IMPACT OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ON GROWTH IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF PAKISTAN:
MODERATING ROLE OF STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Doctoral Thesis

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Eskişehir 2023

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DOCTORAL THESIS
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ÖZET

PAKISTAN ÜNIVERSITELERINDE STRATEJIK LIDERLIĞIN BÜYÜME ÜZERINDEKI ETKISI: STRATEJIK UYUMUN ARACILIK ROLÜ

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Stratejik liderlik çok kritik bir kavram olup uzun yıllardır örgütsel çalışmalarda yer almaktadır, ancak Pakistan açısından oldukça yeni bir kavramdır. Pakistan'da Stratejik liderlik konusunda kayda değer bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Stratejik liderlik örgütün büyümesinde kritik bir rol oynar. Pakistan Yüksek Öğrenim komisyonu finansal hedeflere ulaşmak için, üniversitelerin finansal kaynaklarını artırarak bağımsız hale gelmeleri gerektiğini, öğrencilerin ve programların artmasını, büyümeyi artıran ana faktörler olduğundan birçok kez bahsetmiştir. Üniversitelerin stratejik liderliği, yüksek öğretim kurumlarında büyümeyi artırmada bu kritik rolü oynamaktadır. Bu çalışmada Stratejik liderlik ile büyüme arasındaki ilişki incelemektedir. Ayrıca, üniversitelerde stratejik liderliğin büyüme üzerindeki etkisini artırmada stratejik uyumun aracı rolünü de kontrol etmektedir. Öncelikle stratejik liderlik, stratejik uyum ve büyüme değişkenlerinin üç değişkeni arasındaki ilişkiyi kurmak için kapsamlı bir literatür taraması yapılmaktadır. Veriler üniversite yönetimi aracılığıyla çevrimiçi olarak stratejik liderler ve çalışanlar arasında ayrı ayrı dağıtılan yedi puanlı bir likert ölçeğinde, 249 katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Bunların 88'i stratejik liderdi ve geri kalan 161'i hem akademik hem de akademik olmayan departmanlardan genel çalışanlardı. Veri analizi için SPSS 20.0 ve Smart-PLS 2.0, Yapı Eşitliği Modellemesi (SEM) kullanılmıştır. Bu araştırmada, stratejik liderliğin hem stratejik uyum hem de büyüme üzerindeki pozitif rolü olduğu bulunmuştur . Bu çalışma aynı zamanda stratejik uyumun stratejik liderlik ile büyüme arasındaki aracı rolüne de işaret etmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Stratejik Liderlik, Stratejik Uyum, Smart-PLS, YEM.

ABSTRACT

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Strategic leadership is a concept very critical and has been in organizational studies for many years, but from a Pakistani point of view, it is quite a new concept. No considerable work has been done on Strategic leadership in Pakistan. Strategic leadership plays a critical role in the growth of the organization. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan has mentioned many times that universities must become independent by increasing their financial resources, and students' growth and programs' growth are the main factors to enhance growth to meet the financial goals. Universities' strategic leadership plays a critical role in enhancing growth in higher education institutions. Here in this study, we have examined the relationship between Strategic leadership and growth. Also, we have checked the intermoderating role of strategic alignment in enhancing the impact of strategic leadership on growth in universities. First, a comprehensive literature review has been done to establish the relationship among the three variables of strategic leadership, strategic alignment, and growth. Data has been collected on a seven-point Likert scale adopted questionnaire separately distributed among strategic leaders and employees online through university administration, from 249 respondents. Among them, 88 were strategic leaders and the remaining 161 were general employees from both academic and non-academic departments. SPSS 20.0 and Smart-PLS 2.0, Structure Equation Modeling (SEM) have been employed for data analysis. This research comprehends the positive role of strategic leadership towards both strategic alignment and growth which was hypothesized through literature. This study also indicates the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth.

Keywords: Strategic Leadership, Strategic Alignment, Smart-PLS, SEM.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH
ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES

I hereby truthfully declare that this thesis is an original work prepared by me; that I have behaved in accordance with the scientific ethical principles and rules throughout the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis, and presentation of my work; that I have cited the sources of all the data and information that could be obtained within the scope of this study, and included these sources in the references section; and that this study has been scanned for plagiarism with "scientific plagiarism detection program" used by Anadolu University, and that "it does not have any plagiarism" whatsoever. I also declare that, if a case contrary to my declaration is detected in my work at any time, I hereby express my consent to all the ethical and legal consequences that are involved.

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Raja Abdul Ghafoor KHAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1   INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Study Background

Organizations are working hard to become competitive in this ever-changing environment. Technology is changing day by day and it makes it difficult for organizations to compete and remain competitive. This turbulent and ever-changing environment makes organizations think differently and develop their leadership in such a way that it can make the organization competitive and make it perform better to remain in the market with a good reputation and profitable. In this turbulent and unpredictable environment, it is very important to develop effective strategic leadership which is the foundation of success and strategic management process (Hidayah et al., 2015). Leader in any organization plays the roles of strategic thinking and planning the operational activities (Azhar et al., 2012). It is the responsibility of the leader in any organization to think strategically and give directions to the employees of the organization to achieve strategic goals. The strategic leadership of any organization is responsible for the development of strategic management processes for the organization. They are responsible for the development of vision, mission, strategic goals and objectives, development of strategies to achieve those goals, execution of the developed strategies, and performance evaluation (Fuller and Green, 2005). The alignment of the vision of any organization with its goals and objection is the most important task of leadership in an organization (Azhar, 2012). To achieve the goals, it is important for an organization its vision and mission must be aligned with its strategic goals and objectives which will ultimately result in enhancing the performance of the organization.

Strategic leadership is a critical component in organizational studies. Strategic leadership plays an important role in the development of organizations. Strategic

Leadership is the unique ability to anticipate, envisioning, maintaining flexibility, think strategically, and empower employees to create new inventions that lead to organizational transformations or changes and ultimately performance improvement (Banzato & Sierra, 2016). Strategic leadership is comprised of the people who have power within the organization. These people are the CEO, Top management teams (TMT) the board members. These are the people responsible for the implementation of the strategic management process.

Here in this study, the concept of strategic leadership has been examined in higher education institutions. Universities are the producers of strategic leaders. So, it is important to study what kind of strategic leadership future strategic leaders are developing. The focus of this study has remained on strategic leadership in the universities of Pakistan and its effect on the growth of the universities. It is an emerging concept in organizational studies. Though a lot of work in this area has been done in many business areas, very little work has been done in the higher education sector. Especially in Pakistan, no significant work has been done on strategic leadership in higher education institutions.

1.2. Explanation of Different Concepts

1.2.1. Strategic leadership

The study and scope of Strategic Leadership focus on a small group of executives referred to as the CEO, Top management teams (TMT), and the board of directors who have the overall responsibilities of an organization (Banzato & Sierra, 2016). Strategic Leadership is the unique ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and empower employees to create new inventions that lead to organizational transformations or changes and ultimately performance improvement (Banzato & Sierra, 2016). The process of strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation requires a coordinated and sustained commitment from top leadership (Mosia and Veldsman, 2004). A company's performance is directly linked with its strategic choices and those strategic choices are made by the people who have power in the organization (John, 1972).

Strategic Leadership focuses on sustainable competitive advantage or the success of the organization (Hughes and Beatty 2005, p.9). Strategic leadership is the

ability to anticipate, envision, empower others and maintain flexibility to create necessary strategic change. Strategic leaders affect organizational performance regardless of their tenure. Effective strategic leadership is the foundation for the successful use of the strategic management process (Hitt et al. 2016, p.384). The impact of strategic leadership is felt over a long period and it involves significant organizational change (Hughes and Beatty 2005, p.11). Leadership performs various roles such as motivator, innovator, developer, strategist, analyst, caretaker, organizer, change enabler, risk manager, guide evaluator, and collaborator (Azhar et al. 2012). Leadership development is a process that depends on the ability and willingness to learn from experience (Hughes and Beatty 2005, p.221). According to Jaradat & Mashhour (2017), conceiving and implementation of successful strategies is the task of strategic leadership. The transformation leadership style is considered one of the most effective strategic leadership styles (Hitt et al. 2016, p.387). Stumpf & Mullen (1991) have developed four elements that are associated with the effectiveness of management. These elements are; (1) frequently applying a small number of important concepts, (2) developing skill at thinking and acting strategically, (3) taking advantage of knowing one's personal style and its impact on others and, (4) understanding the nature of strategic management processes. These four elements must be developed in proportion to each other (Stumpf & Mullen 1991).

The six critical criteria were developed by Hitt et al. (1994) to measure strategic leadership in organizational studies. These six criteria are determining strategic direction, exploiting and maintaining core competencies, developing human capital, sustaining an effective corporate culture, emphasizing ethical practices, and establishing strategic controls. Some other dimensions of strategic leadership are described by Duursema (2013) which are client-centricity, operational efficiency, business development, and organizational creativity. According to Duursema (2013). Tonge et al. (1998) have suggested six attributes of leadership; these are direction, selection of key personnel, vision, people motivation, communication, financial skills, and product/service knowledge.

1.2.2. Strategic Alignment

Strategic alignment is necessary for success. According to Khadem (2008), alignment is crucial to organizational success. Alignment is that optimal and ideal state in which all the important factors of an organization like employees, customers, strategy, and key processes work in line to propel profit and growth. Strategic alignment is important for any growing organization. It is the responsibility of the leaders of the organization to keep the organization aligned in this fast-changing environment. Customers and employees of an aligned organization are more satisfied as compared to other organizations and such organizations produce better returns for their shareholders. Alignment involves common agreements between goals and means (Fonvielle and Carr, 2001).

Strategic leaders can play an important role in attaining and maintaining this alignment for steady and sustained growth for the universities. A university's vision, mission, strategy, employees, and key processes must be aligned for the growth of the university. All these factors can be aligned, and this work must be done by the strategic leadership of the universities. The universities' TMT (top management teams) including all directors, deans, registrar, board members, and rectors are responsible for this alignment.

1.2.3. Growth

Growth can be measured through different aspects of an educational institution. Some of them are the growing number of students, faculties, departments, programs, faculty members, campuses, research publications, patents, and international collaborations. These are all non-financial growth areas of an educational institutional. From a financial point of view financial resources, profits, revenues and income from all the educational institution resources are the financial growth areas. If the number of students is declining, one of the solutions to increase the number of students is to attract students from other countries. One example of this phenomenon is the universities in the UK and USA which are attracting an increased number of students from India and China (Stepan 2016). The same is the case with Pakistan.

Many Pakistani universities are attracting students from other developing and under-developed countries by giving them incentives to get admission to Pakistani

universities. Students from Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Indonesia, Somalia, and many other African and Asian countries are studying at Pakistani universities. This is one way to overcome the 'growth' problem in the local market for universities. Population reduction is also a big problem in declining the number of students in universities (Stepan 2016). In recent years researchers and policy makers have become particularly focused on student growth (Anderman et al., 2015). Here in this study, we will examine the growth of students and programs in the last 5 years in the selected universities for research and data collection in Pakistan.

The higher education environment is changing at a very rapid pace as new and latest programs are introduced for the students to study. Some of the new programs are terrorist financing, cyber security, money laundering, disaster management, cybercrime, and social media norms and security. The universities need to offer new courses to deliver the latest knowledge and to attract diverse students from all around the world.

1.3. Problem Statement

Strategic leadership remained the focus of many researchers in the world. Strategic leaders are the people within the organization, usually known as the top management teams (TMT) responsible for the strategic management process in any organization. It means they are responsible for the development and implementation of the strategy while focusing on all the necessary actions to improve the performance of the organization. Here in this study, we will focus on the impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities of Pakistan. No significant work has been done in this area, especially in Pakistan. The area of strategic leadership is still unexplored in Pakistan. Din et al. (2017) tested the impact of Strategic Leadership on employee performance in the textile industry of Faisalabad, Pakistan; which is a production sector.

In the services sector, the only telecom sector has been explored to study the phenomena of strategic leadership. Jabeen (2017) checked the impact of strategic leadership on employee creativity and employee performance in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Jabeen (2017) has suggested that this is a new concept in Pakistan, but it is well-established and discussed in Europe and America. So, it is clear that the phenomenon of strategic leadership still has the potential to explore in Pakistan to

increase its generalizability and scope. Nothing has been done in this area in the Education sector of Pakistan which is the backbone of any country both economically and socially. No research has been done to check the impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the organization. Growth is the major performance factor in any industry. Nyamao (2016) suggested that the performance of government organizations can also be checked for their strategic leaders. So, this study is planned to answer the question "how does strategic leadership affect the growth of students and programs of universities in Pakistan".

In this study, to fulfill this gap the focus remained on the public sector universities of Pakistan. Serfontein (2010) has done a study on the business organization to study strategic leadership and focusing on high-performing business organizations and suggested studying the phenomena in low-performing and government organizations to make the concept more generalizable. This study focuses on public sector universities regardless of their rankings as our sample will be more geographically based that include both high-performing and low-performing universities of Pakistan. In most studies data has been collected only from the head of the organization and not the top management teams have been included. In this study, data has been collected from the Vice chancellors or Rectors, deans, directors, and heads of the departments as being strategic leaders and from other employees of the universities. Lear (2012) has tested the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment in high-performing companies in South Africa. An organization needs to be aligned for better performance. In a university setup, the employees and employers must be on the same page regarding all the important matters of the university. This study also focuses on the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and the growth of the universities in Pakistan. Walter et al. (2013) study the moderating role of strategic alignment in research on university faculty members. So it is important to test the phenomenon in a different geographic location to enhance the generalizability of the research and also to check the moderating effect of strategic alignment.

1.4. Study Objectives

1. Extending the research done internationally on Strategic Leadership by empirically assessing the concept in the context of Pakistan's Higher education institutions.

2. To check the relationship between the strategic leadership and strategic alignment in the universities of Pakistan.

3. To analyze the effect of strategic leadership and strategic alignment on the growth of the universities.

4. To analyze the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth in the universities of Pakistan.

1.5. Research Questions

1. To study whether the phenomenon of strategic leadership exists in the universities of Pakistan.

2. What are the effect of strategic leadership on strategic alignment and the growth of the universities in Pakistan?

3. What is the effect of strategic alignment on the growth of the universities of Pakistan?

4. How strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and growth in the universities of Pakistan?

1.6. Proposed Hypothesis

H1: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities in Pakistan

H2: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment

H3: Strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

H4: Strategic alignment has a positive impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

1.7. Methodology of the Study

The researcher needs to specify the way he or she is conducting the research. The methodology of the research shows the way research has been done to answer the research questions and the objectives that have been set achieve in the beginning if the research. In this research three variables will be examined for research; strategic leadership as an independent variable, strategic alignment as a moderating variable, and growth as a dependent variable. A relationship will also be established and measured between strategic leadership and strategic alignment.

The detailed methodology that includes sampling, population, sampling frame, sampling technique sample, data collection and data analysis, instrument validity, and reliability will be discussed in the third chapter.

1.8.   Significance of the Study

This study will help in identifying the role of strategic leadership in the growth of the higher education institutions of Pakistan. Although there are different criteria implemented by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) to judge the performance of the universities in Pakistan and the same are used for the university rankings in Pakistan, now it's the need of the hour to implement the corporate strategic analysis tools to see the performance of higher education institutions in Pakistan. Because of the budgetary cuts from the government of Pakistan for higher education institutions, the public sector higher education institutions are being suggested to seek out ways to generate funds by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. Over the last few years universities of Pakistan are generating more money through tuition fees and other projects. So, it is necessary to analyze these public sector institutions as corporates and the tools that are being used by the profit motive organizations must be used to analyze the performance of these public sector universities.

The universities need to increase the number of students and the number of programs for steady growth. With the increase in the number of students and number of programs, universities would be able to increase their funding through tuition fees. With this study, Higher Education Institutions will be able to judge the universities for their growth and the role of their respective strategic leadership in enhancing the growth. This will also help the authorities to appoint competent strategic leaders for the betterment of the universities.

1.9.   Contribution of the Study

Pakistan is a developing country and all its universities are facing financial problems that hinder them to contribute widely to research and innovation. Though in the past few years, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan has opened many departments like the Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) and Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) to increase research contributions of the universities in Pakistan the lake of finances the big problem for the universities to act

accordingly. In the last two decades since the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan came into being in 2002, universities are encouraged to generate their finances instead of looking towards the government for their contribution.

So the universities must work on those strategies that could allow them to generate money to fulfill their needs and contribute to the betterment of society with quality research and education. Universities are the back bone of any society both from ethical and financial points of view. The leadership of the university can play a significant role in the growth of the university which ultimately enhances its performance of the university. The focus of this study remained on the public sector universities of Pakistan situated in the capital territory of Islamabad which is the capital city of Pakistan. This study will contribute to the body of knowledge related to strategic leadership and strategic alignment and their impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

This is the need of the hour that public sector universities must be analyzed as profit-generating organizations that focus on growth to generate profits to compete in this competitive world. More growth means more tuition fees and funds which would be the ultimate goal for any university because without funds it is impossible to contribute to emerging research in different fields and also to provide quality education.

This is the first time in Pakistan that such a study has been done. No work has been done in this field in Pakistan by focusing on the higher education sector of Pakistan. With this new analysis process, the role of strategic leaders is highlighted in the growth of the universities. There are already many criteria used in Pakistan to analyze the contributions of the universities to rank them. This research will contribute to enhancing those criteria and include the contribution of strategic leaders in enhancing the performance of the universities. This research will also help the Higher Education Commission and the government of Pakistan to appoint the best strategic leadership to enhance the performance of the universities.

1.10. Outline of the Research Sequence

The outline of the research is as follows. A chapter-wise summary is provided for the convenience of the readers.

1.10.1. Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides the background of the study; the main concepts of strategic leadership, strategic alignment, growth, strategic leadership, and growth in higher education have been discussed. The problem statement has been formulated. Research objectives and research questions have been developed. An overview of hypotheses and methodology has been given. It also explains the significance and contribution of the study.

1.10.2. Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive review of the literature to support the study through theoretical background for the justification of the research questions, research objectives, and hypotheses that have been developed to answer, achieve and approve. There is a detailed review of the literature related to strategic leadership, strategic alignment, strategic leadership in higher education institutions, corporate growth, growth in higher education institutions, justification of six critical criteria, and the four antecedents (strategy, customer, processes, people) of strategic alignment. In the end, a theoretical framework has also been developed to understand the Independent, Dependent, and Moderating variables used in the study to verify the hypotheses.

1.10.3. Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter offers detailed information about the methodology adopted for this study. The information related to sampling, population frame, sampling frame, sampling technique, sample, data collection, and data analysis has been provided. This chapter also included a pilot study that has been done to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire that has been adopted and used for the online data collection from the selected universities of Pakistan.

