42

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CURRENT

PROBLEMS OF STUDENT AUDITORIUM MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER SCHOOLS

PROBLEMAS ACTUALES DE LA GESTIÓN DE AUDITORIOS ESTUDIANTILES EN ESCUELAS SUPERIORES

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ABSTRACT

Effective student engagement is both crucial for academic success and national development in higher education. Apart from faculty competence which is represented by professional competence, pedagogical competencies, and subject content knowledge, the relationship between faculty and students is equally important. While these factors are slowly gaining recognition, there are still gaps in how a faculty member's approach to managing student engagement directly influences higher education institutional outcomes. The goal of this research is to analyze the interaction between faculty and management of the student audience within a higher educational setting. It is shown that to transform outcomes, effective institutional management and innovative pedagogical practices have critical roles to play. Key findings indicate that the continuous professional development of faculty, the infusion of contemporary learning technologies, and the introduction of feedback mechanisms are crucial to significantly enhancing learning outcomes. Also, the study has shown that institutional settings, if well managed, produce feedback mechanisms that streamline the entire educational work. Addressing these components would ensure that institutions of higher learning could play their role in fostering innovation and social development, and in training students to excel in an interdependent world.

Keywords: Student learning, Learning process, Student audience, Management.

RESUMEN

La participación efectiva de los estudiantes es crucial para el éxito académico y el desarrollo nacional en la educación superior. Además de la competencia del profesorado, representada por la competencia profesional, las competencias pedagógicas y el conocimiento del contenido de la asignatura, la relación entre el profesorado y los estudiantes es igualmente importante. Si bien estos factores están ganando reconocimiento lentamente, todavía hay lagunas en la forma en que el enfoque de un miembro del profesorado para gestionar la participación de los estudiantes influye directamente en los resultados institucionales de la educación superior. El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar la interacción entre el profesorado y la gestión de la audiencia estudiantil dentro de un entorno de educación superior. Se demuestra que, para transformar los resultados, la gestión institucional eficaz y las prácticas pedagógicas innovadoras tienen un papel fundamental que desempeñar. Los hallazgos clave indican que el desarrollo profesional continuo del profesorado, la infusión de tecnologías de aprendizaje contemporáneas y la introducción de mecanismos de retroalimentación son cruciales para mejorar significativamente los resultados del aprendizaje. Además, el estudio ha demostrado que los entornos institucionales, si están bien gestionados, producen mecanismos de retroalimentación que agilizan todo el trabajo educativo. Abordar estos componentes garantizaría que las instituciones de educación superior pudieran desempeñar su papel en el fomento de la innovación y el desarrollo social, y en la formación de los estudiantes para sobresalir en un mundo interdependiente.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje estudiantil, proceso de aprendizaje, audiencia estudiantil, gestión.

INTRODUCTION

Quality instruction remains the bedrock upon which excellence in higher education rests. The modern teacher needs to represent new pedagogical thinking, to have a strong theoretical backbone, advanced methodological positions, technical readiness, and cultural sensitivity, and to be in a position to adjust to the dynamic characteristics of modern education. These qualities ensure that educators are adequately equipped to transfer knowledge and skills to their students through various educational formats, notably lectures and seminars (Bettinson et al., 2024; Hsu, 2023). However, and related to these points, the learning environment itself is equally significant in the educational process. Indeed, the effectiveness of learning experiences heavily relies on a positive moral and psychological climate, engaging teaching methodologies, professional instructor-student relations, state-of-the-art educational resources, and interactive learning opportunities. These ingredients provide an enabling atmosphere characterized by learning and professional development (Balalaieva et al., 2023; Khuram et al., 2023).

More specifically, managing auditoriums for students in higher education institutions is a very complex challenge that attracts considerable attention in academic literature. In this regard, Thompson (2013) highlights that quality classrooms significantly and highly relate to learning outcomes, a confirmation of previous studies. The author promotes classrooms that are more open to various methods of instruction and facilitating learning interactions. It argues that educational spaces designed for active engagement promote situated learning. This substantive idea puts forward the bottom-line need for these places of higher learning to implement renovations and construction of learning environments responsive to the pedagogies of today. On the other hand, in a comparative study, Vidalakis et al. (2013) discuss issues in gauging quality and value in relation to higher education facilities. As suggested in their study, investments cannot easily be based on "value," which could be perceived differently for different stakeholders. The authors then introduce the user-centered facility design and management approach in which the students and faculty's use of facilities are designed to be the top priorities of an institution in terms of better satisfaction with and effectiveness in uses made of the facilities. This is naturally a reflection of the belief that effective facility management greatly influences educational experiences.

