different fields to fill different kind of jobs, how do you evaluate the quality of private local university and college graduates in term of their specialisations and their general knowledge?
2.	Students learned different skills beside their specialisations, which enable them to carry on their work immediately and not require additional training. Do you agree, or if not, how do you see university and college' graduates in term of them having the necessary skills? How long does it take university and college graduates to be ready to perform well at their jobs?
3.	What are the important administrative and technical skills necessary to be taught to students?
4.	Have you faced any kind of problems with graduates with regards to being resistant to doing duties they consider beneath them, and also insisting on implementing their new ideas and projects?
5.	Is there any communication between the management of private universities and colleges and government Ministries to exchange views and experiences to develop programmes or amend the current programmes to meet the real job requirements in the public sector? If such a network exists, do you think universities and colleges will use this?
6.	How do you see quality in higher education and quality of those who graduated from private universities and colleges?
7.	What advice would you like to give to the management of private universities and colleges to attract the best-qualified students?

Appendix 2

10. Interviews addressed to graduate students from selected private universities and colleges who currently work in the public and private sectors

Name: _____ Major: _____ Graduation Year: _____

University: Sohar (), Nizwa (), Dhofar ()

College: Majan (), Muscat (), Modern College ()

No	Questions
1.	As you aware there are differences between studying and doing real work, and are satisfy with your work and enjoying what you are doing?
2.	As you aware there are variances among universities and colleges with regards to quality of teaching, teaching materials and quality of faculty members? Is there any relation between the courses you studied and your current work?
3.	Q 3: Students learned different skills besides their core courses during their studies at universities and colleges. These skills include: communication skills, negotiation skills, performing reports and computer skills. The students need such skills to get a job and to compete with other students. Did you learn such skills while you were at university or college? Are these skills important for your work? Would you like to advise the university's or college's administration in this regards?
4.	The types of work you are doing are matching or close to your area of specialisation at your university or College. What are the important skills you wish you had learned at your university or college that would have helped you in your workplace?
5.	Basic training is essential at the beginning of your work, and then gradually you are supposed to attend more training courses to develop your work performance. Have you done any training courses up to this

