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SUSTAINABILITY IN LIFELONG LEARNING: MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE FROM PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places education and lifelong learning opportunities for all at the forefront within Sustainable Development Goal 4, thereby increasing the role of higher education institutions across the world. Higher education institutions have also significantly been impacted by technological advancements of the 21st century, necessitating the need to build resilience and respond with a sustainable approach. Conversely, studies on lifelong learning in the context of higher education institutions remain limited in Pakistan. Recognizing this fact, this study intends to examine sustainability in lifelong learning in terms of the courses offered, strategies used, challenges faced, and the sustainable leadership approach applied in Pakistan. This qualitative study employs the phenomenology approach to explore the perspective of lifelong learning center managers and uses purposive sampling technique to select respondents from eight renowned universities in Pakistan. Thus, eight respondents who possessed a minimum one-year experience managing lifelong learning centers were asked questions in semi-structured interviews. Subsequently, the content analysis method was used to extract themes and analyze data. Finally, practical recommendations on how to improve the process and quality of lifelong learning have been made using the results of this study.

Keywords: sustainable development, lifelong learning, higher education institutions, resilience

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Introduction

In the recent times, public and private think tanks across the world have deliberated the concept of lifelong learning to examine the opportunities and limitations of education as a facilitator of sustainability (English & Carlsen, 2019).Technological advancements that have taken place in the recent years have also increased the role of higher education institutions, and consequently, created a need for modifications, innovations, and the obligation to respond to the impact and demands of sustainability. Considering that

learning is a continuous process or a process of lifelong personal development, it is important for individuals to match the speed with which technology is advancing and the institutions that can equip people to cope with such advancements are higher education institutions. Therefore, it has become increasingly imperative for higher education institutions to educate people to meet the needs of the era with a special focus placed on lifelong learning (Laal, 2013). In the recent times, with the announcement of United Nations General Assembly (UN-GA) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), awareness regarding lifelong learning has increased and important initiatives have taken place for the realization of this goal(United Nations, 2015).

Higher education institutions keep reviewing curricula to keep up with the technological transformations of the world, and therefore, can inculcate sustainability in leaders over the years. In this regard, one of the major themes at higher education institutions is sustainable leadership strategies that need to consider the core values and continuity of the institutions. The phenomenon of sustainability is more than a new trend and involves the philosophy of resilience for lifelong development. Higher education institutions in Pakistan remain in need of sustainable leadership in order to cultivate sustainable institutions. Therefore, the means to achieving sustainability at higher education institutions should align with leadership perceptions. Sustainable governance at higher education institutions requires the incorporation and adaptation of latest management trends to enable the development of human resource and to offer a satisfying environment for both employees and students in order to motivate them towards accomplishing the objectives of the institution. Therefore, it is essential to clarify the role of leaders at universities(Bora, 2014).

The foundation of this study has been established using the sustainable leadership philosophy of Lambert and the general concept of lifelong learning (Lambert, 2011). Review of the literature also reveals that there are multiple indicators that lifelong learning should be implemented as a strategy (Kaplan, 2016). A number of studies on lifelong learning have been conducted in the context of European countries; however, studies on lifelong learning remain limited in Pakistan, particularly in the context of

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higher education institutions. In addition, studies have also not explored lifelong learning at higher education institutions and the role of sustainable leaders in Pakistan(Sultan & Arshad, 2017).

This study investigates the perspective of managers at lifelong learning centers in Pakistani universities and examines what type of leadership behavior would facilitate successful implementation of lifelong learning at universities. This paper assists in qualitatively clarifying the role of leaders in the context of lifelong learning at Pakistani universities. It focuses on discovering the strategies, perspective, and experiences of managers pertaining to lifelong learning at Pakistani higher education institutions. The study sets out to find answers to the following research questions:

1. How do lifelong learning center managers at higher education institutions perceive lifelong learning?

2. How do higher education institutions implement lifelong learning strategies and what are the problems faced by lifelong learning center managers during implementation?

3. What type of sustainable leadership behavior will help in successfully implementing lifelong learning?

Literature Review

The Concept of Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning can be defined as a continuous process that facilitates and enables individuals to gain knowledge and skills they will need during the course of their lives (Bryce, Frigo, McKenzie, & Withers, 2000). It was first presented in UNESCO's Faure report, which defined it as an essential component of universal education. It was conceptualized on the notion that education is an enabler for individuals to recognize their potential (Platt, 1973).Over the years, international organizations and researchers have developed different definitions of lifelong learning. The International Labour Office stated that lifelong learning is a process for gaining new knowledge and skills throughout one's life (ILO, 2000). Jarvis (2006)argued that lifelong learning is the amalgamation of processes in the lifetime of an individual, through which an individual's body and mind go through social situations, yielding a constantly evolving or a more skilled individual. Delors (1996) defined lifelong learning as education that continues throughout life and in all aspects of life.