The discussion is further enriched by Lee (2017) when it analyzes the ever-evolving role of learning space within a university. He proposes a framework for the assessment and evaluation of existing education spaces, and his work underlines the need to perceive users' preferences coupled with the social dynamics. It denotes the implicit tension between academic needs and spatial planning; thus, he emphasizes the need for investment from the institutions into the spaces that foster collaboration and innovation. In the work of Corrall (2018), attention is placed on academic libraries where more weight is put on the strategic assessment of space to improve the quality of service. The author places library spaces as vital learning environments and from such perspective, the author affirms that the trend of space evaluation would become a part of more encompassing institutional strategies. From this point of view, in its full stretch, every educational facility has to have a place in terms of effectiveness toward the realization of learning outcomes.

Azizi et al. (2020) introduce a technological dimension to the management of space by applying the tools of the Internet of Things. The case study indeed proves the viability of data-driven methods in optimizing academic building use for better resource performance. This is quite crucial in today's landscape, where real estate costs are highly significant, besides issues of sustainability confronting economies. Spire (2022) builds on this theme of interconnection between physical space and educational practices through a critique of how a university evaluates its learning environments. For the purpose of the place, Spire notices the material-social-personal nexus of places of learning and argues for nuance in conceptions of quality learning environments. This question is particularly timely given the complexity of integrating digital tools within institutions, alongside the acknowledgment of ongoing primacy attached to human interaction within educational space. Finally, Benson et al. (2022) investigated classroom turnover times, which depend on the size of the lecture hall. Large lecture halls might be associated with increasing delays in the transition of students among classes, drawing into focus careful scheduling and spatial consideration. This study, therefore, meets the need to understand how physical space impacts students' behavior and classroom dynamics as part of the greater discourse of auditorium management.

These examples show that the management of student auditoriums and learning spaces in the higher education system is a result of design issues, user needs, integration of technology, and social interaction, among others. Each of these studies brings knowledge into the multi-faceted ways that physical environments can enable or compromise the educational experience, informing future practice in the management of student auditoriums.

Considering the elements discussed above, this paper aims to analyze how the physical learning environment,

institutional management, and educational strategies influence students' performance, satisfaction, and overall educational experience. The aim is to assess how improvements in these areas can contribute to national progress and development, with a special emphasis on the case of Azerbaijan, where a progressive management model is being implemented to align with state policy and strategic objectives. Therefore, the study also reviewed institutional factors such as management effectiveness, integration of modern learning technologies, and teacher development, using feedback mechanisms to support continuous improvement of educational outcomes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To accomplish the research goal in this study were employed a mixed research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data collection was conducted at Ganja State University through multiple research instruments, including semi-structured interviews, systematic classroom observation, focus group discussions, surveys, and institutional document analysis. The diagnostic research focused on evaluating various aspects of the student body, including students' value orientations, social roles and group dynamics, classroom conflict levels, personality trait hierarchization, pedagogical environment, educational level, and satisfaction with both pedagogical and formative processes. This comprehensive approach allowed for a thorough understanding of the educational environment and student development.

To assess classroom behavior, an observation rubric was developed incorporating key indicators such as attention level and concentration during class, confidence and performance in oral participation, verbal communication skills, emotional self-regulation, and general classroom behavior. This structured observation tool provided consistent metrics for evaluating student engagement and performance. Data analysis combined inductive and deductive methods, complemented by statistical analysis for processing quantitative data. The findings enabled the development of pedagogical strategies that considered the individual characteristics, gender, age, and educational level of students (Dadashova, 2007).

