

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: AN IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study observes the pivotal role of Strategic Planning Efforts (SPEs) and their influence on enhancing teaching and learning products, as well as exploring the essential role of Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) in boosting the quality and level of education and learning within HEIs. The main outcomes of the FDPs that serve as pillars of teaching and learning and that are adopted in this paper as basic criteria for the proposed conceptual framework are: Pedagogical Contents Knowledge (PCK), Curriculum Development and Course Design (CDCD), Instructional Skills (ISs), Enhanced Assessment and Feedback Practices (EAFP), and Professional Growth and Reflection (PGR). The surveys were used as a research method, and the questionnaire was sent to selected experts in the field of academic development programs, faculty, and administrators in HEIs in Iraq, and analysed using SPSS software. The results revealed a strong positive impact of Strategic Planning in activating Academic Development Programs, and a strong impact of Academic Development Programs on strengthening the main pillars of teaching and learning stated in the study.

Keywords: Strategic Planning, Faculty Development Programs, teaching and learning performance, higher education institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning have become the key to surviving in today's ever-evolving world in all aspects of life and achieving stability and the fulfilment of personal and institutional aspirations. Academic development is the effort to improve the efficiency of faculty, enhance the quality of curriculum, and raise educational institutions to the level where students can acquire science and knowledge effectively and at a high level, and thus overcome the difficulties of a fluctuating life.

Academic development in a higher education institution therefore has three prime objectives, the first is to empower and qualify students to acquire knowledge and increase their educational potential and thinking skills at a level that makes them more productive. The second objective is to raise the level of efficiency of faculty members, enhance their competencies and improve their skills in the fields of teaching, research, and related academic and professional endeavours to raise the level of quality of teaching and enable them to transfer knowledge easily and