Lifelong learning is an evolving concept that is expected to help with the fulfilment of United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, World Bank, and other international organizations endeavored to promote this concept for the fulfilment of international, social and cultural cooperation goals. However, lifelong learning has faced a number of challenges in fulfilling its goals. These obstacles originate from insufficient knowledge of the concept and the limitations associated with implementing it in a tangible form (Atchoarena, 2021). In the recent times, this concept has evolved from its traditional role, which was limited to the government and educational institutions, to a more inclusive role that places importance on informal education, which emphasizes personal learning. This change stems from the digital transformation of education and the range of learning tools available in the digital world(Schuetze, 2006).

Strategies and Challenges of Lifelong Learning

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals highlight that students must learn the skills necessary to support sustainability by the year 2030. Lifelong learning promotes learning as a continuous process owing to the belief that education never ceases in lifelong learning. As a result, universities can no longer be considered places specifically designed to impart knowledge to younger individuals. Universities must also ensure that individuals whose ages, personal and professional backgrounds differ from those of typical students have the resources they need to acquire quality education that helps them in their personal and professional lives (Taşçı & Titrek, 2020).

Bass et al. (2017) introduced a structural strategy for lifelong learning. The structural strategy is guided by a number of dimensions that highlight the significance of critical thinking, holistic perspectives and responsiveness. The strategy includes six inter-related stages of self-knowledge, explanation, reflection, external stimuli, assessment and learning. However, the strategy has not formally been studied in practice. Zitter (2010) presented a design perspective for lifelong learning. This perspective uses a strategy called CIMO, which is short for context, intervention, mechanisms and outcomes. The objective of CIMO is to help simulate a problem and come up with a practical solution for that problem. The study discovered that use of CIMO-strategy facilitated acquisition of scientific knowledge from real-life problems. The study also concluded that technology played a vital role in imparting simulation-based education. Use of digital technology has emerged as a strategy for enhancing the flexibility of education, and therefore, offers new prospects of how and where to impart education and acquire knowledge. Digital transformation of education is seen as an enabler that presents an evolving digital landscape and offers opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds and locations to become lifelong learners. Therefore, educational institutions must also play a vital role in embracing diversity and providing the necessary tools that enable teachers and students to have high-value interactions (Willcox, Sarma, & Lippel, 2016).

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Volume 3, Issue 1, Page 1-18, March 31, 2022 (Special Issue)

One particular challenge faced by managers of lifelong learning centers at universities is how to cope with the fast-paced development of technology coupled with the cumbersome administrative procedures (Chitiba, 2012). The implementation of a contemporary education strategy can take up to three years; however, if adoption of technology-based learning is delayed due to bureaucratic procedures, the education strategy might already become obsolete before it has been implemented. Therefore, there is a constant conflict between imparting modern education and the obligation to follow administrative procedures. Another challenge faced by managers of learning centers at universities is how to manage continuous capacity-building of teachers (Scales & Kelly, 2012). While universities do offer capacity-building opportunities for teachers, these are mostly related to pedagogical skills and do not focus on the core subjects. Thus, universities should not only focus on what they offer to the students, but should also concentrate on continuous capacity-building and professional development of teachers (Yang, Schneller, & Roche, 2015). Moreover, another challenge of lifelong learning involves the inclusion of organizations in the development of programs pertaining to lifelong learning. Involving organizations in the development of programs helps ensure that the programs offered remain relevant to the industries where the students work or will eventually work (Agerbæk & Houmøller, 2018).

Sustainable Leadership in Lifelong Learning

Leadership styles have a significant impact on how universities respond to the demands of sustainability. Higher education institutions must have at least three crucial elements in order to perform sustainably. These elements are room for change, participation, and management's vision (Székely & Knirsch, 2005). In today's era, universities cannot operate without strong leadership and wise management. A number of definitions for leadership have emerged over time, and while they share some common elements, they carry different meanings. Some studies have concentrated on a leader's internal, external and behavioral traits, while others have focused on a leader's connection with people, and some studies have investigated the circumstances that impact a leader's reactions (Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 2012). Therefore, through the course of history, leaders with different traits have led organizations at different times, places and situations.