This methodological approach facilitated a comprehensive evaluation of the teaching-learning process and provided foundations for optimizing classroom management and the development of self-learning competencies. The integration of multiple research methods allowed for a robust understanding of student dynamics and educational needs, thereby supporting evidence-based pedagogical planning and implementation. We believe the research outcomes are particularly valuable for instructors, enabling them to effectively plan their activities and manage their classrooms while taking into account individual student characteristics, age-appropriate considerations, varying levels of educational development, and natural aptitude for self-directed learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to get acquainted with the student audience and to get a clear idea of the academic group and student body, it is necessary to study students in the learning process, during lectures and seminars, extracurricular activities, and in their spare time. The learning process helps gather necessary information about students' upbringing, level of education, tendencies, abilities, talents, tastes, and creativity, both individually and as a group, as well as understand their feelings, emotions, worries, and difficulties. Some professors do not consider it necessary to spend time on these issues, claiming that it is not their job. Of course, such a position is unacceptable. There are always reasons why an academic group (or individual students) is ahead or behind, displays exemplary behavior or indiscipline, or shows high or low performance. There is a cause for every action and deed.

During a survey, one university teacher was asked, "Do you have any information about the students you are lecturing to? Do you know them well?" He responded with surprise: "I am sent to the lecture hall to teach, not to study students. If I had to study each student individually and collect information about them, who would teach the lesson? There is no time to study students." Another teacher answered: "We are given hours to teach, and we write topics in the journal. The dean's office checks. In less than an hour when a lecture is given, there is only time for the lecture. There is no time for discipline." Evidently, some teachers hold such positions.

K.D. Ushinsky, referring to such teachers, wrote:

It is not enough for a teacher to take their subject seriously, to talk about it seriously, and to start their work with a full sense of its importance. The school administration, parents, and all adults, including the student, should also respect the student's efforts to cross the great path that humanity has traversed with the help of the teacher. (Ushinsky, 1953, p. 71).

As is known, there are different age groups, each with its own characteristics. Age periods have been classified differently since ancient times. For example, the Quran focuses on three age periods: a) childhood; b) youth; and c) old age. However, there are other classifications. Some holy figures (Prophet Muhammad) and thinkers (Aristotle, Nizamy Ganjavi, etc.) divided ages into seven-year

periods, while others (Y.A. Comenius) classified them into six-year periods. Regardless of how age periods are divided, three areas are brought into focus in personality development: 1. Anatomical-physiological development, 2. Psychological development, and 3. Intellectual and spiritual development.

Why does a teacher or a parent need to learn about age? K.D. Ushinsky answers this question: "If pedagogy wants to educate a person in all respects, it must first study the person in all respects" (Ushinsky, 1953, p. 86). The student years coincide with the period of youth. Development in this period consists of two stages: early adolescence (15-18 years) and adulthood (18-25 years). A teacher who gives a lecture or conducts a seminar for a student audience must be familiar with the characteristics of youth, or more precisely, the psychology of age. Age psychology considers the problems of personality development, its characteristics at the appropriate age, the dynamics of mental development, and the general patterns.

Age psychology studies the dynamics and patterns of mental development from birth to the end of life, as well as the characteristics of the development of mental processes and personality traits in ontogenesis. The subject of age psychology is the driving forces, conditions, and regularities of human mental development. The concept of driving forces of mental development refers to the reasons that stimulate a person's mental development and direct it in a certain direction. The driving force of a child's mental development is, first of all, the dialectical contradiction between the new needs that arise in the activity and the ability to meet those needs.This contradiction is typical not only for young children but for all ages. However, when these contradictions manifest themselves, they have specific features depending on age. The conditions of mental development refer to the internal and external factors that always affect it, and although they are not the driving force, they influence development and direct its course. As for the regularities of mental development, they consist of general and special patterns. With the help of these regularities, it is possible to record a person's mental development and manage that development. (Ahmadov, 2023).

The student years coincide with the period of youth. The teaching staff working with the student audience should learn: In youth, the personality is at the stage of comprehensive development. Secondary education years are behind them. A person studies at universities or colleges, serves in the army, or works in industry, construction, or other enterprises. During this period, young people tend to broaden their worldview towards moral purification and perfection. They are ready to follow the rules of ethics and coexistence, the rule of law, to protect the honor and dignity of the team and family of which they are members, and to defend the Motherland. They think about independent family life; some get married, while others get engaged.