1.10.4. Chapter 4: Data analysis, Interpretation, and Discussion of Research Findings

This chapter provides the graphs and tables related to the data analysis and based on data analysis results have been produced. These results have been used for the acceptance or rejection of the proposed hypotheses and to answer the research questions and to achieve research objectives. Based on these results a comprehensive discussion has been done on the findings. A discussion has also been done on the

recent situation of corona pandemic worldwide and its effects on higher education from both institutes' and students' points of view.

1.10.5. Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Study

This chapter provides a conclusion drawn by the discussion on results and recommendations that have been made for further study in this area. The contribution of the study has also been discussed and the limitations of the study are provided.

1.11. Summary

This chapter focused on the background of the study and the need for the research. A niche has been developed based on previous studies that provide bases for the recent study to conduct. Brief descriptions of the necessary concepts like strategic leadership, strategic alignment, and growth incorporation and higher education institutions have been provided for a better understanding of the ideas used in the research and the same have been further explained in detail in the second chapter. A comprehensive problem statement has been developed to justify the research. Research questions and research objectives also have been established. A brief description of the proposed hypotheses is also part of this chapter. In the end, the importance and contribution of the study have been discussed.

Chapter 2   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.   Higher Education Sector of Pakistan

The university grant commission of Pakistan (UGC) was established with the freedom of Pakistan on 14 August 1947 from the British colony of the Indian subcontinent. As clear from the name, The University grant commission was less a regulatory body and more a financial body to give funds to public sector universities of Pakistan at that Time. It remains active till 2002.

The Higher Education Institution of Pakistan (HEC) was established in 2002 under the Higher Education Commission Ordinance 2002 by President General Pervez Musharaf. According to this ordinance, the controlling authority of the Higher Education Commission is the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission's head quarter is situated in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. According to the ordinance of the Higher Education Commission, the Prime Minister of Pakistan will appoint the chairperson of the commission with international eminence with proven ability that has made a significant contribution to higher education as a teacher, researcher, and administrator. Prof. Dr. Atta Ur Rehman was the founder Chairman of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. He is a renowned Scientist and a Chemistry Professor. The status of the chairperson of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan is equivalent to the Federal Minister.

The Higher Education Commission is the regulatory body of the universities in Pakistan and all the rankings of universities are declared by Higher Education Commission under the criteria defined by the commission.

There is a total of two hundred and fourteen universities in Pakistan, both public and private spread all over Pakistan. One hundred and thirty-one universities are public sector universities and the remaining eighty-three are private sector universities. There are two different legal statuses of Pakistani universities. Some Pakistani universities are chartered by the Federal Government of Pakistan and some of them are charted by provincial governments. Federally chartered universities can open campuses all over Pakistan and in the Federal Territory of Islamabad the capital of Pakistan, but on the other hand provincial charted universities can open campuses in the related province only and in the federal territory of Islamabad. Provincial charted universities cannot open their campuses in other provinces. There are total

196 general category universities in Pakistan which are offering higher education in diverse fields ranging from natural sciences to social science and humanities and from medical sciences to engineering and technology. 115 public sector universities are general and the remaining 81 are private sector general universities. There are total 23 federally charted general universities in Pakistan and all of them are operating with their main campuses in the federal territory of Islamabad and most of them have campuses all over Pakistan. There is 9 private sectors federally chartered general category universities in the federal territory of Islamabad. There are 7 general universities in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. 5 of them are public sector universities and the other two are private sector universities.

2.1.1. Public Sector Universities of Pakistan

There are one hundred and twenty public sector universities in Pakistan. Both federal and provincial governments can give a charter to the universities that fulfill the required criteria determined by the federal or provincial governments. There are total 131 public sector universities in Pakistan charted by the federal and provincial governments of Pakistan. A public sector university is entitled to get financial assistant from both governments (Provincial or Federal) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. There are four provinces in Pakistan, a federal territory, and The State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (a disputed territory between India and Pakistan since 1947) that have the authority to give a charter to the newly established universities.

There are five public sector universities in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir chartered by the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Balochistan is the smallest province of Pakistan by population and the biggest by area. Balochistan government has given the charter to eight Public sector universities. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the third large province of Pakistan by population with 27 provincial chartered public sector universities. Sindh is the second big province of Pakistan by population with 25 provincial chartered universities situated in different cities of the province. Punjab is the biggest province of Pakistan by population with more than 100 million population has 39 provincial chartered universities, more than any other province and the capital territory. The federal government of Pakistan has given the charter to 27 universities.

Federally chartered universities have one big advantage over provincial chartered universities as they can open campuses all over Pakistan. While a provincial charted university can open a campus in the same province or the Capital Territory of Islamabad. It cannot open its campus in any other province. Pakistan's top-ranked university is Quaid-e-Azam University, charted by the federal government and situated in the federal capital Islamabad.

2.1.2. Private Sector Universities of Pakistan

There are total 83 private sector universities in Pakistan charted by federal and provincial governments. There are two private-sector universities Chartered by the government of the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. One private university situated in Balochistan, charted by the provincial government of Balochistan. There are 11 provincial charted private sector universities in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Sindh has 33 private-sector charter universities. The biggest province Punjab has given the charter to 26 private-sector universities. The federal government of Pakistan has given the charter to 10 private sector universities. Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi and Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) Lahore are two of the most famous Private sector universities of Pakistan with an international reputation.

2.2. The Concept of Strategic Leadership

Organizations always try to produce better results and try to improve performance over time. Performance improvement is the key to success for any organization in the world. No organization in the world is recognized without improved performance. Continuous improvement is very important to enhance performance and bring the organization to a higher level. The same is the case with universities or higher education institutions worldwide. Education is the basic requirement for jobs in the world. The level of required education increases with the increase in job sophistication and importance. Students try to get admission to the best university in their region or even the world. Every year universities in different regions and countries in the world receive applications from foreign students. Especially students from developing countries try to get admission in the universities of developed universities. The degrees from those universities help these students to get good jobs in their countries. The question is why some universities are doing very

well in attracting potential students from their regions and all around the world and other universities are unable to do so. The leadership of any organization plays an important role to make its organization recognizable. These are the choices made by the leaders that make the organization a performer in the market. The same is the case with universities and higher education institutions all around the world. The performance of an organization is not a matter of luck. The choices of the leaders determine the position of the organization in the market (Lear, 2012).

One of the most critical issues that are faced by organizations is strategic leadership. Leadership and the types and styles of leadership remained the focus of researchers for last many decades, but the phenomenon of strategic leadership is attracting the focus of researchers in recent years (Narayanan & Zane, 2009). The main focus of every higher education institution is to attract good potential students form the market and to deliver quality education to their students. Here we can call students the customers of the universities. Students' expectations from their leaders are the dissemination of proper information, the capacity of foresight, energy, involvement, recognition, organizational and individual dynamics, and support for similarities and dynamics (Drugus and Landoy, 2014).

Strategic leadership remained the focus of organizational research in the past two decades. Not too much empirical work has been done on the effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance and other organization processes (Elenkov, 2008). As compared to corporate organizations, the phenomenon of strategic leadership is explored very little in the higher education sector. Universities are in the phase of developing strategic leadership, especially in developing countries. Strategic leadership is the foundation for the strategic management process in any organization (Hidayah et al., 2015).

Strategic leadership by creating a strategic vision for an organization by keeping in mind the future changes may energize the human resource of the company and can result in positive and better outcomes (Hitt et al., 2011). Strategic leadership plays an important role in the learning process of the organization. Strategic leadership develops the mechanism in the organization to learn from the past to bring the organization to a better level in the future (Boal & Schultz, 2007).

Strategic leaders are under immense pressure to perform and deliver positive results in this changing environment. Processes and technologies are changing at a

rapid pace as compared to the past and under these conditions, it is very difficult for strategic leaders to give a steady performance. A new competitive landscape has been created by the global economy in which it is very difficult to predict constantly changing events (Ireland & Hitt, 1999).

In this ever-changing world of economies and technologies, leaders and individuals must develop the behavior to look beyond their approach to their responsibilities and tasks (Wheeler et al., 2007; Serfontein, 2010). Strategic leaders are the most responsible people in any organization as they are responsible to develop strategies and planning that lead the organizations to become market leaders. Their strategic plans can help the organization to perform better as compared to other organizations both domestically and internationally. It is very difficult to perform in this changing environment but it is evident that some leaders influence the performance of the organization (Drucker, 2002).

The quality of individual leadership does matter (Wheeler et al., 2007). Quality strategic leadership is the backbone of any organization and it can help an organization to develop and grow. Some Strategic leaders have a definite influence on the performance of the organization (Smith et al., 1984). It depends on the quality of strategic leaders that the organization would perform in the competitive and changing environment. The higher education environment is changing at a very rapid pace as new and latest programs are introduced for the students to study. Some of the new programs are terrorist financing, cyber security, money laundering, disaster management, cybercrime, and social media norms and security.

It is nearly impossible for an organization to achieve sustainable competitive advantage without effective strategic leadership (Elenkov, 2008). Businesses and academicians are focusing on strategic leadership to make organizations more competitive in this changing world. (Hitt et al., 1998). Universities are also required to develop strategic leadership to become competitive and perform better in this changing environment. Education has evolved in the last 2 decades. Terrorism, natural disasters, and other activities made the universities think differently and develop strategies to cope with these problems by contributing their share of offering courses related to these major problems faced by today's world.

2.3. Definitions of Strategic Leadership

Providing strategic direction to organizations is the primary task of strategic leaders. It's the prime responsibility of the top leadership of any organization to provide a roadmap for the future direction of an organization. Different departments and people in the organization who ultimately implement the strategies get directions from these high-performing leaders (Serfortein, 2010). All the strategic processes are controlled by these top-level employees who refer to as executives within the organization. They are responsible for taking decisions, developing and implementing policies, and disseminating the information related to tasks and objectives that have to be accomplished to those who are working under their leadership.

People at lower levels like operatives and also include people from middle or supervisory levels who have the opinion or thinking that they are working under an authoritative mechanism. They often feel afraid to take part in strategic decisions. The fear of criticism refrains them to take part in the decision-making and makes them hold their views rather than discuss them with others and take part in determining the future direction of the organization (Serfortien, 2010, Hitt & Ireland, 2002).

Strategic leadership is the mindset and decision-making behind the development of the strategies which are necessary for organizations to develop and grow. There is a difference between supervisory leadership and strategic leadership. Supervisory leadership represents leaders "in" organizations while on the other hand strategic leadership represents leaders "of" organizations (Boal & Hoojiberg, 2001). The study which focuses on the executives and top management of an organization is known as the study of strategic leadership (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996). From higher education institutions, universities, and degree awarding institutes, the study of strategic leadership will focus on vice-chancellors, rectors, vice-rectors, registrars, Directors of different offices, members boards, and governing bodies (i.e senate and syndicate), and professors. These people within the universities are responsible for strategy development and taking executive decisions. Their decisions and strategies will determine the future direction of the university or the higher education institution.

Strategic leadership is the ability to help others in their everyday decisions that are necessary for the organizational long-term viability and also maintaining its short-term financial viability at the same time (Rowe, 2001). Strategic leadership intends to take those decisions that would be viable for both long-term and short-term success

for the organization. Most of the short-term success is considered to be in the form of financial gains and long-term success is considered to remain in the market for a long time with increasing customer range and satisfaction.

In recent studies of strategic leadership, most of the attention is given to the importance of strategic leaders in organizations, while some studies focus on the day-to-day routine of strategic leaders in organizational settings (Nyabdza, 2008). Very little work has been done to see the impact of strategic leadership on the performance of the organization and no work has been done to study the impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the organization, especially in a higher education institution setup.

According to Elenkov (2008), there is very little evidence of the studies that focus on the impact of strategic leaders on the significant processes of the organization that have strategic importance to the organizations for the achievement of sustainable competitive position in the market.

Strategic leaders are the people within the organization which have the best understanding and latest knowledge about the changing environment, especially about technological advancement (Hidayah et al., 2015). Strategic leadership also understands the impact of political factors, social change factors, and technological change on the field of competition. This unknown phenomenon can put the company at a risk (Boal & Hoojiberg, 2001). Followers are inspired by the vision and goals set by the strategic leadership and this inspiration leads the followers to achieve that vision (Robbins & Judge, 2013).

In the past time when the environment was stable and there were no rapid changings in the environment, it was not necessary for the employees at all levels to understand the strategy of the organization. During those stable times, only top management of the organizations was aware of the organization's strategy and they didn't think it necessary to disseminate such information to lower-level employees of the organization. The rapid changes in technological advancement and with the emergence of global competitiveness have changed the overall view of strategic leadership.

2.4. Strategic Leadership Components

It is the core responsibility of an organization to provide its employees with clear and sufficient information for the implementation of strategic leadership

practices within the organization. Employees must be aware of good strategic leadership practices and they are willing to endorse those practices in the organization (Nel, 2008). The best possible way to achieve this is to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic leadership framework that covers all the possible business-related issues in a broader aspect (Nel, 2008). It will help the strategic leadership of the organization to deal with the strategic issues more broadly and generically rather than deal with every issue with a different strategy.

The vision of an organization is very important in the sense that it shows what the organization is doing in the recent scenario and what it will be doing in the future. An organization's vision is crucial, and it is necessary to understand the overall competitive landscape of the organization. This understanding of the competitive environment of the organization will help the leadership to position their company in the present competitive situation and also help them to appropriately place it three or five years from now. A genuine and realistic vision shows the position of the company in the coming five to ten years and this position depends heavily on the recent position and strategies of the organization. This cannot be achieved with traditional strategic planning interventions or top-down approaches to strategic leadership. The competitive environment of an organization is changing with time and this ever-changing environment requires constant dedication to shape and develop strategic leadership to ensure it remains responsive.

It is critical that organizations integrate, identify, align, and balance all important internal as well as external variables that are likely to impact their ability to execute strategic leadership. This includes identifying patterns as well as trends and possible reactions that could be caused by activating strategic leadership. Taking the necessary steps and taking action to ensure that products and services are provided that meet the needs of both internal and external customers is critical to the organization's future direction (Serfortien, 2010). Topics such as empowerment and personal responsibility for ensuring quality are key factors at this strategic leadership level.

2.4.1. Vision and Purpose

The vision and purpose of an organization are necessary for the alignment of the actions of the people of the whole organization (Prokesch, 1997). An active and well-disseminated vision becomes part of the life of the people of the organization. They

talk about the vision and purpose of the organization during their routine conversation (Serfortien, 2010). Vision gives them the energy to participate positively to achieve organizational goals and people feel proud while talking about the vision and purpose of their organization. It is the biggest trap for the organization when the leadership of the organization is so sure about their vision and it doesn't bother about the changing environment and fails to get benefits from the opportunities in their competitive environment.

When the strategic leadership of any organization fails to critically analyze its changing competitive environment, then it is obvious that the organization will face problems and challenges which are unseen and will negatively affect the performance of the organization in many ways affecting the competitive position, reduction in market share, losses in revenues and profits, loss of human capital and many more (Serfortien, 2010). To overcome such issues it is important for the strategic leadership of an organization to continuously oversee the changing competitive environment of the company to remain up-to-date to face the most recent challenges of the environment to secure a competitive position. To achieve this, leaders must also continuously create burning platforms so that it is impossible for the organization to maintain the status quo. It is very difficult for an organization to remain competitive or a market leader with the same vision and strategy for a very long time. Organizations must adopt change and act according to the needs of the continuously changing landscape.

The vision of the organization must be communicated with passion by the executive leadership of the organization which is also the top leadership or the strategic leadership of the organization (Stumpf & Mullen, 1991). Vision can be communicated through print or electronic media, but direct communication of top leadership with the employees with their physical presence in front of the employees is very important while communicating the vision and purpose of the organization. It brings new hope in the employees and they act more confidently and passionately to achieve the vision of the organization. If the vision is disseminated only through electronic or print media within the organization it remains there in the form of booklets, broachers, pamphlets, and audio or video tapes. No one bothers to read or listen to it again to remain aligned with the vision and purpose of the organization and over time people forgot the vision and become purposeless. This interaction of the

employees at all levels and the strategic leadership also provides opportunities for the employees to discuss their problems and issues with the leadership. It helps them to resolve the issues with mutual understanding after discussion and reduces the communication gap between leadership and the employees of the organization (Serfortien, 2010).

2.4.2. Core Competencies

Core competencies are the unique capabilities and resources that an organization possesses as compared to its competitors (Grant, 1996). It gives an organization o competitive advantage over its competitors in the environment. The development of core competencies is the result of changes occurring in the environment like technological advancement, innovation, and diversity in the competitors. The long-term strategies of the organizations depend on these core competencies (Sefortien, 2010). It is the strategic leadership of the organization that develops skills to bring the organization to a competitive position as compared to its competitors. The skills and knowledge developed by the top leadership are gradually transferred to other employees of the organization at all levels which helps them to achieve day-to-day tasks to achieve goals set by the organization. An organization consists of many individuals, groups, and systems that work independently to accomplish collective goals. It is the leadership that plays its role to facilitate such individuals and groups to coordinate and integrate to achieve collective goals.

Creativity involves seeing new possibilities, finding connections between disparate ideas, and reframing the way leaders think about an issue (McCauley & Velsor, 2004). To become creative and innovative a leader needs to think that he or she is not capable enough or that he or she is not utilizing his or her abilities on a full scale. It is a step-by-step process and can be very slow at the first stage. No new competencies can be developed immediately. It takes time to develop new skills and abilities to become more skillful and competitive. Finally, after a lot of practice, leaders can become comfortable with the newly developed or learned skill or competence and start to use it effectively. The development of leadership competencies is a slow and repeated process that's why it takes time.

2.4.3.   Developing Human Resource

To cope with the new challenges and demands of the changing environment it is necessary to develop new skills, abilities, and knowledge. It is the core issue of organizational studies that the human resource of an organization must be equipped with up-to-date skills and knowledge to compete with the challenging and ever-changing environment. The culture of organizational learning is the basic requirement for each organization now a day.   Many organizations still have the problem of viewing the human resources organization as an appreciating asset and still, leaders are reluctant to invest in the training and development programs for the people of their organizations (Serfortien, 2010). Training and development are necessary for the people of the organization to work confidently in the organization and to implement their thinking and vision for the betterment of the organization. Training and development bring confidence in the employees of the organization as they can think about further personal and professional growth within the organization.

An organization can't compete with the changing and competitive environment without developing its human resource. Human resource is a major factor in the progress of any organization. The leadership must develop a continuous learning culture in the organization. Continual, systematic work on the productivity of knowledge and knowledge workers enhances the organization's ability to perform successfully. Miller, 1996 is on the view that developing employees result in a motivated and well-educated workforce. The type of workforce that is capable of performing very well. Employees with the opportunity to learn and grow perform better as compared to those who are unable to get such an opportunity.