It has been observed that the concept of sustainable leader ship has rarely been explored in literature due to its emergence in the recent times. During the past two decades, this concept has gained popularity and a limited number of studies can be found on it. The first premise of sustainable leadership is educated leadership that forms the foundation for both leadership and educational transformation(Davies, 2009). In order to develop sustainable higher education, universities require the services of leaders with a mindset for sustainability. Thus, leadership abilities appear to be the key to achieving sustainability in higher education. Using a sustainable approach also improves the financial standing and resilience of universities. Coupled with other benefits, it facilitates cost-cutting, productive initiatives, risk management, expansion and healthy

competition for universities. Therefore, successful implementation of sustainability has a direct relationship with sustainable leadership (EUAC, 2018).

In 2009, Quinn & Dalton's study uncovered how leaders performed their tasks and found that successful leaders implemented sustainability like other prominent leaders of the past by following their examples and possessed some additional capabilities (Quinn & Dalton, 2009). When leaders have the capacity and are able to reflect on experiences of the past, this can form positive psychological triggers in them that can help them respond positively to challenges and problem situations(Luthans & Avolio, 2003). For leaders to develop a sustainable approach, they must begin with observing their personal traits. Sustainable leaders are individuals who recognize the cultural, social, commercial and environmental aspects of their work and use their skills to mobilize the people working under them. Thus, sustainable leaders are individuals with strong principles and remarkable talent who are capable of correctly reading complicated issues, mitigating them, and foreseeing the consequences of these issues in the future. Such leaders not only promote teamwork but also elevate all members of their team to achieve the objective of building a resilient mindset for a sustainable future (Burns, Vaught, & Bauman, 2015).

Methodology

This qualitative study employs the phenomenology approach to understand the experiences and perspectives of respondents (Dahlberg, Dahlberg, & Moodley, 2009). Phenomenology was employed to obtain information regarding the experiences, perspectives and strategies of leaders about lifelong learning in Pakistani higher education institutions. The purposive sampling technique was used to gather in-depth insights and understanding of the phenomena understudy (Patton, 2002). A limited number of eight lifelong learning center managers were interviewed because these respondents had experienced the phenomenon and could talk about it in detail. The selected lifelong learning center managers possessed a minimum one-year experience working at their respective institutions. For the selection of higher education institutions, convenience, time and cost of transportation were taken into consideration. However, it was ensured that all the selected institutions were renowned top-tier institutions in Pakistan with active continuing education centers.

The respondents consisted of 5 female and 3 male managers who were leading or managing continuing education centers or professional development centers of their respective universities. To understand the perceptions of respondents, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted after developing an interview protocol. The last part of the interview protocol was developed using Lambert's theory (Lambert, 2011). The interview protocol was then reviewed by an expert to establish the face validity of the protocol and the suggested revisions were incorporated in the protocol. The average time taken to complete one interview was 30 minutes.

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Volume 3, Issue 1, Page 1-18, March 31, 2022 (Special Issue)

The research was analyzed in four phases using the content analysis method. Themes were identified from the obtained data in the first phase, after which sub-themes were derived in the second phase. Once the themes were identified, they were arranged with codes in the third phase. Finally, the results were interpreted and the meanings of certain words or statements were analyzed in the fourth phase(Bengtsson, 2016). The respondents were categorized from R1-R8 and the transcribed data was sent to the respondents for their review and approval.

Analysis and Results

A detailed analysis of responses given by lifelong learning center managers was carried out by determining themes, sub-themes, codes and descriptions of opinions, strategies, and limitations in implementation of lifelong learning at higher education institutions where the respondents worked.

During face-to-face interviews with eight lifelong learning center managers, the following themes, codes and statements about the **concept of lifelong learning** emerged:

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Concept of lifelong learning	Learning Procedure	Skills Enhancement		Individuals develop their aptitudes and capabilities in areas of interest						
		Literacy for all						Everyone should view lifelong learning as an educational philosophy		
		Education without boundaries				Education is not bounded by time, age or place			Education should be viewed in a broader sense including informal learning as well	
		Education from cradle to coffin	An individual keeps learning from birth to death		Learning is an ongoing process that never ends					
		Education encompasses entire life		Education covers the entire life of a person	Learning intentionally or unintentionally throughout life					
		Access to innovative ideas and changes occurring in environment					Keeping up with changes occurring in world and not lagging behind			Learning continuously about changing trends and keeping up with the pace of world
		Personal and social development	Developing one's self and then giving back to the society							

Table 1: Themes, sub-themes, codes and descriptions derived for concept of lifelong learning

An analysis of lifelong learningas described by managers of lifelong learning centers indicates that these managers possess in-depth knowledge of the concept since many responses overlap the definitions available in literature.