All this increases the sense of responsibility in young people; they continue training in their chosen specialties and try to grow as good specialists. Young people strive to be role models and succeed in interpersonal relationships. They perceive each other and interact with one another. Moral qualities such as chastity and honor are formed in girls, while masculine dignity and honor are formed in boys, and they acquire ideas and beliefs. Young people develop patriotism, national pride, self-awareness, self-esteem, national self-consciousness, a sense of duty and responsibility, creative activity and social activity, communication skills, and acquire spiritual wealth. They have a need for self-education and self-improvement.

Professor. A.A. Gadirov wrote:

During youth, new personality traits, especially the tendency to behave like a good person and self-awareness, are noticeable. Thanks to the development of self-awareness, which is an important psychological phenomenon at a young age, young people begin to better understand their personality, abilities, moral qualities, self-esteem, and position in the group and see their pros and cons. Then the concept of 'I' becomes more sustainable, and self-governance and self-determination are formed. (Gadirov, 2002, pp. 345–346).

The teaching staff should also become acquainted with the socio-psychological characteristics of youth. As we know, young people develop with the help of biological, psychological, psychosexual, and sociological factors.

In order to meet the challenges of human capital development in the education system in the Republic of Azerbaijan, significant work has been done to improve the quality of general education, bring higher education in line with European standards, restructure the education management system, develop human resources, and increase the prestige of the teaching profession. In recent years, more than 3,000 secondary schools have either been rebuilt or overhauled, provided with equipment and information and communication technologies in accordance with the requirements of modern education. Innovative teaching methods and pedagogical technologies have been developed that take into account the age and individual characteristics of students. The application of innovations in the pedagogical process, especially extensive innovations, has expanded.

Although the application of extensive innovations to the educational process has led to some progress, it has not led to radical change. Therefore, as in European countries, there is a need for intensive innovations in education in Azerbaijan. This, of course, requires the creation of a new system that will improve the professionalism of educators, the involvement of high-scoring applicants in the teaching profession, and the differentiation and stimulation of teacher work. To this end, the Ministry of Education has taken a number of necessary measures in recent years. The awarding of a 100-manat "Teacher of the Future" scholarship to 300 students who scored more than 500 points, as well as the organization of "Sabah" groups in the pedagogical field, has provided additional incentives to future teachers.

A diagnostic assessment of teachers working in secondary schools of the republic was considered necessary and important. Those who performed well and those who did not were distinguished. The work of those who met the conditions of the competition was stimulated. Those who scored low were faced with a choice: either they adapted to the changes in the field of education by adopting pedagogical-psychological and methodological innovations in training and seminars, or they had to say goodbye to school once and for all. Let's admit that we have teachers in our schools who can't use computers, who are confused by simple questions from students, and this is a way to gradually remove them from schools. The question may be asked: how did such teachers come to school? The socio-political processes that took place in the country in the early 1990s created serious problems in all areas, including education. Many of the teachers who had worked in schools for decades and had high knowledge, skills, and experience in this field had to leave their beloved students due to low salaries. They were replaced by non-specialists (technologists, engineers, veterinarians, etc.) who completed an 8-month pedagogical course, and graduates of pedagogical colleges with inadequate material and technical bases and insufficiently qualified teaching staff in the districts. This is not an easy situation, and it has a clear impact on the quality of education.

That is why the State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan envisages the modernization of human resources in the field of education as the second strategic direction (Ahmadov, 2008). This direction serves to form competent educators who apply innovative teaching methods and ensure effective mastering of educational content. As noted in the strategy, it includes the professional development of educators, the establishment of new systems for assessing student achievement, the identification and development of students' talents, as well as the creation of an inclusive learning methodology for those in need of special care. In the implementation of this strategic direction, the higher education institutions that train teachers for secondary schools have important responsibilities. Inadequate skills, insufficient competition in the labor market, and inadequate financial incentives have negatively affected the development of the teacher factor in education.

Improving and building a more effective teaching process in secondary schools, creating an environment of cooperation, forming healthy competition, characterized by deep scientific and methodological knowledge, creative thinking, broad erudition, pedagogical and psychological training, high moral qualities, academic ability, teaching experience, and professionalism depends directly on the teachers (Abbasov, 2010). Aziz Sanjar, a professor at the University of North Carolina and a Nobel laureate, addressed students in Baku: "Choose a good teacher." A teacher, while acknowledging that the teaching profession is honorable, must also accept that it is a responsible, difficult, and complex job.