2.5.   Managerial, Visionary and Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership is on the view that visionary leadership has the ability and willingness to take risks while on the other hand managerial leadership has a more rational view of the world which means managerial leadership is reluctant in taking risky decisions. Both visionary and managerial leadership can coexist, and strategic leadership can be the combination of both visionary and managerial leadership as a result of synergy.

Hitt and Irland (2001) proposed a brief difference between these three leadership styles also covered by Rowe (2001) and Serfortien (2010).

2.5.1. Managerial Leadership

The leaders of most companies perceive them as managerial leaders. There focus remains more on day-to-day activities rather than long-term objectives. This way of working stops them to think strategically and bound them to focus only on recent activities for short- term financial gains rather focus on strategic issues. This type of managerial decision-making enhances red-tapism in the organization and it blocks the way of innovation and creativity. Executives with managerial leadership style don't take too much risk and don't go for innovation and change in their organization rather they stick with the routine and small financial gains. How things get done becomes more important than what gets done (Serfortien, 2010). Day-to-day activities and other routine work, reports, and procedural activities overburdened the managers and force them to stop being creative and innovative. This behavior damages the overall productivity of an organization and stops the people of the organization from further personal and professional growth. Managers need proper time and courage to become more creative and effective in their job.

One thing to remember, it is not necessary to think that managerial leadership is something not good for the organization and it always has a negative impact on the performance of the organization. Sometimes it is necessary to work as managerial leadership and focus on day-to-day activities but there must be balance and the strategic focus must remain active and must be discussed from time to time to remain aligned with the strategic goals of the organization.

2.5.2. Visionary Leadership

Visionary leadership is thought to be the problem solver for today's organizations that are facing many issues due to the fast-changing environment. Still, it is very difficult for visionary leaders to become part of the organizations as organizations are full of managerial leaders and they are not willing to adjust visionary leaders. Visionary leaders need support from managerial leaders to become appropriate for the organizations (Serfortien, 2010). Sometimes the presence of visionary leaders halts the productivity of managerial leaders. Organizations are still reluctant to adopt change as long as they are earning profits.

Vision is part of every strategic leadership (Conger, 1991). A vision is simply a picture, target, or goal of the future that is realistic, credible, and therefore better than the present. Many leaders are prisoners of the past and obsessed with the present. In this respect, leaders and executives are victims of their past failures. Problems of the present often seem so overwhelming that it seems pointless to talk about the future. This phenomenon bounds managers to focus on day-to-day activities and remain vigilant only for short-term financial gains. It stops the manager to think about the long run and for a better long-term future and growth of the organization which is the key to success and survival in the long run. Also, it is exactly a good time to think about the future when the company is facing hard times. It is the time for the leaders to look up new opportunities to keep the organization competitive in the long run. Though it is difficult to think for the far future in a hard time, it is the best time to think and come up with new ideas to lead the organization and bring it out of these hard times. Leadership and indeed success, on every human level, is dependent on positive vision or hope for the future. If this hope is alive, the organization can come out from difficult times and can become competitive again. It's visionary leadership that plays its futuristic role to get the organization out of difficult times and put it back on track for growth.

2.5.3. Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership practices are the result of years of effort and focus. To maintain strategic competitiveness in the 21st century it is important to develop strategic leadership and innovative strategies (Ireland & Hitt, 1999). Hitt and Ireland (2001) stated that leaders should seek guidance from the past (trends, history, experiences), the present (facing up to the real issues confronting the organization), and the future (environmental trends impacting the organization). It means the development of strategic leadership is not an overnight process. It takes a lot of time, effort, experience, and knowledge to develop strategic leadership in the organization. Experience told strategic leadership what has been done well and what can be done better to improve the performance of the organization. To remain competitive in the recent environment a company must be able to handle real-time issues it is facing to maintain its competitiveness and to make improvements in the future it is important to do effective environmental scanning for future direction and product or service

innovation. Guidance from the internal and external stakeholders can also help a leader to draw the future direction of the organization. Employees are he internal stake holders of a company while customers are the main external stakeholders of the company other than environmental agencies, governmental agencies, regulatory bodies, print and electronic media, and all those who are directly or indirectly affected by the decisions of the organization. It is the leaders who decide which information is important and can help an organization to survive better in the face of the future while maintaining competitiveness. The leader draws on selecting, synthesizing, and articulating skills that must be formulated into an appropriate vision, combining both reason and intuition and articulating the desires of all stakeholders, including the personal visions of employees (Serfortien, 2010).

Many organizations have established and become world famous within a few years but after that, they also washed out from the face of the world within no time. They delivered good performance for a specific period but their performance was not sustainable. To survive for a long time and to remain competitive, sustainability is crucial. The first stage of the progression towards world-class and truly universally responsive strategic leadership practices is to classify the status of the organizational and leadership practices and to determine the gap that has to be bridged. This is paradoxically possibly the easiest step of the journey – but it does require the leadership will to decide that they do indeed want the organization to embark on the journey to greatness (Nel, 2008). It is the strategic leadership of the organization that plays a very important role to bring the organization to the top and to make it more innovative and a knowledge seeker to make the organization more competitive and survive longer with good performance delivery in the face of the fast and ever-changing competitive environment.

Strategic leadership in the higher education sector also plays its role to make the universities and other higher education degree awarding institutes become competitive and remain competitive in this fast-changing environment. New and innovative degree programs enable students to survive the competitive world of jobs and entrepreneurship. Higher education institutions require a leader who can facilitate a complex transformation process, not just the core activity of learning and teaching (Hidayah et al., 2015). What students expect from leaders is the capacity for foresight, communication of information, involvement, high expectation, energy, and

recognition of results (Drugus and Landoy, 2014). Providing a degree education is not the only core activity of an educational institution. It is also the responsibility of a higher education institution to facilitate its students to survive in the outer world of competition and technology to become better performers.

2.6. Theories of Strategic Leadership

The phenomenon of strategic leadership has evolved since the 1970s. It has experienced both metamorphosis and rejuvenation in its process of evolution since its early studies (Lear, 2012). Rejuvenation in the study of leadership can be described as an old friend in which management science is not interested anymore (House, 1977). In the early 1980s researchers from management science and specifically from leadership even started thinking and asking questions about whether leadership even matters. In the mid-1980s the work on supervisory leadership laid the stone for the study of strategic leadership (House & Aditya, 1997). Supervisory theories of leadership are about the leadership "in" organization, while on the other hand; strategic theories of leadership are concerned with the leadership "of" organizations (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001).

2.6.1. Upper Echelons Theory

This work on supervisory leadership was the start of the new work on upper echelons theory and the study of top management teams (TMTs) that were further labeled as new leadership theories (Boal & Hoojiberg, 2001). The evolution of leadership theory starts from the original upper echelons theory which was originally developed by Hambrick and Mason (1984) to focus on new leadership theory (Lear, 2012). Strategic leadership focuses on the people who have overall responsibility for the organization and includes not only the titular head of the organization but also members of TMT (top management teams) or the dominant coalition (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). These are the people who are responsible for taking critical decisions in the organization to make the organization progress in the competitive environment and become the market leader. The decisions of these top leaders or influencers make the organization grow.

Boal and Hooijberg, (2001) have also mentioned that the study of strategic leadership started with the early work on charismatic leadership and implicit theories

of leadership and the work done by House and Aditya (1997) on supervisory leadership. Strategic leadership focuses on the creation of meaning and purpose for the corporation (House & Aditya, 1997).

The outcomes of any organization, whether, in the form of strategies or the form of organizational effectiveness are reflections of the cognitive bases and values of the top management also known as the powerful actors in the organization (Hambrick & Mason, 1984).

2.7. Strategic Leadership and the Performance of the Organization

The performance of the organization depends on the decisions made by the leadership of the organization. At the initial stage, leadership plays its role to develop products or services, providing management support, sales, and marketing services. With the growth of the business, it is the responsibility of the leaders to appoint or hire relevant staff to make the organization continue on the winning streak. To increase the per unit price of the product, more attention must be given to quality standards. The leader has to give responsibility based on trust or design control systems to monitor individual activity (Breene & Nunes, 2006). Initially, a supervisor is responsible for all the activities related to business in the organization. With time as business flourishes, the role of leadership is required to oversee the enhancing business activities like more production, extra staffing, nationalizing and internationalizing, and more sales and revenues. With the growth in the business, the company has to achieve more quality standards and development of the product and services according to the need and cultures of a variety of customers related to different geographic locations within a country or form other countries in which the company is operating.

The same is the case with higher education institutions, as universities start growing and they enroll more students and also open campuses in other areas of a country or provide distance education to students from different countries and cultural backgrounds, the strategic leadership of the universities put efforts together to maintain performance standards and to compete with the competitors. Universities have to provide quality education in emerging fields to attract quality students from all over the world for on-campus as well as distance learning programs. Higher

education institutions require a leader who can facilitate a complex transformation process, not just the core activity of learning and teaching (Hidayah et al., 2015).

2.8. Strategic Leadership in Higher Education Institutions

Leadership is the most important aspect of any educational institution. Leaders are the people who are responsible for the performance of educational institutions of any category and in any country. As mentioned earlier strategic leadership is the group of executives referred to as the CEO, Top management teams (TMT), and the board of directors who have the overall responsibilities of an organization (Banzato & Sierra, 2016). The same is the case with higher education institutions. In higher education institutions strategic leadership is comprised of Rector or the Vice-Chancellor (VC) in the case of many Pakistani universities that is the head of the university, Top management teams including the Registrar generally known as the administrative head of the university, Director Finance, Director ORIC (Office of research innovation and commercialization), DASR (Director Advance Studies and Research), Director QEC (Quality Enhancement Cell), All the deans and directors of the institutes, all teaching staff who have administrative positions, Members Syndicate(senate), Members board of studies and board of faculties.

Strategic leadership is not a new category or type of leadership. Rather it is considered as the strategic element within the broader leadership paradigm (Davies & Davies 2009, p.13, 14). In current educational leadership literature Strategic leadership is a critical issue relevant to school leaders that have largely been overlooked (Eacott 2007). Higher education institutions require a leader who can facilitate a complex transformation process, not just the core activity of learning and teaching (Hidayah et al., 2015). What students expect from leaders is the capacity for foresight, communication of information, involvement, high expectation, energy, and recognition of results (Drugus and Landoy, 2014). Currently, there is also very little work on strategic leadership in Pakistan and especially the higher education sector of Pakistan has been neglected in this domain. No work has been done on the strategic leadership of higher education institutions in Pakistan.

Hidayah et al. (2015) in the study, "How to develop strategic leadership in higher education institutions? An empirical study in Jakarta, Indonesia", have developed three dimensions to measure strategic leadership in higher education

institutions. Those dimensions are; 1). Create visions as vision leader, 2). Moving the strategic leadership process as Strategist and 3). Agent of change. A strategic leader must be a visionary leader who provides vision with long-term insight into his/her institution, a strategist to develop competitive and long-term effective strategies for the organization, and an agent to change to keep align with the ongoing technological and other environmental changings it this turbulent and ever-changing environment.

Hidayah et al., (2015) have described three different dimensions of strategic leadership for higher education institutions. These three dimensions are; 1). A visionary leader explains his or her ability to develop a vision for the university, 2). A strategic expert that explains the ability to develop the strategic management process, and 3). The agent of change that explains as the ability to initiate and lead the change in the university (Hidayah et al., 2015). The organization also analyses its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats through effective strategic leadership. Strategic leadership also can affect the growth and quality of the organization (Hidayah et al., 2015).

Effective strategic leadership brings reforms, new techniques, empowerment, early response to errors to correct them, best customer services, and minimizing the risk factor to achieve competitive advantage. Continuous quality management and customer satisfaction are required to maintain a competitive advantage (Abbasi et al., 2012).

2.9.   Critical Criteria of Strategic Leadership

Irelan and Hitt (1999) describe what will be different in the companies of the 21st century as how top leaders of the organization fulfill their strategic leadership responsibilities. There should be interaction among the strategic leaders and employees of the organization (Lear, 2012).

The six critical criteria were developed by Hitt et al. (1994) to measure strategic leadership in organizational studies. These six criteria are determining strategic direction, exploiting and maintaining core competencies, developing human capital, sustaining an effective corporate culture, emphasizing ethical practices, and establishing strategic controls.

Hitt et al. (1994) developed six critical criteria to measure strategic leadership in organizations further explored by Hagen et al. (1998) and refined by Hitt. Et al. (2007,

384). These critical criteria can also be called critical competencies and are further described as key strategic leadership actions by Hitt et al. (2007, 384-394) also, the study by Lear (2012).
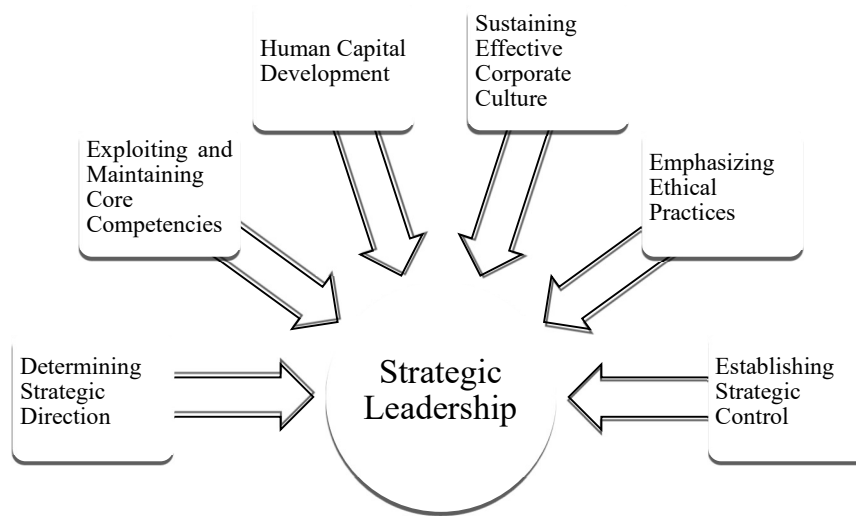
Figure 2.1. Model of Strategic Leadership
   (**Source**: Adapted from Hitt et al., 2001)

Jooste and Fourie (2009) suggested that critical criteria developed by Hitt et al., (2001) have a positive contribution to strategy implementation.

2.9.1. Determining Strategic Direction

An organization needs to determine its strategic direction. It involves the determination of a long-term vision for the organization in order set the direction in which the leaders want their organization to flourish. Long term vision of an organization is generally considered at least five to ten years from now into the future (Hagen et al., 1998). Strategic leaders must have a strategic intent to leverage the organizational resources to achieve the goals which are considered unattainable in the past to achieve competitive advantage. Strategic intent also involves the commitment of the employees of the organization to achieve organizational goals by focusing on doing the assigned tasks in a better way as compared to the employees of competitor organizations (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005).

Effective strategies and strong leaders have a positive relationship (Hammonds, 2001). If an organization wants to be successful in the market then that organization

needs to have a very strong leader who can make bold decisions (Lear, 2012). A strong leader can also develop a strong vision to be followed by the employees.

Strategic leaders have a very keen interest in developing the vision for the organization as vision is very critical for anyone in the position of leadership and it is the determination of the future of the organization closely aligned to the future directed goals (Orndoff, 2002). A vision is the future view of the organization and a description of the company in the next five years or even more than five years (Lear, 2012).

Visionary leadership is future-oriented leadership and these visionary leaders do not depend on their organizations to be recognized (Serfontein, 2010). The development of a good and attainable organizational vision and the ability of an organization to manage the change represent the core competency of the organization and it further helps the organization to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Zaccaro & Banks, 2004).

2.9.2. Exploiting and Maintaining Core Competencies

The unique capabilities and resources of an organization that are essential for an organization to develop a competitive advantage in the market are the core competencies of that organization (Hitt et al., 2001). An organization needs to develop unique processes and develop unique capabilities to achieve competitive advantage. Strategic leaders make decisions to help their organizations in developing, strengthen, leverage, maintain, and exploit core competencies. Competencies that are based on intangible resources are the most effective core competencies of an organization because they are related to the knowledge and skills of the employees and are less visible to the competitors of the organization (Lear, 2012). Those competencies which are less visible are the more effective ones as they are very difficult for competitors to copy.

There are three levels of competencies; 1). A competency, 2). A core competency, and 3). A distinctive competency (Thompson et al., 2010). Competency is the ability of the company to perform an activity just like other competitive organizations are performing in the competitive environment of that organization. A core competency is the competency of an organization to perform an activity better than its competitors in the market and it gives that organization a competitive edge in

31

that particular competitive environment. While a distinctive competency is the ability of an organization to perform an activity differently as compared to its competitors, not necessarily better than its competitors. So core competency is the most important competency that gives the organization a competitive edge and helps the organization to develop a sustainable competitive advantage over its competitors.

If an organization can perform some aspects of production better than its competitor in a more consistent manner, it is the core competency of that organization and this capability of the organization turns the organizational performance to better than average (Clardy, 2007).

2.9.3.   Developing Human Capital

There is no choice for the organization but to align its available resources with the developed strategy of the organization (Treen, 2000). An organization needs to align its resources with the strategy to achieve its goals. To ensure that the right person is hired for the right job an effective recruitment process is very important (Grigoryev, 2006). Achieving the right fit is critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage. The performance of the executives matters a lot. The performance of the recruits and other junior employees also depends on the performance of the executives. Executive and the selection of employees by the executives are the keys to success for the organization (Hollenbeck, 2009). The top management and leaders need to choose their team carefully by keeping in mind the vision and goals of the organization to develop a strategic fit among employees and the goals of the organization.

Human capital is defined as the skill and knowledge of the work force of any organization – employees as a capital resource (Hagen et al., 1998). Appropriate human capital is necessary to develop and exploit core competencies.

A great leader develops more leaders not only followers. Ready (2004) has identified some characteristics of the companies that build leaders. These characteristics are; articulation of leadership is the priority of these organizations, powerful infrastructure for the development of the leadership is created by building the best human HR functions, a strong reward and support system is developed for future leaders, and a strong organizational culture is created to facilitate the development of the future leaders.

2.9.4.   Sustaining an Effective Corporate Culture

The culture of an organization influences how the organization is conducting its business. The culture of an organization is a set of ideologies, core values, and symbols that are shared throughout the organization (Hitt et al., 2001). Most of the employees of the organization share these values if not all. It is the responsibility of strategic leaders to develop a good organizational culture. Change is ever lasting but it is very difficult to change the culture of the organization. Effective strategic leadership recognizes the need for effective change in the culture and brings that change positively (Hagen et al., 1998). It is the responsibility of the top leaders to bring the required change to the organization (Bipath, 2007).