The following themes, sub-themes, codes and statements related to **strategies of lifelong learning programs** implemented by managers of lifelong learning centers emerged from the interviews:

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Strategies implemented for lifelong learning	Institutional approaches to lifelong learning programs	Trainings to enhance personal and academic development	Introduction of various language courses and software trainings such as SMART-PLS and SPSS	Academic writing courses are taught along with various trainings on software	Focus on being bilingual workshops and trainings related to quantitative data analysis	Soft skill courses	Advanced English courses	Time and stress management courses, verbal and non-verbal communication trainings	Language courses are taught	Time and knowledge management courses, soft skills
		Trainings as per need identified	Artificial intelligence and IoT related training	Technological advancement trainings	Trainings for new technology	Robotics and coding	Robotics and coding		Robotics and coding related trainings	
		Adult education			Adult access to educational trainings through social media networks	Access to education using social media mainly for adults				
	Inter-organizational strategies	Partnership with organizations and industries	Various certified courses in partnership with other organizations						Instructors from industries are invited for short courses	Advanced trainings to engineers & technicians

Table 1: Themes, sub-themes, codes and descriptions derived for strategies of lifelong learning

Managers of lifelong learning programs discussed the various institutional and inter-organizational strategies during their interviews. The major themes that emerged were trainings provided to academicians for personal and professional development, adult education, and trainings that are provided based on the needs identified. In addition,

some respondents also mentioned certified programs in partnership with other organizations.

The following themes, sub-themes, codes and statements about **challenges faced by managers of lifelong learning centers** emerged from the interviews:

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Limitations in implementation of lifelong learning strategies	Interruptions and difficulties faced	Financial problems				Projects are in abundance but funding is limited		Students are unable to afford lifelong learning programs due to financial constraints		
		Educational problems	Learning objectives differ for each student attending lifelong learning trainings		Students expectations of courses differ					Student perception and willingness to learn has a major impact on quality of program
		Technical problems				Shortage of qualified people and infrastructure	Shortage of trainers and equipment		Labs have limited and insufficient equipment	
		Inter-organizational challenges		It's difficult to come to a mutual agreement on various aspects of trainings						

Table 2: Themes, sub-themes, codes and descriptions derived for challenges faced by lifelong learning center managers

The managers identified many problems that they faced on a regular basis while implementing lifelong learning strategies at their institutions. These problems were not limited to financial constraints but also included academic difficulties, technical and hardware problems, and disagreement with external organizations.

The following themes, sub-themes, codes and statements related to **sustainable leadership** emerged from the responses of lifelong learning center managers:

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8
Attitude of leaders	Sustainable guidance	Train the trainer					Leaders should be ready to learn			Leaders should adopt the idea of continuous learning
		Association with other organizations	The leaders should be able to collaborate with internal and external trainers	Leaders are unable to introduce programs in collaboration with other organizations		Collaboration with external institution for lifelong learning programs is important				
		Skills to govern and coordinate							Governing and coordinating lifelong learning programs is essential	
		Inclusion of diversity and equal opportunities			Equal opportunities should be provided to people who are in need of specific trainings at a particular point			Diversity of audience should be encouraged		

Table 3: Themes, sub-themes, codes and descriptions derived for sustainable leadership

As per the managers of lifelong learning centers, it is necessary for leaders to be open to and ready for new ideas. Many respondents believed that collaboration with external organizations was vital for the success of lifelong learning programs. Moreover, diversity was identified as an important element that should not be ignored when offering lifelong learning courses.

Based on Lambert's framework of sustainable leadership (2011), the lifelong learning managers working at higher education institutions were further probed about sustainable leadership behavior that would enable successful implementation of lifelong learning strategies at their respective institutions. The respondents revealed the following insights that have been categorized into Lambert'ssix principles of sustainable leadership:

Principle 1. Learning opportunities to build staff capacity:

According to a manager of lifelong learning center (R2):

"We provide equal opportunities to our employees to participate in personal and professional development programs. They are sent for various conferences and certified courses that help them build their learning capabilities and ingrain the concept of lifelong learning in them."