Although the social task a teacher performs and the function, they fulfill remain largely unchanged, modernity and innovations manifest themselves in the essence and content of the teacher's field of activity as new aspects and directions enter their work. These create a need for new research and the creation of pedagogical works dedicated to training teachers who can meet the requirements of the time. While the acquisition of pedagogical knowledge and skills is a key factor in a teacher's pedagogical skills, the ability to use them in a timely, appropriate, and creative manner in various pedagogical situations is a sign of pedagogical professionalism. Preparation for pedagogical activity (during professional education) and being able to use the skills acquired during pedagogical activity are very important in this regard. These are accompanied by the emergence of professional qualities in the teacher, such as initiative, independence, creativity, responsibility, self-activation, and self-improvement. These are the main components of a teacher's professional pedagogical culture and play a key role in a teacher's work.

A teacher's professional attitude towards their work stimulates them to enjoy their job, work with children, work with great enthusiasm, and work productively, inspiring new achievements. Such teachers never complain about lessons, work, or students. On the contrary, they are in a great emotional mood in class and communication with students. Interestingly, students also participate in the lessons of such teachers with great enthusiasm, are interested in learning and gaining new knowledge, and avoid tension. A teacher's professionalism is not measured by

their teaching degree. Not everyone who is a teacher can rise to the top of the teaching profession and become a professional teacher. Therefore, to rise to the level of professionalism, a teacher must be attached to their art, love it, and constantly work on it. Neither professionalism nor competence can be expected from teachers who neglect pedagogical activities, sometimes even negatively. When there are contradictions between the teacher's activity and their personality, they not only fail to think about professionalism but also do not show interest in fulfilling their duties properly.

It seems that we are talking about the competence of such teachers. The fact that only a little more than 18 percent of teachers in the Ministry of Education's test exams in Baku in recent months showed high results suggests that we need more professional and competent teachers in secondary schools, educators working with modern teaching methods, specialists with new pedagogical thinking, and teachers with a teaching life credo and civic consciousness. Given that this path begins with vocational education, one of the key issues is to achieve a fundamental change in teacher training in teacher training universities and, first of all, to form a real teacher position and civic consciousness in future teachers.

In order to get acquainted with the student's personality and study the student audience, it is necessary to take into account both the general psychological requirements and the specific conditions of the pedagogical process. The teacher should learn about the interests, tendencies, and entertainment of students, the emotional state of individual students, and the nature of their relationships with peers and teachers. In this area, of course, studying the student's personality through pedagogical and psychological methods helps. The results of the diagnostic study should be analyzed. Pedagogical-psychological diagnostics is one of the necessary components of the pedagogical process, a reliable tool for determining the socio-psychological characteristics of the student body in terms of improving and increasing the effectiveness of the educational process.

The management of the learning process is based on the level and opportunities of students' preparation, education, upbringing, and development. All this is provided by diagnostics. Diagnosis is of Greek origin and means to clarify knowledge. Diagnosis is closely related to forecasting. Forecasting is also of Greek origin; it means to foresee the future. The study should serve to reveal the characteristics of the mental development process of each student. The results of the diagnosis of mental development should be evaluated by comparing these results with existing norms.

Pedagogical-psychological diagnostics play an extremely important role in improving, optimizing, and perfecting the pedagogical process. Through diagnostic methods, the teacher acquires information about the pedagogical process, students' health, quality of education and upbringing, the level of education and upbringing of student boys and girls, and groups. The teacher then analyzes and evaluates the obtained information and predicts the development of the pedagogical process and students. The following functions of pedagogical diagnostics are noted in the existing literature:

1. Control-corrective function: This function involves data collection and improving the quality of the pedagogical process.
2. Predictive function: This feature focuses on problems such as anticipating, developing, and forecasting students' development paths.
3. Educational function: In the process of diagnosis and related to it, the teacher has the opportunity to have an educational impact on students.

In the pedagogical process, diagnostics performs a number of tasks. Among them are informational, predictive, evaluative, and developmental functions:

Informational function of diagnostics:

1. Determines the level of development of the student.
2. Reveals the nature of pedagogical relations.

Predictive function of diagnostics:

1. Clarifies possible opportunities for student development.
2. Provides a forecast on the results of organizing relations with students.