Certain organizational cultures are necessary for the performance of the organization. Some cultural values enhance the performance of the organization. Those companies which possess strong organizational cultures can perform better as compared to those that have weak organizational cultures (Bipath, 2007). Strong Culture has a positive impact on the performance of the organization and a weak organizational culture can influence the performance negatively. Literature shows that culture can positively impact the economic value of the organization (Barney, 1986).

All companies have a culture, some companies possess discipline, but some companies have a culture of discipline (Collins, 2001). Culture has the power to influence the performance of n organization. A positive corporate culture is developed and driven by the strategic leaders and they are responsible for that culture (Lear, 2012).

2.9.5.   Emphasizing Ethical Practices

Ethics relate to the philosophy behind moral outcomes. In business organizations, the term ethics is often used as business ethics. Business ethics deals with the organizational good or bad. It deals with what is good or bad in the business world. Business ethics examines questions of moral right and wrong arising in the context of business practice or theory (Weiss, 2014). Executives at General Mills became concerned about the raise in the murder rate in 1990 when the Hawthorne neighborhood was become a no-man's area because of gun battles and the people of neighboring areas were so terrified. The murder rate was record high in 1996. It was

the time when executives at General Mills decided to intervene and tried to stop these killings in an ethical manner. General Mills spent $2.5 million to restore the area by demolishing damaged houses to build a new road for a school and it also donated thousands of employee hours to help clean up Hawthorne (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012).

General mills rebuilt the houses and provided grants to help people to buy houses. By 2003, homicides were down 32% and robberies had declined to 56% in Hawthorne. This was not the only story, General Mills had been given the title of "Most Admired Company" by Fortune magazine and also the third most socially responsible company in a survey by Wall Street Journal (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012).

Ethics means to do well whether it is legal or not written in the rule (Sauser, 2005). It is a general perception that there is no link between morality and the management of an organization. Some people assume that morality does not mix with the very concept of management. If there is morality then there will be no or poor management is there in an organization (Hertzen, 2008). Unfortunately, this is a misapprehension. There is no management without morality. Morality is also often perceived as a superficial element in management that covers the real concept or the hard core of management. It is also perceived as an ad-on to management that damages the real concept of management (Hertzen, 2008). According to this viewpoint, a lack of morality is a sign of good management practice and if morality is involved it damages the core concept of management. But with time the concept of morality is taking place in the management decision-making in the organization. Now the main stream view point is that morality, after all, may have something to do with good management. The view point is changing form negative to positive that morality is helping the strategic leaders to take good decisions rather than it is damaging the core of managerial decision-making.

One of the assumptions is the personal values of the leader influence the company's beliefs, decisions, and behaviors (McCann & Holt, 2009). Now it is believed that the leaders of the organization must show moral obligation to all stakeholders, including internal and external stakeholders which are employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, natural environment, and government (Mendonca, 2001).

Profit maximization is the primary goal of the business and is only one side of an on-going debate regarding ethics and corporate social responsibility. According to

Byron (2003) distinguished professors of Ethics at Georgetown University, profits are merely a means to an end, not an end itself. Every person needs food to survive and grow just like companies need profits to survive and grow. "Maximizing profits is like maximizing food". So maximizing profits cannot be the primary goal or obligation of any business (Byron, 2003).

According to Carroll business organizations have four responsibilities. These are Economic, Legal, Ethical, and Discretionary. The first responsibility is economic responsibility that is it is the responsibility of any business organization to produce goods and services that have value to the customers so that the company repays its shareholders and creditors. The second is the legal obligation of the company. It is the responsibility of the company to abide by the rules and regulations imposed by the local governments and also the international laws to do any kind of business. The third one is the ethical responsibility of a firm. A firm must act ethically in a society according to the beliefs and behavior of that society. And the fourth is the Discretionary responsibilities of a firm. Discretionary responsibilities are the voluntary obligations that a firm fulfills. The difference between ethical and discretionary responsibilities is that few people think that a company must fulfill discretionary responsibilities but many people think that a company must fulfill its ethical responsibilities (Carroll, 1991). Discretionary responsibilities come after ethical responsibility but with time, the discretionary responsibility becomes an ethical responsibility. These all responsibilities come in a row one after another. A company must fulfill ethical and discretionary responsibilities after fulfilling the first two responsibilities (Oleck, 2001).

It is the responsibility of strategic leaders to act ethically when dealing with the stakeholders of the company and also makes their employees follow such values of ethical behavior. Ethical practices increase the effectiveness of the process of strategy implementation (Lear, 2012). A very small and innocent decision of the leaders and executives in this environment of virtual moral and ethical minefield can go wrong and cause too much damage to the organization and its reputation and the decision makers themselves (Messick & Baazerman, 1996).

Leading ethically is the most appropriate way to lead the organization to make the organization more ethically reputable in the market. Ethical practices also provide bases for effective strategic control in organizational settings. The integrity of the

leader is very important for the corporation to achieve its strategic goals (McCann & Holt, 2009). The next section will explain the establishment of strategic control within the organization.

2.9.6.   Establishing Strategic Control

Organizational control remains the focus for leaders and academicians for the last many decades. Strategic control is a very important element of strategy implementation in the organizational setting to make sure that company is achieving its desired goals to remain competitive and to perform above average n this competitive environment (Hitt et al., 2001). Strategic controls are established to keep the organization on track and to align the organizational strategies and strategic goals of the organization. Strategic controls give leaders an overview that the strategies are being implemented rightfully to achieve the desired outcome while remaining competitive.

Strategic controls keep the organization and its employees on track during turbulent environments. It is very difficult for organizations to adopt change as the environment, customer needs, and technologies are on a fast track to change with time. It is often difficult to manage the change that's why control is important (Lear, 2012). Leadership that does not have a direct impact on the performance of the organization is leadership that does not matter to the organization (Narayanan & Zane, 2009).

A five-factor model is developed by Tavakoli and Perks (2001) for a strategic control system to manage change within the organization. These five factors are Industry key success factors, planning premises, strategic capability, strategic goals, and competitive advantage. Effective strategic control is essential for leaders to make an organization a market leader by improving performance.

2.10. Strategic Alignment

When all the important elements of an organization like people, key processes, strategy, and customers work together in a way to increase profit and enhance growth that optimal state is called alignment. Customers and employees of an aligned organization are more satisfied as compared to other un-aligned organizations in the

market and these aligned also produce good profits for their shareholders in the form of dividends (Lobavits, 2004).

Strategic alignment is necessary for success. According to Khadem (2008), alignment is crucial to organizational success. Strategic alignment is important for any growing organization. It is the responsibility of the leaders of the organization to keep the organization aligned in this fast-changing environment. Alignment involves common agreements between goals and means (Fonvielle and Carr, 2001).

Strategic leaders can play an important role in attaining and maintaining this alignment for steady and sustained growth for the universities. A university's vision, mission, strategy, employees, customers (students), and key processes must be aligned for the growth of the university. All these factors can be aligned, and this work must be done by the strategic leadership of the universities. The universities' TMT (top management teams) including all directors, deans, registrar, board members, and rectors are responsible for this alignment.

There must a central point for the employees of the organization to remain focused and the vision, mission and strategy, and cultural values of the organization are to provide that central focus point for the employees (Khadem, 2008). So alignment can also be defined as the values, mission, vision, and strategy must be in a straight line for the employees to focus on. Like in automobiles, alignment is defined as the wheels and steering of the vehicle must be in a straight line to become aligned for a smooth and safe drive. The same is the case with the organization if all the necessary elements of an organization are not working with align to the vision, mission, and strategy of the organization the organization's performance will be negatively affected.

Both alignment and integration are important factors. It can be mentioned as if two persons are running in the same direction, we can say that they are aligned but if they are running in the same direction with cooperation with each other then they are integrated as well (Khadam, 2008). Both integration and alignment are important factors for the growth of the organization.

It is evident in some universities of Pakistan that they possess alignment by focusing on the vision, mission, customer satisfaction, and other factors like that but they are not integrated. Universities' top leaders have developed vision, mission, and strategies for the employees as a focus point, but the problem arises at the time of

37

admission in some universities that different departments and institutes of some universities do not cooperate and advertise their admissions on different dates and times. This is one of the main reasons behind the low-performing universities in Pakistan and the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. So the elements of an organization must be aligned and integrated to become a performer in the market.

Kaplan and Norton (2006) have developed a balance score card with four factors to measure the performance of a business unit, how a business unit by improving internal processes creates shareholder value through better customer relationships. These four factors are financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth.

These four factors pose four important questions about the different stakeholders of the company. These four posed questions are; 1). Financial: What are the expectations of our share-holders about the financial performance of the organization? 2). Customer: How value has been created for our valued customers to achieve the financial goals of the company? 3). Internal processes: For the satisfaction of our stakeholders, especially shareholders, and customers which processes must be introduced and developed? and 4). Growth and Learning: How do we align organizational intangible assets like systems, culture, people, and skills to bring improvement to the important processes of our organization? (Kaplan & Norton, 2006). All these factors are interconnected in a manner that each of them improves the function of the other perspective like a training and development program will enhance the skills of the employees (Learning and growth) that results in the customer relation (internal processes, that will bring customer satisfaction (customer), and finally the financial gains (financial) will be achieved through greater satisfied customer (kaplon & Norton, 2006).

It is key to organizational success that organizational strategy must be aligned with the employees and processes of the organization (Kaplan & Norton, 2006). Alignment between these elements of the organization results in better performance and greater financial gains. The alignment between these four factors; the strategy, the organization, the employees, and the management systems is important for successful strategy execution (Kaplon & Norton, 2006).

The Kaplon and Norton (2006) concept of alignment factors is the same presented by Labovitz and Rosansky (1997), which has the components like strategy,

38

people (employees), customer, and processes. Raymond and Croteau, (2009) found that there is a positive relationship between alignment and productivity and alignment and profitability. Very few researches have been done to empirically test the nature of alignment and its impact on the performance of the organization (Lear, 2012). University growth is also a performance indicator and it also has a positive financial impact on the university.

Though the phenomenon of alignment is important for all types of organizations, it is critical in the services sector organization (Lear, 2012). As no good is being produced by the company rather they provide intangible products like education, insurance, financial assistance, and health services. So services sector required the alignment of many internal practices which are the contributors to the creation of service culture, strategy, and tradition (Schneider et al., 2003). Alignment is critical for the performance of the services organizations and in this case the universities, degree awarding institutes, and other higher education institutions.

Alignment is an agreement among all the internal stakeholders of the organization about the goals and the means to achieve those goals (Fonvielle & Carr, 2001). The leaders need to achieve strategic goals so that all the elements of the value chain of their organization work collectively with cooperation and integration. The people from a more aligned organization feel more energetic and purposeful with a shared sense of responsibility as compared to those people whose organizations are not that aligned (Fonvielle & Carr, 2001). Goals cannot be achieved if the people of the organization do not work in the same direction with the same sense of purpose and shared values.

The literature and studies generally examine four main elements of strategic alignment that are; strategy, customers, processes, and people (employees). These elements are crucial to organizations and strong cooperation and integration among these critical elements of an organization are necessary for the growth of the organization. Strategic alignment must be there to ensure that the organization is in balance.

2.10.1. Model of Strategic alignment

The model of strategic alignment is presented by Labovitz and Rosansky (1997) to measure the effectiveness of the organization. Alignment helps the strategic leader

at every point within the organization to implement a coherent business strategy that is customer focused, develops the best people (employees), and helps them to improve organizational processes continuously. The alignment between the customer, processes, people (employees), and strategy results in the growth of the organization with increased revenues (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1997).
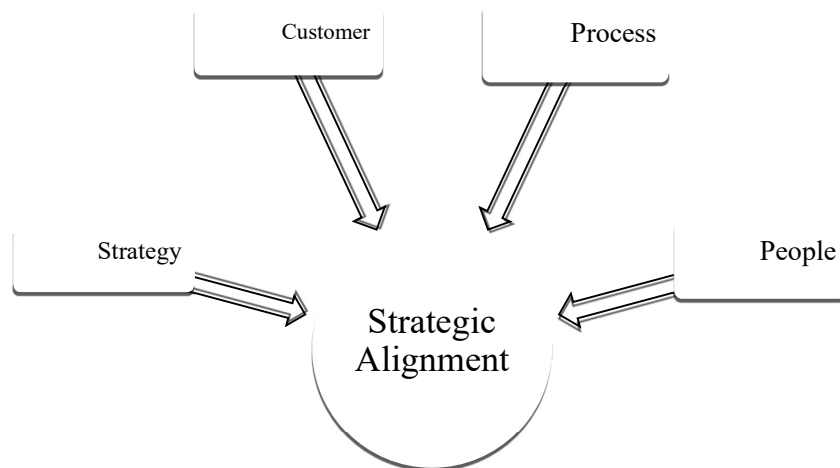
Figure 2.2. Model of Strategic Alignment
*(**Source**: Adapted from Labovitz & Rosansky, 1997)*

The main focus of strategic leaders is to achieve organizational goals and objectives with greater customer satisfaction. The organizations in which these four elements; customer, processes, strategy, and people (employees) are aligned and work in the same direction can achieve organizational goals in a better way as compared to less aligned organizations.

2.10.2. Vertical and Horizontal Alignment

There are two dimensions of alignment relies upon the organizational settings and those dimensions are vertical and horizontal generally known as the vertical axis and horizontal axis. The focus of the vertical dimension or vertical axis within the organizational setting is the organizational strategy and the people of the organization who are responsible to perform everyday tasks to transform that developed strategy into a meaningful outcome. It is very important that how a strategy is formulated and how it is understood by the employees who are responsible for the implementation of the strategy (Lear, 2012). For the achievement of vertical alignment, the communication mechanism must be very strong and the information must be very clear and disseminated all across the organization for everyone in the organization to

understand for the better implementation of designed strategies at the top level. Competencies must be aligned with strategy to achieve excellent execution of the strategy (Khadem, 2008). Achieving vertical alignment is important for leaders to best implementation of the strategies in their real essence.

The focus of the vertical alignment is the strategy and the people who are responsible for the implementation of that strategy. In the same way, the focus of the horizontal alignment is the processes of the organization and customer satisfaction. Horizontal alignment is there when the processes of the organization are done in a manner to achieve maximum customer satisfaction and it can be achieved only when the actions are done by keeping in mind the needs of the customers that make the customers more loyal to the organization (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1997).

2.11. Growth

Growth is a corporate-level strategy adopted by organizations to gain economies of scale in operations and functions. It enhances the competitive position of the organization in the market. Growth also provides opportunities for employees to develop and grow (Hitt et al., 2007). While adopting this strategy of growth, organizations make sure to maintain quality and performance standards.

This growth can be achieved through internal or external methods. The internal methods consist of penetration of the existing market and developing new markets. It can also be achieved by developing new products for existing or new markets. Growth by being achieved externally through acquiring other organizations or by vertical integration (David 1999).

2.11.1. Vertical Integration

Vertical integration happens in two directions; backward integration and forward integration. Backward integration happens when a company starts to produce its raw material or the inputs for its finished good (Hitt et al., 2007). An example of backward integration is if a beverage company starts producing bottles and caps for it beverages or a supermarket starts its own cattle form to sell meat in its market or grow its vegetables.

Forward integration happens when a company goes for distribution or opens outlets to sell its products directly to the customers. Many companies own businesses for distribution or the essential raw material for their goods.

2.11.2. Horizontal Integration

To gain economies of scale firms try to take over their competitor organization. This is called horizontal organization (David 1999). Organizations now a day use this horizontal integration as a growth strategy. Mergers, takeovers, and acquisitions among competitors provide economies of scale and enhance the transfer of resources and competencies (David 1999).

2.11.3. Strategic Leadership and Growth

Strategic leadership is the strategic element within the broader leadership paradigm (Davies & Davies 2009, p.13, 14). Strategic leaders are powerful people in top positions within any institution who is responsible for the implementation of the strategic management process. The same is the case with universities or higher education institutions. These powerful people are rectors, principle officers, deans and directors of institutes, members of the syndicate, members of the board of studies, and the board of faculties. These people have the resources to allocate for the implementation of the formulated strategies. Education institutions are traditionally viewed as under-led and under-managed organizations characterized by their core business of teaching and learning (Eacott 2007). There are three different determinants of organizational growth, those are individual, organizational, and environmental (Sarwoko and Frisdiantara, 2016). There are many organizational growth factors such as revenues, assets, and employees (Pfeifer et al., 2016). Strategic leadership is still an emerging domain and very little work have been done in this area especially related to the higher education institution. Much work has been done on strategic leadership and its impact on strategy formulation or strategy implementation. The area of growth has been neglected and very little literature is available regarding strategic leadership and institutional growth. Growth is the primary determinant of any organization to measure performance. Companies that do business in expanding industries must grow to survive (Wheelen & Hunger 2012, p.207)

2.11.4. Growth Through Strategic Alignment

Growth can be achieved by aligning the organizational strategic alignment factors in a way that the can cooperate and integrate well. An aligned organization is more effective as compared to an unaligned organization in terms of performance (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1997). Growth is an important factor growth. If an organization is growing in terms of increased customers, revenues, profits, new geographic location, and the number of employees it indicates that the organization is performing well. Many studies on strategic alignments that focused on the alignment of information technology practices with the objectives of the organizations have tested the impact of aligned IT processes on the performance of the organization and suggested that with aligned IT processes a business cannot grow and become competitive (Peak & Guynes, 2003).

Many researchers have discovered the positive impact of IT-business alignment on organizational performance (Yayla & Hu, 2012). As growth is the basic component of organizational performance we can conclude that strategic alignment has also a positive relationship with growth as it has with the overall performance of the organization.

Strategic leaders can play an important role in attaining and maintaining this alignment for steady and sustained growth for the universities. A university's vision, mission, strategy, employees, and key processes must be aligned for the growth of the university. All these factors can be aligned, and this work must be done by the strategic leadership of the universities. The universities' TMT (top management teams) including all directors, deans, registrar, board members, and rectors are responsible for this alignment.

2.11.5. Growth in Higher Education Institutions

Growth can be measured through different aspects of an educational institution. Some of them are the growing number of students, faculties, departments, programs, faculty members, campuses, research publications, patents, and international collaborations. These are all non-financial growth areas of an educational institutional. From a financial point of view financial resources, profits, revenues and income from all the educational institution resources are the financial growth areas. If

the number of students is declining, one of the solutions to increase the number of students is to attract students from other countries. One example of this phenomenon is the universities in the UK and USA which are attracting an increased number of students from India and China (Stepan 2016). The same is the case with Pakistan.