According to another representative (R4):

"As a leader of an institution, one should be a role model for others. Hence, our leaders try to positively influence everyone in the institution by participating in various trainings and development programs along with the employees. I also renew myself every now and then with the new trends and recent knowledge. I make sure that I motivate students by interacting with them in person and through social platforms. This creates an atmosphere of learning among employees and students and allows efficient implementation of lifelong learning strategies."

Principle 2. Implementation of lifelong learning programs at every level of hierarchy:

A representative (R3) pointed out some obstacles in sustainable leadership when it comes to lifelong learning programs. He declared:

"The implementation of lifelong learning programs requires support from top management. However, we usually do not get the required support. Most of the decisions are delayed to such an extent that we lose the opportunity of participation in training programs. Furthermore, everyone has a different expectation from courses which leads to misalignment of goals for such programs."

The manager of R1 indicated:

"Everyone should be a part of decision making when it comes to lifelong learning processes. We try to actively involve employees at all levels and obtain feedback from public which enhances their motivation to be part of such programs."

Principle 3. Consolidation and communication:

Manager (R1) of a university agreed that communication is the key to offering successful lifelong learning programs:

"We make sure that we motivate employees to become part of training programs. We enroll our employees in training programs offered all over the world. These trainings are not limited to a specific domain, we try to reach organizations via various platforms and make sure that our employees engage in development programs on a regular basis."

Respondent (R6) from a university stated:

"Collaboration and communication with internal and external staff is the center to lifelong learning activities. Our management ensures that we associate with external organizations well in time in order to capitalize on lifelong learning opportunities and provide our students with up-to-date knowledge."

Principle 4. Synergy between short-term and long-term goals:

Managers agreed that in order to enhance corporate development, functional and tactical goals need to be aligned with strategic goals of the institution. According to two managers (R3 and R8):

"The success of our institution comes from the alignment of goals at all levels of management. We create SMART goals and ensure their implementation. This assists us in developing sustainability and helps us in creating a clear vision."

"We, at all levels of management, develop goals annually and use a participative approach to communicate these goals to our staff members. The environmental changes are constant so we ensure that we scan the environment and then develop goals at all levels."

Principle 5. Diversity:

Cohesion and inclusion of each and every race, sect and ethnicity is vital to promote lifelong learning. According to a manager (R7):

"We collaborate nationally and internationally to promote diversity in lifelong learning programs. Various trainers from diverse industries are given a chance to communicate with our students. We also ensure that equal opportunities are provided to our staff members and potential students to enroll in such programs."

On the other hand, a representative (R3) indicated the difficulties associated with diversity:

"Diversity however, is an important factor in lifelong learning programs, however, due to financial constraints as well as lack of support from top management, it is really tough to manage diversity from both trainee and trainer perspective."

45ISSN (P):2788-4821 & ISSN (O): 2788-483X
Volume 3, Issue 1, Page 1-18, March 31, 2022 (Special Issue)

Principle 6. Conserves:

Although Luthans & Avolio (2003) suggested that learning from the past is crucial for a leader, majority of the respondents declared weaknesses associated with such mindsets.

According to a manager (R3):

"Learning from problems of the past can be a hurdle since the management and executives change as time passes. The old practices become obsolete, and hence, the new trends and new knowledge is implemented in lifelong learning strategies. New strategies require new methods and old ways of doing things are not appropriate."

While investigating the sustainable leadership behavior at higher education institutions, results revealed that managers agreed that providing opportunities to staff members for building their capacity plays an important role in sustaining the culture of lifelong learning at higher education institutions. In addition, managers suggested that sustainable leadership should be practiced for every level of hierarchy in order to engage managers at all levels. However, managers identified that successful implementation of lifelong learning at all levels will require strong collaboration and teamwork among employees and the management. The synergy between institutional objectives and the objectives of external stakeholders is also a crucial factor for the successful deployment of lifelong learning programs. The inclusion of people from various backgrounds and cultures will also add value to lifelong learning programs. Conversely, a number of limitations, including lack of top management's support and financial constraints, interfere with the inclusion of diversity in lifelong learning programs. Moreover, learning from the past is not considered an essential element for sustainable lifelong learning programs due to changing trends and new problems emerging from external variations in the environment. The leaders need to focus on new problems every day hence; focusing on the past glitches and their solutions is rarely required in the era of constant change.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the perspective of lifelong learning center managers working at Pakistani higher education institutions regarding the concept of lifelong learning, the

strategies they use, the challenges they face, and the sustainable leadership behavior that facilitates lifelong learning.