Evaluative function of diagnostics:

1. Forms an idea about the effectiveness of pedagogical relations.
2. Determines the effectiveness of the use of various educational and teaching aids in the pedagogical process.

Developmental function of diagnostics:

1. Uses diagnostic methods to reveal the student's opportunities and development perspectives.
2. Creates conditions for self-assertion, self-confidence, and self-development based on diagnostics.

Some requirements must be observed when working with diagnostic methods. These requirements may include:

1. The content of diagnostic methods should provide information on the expected results.

2. The results of pedagogical-psychological diagnostics should be effectively investigated, and accurate information should be obtained.
3. Diagnosis should reveal not only the actual level of development of a given individual feature but also take into account the zone of proximal development.
4. Based on the results of pedagogical-psychological diagnostics, corrective work should be carried out with the student audience and individual students.
5. The study of students' psyche should be carried out taking into account their individual characteristics.
6. The results of the diagnosis should be for the benefit of the students, not to their detriment.
7. The study of the student's personality should be carried out in the natural conditions of the pedagogical process.
8. The importance of diagnostics should be explained to students.

Learning about individual students is also important in getting to know the student audience. This makes it necessary to study their individual characteristics. Of course, the result will be effective if the teacher knows exactly what traits will affect the student and lead to success. The teacher gathers more accurate information as they learn the student's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, skills, and abilities. Being aware of the individuality of students is also an indicator of the educator's pedagogical competence and skills. Here, one issue should be at the center of attention: the student audience and individual students should have their personality, individual characteristics, and positive and negative situations learned from an early age, not after creating some anxiety. Considering this, teachers involved in the experiment received information about students from the curators of the academic group or groups at the beginning of the first lectures or seminars. This greatly facilitated their activities and work with the student audience.

The study of individual characteristics of students is a continuous process. These features do not remain unchanged. In the process of formation and improvement of both the nature of the activity and the knowledge, skills, and habits of the student, there are changes in the personality and intellectual field; then, the ability to control their temperament develops. For some reasons (improper teacher-student relations, misunderstandings with fellow students, family circumstances, financial situation, etc.), negative changes in the student's personality may occur. Teachers should be interested in eliminating negative manifestations, taking care of students' education, and encouraging them to engage in self-education. However, in some cases, the teacher encounters difficulties in understanding students. It is possible that some features of the student are masked by other features. Or the difficulty may be related to the student's temporary situation (pessimism, discouragement, family conflicts, extreme fatigue, etc.).

Thus, the study of the individual characteristics of students should not be considered separately from the characteristics of the student body and the interaction of team members. When working with students, not only their individual characteristics but also their gender characteristics should be in focus. In order to study the student audience in the higher education institutions participating in the experiment, assessment (rating), physiological, genetic, magnetophonographic, cinematographic, testing, expert, monitoring, statistical, and modeling methods were also used. When managing a student audience, there are problems that a teacher cannot overcome without relying on age physiology. Physiological methods help in this case.

CONCLUSIONS

Higher education is a critical driver of national progress and development, and its success relies on several interrelated factors, including institutional management, teaching excellence, and the educational environment. Effective management at the institutional level is essential for achieving desired outcomes. Because of that, in Azerbaijan, the government is implementing a progressive management model that involves the execution of state policies, the creation of a legal framework, the establishment of standardized educational standards, quality assessment systems, strategic investments in specialist training, innovation in education financing, and coordination between public and private educational actors.

To foster optimal educational outcomes, institutional environments must offer educators and students opportunities for both personal and professional development. This includes regular professional development for faculty, support for pedagogical innovation, the integration of modern learning technologies, continuous assessment and feedback mechanisms, and a robust academic and career guidance system. These elements function as reinforcing feedback loops that help higher education institutions develop skilled professionals capable of contributing to national progress and enhancing global competitiveness.

Moreover, the evolving role of digital transformation and international collaboration should be considered as crucial elements for future growth. Personalized learning approaches and inclusive educational policies must also be prioritized to address diverse student needs. With

high standards across these areas and the collective dedication of government bodies, institutional leaders, educators, and students, higher education can fulfill its fundamental role in shaping a society that is competitive, innovative, and globally engaged.

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