Many Pakistani universities are attracting students from other developing and under-developed countries by giving them incentives to get admission to Pakistani universities. Students from Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Indonesia, Somalia, and many other African and Asian countries are studying at Pakistani universities. This is one way to overcome the growth problem in the local market for universities. Population reduction is also a big problem in declining the number of students in universities (Stepan 2016). In recent years researchers and policy makers have become particularly focused on student growth (Anderman et al., 2015). Here in this study, we will examine the growth of students and programs in the last 5 years in the selected universities for research and data collection in Pakistan.

The higher education environment is changing at a very rapid pace as new and latest programs are introduced for the students to study. Some of the new programs are terrorist financing, cyber security, money laundering, disaster management, cybercrime, and social media norms and security. The universities need to offer new courses to deliver the latest knowledge and to attract diverse students from all around the world.

2.12. Theoretical Framework

Based on the above literature and body of knowledge following theoretical framework can be devised to study in this research. In this theoretical framework, Strategic Leadership is taken as an independent variable to see its impact on the other variables which are strategic alignment which is moderating variable, and growth which is the dependent variable. This theoretical model shows four different hypotheses. The detail of these hypotheses is given in the following paragraphs. The four hypotheses are represented by H1, H2, H3, and H4 respectively. This study model is devised particularly for this research to identify the impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment and growth in the universities of Pakistan. This model also shows the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic

leadership and growth. The impact of strategic alignment on growth is also studied through this model.
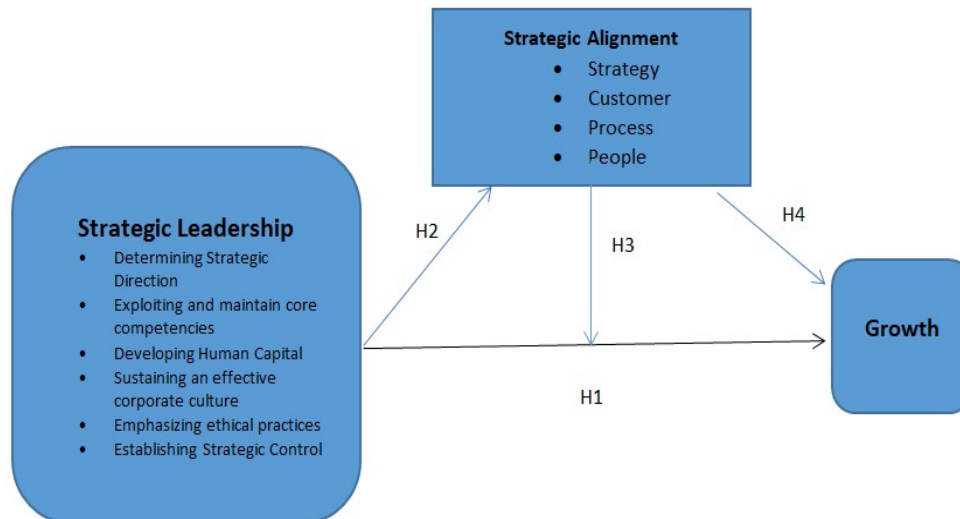
Figure 2.3. Study Model

2.13. Hypotheses Development

After the literature review, the following four hypotheses have been developed to study in this research.

2.13.1. Strategic Leadership and Growth

Some dimensions of strategic leadership described by Duursema (2013) are client-centricity, operational efficiency, business development, and organizational creativity. So we can measure strategic leadership by measuring these four dimensions. Effective strategic leadership is the foundation for the successful use of the strategic management process (Hitt et al. 2016, p.384). According to Jaradat & Mashhour (2017), conceiving and implementation of successful strategies is the task of strategic leadership. Strategic Leadership is the unique ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and empower the employees of a company to create new inventions that lead to organizational transformations or changes and ultimately improve the performance of the company (Banzato & Sierra, 2016).

Strategic leadership plays its role in enhancing the performance of the organization. Strategic leadership also plays a role in the formulation and implementation of organizational strategies. So we can say that strategic leaders are also responsible for the formulation and successful implementation of growth strategies in the organization and here in the case of the universities strategic leadership is responsible for the formulation and successful implementation of growth strategies of the universities in Pakistan. Growth is also a measurement of performance for any institution. If the institution is growing, we can say that the institution is doing well, and its strategic leadership is playing its role in enhancing the growth of the institution. From all this discussion we can conclude that strategic leadership positively affects the growth of the institution.

Hidayah et al. (2015) in their study "How to develop strategic leadership in higher education institutions? An empirical study in Jakarta, Indonesia" have developed three dimensions to measure strategic leadership in higher education institutions. Those dimensions are; 1). Create visions as vision leader, 2). Moving the strategic leadership process as Strategist and 3). Agent of change. A strategic leader must be a visionary leader who provides vision with a long-term insight into his/her institution, a strategist to develop competitive and long-term effective strategies for the organization, and an agent to change to keep align with the ongoing technological and other environmental changings it this turbulent and ever-changing environment.

The six critical criteria were developed by Hitt et al. (1994) and used by Lear (2012) to measure strategic leadership in organizational studies. These six criteria are determining strategic direction, exploiting and maintaining core competencies, developing human capital, sustaining an effective corporate culture, emphasizing ethical practices, and establishing strategic controls. Strategic leaders affect organizational performance regardless of their tenure. Effective strategic leadership is the foundation for the successful use of the strategic management process (Hitt et al. 2016, p.384). The same is the case here, strategic leadership is the combination of six critical criteria and these six critical criteria play an important role in enhancing the performance of the organization.

Strategic leadership of the universities must develop these six critical criteria for the growth of the universities. The same is the case with higher education institutions.

So we can say that these six critical criteria have a positive effect on the growth of universities.

Strategic leadership plays a positive role in enhancing the performance of universities. Strategic leadership is very important in achieving high performance in a study program (Hidayah et al., 2015). The following study hypothesis can be developed from the above discussions.

H1: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities in Pakistan

2.13.2. Strategic Leadership and Strategic Alignment

According to Lear (2012), there is a positive relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment. It means a better strategic leadership in any organization can development a better strategic alignment among the people, customer, strategy, and processes of the organization that ultimately enhance the performance of the organization. Customers and employees of an aligned organization are more satisfied as compared to other organizations and such organizations produce better returns for their shareholders. Alignment involves common agreements between goals and means (Fonvielle and Carr, 2001). According to Khadem (2008), if two people are moving in the same direction they can be called aligned. Alignment needs a central point or a center of focus that can be defined as a frame of reference for all the employees of the organization which is the vision, strategy, and values of the organization (Khadem, 2008). Alignment, therefore, can be defined as the alignment of the employees with the organization's vision, strategy, and values. Lear (2012) has used four components for effective strategic alignment in his research. Those four components are 1). Strategy, 2) Customer, 3). Processes and 4). People. Alignment links strategy to the people and integrates them with process improvement and customer (Lear, 2012).

Alignment is not a natural phenomenon that just happens in any organization. There must be someone in a strong position within the organization to make it happen with some kind of Herculean effort (Lear, 2012). Those powerful people are the Top management teams or the CEOs of the organizations and in our case the vice-chancellors, rectors, directors, members of the board of studies and faculties, members of syndicate, Deans, and heads of the department of the universities. TMT

(Top management teams) within the organization are responsible to align the organizational strategy with the goals of the organization to make it clear that the organization is going in the same direction that is required to achieve the overall goals of the organization. The most important task of leadership is to align the vision of the organization with its goals and objectives (Azhar et al., 2012) Alignment between the goals and means to achieve those goals is the key to the success of any organization. Top management teams put efforts together to develop strategies that are essential to make the organization on the path to achieving its objectives and there should be a realistic approach to formulate proper strategies (Holm & Mathew, 2009).

Employees of an aligned organization are very much aware of the existence of their organization and the role they are playing to make the organization more effective in terms of achieving performance and increasing revenues. The role of strategic leaders is critical in terms of making the employees of the organization up-to-date regarding the changing market conditions and the targets set by the organization to maintain its position in the market. Developing a strategy means preparing for the future to attain goals (Chatman et al., 2010). For this purpose strategic leaders are responsible to make the organizational day-to-day activities and overall working of the organization align with the goals of the organization. According to the above discussion following hypothesis can be developed.

H2: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment

2.13.3. Moderating Role of Strategic Alignment

Strategic alignment enhances the performance of the organization (Ouakouak and Ouedraogo, 2013). The moderating role of strategic alignment explains the relationship between strategic leadership and the IT interventions introduced by the leadership in the organization (Masa'deh et al., 2008) Strategic alignment plays the role of a full mediator among the relationship of rationale strategic planning and firm performance (Ouakouak and Ouedraogo, 2013). Effective strategic leadership is the foundation for the successful use of the strategic management process (Hitt et al. 2016, p.384). Growth is an important factor in enhancing the firm performance. Strategic leadership plays a positive role in enhancing the performance of universities. Strategic leadership is very important in achieving high performance in a study program (Hidayah et al., 2015). As employees are the main source of a firm's success, hence, more attention must be given to their alignment with their organization's

strategy (Khadem, 2008). As discussed earlier that strategic leadership plays a very important role in enhancing the performance of the organization (Din et al., 2017) and strategic alignment is also an important factor in improving the firm's performance. Enhancing growth means enhancing the performance of the organization.

H3: Strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

2.13.4. Strategic Alignment and Growth

According to Khadem (2008), alignment is crucial to organizational success. Alignment is that optimal and ideal state in which all the important factors of an organization like employees, customers, strategy, and key processes work in line to propel profit and growth. Strategic alignment is important for any growing organization (Lear, 2012). It is the responsibility of the leaders of the organization to keep the organization aligned in this fast-changing environment. Customers and employees of an aligned organization are more satisfied as compared to other organizations and such organizations produce better returns for their shareholders. Alignment involves common agreements between goals and means (Fonvielle and Carr, 2001). As strategic alignment plays an important role in growing the organization. When an organization is more aligns in terms of its goals and means that is if the strategies of the organization are in the same direction which leads to achieving the final goals of the organization this can help the organization to grow and become more profitable in the coming future. The path that leads to better performance must be aligned with the overall objectives of the organization. Align organizations can achieve their goals in a better way as compared to their competitors (Serfontein, 2010). Growth is the ultimate goal for any organization that needs to increase its revenues and profit. When organizations are growing they can become more innovative and can become more competitive (Rahman et al., 2018). The following hypothesis can be derived based on the above arguments.

H4: Strategic alignment has a positive impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

2.14. Summary

In this chapter, comprehensive information has been provided on the higher education sector of Pakistan, its legislation, process of establishing a higher education institution in Pakistan. Also, brief data on facts and figures regarding the types and categories of the universities has been added. It is important to understand the higher education system in Pakistan for a better understanding of the research conducted on the universities in Pakistan. An ample literature review has been done on the concepts of strategic leadership, strategic alignment, growth, and growth in the higher education sector particularly in Pakistan have been done. Based on secondary information present in the literature a theoretical model has been developed that shows variables that are used in this study and after that the hypotheses have been proposed to verify through empirical research. These hypotheses are verified further in the research on the bases of data analysis and results.

Chapter 3   METHODOLOGY

The methodology is the most important part of the research. It is very important to describe all the steps used by the researcher to conduct the research. Following is the detailed methodology that is followed to conduct this research by the researcher.

3.1.   Sampling

Sampling is the most important part of the research. The whole research depends on the proper sampling and the selection of the proper target audience. Following is the detail of our population frame, sampling frame, sampling technique and sample.

3.1.1.   Population Frame

There are total two hundred and fourteen universities in Pakistan, both public and private spread all over Pakistan. One hundred and thirty-one universities are public sector universities and the remaining eighty-three are private sector universities. There are two different legal statuses of Pakistani universities. Some Pakistani universities are chartered by the Federal Government of Pakistan and some of them are chartered by provincial governments. Federally chartered universities can open campuses all over Pakistan and in the Federal Territory of Islamabad the capital of Pakistan, but on the other hand, provincial chartered universities can open campuses in the related province only and in the federal territory of Islamabad. Provincial chartered universities cannot open their campuses in other provinces. There are total 196 general category universities in Pakistan which are offering higher education in diverse fields ranging from natural sciences to social science and humanities and from medical sciences to engineering and technology. 115 public sector universities are general and the remaining 81 are private sector general universities. There are total 20 federally chartered general category universities in Pakistan out of which 13 universities are public sector universities operating their main campuses in the federal territory of Islamabad and most of them have campuses all over Pakistan. There are 7 private sector federally chartered general category universities in the federal territory of Islamabad. There are 7 general universities in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. 5 of them are public sector universities and

the other two are private sector universities. The focus of this study is the public sector general category universities chartered by the federal government of Pakistan located in the federal territory of Islamabad.

3.1.2. Sampling Frame:

The sampling frame of this research is the federally chartered general category public sector universities located in the federal territory of Islamabad. In this geographical area, only those universities have been selected for data collection which has more than at least 2000 student body and at least 10 different departments under different faculties. Total seven universities are selected for the data collection. A total of seven universities have been selected from the 13 federally chartered general category universities situated in the federal territory of Islamabad to collect the data for the research.

3.1.3. Sampling Technique

The non-probability purposive sampling technique is used to collect the quantitative data from the university officials. This data technique is useful when dealing with people who have better information like some top officials or some women who reached the top position in an organization (Sekeran, 2003, p-277). The sub-technique of the purposive sampling technique that is judgement sampling is used when the most appropriate respondents are required for the data collection. Purposive sampling seems to be a much easier technique to collect the data but it is very difficult in some cases to approach those high-level officials at top positions in an organization (Denieffe, 2020). Purposive sampling is more appropriate when critical data is required and the sample of the research is the top management of an organization (Etikan et al., 2016, Andrade, 2021). As the data is required from the top management of the universities the judgemental sampling is most appropriate as there are only a few high officials in any university and only they have the appropriate information as top leaders of the university.

3.1.4. Sample

There are two different questionnaires for data collection. One questionnaire is for strategic leaders and the other one is for employees, that is the strategic alignment questionnaire. Data is collected from the top management of the selected universities

on the strategic leadership questionnaire. Those employees are from grades 20 to 22 including Rectors and Vice Chancellors, pro-rectors, directors, registrars, officers of QEC (Quality enhancement cell), ORIC (Office of the Research Innovation and Commercialization), other top officials related to R&D departments and administrative staff.

In Pakistan, civil servants or government institutions has a pay scale called Basic Pay Scale (BPS) according to which every civil servant (government employee) gets his or her pay. These pay scales start from one to twenty-two. Take examples from government universities; an office boy has a basic pay scale of 02. Similarly, a driver has a basic pay scale of 04, a lecturer in a Pakistani university has a basic pay scale of 18, an assistant professor has BPS-19, an associate professor has BPS-20, the professor has BPS-21 and a Meritorious University Professor has a basic pay scale of 22. In addition to this on the administrative side, a director of any department has a basic pay scale of 20, a director general has BPS-21 and some secretaries have BPS-21 and some have BPS-22 according to their seniority. Similarly, a university vice-chancellor or a Rector (both are equivalent positions in Pakistan) is normally a Meritorious University Professor with a basic scale of 22. The director of ORIC, director finance, director BIC, director planning, director advance Studies and research, and the chief librarian have a basic pay scale of 20 in the universities of Pakistan. The higher the basic pay scale, the more important their position in the institute with more participation in decision-making and other key duties in the institute.

In Pakistani universities, the positions of principal staff officers like director finance, director planning, registrar, director of campuses, chief librarian, director BIC, director ORIC, and director advance study and research, are usually possessed by the senior professors. All the categories in teaching like, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor have their elected members in the syndicate which is the highest forum of the universities in Pakistan. It usually consists of the vice-chancellor or rector of the respective university, elected members of all the constituencies of teachers, elected president of the academic staff association, elected president of the administrative staff association, chief justice of the high court or his nominee, secretary higher education or his nominee and the meeting of the syndicate is presided by the president in case of Azad Kashmir and the governor of the province

in case of the provincial chartered universities who is the chancellor of the respective provincial chartered university as already mentioned in the introductory portion of this study.

The data on the employee scale which is the strategic alignment scale is collected from all other employees both teaching and non-teaching which don't fall in the category of top management as explained above.

3.1.5. Sample Size

The total sample size for the study is 249 out of which 88 are strategic leaders and the other 161 are general employees other than the strategic leader. As data has collected online and the responses were received by the researcher on the given email. The data collection stopped when the required amount of questionnaires was received for further analysis. Further detail of the required sample size for the analysis through smart-PLS has been described in chapter 4 the data analysis, results, and discussion chapter.

3.2. Data Collection and Data Analysis

3.2.1. Data Collection

Data is collected through a questionnaire for quantitative analysis. An adopted questionnaire with modifications according to the higher education institutions is used to collect quantitative data from the target audience for analysis. Secondary data is also collected from selected higher education institutions related to student enrolment (student growth) in the last ten years, and newly opened programs (program growth) in the last ten years to measure the growth.

A request letter along with the supervisor's institutional support letter is sent to the registrars of selected universities to get time for a meeting regarding data collection and cooperation. After the arrangement of the meeting, the questionnaires in both hard and soft forms were handed over to registrars for distribution among the identified respondents. The researcher received online responses from the respondents on the Google form. As it was prohibited to go into all the offices because of the covid-19 situation the forms in soft form were distributed through the registrar's office. It was told to the researcher that forms have been sent to respondents through emails and by WhatsApp as well according to the convenience of the respondents.

Initially, data was collected from 5 universities with a total sample size of 172 out of which 67 were strategic leaders and 105 were general employees for pilot testing. After pilot testing, data was collected from two more universities to enhance the sample size and generalizability of the research.

3.2.2. Data Analysis

1. SPSS 20 .0 and Smart-PLS 2.0 (Partial Least Square) are used to analyze the data to produce results.
2. The Cronbach's alpha test is used to test the reliability of the instrument.
3. Exploratory factor analysis EFA is used to check the validity of the instruments.
4. Exploratory Factor Analysis and KMO are used to test the validity of the instruments.
5. MS-Excel 2010 is also utilized to calculate growth data.
6. Smart-PLS structure equation modeling (SEM) is used to test our hypothesis regarding the structural model and measurement model of strategic leadership factors and strategic alignment and their effect on the growth of the universities.

3.3. Research Instrument

A questionnaire to collect data on strategic leadership and strategic alignment is adopted from Lear (2012) for both employees and leaders and is modified accordingly to collect data from the universities.

3.4. Measurement of Strategic Leadership

The critical criteria of strategic leadership are measured by the top management of the universities. The research instrument that is used for the collection of data from the top management of the universities consists of six questions on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). This scale measured the importance given by the top management of the universities to these critical criteria of strategic leadership.

The six critical criteria developed by Hitt et al. (1995) and empirically tested by Lear (2012) are utilized to measure strategic leadership in the universities of Pakistan. Kwong and Wong (2013) used one question to estimate one factor. Therefore, one

question can be used to study one factor. The questionnaire for strategic leadership can be seen in the appendix 1.