The primary data collected from eight lifelong learning center managers revealed that there are a number of meanings associated with the concept of lifelong learning. While some managers believed that lifelong learning enhances the capabilities of individuals, others perceived it as a learning process that never ends. This finding is in line with the finding of Delors (1996). Managers also believed that lifelong learning is education without the boundaries of age, time, place or mode of learning. This result is consistent with the findings of Platt (1973). Moreover, in agreement with Zitter (2010), managers considered innovative ideas for personal and professional development as essential components of lifelong learning. Thus, as seen in literature, the understanding of the concept of lifelong learning differed for individuals(Schuetze, 2006).

When asked about the strategies applied, managers believed that in order to implement successful programs for lifelong learning, trainings should be designed and provided for personal and academic excellence of teachers. This result is in agreement with the findings of Yang et al (2015). Managers also suggested that workshops on how to use research-based software such as SMART-PLS or SPSS should be provided to teachers. In addition to these, managers believed that courses on oral and verbal communication skills, time management, and knowledge management could also prove useful for lifelong learners. The respondents were also of the opinion that trainings should be provided after analyzing the need for them, and hence, contemporary courses on artificial intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), and robotics should be made available. This finding corresponds to the finding of Chitiba(2012). Managers considered social media an unsuitable medium for providing lifelong learning to adults. However, they were of the view that universities should focus on developing strategies to collaborate with external organizations and offer advanced courses relevant to industries not just for managerial staff but for engineers and technicians as well. As seen in literature, the findings of Agerbæk & Houmøller (2018) support this result.

According to the managers of lifelong learning centers at universities, the most significant challenges associated with lifelong learning were educational and technical. The learning objectives differ from the learning outcomes expected by students, thereby, negatively affecting the effectiveness of the program. Shortage of qualified teachers and lack of infrastructure to provide a satisfactory experience were also highlighted as limitations associated with offering lifelong learning programs.

The result regarding shortage of qualified teachers is in line with the findings of Scales & Kelly (2012). When inquired about the guidance received from leaders or the top management, it was discovered that the most important element for managers of lifelong learning centers was that their leaders should be open to the idea of collaborating with external organizations for the purpose of training and curricula development. The managers felt that academia-industry and third-party collaborations would help them offer relevant high quality programs to lifelong learners. The study by Agerbæk & Houmøller (2018) also revealed the same results.

When probed about sustainable leadership behavior to run successful lifelong learning programs, the managers agreed that equal opportunities should be provided to build staff capacities. In addition, managers believed that employees at every level should be trained for the future. As identified in literature, communication, involvement, synergy between institutional and departmental goals, and diversity were also considered key factors that contributed to sustainable leadership in lifelong learning (Burns et al, 2015). However, the principle of Conserves derived from Lambert's framework for sustainable leadership (2011)was denied by managers of lifelong learning centers. According to them, learning from the past is not a crucial factor for sustainable leadership because leaders must not dwell in the past and must focus on new problems every day. This result, however, does not support the findings of Luthans & Avolio's(2003) study in literature in which they suggest that leaders must reflect on history and learn from experiences of the past.

This study concludes that in order to successfully run lifelong learning centers at Pakistani higher education institutions, sustainable leadership behaviors are crucial. However, managers of lifelong learning centers at higher education institutions appear to be facing problems with funding, lack of infrastructure, unqualified teachers, lack of academia-industry collaboration, and conflict between student-institution expectations from the lifelong learning programs. Recognizing these challenges, measures should be taken by the top management of universities to demonstrate sustainable leadership behavior and rectify the weaknesses highlighted by managers of lifelong learning centers in order to facilitate effective lifelong learning programs. To sum up, lifelong learning will play a significant role in achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Therefore, training of teachers and establishment of adequate facilities is essential for sustainable lifelong learning. From this perspective, sustainable leaders will play a crucial role as the role of higher education institutions evolves with changing demands of the digital world. In the future, it is important to study the student perspective of lifelong learners and their motivation for pursuing lifelong learning

opportunities. In addition, a quantitative study to support this study can be conducted in the future to obtain additional insights from the perspective of managers. Lastly, lifelong learning in the context of developed v/s developing countries should be explored in the future to measure the global impact of lifelong learning.

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