COMMENTARY

An Organizational Challenge: Reframing Of Leadership to Introduce "Master's Program in Basic Sciences"

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ABSTRACT:
There is a severe dearth of post graduate institutes in our country. Therefore, there is a need to initiate post graduate program for students who have talent and passion for research and teaching. The post graduate program will be aimed to strengthen the multi-disciplinary integrated concepts of Basic sciences as a solid foundation for developing research mentors and educators. This can only be made possible by analyzing the challenge in structural, human, political and symbolic leadership frames and device a solution which is in line with the vision and mission of the organization.
Keywords: Leadership, Structural frame, Human resource frame, Political frame, Symbolic frame.

BACKGROUND:

Bolman and Deal proposed that leaders observe organizational challenges in the light of leadership frames[1]. Bolman and Deal's reframing of pedagogics delivered the theory for accepting the intricate change process and the participation as a leader[2,3]. By means of practical application of this theory, leaders can understand their organization, refine their skills and improve their expertise for the change[4]. The procedure of reframing using the four frames- structural, human resources, political, and symbolic offers the theoretic pedagogics to produce agreement on purpose and practice of the change process[4]. Furthermore, "the talent to utilize various frames is linked with greater efficiency of leaders"[3]. This challenge is a set of urgency for leadership to create arenas, build alliances and diffuse oppositions (Dolman; Political frame), review, modify and strengthen a post graduate program by designing, maintaining, and aligning structural reforms with the tasks, technology, environment and strategic/tactical goals (Dolman; Structural frame). The strategies adopted will empower

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faculty with the desired skills, credibility connections and authority to move the program in the right direction (Dolman; Human resource frame). Moreover, the theme in post graduate education will be communicated through a combination of words, deeds and symbols aligned with vision and strategy of organization culture (Dolman; symbolic frame)

Planning for change by leadership frames:
The first strategic step is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of the leader as well as the organization and analyze them in respective leadership frames and then redesign of all four frames in practice based context[5] is required for a full range leadership model[6].
Structural leaders try to define internal processes of the organization within the structural environment[1]. Human resource theorists put emphasis on the interdependence between people and organizations. The process of real change begins with the capitalization of passion of the group and consensus building[7]. This political structure in organization is mentioned as the jungle model[7]. Political theoreticians see authority, conflict, and sharing of scarce assets as a fundamental concern[2,3].

How can we acquire this change?
Strategies will be required in all the frames of leadership
  Structural reform
❖ Determine organizational readiness.
❖ Formulate strategic planning committee with departmental chair, members from the developmental team, representatives from advanced board of graduate studies, medical education department and research office.
❖ Establish committees to evaluate these documents.
❖ Assign roles to different committees to assess documents with dead lines.
❖ Frequent meetings of steering committee to analyze the reports from sub-committees.
❖ Evaluate the strengths and competencies of faculty and staff from desk records and students

Rehana Rehman[1], Rabiya Ali[2], Rakhshaan Khan[3], Fazal M Arain[4]

evaluations

❖ Define competencies/skills and specialized roles of faculty members

❖ Assess the need for recruitment of new faculty members

❖ Develop a policy for recruitment of new faculty members in line with the policy of the organization
  o Plan advertisement
  o Review selection criteria
  o Recruit staff

❖ Recruitment process of support and allied staff
  o Review competencies, prepare criteria, advertise and recruit
  o Recruit full time/part time support staff depending upon available budget

❖ Admission criteria for graduates
  o Review and modify (if necessary) the admission criteria
  o Review and modify fee policy (if necessary)

❖ Check the availability of physical resources (infrastructure, finances and material)

❖ Submit educational grants to arrange finances for development of program

Strategies for human resource reform:

❖ Address the apprehensions/ demands of the faculty and staff

❖ Individualized consideration[8]:
  o Providing feedback, encouragement, and consistent communication with the committee members, faculty and staff
  o Initiate formal faculty research mentoring program
  o Empower them by increasing their participation
  o Give autonomy

❖ Intellectual stimulation[4]:
  o Stimulate thinking of faculty using brain storming techniques (Suggestions from faculty to improve the program)
  o Refresher training of faculty members on changes in curriculum

❖ Inspirational motivation:
  o Acknowledgement of staff member's separate efforts and requirements with positive reinforcement [2,3,8]

❖ Idealized influence:
  o Open door policy (being accessible and visible to staff with readiness to listen to problems)

❖ Information sharing:
  o Informal and formal meetings of former and present faculty members and staff

Strategies for Political reform

Advocacy Plan

Recognize Power Bases: The power base of leader is built by the position, resources and information that can be exchanged for cooperation, ability to provide incentives to others and personal qualities like; credibility, persuasiveness, tolerance that inspire confidence and a willingness to follow. Administration of conflict is serious to the organizational effectiveness[9]. Leader needs to identify if:

❖ They arise from personal differences, lack of information, role of inappropriateness (goals and responsibilities) and environmental pressure (resource scarcity and uncertainty).

❖ Or they are hierarchic (i.e. between people or groups in a vertical relationship) or horizontal (i.e. between people or groups at the same level).

❖ Both type of conflicts; horizontal among faculty members and vertical with power interest groups; University Board of advanced Studies, funding agencies for grants and government officials for sponsorship and scholarship (vertical) will be dealt with.

DISCUSSION:

It is well known that learning of basic sciences when placed in the context of clinical and professional practice is more meaningful and relevant to students[10]. There is nonetheless dearth and need of integration in basic sciences both at post graduate and undergraduate levels[11]. The advancement in clinical and translational science is thus hindered by compartmentalization of disciplines and "siloed" efforts of the researchers[12].

The leadership challenge is to introduce an integrated approach of Basic Sciences in existing post graduate curriculum so as to identify and nurture graduate students with talent and passion for research and teaching[13]. In order to approve and implement a post graduate program with integration in Basic Sciences; a leader should be ready for the change, will need to exhibit knowledge, skills and ability clusters of "self and public understanding", "interpersonal impact and supervision", 'authenticity and honesty" and "public and political center in/ out of organization"[14,15]. For this, leader should consider political realities; understand concerns of power in interests groups so as to align them with the vision of the organization[4]. Moreover, leader will recognize the expertise and perspective of each stake holder so as to build coalitions and create arenas for negotiations. Leader will inspire all the team members to have faith in the program and be committed to obtain its recognition with qualified and competent faculty members, innovative curriculum and technology

enhanced learning. This will retain reputation of organization as a center of excellence in line with institution's traditions, culture and values. The strategies adopted will empower faculty with the desired skills, credibility connections and authority to move the program in the right direction

CONCLUSION:

There is a requirement to initiate post graduate program in Pakistan for talented students who have aptitude for research and teaching. The post graduate program will be aimed to strengthen the multi-disciplinary integrated concepts of basic sciences as a solid foundation for developing research mentors and educators. Moreover, the theme of post graduate education will be communicated through a combination of words, deeds and symbols aligned with vision and strategy of organizational culture.

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