A detailed definition for each critical criterion was provided with the questionnaire to ensure consistency in understanding the critical criteria by each respondent.

3.5.   Measurement of Strategic Alignment

Strategic alignment is a necessity for success. According to Khadem (2008), alignment is crucial to organizational success. Alignment is that optimal and ideal state in which all the important factors of an organization like employees, customers, strategy, and key processes work in line to propel profit and growth. Strategic alignment is important for any growing organization.

In this study, strategic alignment is measured through an adopted seven-point Likert scale instrument developed by Labovitz and Rosansky (1997) and used by Lear (2012). This tool is easy to understand and it is an effective way to reveal misalignment problems (Labovitz and Rosansky, 1997). Appendix 1 shows the instrument used to collect data to measure strategic alignment in the universities.

The scale to measure strategic alignment consists of sixteen questions on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). The scale is also tested for validity and reliability before using its results in the study and is found both valid and reliable for the purpose. The sixteen questions of the scale measured the respondents' view of the importance of alignment of strategy, people (employees), customers (students), and processes. The questionnaire to measure strategic alignment can be seen in appendix 1.

3.6.   Scale Validity and Reliability

Validly of a measuring instrument is very important. It is important to examine that our instrument is measuring the same concept for which it has been designed not something else (Sekaran 1992, p.171). There are three major forms of validity, those are content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity. Content validity ensures that all the items of an instrument are adequate to measure the same concept which we intend to measure. If a measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the investigative questions guiding the study, it is called content validity (Cooper &

Schindler 2006, p.18). Criterion-related validity ensures the success of measures used for prediction or estimation (Cooper & Schindler 2006, p.319). Construct validity has two different types. One is convergent and the other is discriminant. If the scores of a newly developed measurement are the same as that of a previously developed scale for the same variable, then the instrument has convergent validity. If the results are not the same then there will be discriminant validity (Cooper & Schindler 2006, p.320). On the other hand, the reliability of a measuring instrument or a questionnaire indicates the consistency and stability of the instrument in measuring the concept (Sekaran 1992, p.173). The Cronbach's alpha test is used to check the reliability of the measuring instrument or the questionnaire (Cooper and Schindler 2006, p.322). Cronbach's alpha is widely used to check internal consistency and construct validity. If the value of Cronbach's alpha is above 0.6 it is considered acceptable but if the value is above 0.8 the instrument is considered as very reliable. If the value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.7, it demonstrates the reliability of the instrument (Din et al. 2017). After modifying the adopted instrument its validity and reliability are tested before applying its results to the research.

3.7. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is the technique to reduce a large number of variables into fewer factors. This technique extracts the maximum common variance from all variables and puts them into a common score. The objective is to find a way of condensing the information contained in several original variables into a smaller set of factors with a minimal loss of information (Lear, 2012).

3.7.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis

The main objectives to use EFA are described below which are also defined by Arshad (2015) are:
   a) To decrease the total number of items from the total items.
   b) To observe the underlying relationship of the variables.
   c) To calculate the validity of the instrument or test, scale.
   d) To develop a simple approach for the analysis and interpretation of variables.
   e) To check the issue of multicollinearity in the data.
   f) To prove the underlying theories.

3.7.2. Criteria for Exploratory Factor Analysis

It is important to keep in view the following criteria in order the run the EFA.

3.7.2.1. Sample Size

The sample size is extremely important for exploratory factor analysis, as the EFA result will be insignificant without an adequate sample size. In the literature, there are different opinions about sample size to perform EFA effectively. Arshad (2015) mentioned in his study that the sample size must be at least 100 for performing EFA.

3.7.2.2. Correlation Matrix

The most important thing we need to know in exploratory factor analysis is the correlation coefficients in the correlation matrix. The correlation coefficients must be greater than 0.3 in magnitude for each item in the correlation matrix. The correlation coefficient in the correlation matrix greater than 0.3 indicates the reliability of the data and the relevancy of exploratory factor analysis (Sabir et al., 2021).

3.7.3. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy/Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

The index of KMO ranges from 0 to 1. The KMO value must be greater than 0.6, the value greater than 0.6 indicates the appropriateness of the data for exploratory factor analysis. The value of KMO less than 6 indicates that the data for exploratory factor analysis are insignificant (Kwong & Wong, 2013).

3.7.4. Cumulative Variance and Eigen Value

The cumulative variance ranges from 01 to 100 %. If the variance of factors is greater than 60% then the data is to be considered reliable and it would be appropriate for EFA but if it is low then it would be insignificant (Sabir et al., 2021).

Below listed tables show the EFA results of the study and their detailed description.

3.8. Pilot Testing

To check the reliability and validity of the scale a pilot study has been done on five universities. It is better to perform a pilot study before going for the complete data collection. Data from 105 employees and 67 employers (strategic leaders) is

collected through an online questionnaire as mentioned above in the methodology. Following are the results of the pilot study.

3.8.1. Reliability for the Strategic Alignment Scale

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is widely accepted to measure reliability. The range of alpha value is from 0 to 1. Reliability is considered at a low level when Cronbach's alpha is less than 0.3 and it is not in the accepted range. Reliability is considered as high when Cronbach's α values are greater than 0.7 it indicates a high level of reliability and it can be highly acceptable (Arshad, 2015). The Cronbach's α values between 0.3 and 0.7 are still acceptable. The alpha values ranging from 0.6 to 0.7 are also acceptable. Cronbach's alpha is also used to test the reliability of the strategic alignment instrument. Following tables explain the reliability of the four constructs of strategic alignment which are strategy, customer (students), people (employees), and process. These constructs are also given the codes "str", "c", "pe" and "pr" respectively for analysis.

3.8.1.1. Reliability for the Constructs of Strategic Alignment

The values of Cronbach's Alpha in table 3-4 are 0.933, 0.893, 0.896, and 0.812 for the constructs of strategy, customer, process, and people related to strategic alignment. A total of 105 responses were received online and all were included in the study. As we have already mentioned that if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6, then the scale is reliable and the data that is collected from that scale can be used for reliable research.

Table 3.1. *Reliability for the Construct of Strategy*

Constructs	Total Cases	Valid Cases	Excluded	Percentage response	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Strategy	105	105	0	100%	0.933	4
Customer	105	105	0	100%	0.893	4
Process	105	105	0	100%	0.896	4
People	105	105	0	100%	0.812	4

3.8.2. Validity of Scale Using Exploratory Factor Analysis EFA

The validity of an instrument is very important for the research. Validity means the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Factor analysis is used to measure the validity of the scale. But to check whether we can apply the exploratory factor analysis EFA to the scale, the KMO test is required. If the value of KMO is greater than 0.6, it shows that the data is valid to apply EFA. Bartlett's test of sphericity having significance at 0.0000 shows that the correlation matrix is not the identity matrix.

3.8.2.1. The Rule of Cumulative Variance and Eigenvalue Greater Than 1

Similar to KMO the cumulative variance is used to check the appropriateness of data. The cumulative variance ranges from 1 to 100%. Data should have a variance of 60% and above, then the data will be considered reliable and appropriate for EFA. Lower than 60% of variance shows the insignificance of the data for exploratory factor analysis (Kwong & Wong, 2013).

3.8.3. Factor Analysis for the Strategic Alignment

The table below shows the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.661 which shows that the data is appropriate for the exploratory factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) with a significance value of 0.000 shows that the correlation matrix for the factors of strategic alignment is not an identity matrix. Both of these tests indicate that the data is fit for EFA.

Table 3-5 shows that the total variance is 76.326 which falls within the acceptable range so the EFA can be run.

Table 3-5 also shows the rotated components for the scale to measure strategic alignment. All the components are converged into four iterations after rotation. It shows that our components are measuring the same factors for which they are developed. It shows the validity of the scale that is used to measure strategic alignment in this study.

The following table clearly shows that all the components of "strategy" are valid and they measure the strategy-related data in the research. The same is the case with other all other components related to our constructs of customer, people, and

process. The 4 components of "customer" measure the same for what they have been developed. Also, the 4 components of the process and 4 components of the construct of people measure their related constructs for which they have been developed and used in the study. All the factors are perfectly loaded.

Table 3.2. EFA Strategic Alignment

	Factors			
	Strategy	Customer	People	Process
Strategy 1	0.945			
Strategy 2	0.935			
Strategy 3	0.899			
Strategy 4	0.898			
Customer 1		0.925		
Customer 2		0.900		
Customer 3		0.859		
Customer 4		0.777		
People 1			0.890	
People 2			0.858	
People 3			0.755	
People 4			0.686	
Process 1				0.892
Process 2				0.889
Process 3				0.863
Process 4				0.846
Total Variance	76.326%			
KMO	0.661			
BTS Sig.	0.000			

3.9.   Reliability for the Scale of Strategic Leadership

The value of Cronbach's Alpha in table 3-6 is 0.967 which shows the reliability of the construct for measuring the responses related to strategy.

Table 3.3. Reliability for the Strategic Leadership

Total Cases	Valid Cases	Excluded	Percentage response	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
67	67	0	100%	0.967	6

A total of 67 responses were received online and all were included in the study. As mentioned before that if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6 (Arshad, 2015) then the scale is reliable and the data that is collected from that scale can be used for reliable research.

3.10. Summary

This chapter explains in detail the research methodology that has been deployed to conduct the study. Sampling, population frame, sampling frame, sampling technique, and sample size have been clarified. Data collection methods and data analysis techniques are also described in this chapter. Exploratory Factor Analysis is utilized to check the validity and reliability of the instrument deployed for data collection. Pilot testing of the instrument used for data collection has also been elaborated on in this chapter and the results of pilot testing are explained.

Chapter 4   DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

In this study the Smart-PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling has been used to test the proposed hypotheses. PLS-SEM can produce the best-unbiased coefficient and model latent constructs under the condition of non-normality and is also usable for small or medium sample sizes (Sabir et al., 2021). Initially, Smart-PLS was designed to conduct marketing research but in the last few years, it has gained popularity in other management and finance-related research (sabir et al., 2021).

Partial Least Square or PSL is useful in applied research projects when there are limited participants (Kwong & Wong, 2013). PLS-SEM has been used in many fields of social sciences and management sciences such as marketing, organization, behavioral sciences, and management information system (Kwong & Wong, 2013).

For the analysis of data, SPSS version 20 is utilized to run various tests and EFA (exploratory factor analysis) to refine and reduce the number of items. After testing the reliability and validity of the instrument used to collect the data from different universities in Pakistan, Smart-PLS version 2.0 has been employed to run Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) which simultaneously tests derived hypotheses. The study followed the multistage procedure for SEM which is usually recommended by Hair Jr. et al., (2010) consisting of EFA, Reliability of data, and testing the model.

4.1.   Structural Equation Modelling SEM

Structural Equation Modelling or simply known as SEM is a multivariate data analysis method generally used in marketing research (Kwong & Wong, 2013). SEM has two sub-models; the inner model and the outer model (Kwong & Wong, 2013). The inner model shows the relationship between the dependent and independent variables while the other hand, while the outer model shows the relationship between the latent variables with their observed variables. In SEM, the variables that are being used can be of one of two types; exogenous or endogenous. An exogenous variable is a variable that has arrows pointing outwards and no arrow leading towards it. On the other hand, an endogenous variable is a variable that may have arrows pointing outwards, but it has at least one arrow pointing towards it. An endogenous variable represents the effects of other variables (Kwong & Wong, 2013).

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a useful multivariate statistical technique, and applications have been increasing day by day since its introduction in the 1980s. Structural equation modeling (SEM) has come to be an important tool and even an essential statistical analysis method in the social sciences. The computer programs designed for conducting SEM analyses have emerged and enabled the technique to be used in even broader applications (Arshad, 2015).

On the other hand, the utility of SEM is widely accepted in approximating realistic results in measurement and structural analyses. In this research, the focus is on the development of the model for Strategic Leadership and its impact on growth in the universities of Pakistan while taking Strategic Alignment as Moderating variable. Much of the previous research has been done on strategic leadership but the use of SEM is very limited. Also, no study has been done to check the impact of Strategic leadership on growth in the universities of Pakistan. So in this research, an effort has been made to develop a valid model by using Smart-PLS.

4.2. Final Data Collection and Instrument Testing

Initially, the data was collected from 5 public sector general categories universities to test the reliability and validity of the instrument. After testing the reliability and validity of the instrument more data is the collection to enhance the generalizability of the research and to increase the sample size. No changes have been made to the instrument as the instrument is valid and reliable to collect data from the universities in Pakistan. After collecting the data from two more universities, the data is processed again to check its validity and reliability.

Data was collected from 5 universities in three-month time period for the pilot testing and after extracting reliable results the data is collected from two more universities. A total of seven universities are included in the study.

4.2.1. Descriptive Statistics for Leaders

The following table shows the descriptive statistics for the strategic leaders that have participated in the study by filling out the online distributed questionnaire. A total number of 88 strategic leaders from the seven selected universities have responded and all 88 responses have been included in the study. The total response rate is 100%.

Table 4.1. Descriptive statistics Strategic Leaders

Name of University	Strategic Leaders	Percentage
IIUI	23	26%
COMSATS	15	17%
NUML	12	14%
PIDE	11	13%
QAU	10	11%
NDU	9	10%
NUST	8	9%
Grand Total	**88**	**100%**

4.2.2. Descriptive Statistics for Employees

The following table shows the descriptive statistics for the employees that have participated in the study by filling out the online distributed questionnaire. A total number of 161 employees from the seven selected universities have responded and all 161 responses have been included in the study. The total response rate is 100%.

Table 4.2. Descriptive statistics Employees

Name of University	Employees	Percentage
IIUI	30	18.6%
COMSATS	28	17.4%
NUML	20	12.4%
PIDE	29	18.0%
QAU	27	16.8%
NDU	12	7.5%
NUST	15	9.3%
Grand Total	**161**	**100.0%**

4.2.3. Reliability for the Strategic Alignment Scale

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is widely accepted to measure reliability. The range of alpha value is from 0 to 1. Reliability is considered at a low level when Cronbach's alpha is less than 0.3 and it is not in the accepted range. Reliability is considered as high when Cronbach's α values are greater than 0.7 it indicates a high level of reliability and it can be highly acceptable (Arshad, 2015). Here Cronbach's alpha is utilized to test the reliability of the strategic alignment instrument. Following

tables explain the reliability of the four constructs of strategic alignment which are strategy, customer (students), people (employees), and process. These constructs are also given the codes "str", "c", "pe" and "pr" respectively for analysis.

4.2.3.1.   *Reliability for the Construct of Strategy*

The value of Cronbach's Alpha in table 4.3 for the constructs of Strategy, Customer, Process, and People are 0.933, 0.897, 0.897, and 0.822 respectively which show the reliability of all the constructs to measure strategic alignment. Total 161 responses were received online and all were included in the study. As we have already mentioned that if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6, then the scale is reliable and the data that is collected from that scale can be used for reliable research.

Table 4.3. Reliability for the Strategic Alignment Constructs

Constructs	Total Cases	Valid Cases	Excluded	Percentage response	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Strategy	161	161	0	100%	0.933	4
Customer	161	161	0	100%	0.897	4
Process	161	161	0	100%	0.897	4
People	161	161	0	100%	0.822	4

4.3.   Validity of Scale Using Exploratory Factor Analysis EFA

The validity of an instrument is very important for the research. Validity means the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Factor analysis is used to measure the validity of the scale. But to check whether we can apply the exploratory factor analysis EFA to the scale, the KMO test is required. If the value of KMO is greater than 0.6, it shows that the data is valid to apply EFA. Bartlett's test of sphericity having significance at 0.0000 shows that the correlation matrix is not the identity matrix.

4.4.   Factor Analysis for the Strategic Alignment

The table below shows the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.656 which shows that the data is appropriate for the exploratory factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) with a significance value of 0.000 shows that the

correlation matrix for the factors of strategic alignment is not an identity matrix. Both of these tests indicate that the data is fit for EFA.

Table 4.4 shows that the total variance is 76.900% which is within the acceptable range so the EFA can be run.

Table 4.4 also shows the rotated components for the scale to measure strategic alignment. All the components are converged into four iterations after rotation. It shows that the components are measuring the same factors for which they are developed and used. It shows the validity of the scale that is used to measure strategic alignment in this study.

The following table clearly shows that all the components of "strategy" are valid and they measure the strategy-related data in the research. The same is the case with other all other components related to our constructs of customer, people, and process. The 4 components of "customer" measure the same for what they have been developed. Also, the 4 components of the process and 4 components of the construct of people measure their related constructs for which they have been developed and used in the study. All the factors are perfectly loaded.

Table 4.4. EFA Strategic Alignment

	Factors			
	Strategy	Customer	People	Process
Strategy 1	0.903			
Strategy 2	0.891			
Strategy 3	0.936			
Strategy 4	0.945			
Customer 1		0.857		
Customer 2		0.905		
Customer 3		0.927		
Customer 4		0.790		
People 1			0.758	
People 2			0.868	
People 3			0.892	
People 4			0.700	

(continued)

	Factors			
	Strategy	Customer	People	Process
Process 1				0.848
Process 2				0.880
Process 3				0.892
Process 4				0.862
Total Variance			76.900%	
KMO			0.656	
BTS Sig.			0.000	

4.5. Reliability for the Scale of Strategic Leadership

The value of Cronbach's Alpha in table 4.5 is 0.971 which shows the reliability of the construct for measuring the responses related to strategy. Total 88 responses were received online and all were included in the study. If the value of Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6 (Arshad, 2015) then the scale is reliable and the data that is collected from that scale can be used for reliable research.

Table 4.5. Reliability for the Scale of Strategic Leadership

Total Cases	Valid Cases	Excluded	Percentage response	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
88	88	0	100%	0.971	6

4.6. Student and Program Growth Data

The following table shows the student growth data collected from the selected universities and tabulated for the study.

Table 4.6. Student Growth

Years	NDU	IIU	COMSATS	NUST	QAU	NUML	PIDE
2011	566	22056	19763	3398	6765	13684	679
2012	754	26258	21225	3693	7274	14107	904
2013	907	23691	27029	4014	7822	14543	1088
2014	1229	25631	35452	4363	8410	14993	1474
2015	1515	30969	35335	4743	9043	15457	1523

(continued)

Years	NDU	IIU	COMSATS	NUST	QAU	NUML	PIDE
2016	1418	31785	35254	5155	9724	15935	1545
2017	1410	30614	34825	5604	10456	16428	1692
2018	1629	30967	34259	6091	11243	16936	1727
2019	1793	30648	36036	6621	12090	17460	1890
2020	2057	30338	35068	7197	13000	18000	1926
Average TG	1327.8	28295.7	31424.6	5087.9	9582.7	15754.3	1444.8
% Change in Growth	135%	28%	59%	50%	42%	15%	113%
Ranks	7	2	5	4	3	1	6

The data for the last 10 years have been collected to check the impact of strategic leadership and strategic alignment on growth. Here average total growth and percentage change in growth are also calculated with the help of the following statistical equations explained by Chaudhry and Kamal 2014 and Levine et al., 2010. The ranks have been assigned to each university according to the percentage change in growth. The highest the percentages change in growth the highest the rank. The ranking method is the simplest approach for assigning weights to criteria. Essentially, the ranks can be given in order from most important to least important and the decision makers usually can rank items much more easily than give weight to them. (Zardari et al., 2015).

$$\overline{SG} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{10} SG_i}{n}$$

$$\%change\ in\ Students\ Growth = \frac{\overline{SG} - SG_{t=1}}{SG_{t=1}}$$

Where $\overline{SG}$ is the average total students' growth and SG_i is the yearly Students' growth and n is the number of years. Where $SG_{t=1}$ is the first year (2011) growth for students in Pakistani universities.

The following table shows the program growth data collected from the selected universities and tabulated for the study.

Table 4.7. Program Growth

Years	NDU	IIU	COMSATS	NUST	QAU	NUML	PIDE
2011	15	135	66	20	25	50	12
2012	15	140	72	20	26	50	12
2013	16	142	86	20	30	55	12
2014	21	145	96	18	30	55	12
2015	21	140	97	25	30	55	12
2016	21	140	97	26	30	60	15
2017	15	140	96	30	32	65	15
2018	15	140	98	30	32	70	15
2019	17	145	99	30	32	80	17
2020	17	145	99	31	34	83	18
Average TG	17.3	141.2	90.6	25	30.1	62.3	14
% Change in Growth	15%	5%	37%	25%	20%	25%	17%
Ranks	2	1	7	5	4	5	3

The data for program growth is also collected for the last 10 years. Here average total growth and percentage change in growth are also calculated with the help of the following statistical equations explained by Chaudhry and Kamal 2014 and Levine et al., 2010. The ranks have been assigned to each university according to the percentage change in growth. The highest the percentages change in growth the highest the rank. The ranking method is the simplest approach for assigning weights to criteria. Essentially, the ranks can be given in order from most important to least important and the decision makers usually can rank items much more easily than give weight to them. (Zardari et al., 2015).

$$\overline{PG} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{10} PG_i}{n}$$

$$\%change\ in\ Program\ Growth = \frac{\overline{PG} - PG_{t=1}}{PG_{t=1}}$$

Where $\overline{PG}$ is the average total programs' growth and PG_i is the yearly program's growth and n is the number of years. Where $PG_{t=1}$ is the first year (2011) growth for programs offered by Pakistani universities.

4.7. Smart PLS-Structure Equation Modelling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a useful statistical technique, and the use of this application for research purposes has been increasing day by day (Arshad, 2015). Structural equation modeling (SEM) has come to be an important tool and even an essential statistical analysis method in the social sciences. Computer programs designed for conducting SEM analyses have emerged and enabled the technique to be used in even broader applications. In this study, Smart-PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling) has been utilized to test the proposed hypotheses.

PLS is well known for its capability of handling small sample sizes. Prior research shows that a sample of 100 to 200 can be good to do data analysis using Smart-PLS (Hoyle, 1995). The minimum required date for the smart PLS depends on the following criteria (Kwong & Wong, 2013).

1. The significance level
2. The statistical power
3. The maximum number of arrows pointing at a latent variable.

PLS is used to run SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) with no assumptions for data distribution (Vinzi et al., 2010). Other than that Smart-PLS is very helpful when the sample size is small and also for the survey of senior officials like CEOs of companies or females in top positions (Wong, 2011). The minimum sample size that is required is suggested by Narcoulides & Saunders 2006, depending on the maximum number of arrows pointing at a latent variable as specified in the structural equation model. The following table shows the minimum sample size required.

Table 4.8. Sample Size

Minimum sample size required	Maximum number of arrows pointing at a latent variable in the model
52	2
59	3
65	4

(continued)

71

Minimum sample size required	Maximum number of arrows pointing at a latent variable in the model
70	5
75	6
80	7
84	8
88	9
91	10

4.7.1. Measurement Model
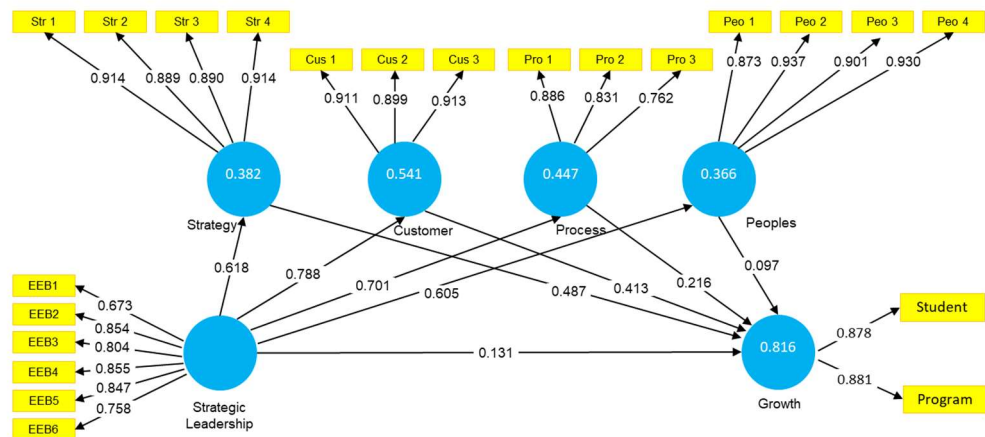
Figure 4.1. Measurement Model

In path diagram; there are two different models. One is measurement model while the other is the structural model, also known as the structural equation model. The measurement model shows the relationship between constructs and their indicators while the other hand the structural model shows the relationship among constructs. Both the indicators and constructs are in different shapes. The oval shape indicates the constructs while the indicators are in rectangular shape.

Table 4.9. Factor Loadings

| Indicators | Factor Loadings | | | | | |
	Strategy	Customer	People	Process	Strategic Leadership	Growth
Str1	0.914					
Str2	0.889					
Str3	0.890					
Str4	0.914					
Cus1		0.911				
Cus2		0.899				
Cus3		0.913				
Pro1			0.886			
Pro2			0.831			
Pro3			0.762			
Peo1				0.873		
Peo2				0.937		
Peo3				0.901		
Peo4				0.930		
EEB1					0.673	
EEB2					0.854	
EEB3					0.804	
EEB4					0.855	
EEB5					0.847	
EEB6					0.758	
Student						0.872
Program						0.881

Table 4.10. Cross Loadings

Variables	Strategy	Customer	Process	People	Strategic Leadership	Growth
Str1	0.914	0.723	0.621	0.667	0.526	0.742
Str2	0.889	0.661	0.655	0.522	0.577	0.688
Str3	0.890	0.612	0.572	0.511	0.623	0.643
Str4	0.914	0.704	0.611	0.602	0.547	0.633
Cus1	0.688	0.911	0.702	0.643	0.573	0.618
Cus2	0.643	0.899	0.543	0.422	0.506	0.622
Cus3	0.523	0.913	0.677	0.511	0.537	0.701
Pro1	0.537	0.635	0.886	0.528	0.423	0.533
Pro2	0.563	0.614	0.831	0.614	0.517	0.431
Pro3	0.311	0.577	0.762	0.422	0.326	0.517
Peo1	0.603	0.522	0.649	0.873	0.617	0.426
Po2	0.484	0.614	0.744	0.937	0.711	0.483
Peo3	0.322	0.433	0.673	0.901	0.688	0.513
Peo4	0.566	0.414	0.641	0.930	0.704	0.655
EEB1	0.415	0.218	0.322	0.428	0.673	0.418
EEB2	0.416	0.294	0.409	0.618	0.854	0.625
EEB3	0.533	0.462	0.504	0.518	0.804	0.533
EEB4	0.544	0.422	0.416	0.629	0.855	0.639
EEB5	0.628	0.614	0.396	0.519	0.847	0.604
EEB6	0.482	0.353	0.386	0.511	0.758	0.415
Student	0.614	0.388	0.426	0.416	0.541	0.878
Program	0.472	0.366	0.384	0.527	0.625	0.881

The VIF or variance inflation factor measures the severity of multicollinearity in the regression analysis. The following table shows that all the VIF are within the range i.e no value is less than 0.25 and above 4.0 (Kwong & Wong, 2010). There is no multicollinearity issue.

Table 4.11. Variance Inflation Factor

Variables	VIF
Str1	3.485
Str2	3.204
Str3	2.800
Str4	3.523
Cus1	2.056
Cus2	3.999
Cus3	3.767
Pro1	2.406
Pro2	2.437
Pro3	1.615
Peo1	2.656
Peo2	3.525
Peo3	3.097
Peo4	3.334
EEB1	2.526
EEB2	1.722
EEB3	3.021
EEB4	2.386
EEB5	3.169
EEB6	2.264
Student	3.696
Program	2.649

4.7.2. Reliability and Validity

Validly of a measuring instrument is very important. It is important to examine that instrument is measuring the same concept for which it has been designed not something else (Sekaran 1992, p.171). Validity ensures that all the items of an instrument are adequate to measure the same concept which we intend to measure. The validity of an instrument or questionnaire is the assurance that the instrument is measuring what it has been created to measure (Sabir et al., 2021). On the other hand,

reliability ensures that the instrument in question will produce the same results if used again in a different study or context (Sabir et al., 2021).

In this study, to test the validity and reliability of the instrument Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) are utilized. If the value of Cronbach's alpha is higher than 0.7, it will ensure that the instrument and its constructs are highly reliable and can be used to collect data for the research (Sabir, 2021). The same is the case with composite reliability (CR). If the value of CR is above 0.7, the instrument is considered to be highly reliable for data collection. The value of average variance extracted (AVE) is required to be above 0.5 to declare the instrument as valid.

Table 4.12. Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	CR	AVE
Criteria/Range	Above 0.7		Above 0.7	0.5 or above
Strategy	0.923	0.926	0.946	0.813
Customer	0.808	0.936	0.885	0.687
People	0.931	0.935	0.951	0.830
Process	0.743	0.835	0.823	0.574
Strategic Leadership	0.887	0.893	0.914	0.642

The above table indicates that the value of Cronbach's Alpha for all the four constructs of Strategic alignment which are strategy, customer, people, and process is more than 0.7. It shows that these constructs are highly reliable. Also, the value of strategic leadership is above 0.7 for Cronbach's Alpha. It shows the reliability of the factors of strategic leadership.

The values of composite reliability for all the constructs of strategic alignment which are strategy, customer, people, and process are well above o.7 which indicates that the constructs are highly reliable. The value composite reliability for the construct of Strategic Leadership is also higher than 0.7 which also indicates the reliability for the constructs of strategic leadership that are used in this study to collect data.

If the value of average variance extracted (AVE) is above 0.5 then the instrument is valid and its factors are measuring the same for which they are devised

to measure. Here the values of AVE for all the constructs of strategic alignment which are strategy, customer, people, and process are above the threshold level of 0.5 which indicated the validity of the constructs. Also, the value of AVE for strategic leadership is higher than 0.5, the threshold level. It means that the scale of strategic leadership with all its constructs is valid and is measuring the same for which they are devised to measure.

4.7.3.   Structural Models for Student and Program Growth
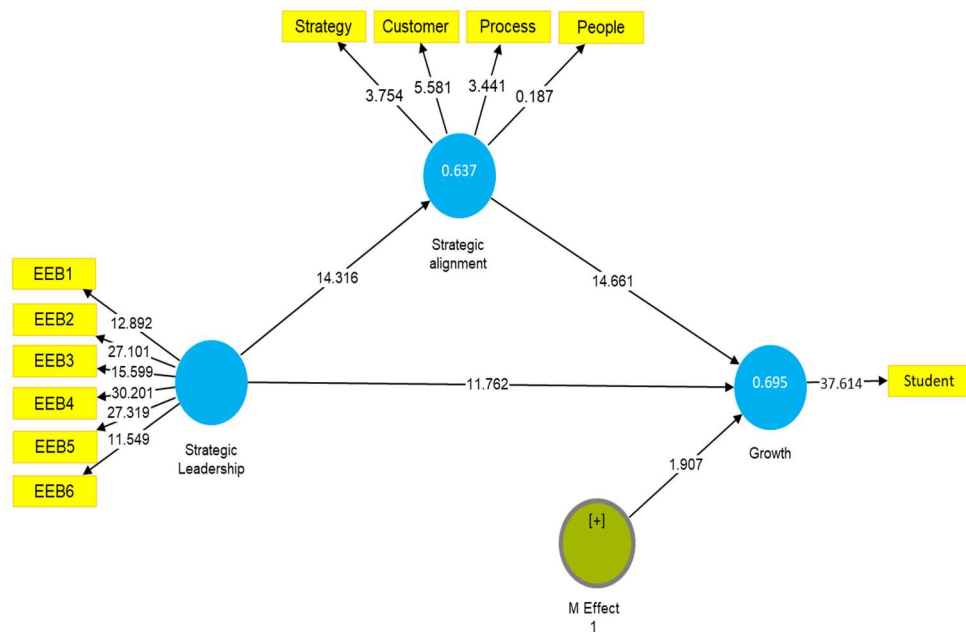
Figure 4.2. Student Structure Model
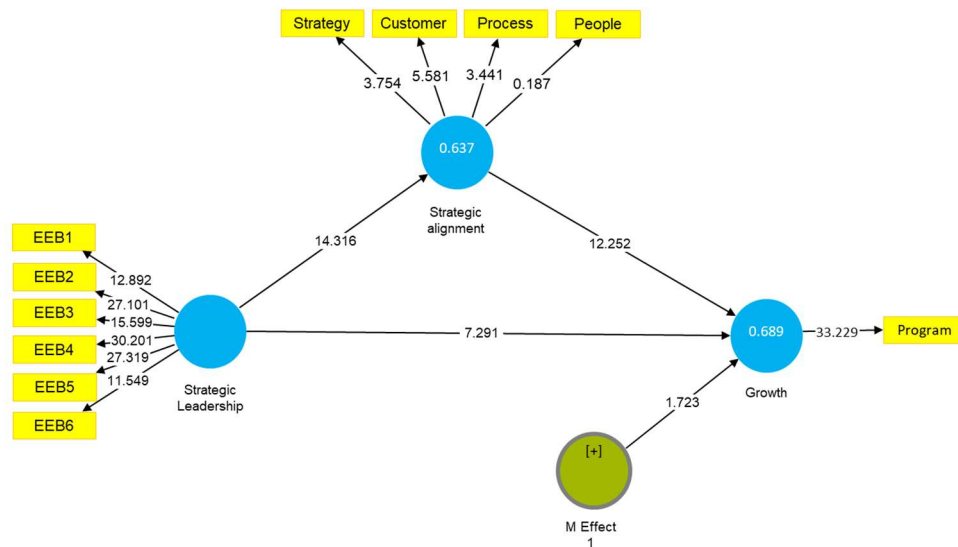
Figure 4.3. Program Structure Model

The structural equation models have been estimated with the help of the partial least square (smart-PLS) method and the results are reported in the following tables.

4.7.4.   Goodness of Fit

For model improvement the Evaluation of the goodness of fit of the build mode is important and it helps in the discussion of findings. Many of the criteria have been settled for this purpose and help in SEM model representation and these are classified into three main categories absolute indices, indices of incremental fit, and indices of parsimonious fit. Since the Introduction of SEM many of the basic statistics have been settled to measure the fitness of the model, this model reviewed and supported only by those methods which are commonly used and most important in model representations. Following is the model fit indices table.

Table 4.13. Model Fit Indices for student growth

Fit indices with threshold criteria	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR < 0.08	0.073	0.075
Chi-Square > 0.05	1198.773	1346.882
NFI > 0.90	0.899	0.903

Table 4.14. Model Fit Indices for Program Growth

Fit indices with threshold criteria	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR < 0.08	0.077	0.079
Chi-Square > 0.05	1145.352	1267.224
NFI > 0.90	0.898	0.901

The threshold criteria for SRMR value is less than 0.08, while the threshold level for chi-square is greater than 0.05 and the threshold level for NFI is greater than 0.90 (Sabir et al., 2021). The results of the model fit indices in the above tables show that all the values are within the range of threshold criteria.

4.7.5. Hypotheses Testing

In the following paragraphs, we will check our hypotheses for rejection or acceptance according to the results of structural equation modeling.

In this study, four hypotheses were developed to check the relationship of the independent variable with the dependent and moderating variable and also to check the moderating role of strategic alignment in light of available literature. Following are the results of the hypotheses based on the analyses that are shown in table 4.14.

These hypotheses are tested against the significance level 0f 5% and are denoted by α. If the p-value is equal to or less than α, then the null hypothesis will be accepted (Arshad, 2015). The threshold level of the beta value is 0.25.

H1: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

The result of SEM in table 4.15 shows that Strategic leadership significantly and positively impacts the growth of the universities as β=0.721 and p=0.000. The beta value is above the threshold level and also p-value is less than the alpha value. So based on these results, the first hypothesis is accepted that is, strategic leadership has a positive impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

H2: There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment.

The results of SEM in table 4.15 shows that strategic leadership has a significant positive relationship with strategic alignment as β=0.781 and p=0.000. The beta value is above the threshold level and also p-value is less than the alpha value. So based on these results, the second hypothesis can be accepted that is, there is a positive impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment.

Table 4.15. Direct Hypotheses

Hypothesis	β Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P values
Strategic Leadership -> Growth	0.721	0.059	9.482	0.000
Strategic Leadership -> Strategic Alignment	0.781	0.056	14.316	0.000
Strategic Alignment -> Growth	0.841	0.065	13.563	0.000
R Square Growth		0.692		
Adjusted R Square Growth		0.689		
R Square Strategic Alignment		0.637		
Adjusted R Square Strategic Alignment		0.635		

H4: Strategic Alignment has a positive impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan

The results of SEM in table 4.15 shows that strategic alignment has a significant positive impact on growth as β=0.841 and p=0.000. The beta value is above the threshold level and also p-value is less than the alpha value. So, based on these results, the third hypothesis can be accepted that there is a positive impact of strategic alignment on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

Table 4.16. Indirect Hypotheses

Hypothesis	β Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P values
Strategic Leadership -> Strategic Alignment -> Growth	0.650	0.071	9.220	0.000

H3: Strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

The results of the indirect hypothesis in table 4.16 indicate that strategic alignment significantly mediates between strategic leadership and growth as β=0.650 and p=0.000. The beta value is above the threshold level and also p-value is less than the alpha value. So, based on these results, this hypothesis is accepted that strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

4.8.   Discussion

The focus of this study remained on the strategic leadership of the universities and their impact on the growth of the university in the scenario of Pakistan. Many studies have been done on strategic leadership in different organizational settings both in the production and services sectors. Here in this study first time in Pakistan, the focus remained on the education sector and the higher education sector of Pakistan has been selected to check the phenomenon of strategic leadership in the universities and degree awarding institutes of Pakistan. In Pakistan there are two different types of higher education institutions; one is the university, and the other is the degree awarding institute according to the higher education laws of Pakistan. Strategic leadership in any institution is the backbone of growth in that institute. The policies and behaviors of the leaders of the organization make the organization grow in this ever-changing environment.

4.8.1.   Strategic Leadership and Growth

The results of this study show that strategic leadership has a significant impact on the growth of universities which is according to previous studies (Hidayah et al., 2015, Hitt et al. 2016, Banzato & Sierra, 2016). By increasing the growth of the university, the leadership can also enhance the performance of the university. The strategic leadership of an organization is responsible for the strategic management of that organization. Growth is a major part of the strategic management process. Growing organizations perform well in the market. Strategic leadership plays a positive role in enhancing the performance of universities. Strategic leadership is very important in achieving high performance in a study program (Hidayah et al., 2015).

This study proves that strategic leadership has a positive role in the growth of the universities of Pakistan.

4.8.2. Strategic Leadership and Strategic Alignment

This study also focused on the strategic alignment in the universities. There is a positive relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment. It means a better strategic leadership in any organization can develop a better strategic alignment among the people, customer, strategy, and processes of the organization that ultimately enhance the performance of the organization (Lear, 2012). The results of this study show that strategic leadership has a significant positive impact on the strategic alignment of the universities in Pakistan. Alignment involves common agreements between goals and means (Fonvielle and Carr, 2001). According to Khadem (2008), if two people are moving in the same direction they can be called aligned. Alignment needs a central point or a center of focus that can be defined as a frame of reference for all the employees of the organization which is the vision, strategy, and values of the organization (Khadem, 2008).

The results of this study are aligned with the previous studies that strategic leadership and strategic alignment are positively associated and strategic leadership plays a critical role in enhancing strategic alignment in organizations (Lear, 2012, Khadem, 2008), in this case, the universities that are the gap fulfilled in this research. The universities have also become profit motive service sector organizations in the past few decades. The same approaches must be adopted by the universities to become the market leader and the alignment between strategic leadership and strategic alignment is one of them.

4.8.3. Strategic Alignment, A Link Between Strategic Leadership and Growth

Another area that has been focused on in this study is the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth. The results of structural equation modeling showed a strong moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth. Strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and growth.

4.8.4. Strategic Alignment and Growth

The study also determines that strategic alignment has a positive impact on the growth of universities in Pakistan. It means an aligned organization can play its role in enhancing the growth of that organization; in this case, the aligned universities can grow better in Pakistan. These results are aligned with the results of the previous studies that strategic alignment plays an important role in enhancing the performance of organizations (Ouakouak and Ouedraogo, 2013, Khadem, 2008). According to the initial model of the study, the results show that strategic leadership which is the top leadership of the universities which are vice chancellor, rector, registrar, directors, deans, and heads of the departments has a positive impact on the growth of the universities. Also, the alignment among the strategy, customer, people, and process that is the strategic alignment of the university has a positive impact on the growth. Also, strategic leadership has a significant positive impact on strategic alignment and strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and growth in the universities of Pakistan.

According to the structural models for both students' growth and programs' growth, it is evident that the total impact of the SL that is Strategic leadership on SG that student growth is 11.762 and the total impact of strategic leadership on PG that is program growth is 7.291. Similarly, the total impact of SA that is strategic alignment on student growth is 14.661 and the impact of strategic alignment on program growth is 12.252. It shows that the impact of strategic leadership is different when it comes to student and program growth. The data has been collected from Islamabad which is the federal capital of Pakistan. Islamabad is located near Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan which are two states affiliated with Pakistan since the Partition of the Indian subcontinent. People from these states also prefer to go to Islamabad for higher studies. Also, Islamabad has many campuses of provincial chartered universities already explained in the introductory portion.

4.8.5. The Corona Pandemic and Recent Study

It is also important to through light on the corona situation and its impact on the higher education sector and its top leadership, as this study has taken place on the eve of the coronavirus all over the world and especially at the worst time for higher education in Pakistan. Throughout the last one and a half years the corona situation in Pakistan was worst. All the higher education institutions were closed and the study

was going online. Universities were completely closed during mid of March 2020 to April 2021 for students and completely close for all activities except online education from mid-March 2020 to September 2020. In September 2020 universities were partially opened for employees with 50% attendance. The 50% were working from home on weekly or monthly shift bases.

4.8.6. Challenges for the Universities

Students, especially researchers have seen a very tough time during the last one and a half years. It was also a tough time for the leadership of the universities as most of the universities were not prepared for online education. It was a very difficult experience for the leadership of the universities to prepare themselves for online education, developing infrastructure, providing internet facilities, and mobilize students to take a positive part in this exercise, as most of the students in Pakistani universities are from remote areas with no or very poor internet facilities.

Coronavirus, also known as SARS-Covid-2 was declared a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020, and the pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the world health organization WHO (Hiscott et al., 2020). Mid-March was the time when all the higher education institutions were closed in Pakistan due to this pandemic. All the economic activities were also stopped in a matter of no time. Lockdowns were imposed in almost all the countries of the world to stop the spread of the virus. Italy was the first country to feel the severity of the virus on its first outbreak in Italy after it started in China (Hiscott et al., 2020).

Like all other social and economic activities, education is also impacted by the coronavirus outbreak badly. Around 320 million students were impacted only in India and stopped from going to their educational institutions (Jena 2020). Several impacts have been seen on higher education institutions like; destabilization of all educational activities, negative impact on the educational assessment system, and reduction in employment opportunities (Jena 2020). Some of the post-covid-19 effects are; personalized learning, low student attendance, reduced international student mobility in higher education institutions, learning with social distancing, different shifts per day, the increased gap between privileged and unprivileged students, increased use of technology in the teaching-learning process, new and improved assessment systems and growing demand of online and distance learning (Jena 2020).

4.8.7.   Challenges for University Leadership

The social distancing of staff and students puts extra pressure on school leaders as they have to workday and night to start and continue the teaching-learning process disrupted by covid-19 (Harris and Jones, 2020). In these crucial times, leadership must come up with swift actions with the foresight of the consequences and the side effects of the actions taken (Harris and Jones, 2020). But due to the novelty of the virus and the leadership has been stretched for the first time in their social and organizational life with that much pressure with no foresight of the future, as still virus is taking lives and spreading at a drastic speed and with every coming winter the spread of virus increase with more new variants.

The leadership is not prepared for this kind of situation with no training, no leadership standards, no developmental programs, no training and preparation, no KPIs, and no benchmarks, in short leadership no longer enjoying the practices they have enjoyed in stable situations (Harris and Jones, 2020). The university leadership has experienced a challenge to continue the teaching-learning process that they have never witnessed or prepared to experience.

This study has contributed to a better understanding of the phenomenon of strategic leadership of the universities in the scenario of Pakistan. No studies have been done before on the strategic leadership of the universities in Pakistan. It has also focused on the phenomenon of strategic alignment in the university set up and how strategic leadership and strategic alignment plays a positive role in enhancing the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

4.9.   Summary

This chapter put light on the data analysis techniques and tools utilized to process the data collected through the questionnaire from the universities to conduct the research. The questionnaire is tested again for reliability and validity after complete data collection from all the universities selected for data collection. The structural equation modeling technique is explained as is utilized for data processing and to produce describable results. The results of the research are summarized in this chapter and also based on the results of structural equation modeling the decisions on the acceptance or rejection of the proposed hypotheses have been made. A comprehensive discussion of results has also been done in this chapter with the discussion of recent circumstances

developed by corona pandemic in the world and specifically in Pakistan and how it affects the higher education sector in Pakistan.

Chapter 5   CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1.   Main Findings

This study shows that strategic leadership and strategic alignment have a positive impact on the growth of universities in Pakistan. This study also indicates the moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth. This study extends the existing body of knowledge on strategic leadership and strategic alignment in the context of Pakistani universities.

The study indicates the positive role of strategic leadership for both strategic alignment and growth. This study shows the phenomenon of strategic leadership exists in the public sector universities of Pakistan which is our main objective of this research to study the phenomenon of strategic leadership and fulfill the gap that already has presented at the start of the study to check the phenomenon of strategic leadership and strategic alignment and their impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan. It is also evident that the growth in the number of students doesn't need to be because of the growth in the number of programs. Some other factors influence the growth of students in the universities of Pakistan. The population may be one factor. Islamabad is also located near affiliated states Azad Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan where higher education services are not very good and students prefer to travel to Islamabad for higher education.

5.2.   Conclusion

The first hypothesis that is "There is a positive impact of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities in Pakistan" has been accepted. The acceptance of this hypothesis indicates that the phenomenon of strategic leadership exists in the public sector universities of Pakistan and positively plays its role in the growth of the universities. This part of the research answers the first research question of the study which is "To study whether the phenomenon of strategic leadership exists in universities of Pakistan?" The conclusion can be made that the phenomenon of strategic leadership truly exists in the public sector universities of Pakistan. One of the main objectives to conduct this research was to "extend the research done internationally on Strategic Leadership by empirically assessing the concept in the context of Pakistan's Higher education institutions." This objective of the research is

comprehensively met and the contribution has been made in the body of knowledge and literature on strategic leadership in the scenario of Pakistan.

Another objective that was developed at the start of the research was "To analyze the effect of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities". The results of the first hypothesis enable the researcher to achieve this objective as well. The results of the first hypothesis show that there is a positive impact of strategic leadership on growth in the universities of Pakistan. It concludes that strategic leaders play a positive role in enhancing the growth of universities. It answers the second research question of the study which is "What is the effect of strategic leadership on strategic alignment and the growth of the universities in Pakistan?" The study indicates a positive effect of strategic leadership on the growth of the universities in Pakistan.

The results of the second hypothesis that is "There a positive impact of strategic leadership on strategic alignment", show that strategic leadership has a positive impact on strategic alignment. It means that strategic leaders play a positive role to make the universality and its employees more aligned with the overall goals and objectives of the university. The second objective of the study is to check the relationship between strategic leadership and strategic alignment in the universities of Pakistan. The results of this hypothesis that is accepted indicate that strategic leadership positively impacts strategic alignment. These results answer the second research question of the study which is "What is the effect of strategic leadership on strategic alignment and on the growth of the universities in Pakistan?" Strategic leadership positively affects strategic alignment that means in the presence of strategic leadership the universities will be more aligned with their goals and objectives.

The third hypothesis that is "Strategic alignment plays a moderating role between strategic leadership and growth of the universities in Pakistan." is also accepted. Strategic alignment plays the moderating role between strategic leadership and strategic alignment. Further studies in this area can explain this moderating role of strategic alignment between strategic leadership and growth.

The fourth hypothesis of the study that is accepted is "Strategic alignment has a positive impact on the growth of the universities in Pakistan", which shows that an aligned university can grow better as compared to other universities whose policies

and people are not aligned with overall goals and objectives of the university. The result of this hypothesis provides the answer to the third research question that is "What is the effect of strategic alignment on the growth in the universities of Pakistan?" that is, strategic alignment affects positively the growth of the university. The more the university policies are aligned, the more there will be growth in the university. It also serves to fulfill the third objective of this research study which is "To analyze the effect of strategic leadership and strategic alignment on the growth of the universities". The analysis of the results shows that the phenomenon of strategic alignment has a good presence in the universities of Pakistan and is effecting positively the growth of the universities.

Although this study extends the literature on strategic leadership and strategic alignment and its impact on growth in the context of Pakistani public sector universities, this study still has some limitations.

5.3.   Recommendations and Limitations

This study includes six factors to study the phenomenon of strategic leadership which are determining strategic direction, exploiting and maintaining core competencies, developing human capital, sustaining an effective corporate culture, emphasizing ethical practices, and establishing strategic controls. These six factors are called the critical criteria of strategic leadership (Hitt et al., 1994). More factors and constructs could have been added to study the phenomena. Also, four constructs are included to study the phenomenon of strategic alignment that is; strategy, customer, people, and process (Lear 2012). More constructs could have been added to study the phenomenon. As this is the first study of its kind on the universities of Pakistan, future researchers can study this phenomenon in detail by adding more constructs. Also, this study included data only from Pakistan. To increase the generalizability of the study data can be collected from more countries. Also, more data can be collected to produce more reliable results as this study includes data only from 249 respondents from seven universities. In the future, a comparison study can be done between the public and private sector universities as this study focuses only on public sector general category universities of Pakistan. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge specifically in the context of Pakistan and can help the top leadership of the universities to develop policies to enhance the growth of the universities in Pakistan. As this study is conducted during the peak time of coronavirus and the

approach to the universities and top leadership of the universities was very difficult due to coronavirus SOPs and closure. Future scholars can conduct the study with an increased number of universities and increased geographic areas to enhance the generalizability of the research.

The years 2020-21 will be remembered as years of destruction by a pandemic the human being witnessed after a century passed to the devastating 1918 Spanish flu (Ahern and Loh, 2020). In times of such uncertainty, trust in leadership is needed. For leaders to instill trust in their followers, they must take appropriate action via preparation and planning; seeking out information and intelligence; leading adaptation; and ensuring a coordinated response (Ahern and Loh, 2020). This is the need of the hour to build trust and act according to the will and with the coordination of the workers of the organization. Leadership cannot handle the such situation alone.

University leadership must act according to the recent situation to improve the quality of education, and assessment system and to enhance the morale of the employees and students. As time is passing by and things are coming to their normal routine, it's time for the leaders to act promptly and positively to help students and employees so that they feel comfortable while coming back to the university. Processes must be developed according to the new situations developed by the pandemic. Strategies must be devised to facilitate employees and students to settle down in the new post-covid scenario. As coronavirus is still out there and its fifth wave is coming to China and Hong Kong. It's the responsibility of the leaders to offer hope, a credible vision of our lives for the future, and guidance on how it can be achieved (Ahern and Loh, 2020). Students are coming back to universities and the mode of education in almost all countries is turning back to normal with corona SOPs. It is the responsibility of the university's top management to make the environment safe for both students and employees and help them feel safe again.

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Appendix: 1

Strategic Leadership Questionnaire

Instructions for completing the questionnaire.

To be completed by the top management i.e., Vice Chancellor, Rector, Members BOD or BOG, Members Syndicate (Senate), Registrar, Directors, Deans, Head of Departments, Academic heads, Research heads, and administrative heads.

Please respond to each statement by marking the appropriate number with a tick "√" sign that best represents your view of the importance of the critical criteria. If you need an explanation, the definition for each criterion is provided below.

It is purely an academic endeavour and your participation in this research study is voluntary. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone. Your participation in this research study will be highly valued.

Name of the University:

Role (Position):

Questions

		Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1.	Determining Strategic Direction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Exploiting and maintaining core competencies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Developing Human Capital	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Sustaining an effective corporate culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Emphasizing ethical practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Establishing strategic control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Critical Criteria	Definition
Determining Strategic direction	Determining the strategic direction of the organization refers to developing a long-term vision. Strategic intent means leveraging the organization's internal resource capabilities and core competencies to accomplish what may at first appear to be unattainable goals in the competitive environment. A long-term vision of the organization's strategic intent usually requires a view of at least five to 10 years in the future. In this case, the focus is on the growth of the university. How much top management is determined to increase the number of students and programs in their respective universities.
Exploiting and maintaining core competencies	Core competencies are the resources and capabilities that serve an organization's (institute's) source of competitive advantage. Typically, core competencies relate to an organization's (institute's) functional skills. As strategic

	leaders, corporate managers make decisions intended to help their organization develop, maintain, strengthen, leverage, and exploit core competencies. Exploiting core competencies involves sharing resources across units (Departments of the university).
Developing Human capital	Human capital refers to the knowledge and skills of the organization's (institute's) workforce (employees) – employees as a capital resource. Core competencies cannot be effectively developed or exploited without appropriate human capital.
Sustaining an effective corporate culture	Organizational culture refers to the core values shared by all or most employees. It consists of a complex set of shared ideologies, symbols, and values that influence the way the organization (university) conducts its business. Strategic leaders must develop and nurture an appropriate culture, one that promotes focused learning and human development, the sharing of skills and resources among units (departments) in the organization (university), and the entrepreneurial spirit necessary for innovation and competitiveness. Changing a culture is more difficult than sustaining it. But effective strategic leadership involves recognizing the need to change the culture and implement the changes.
Emphasizing ethical practices	Effective strategic leaders emphasize ethical practices in their organizations and seek to infuse them through the university culture. The ethics that guide individual actions are based on principles formed by long-term influences that extend beyond the organization. However, universities can shape and control employees' and managers' (heads) behaviour.
Establishing Strategic Control	Strategic control refers to the leaders' understanding of the strategies being implemented in the various business units (departments, Institutes). Strategic control focuses on the content of strategic actions to achieve appropriate

	outcomes. Effective use of strategic controls by university leaders is frequently integrated with appropriate autonomy for the subunits (departments) to enable them to gain a competitive advantage in their respective markets. Autonomy provided by strategic control fosters the flexibility and innovation necessary to take advantage of specific market opportunities.

Employee Questionnaire
(Instructions for completing the questionnaire)
To be completed by a cross-section of employees across the university.
Please respond to each statement by marking the appropriate number with a tick "√" sign that best represents your view.
It is purely an academic endeavour and your participation in this research study is voluntary. Your responses will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone. Your participation in this research study will be highly valued.
Name of the University:
Role (Position):

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
University strategies are clearly communicated to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
University strategies guide the identification of skills and knowledge I need to have	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People here are willing to change when new university strategies require it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Our senior officers agree on the university strategy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For each program our university provides, there is an agreed-upon, prioritized list of what students (customers) care about	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People in this university are provided with useful information about student (customer) complaints	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strategies are periodically reviewed to ensure the satisfaction of critical student (customer) need	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Processes are reviewed regularly to ensure that they contribute to the attainment of student (customer) satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Our university collects information from employees about how well things work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My work unit (department) or team is rewarded for our performance as a team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Groups (teams, departments) in the university cooperate to achieve student (customer) satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

When processes are changed, the impact on employee satisfaction is measured	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Our heads (departmental heads) care about how work gets done as well as about the results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
We review our work processes regularly to see how well they are functioning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
When something goes wrong, we correct the underlying reasons so that the problem will not happen again	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Processes are reviewed to ensure they contribute to the achievement of strategic goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

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