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A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTIONARY LEADSRSHIP IN UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY OF DISTRICT 2)

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ABSTRACT
Evolutionary leadership theory refers to acquisition of leadership skills and competencies for moving from unstable world to sustainable development of institutional, mental and cultural evolution. The aim of the present study has been to study the evolutionary leadership in universities and higher education institutions (Islamic Azad University of District 2). Statistical population of the study included 1600 faculty members, out of which a sample size of 450 persons answered the questions of the evolutionary leadership questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha of 0.98. In order to analyze the collected data, descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation as well as inferential statistics including one-sample t-test for determining the current status of the variables through SPSS software were adopted. The obtained results for institutional evolution and its other components indicated a significant difference between the sample mean and expected mean. And in the dimension of mental evolution, only the mean difference of components of challenging processes and creating shared views with the expected mean is significant. In the dimension of cultural evolution, the mean difference of this dimension and its components is not significant with the theoretical mean.

Keywords: Evolutionary Leadsrship

INTRODUCTION
Leadership in universities is very complicated because of the social and economic dynamism as well as the political issues many colleges and universities are faced with. For success in higher education, leaders should indirectly be aware of many factor specific to academic environments (Esmiths, 2006). The study conducted in 1996 regarding the future challenges of university leadership for 1997-2005 from the viewpoint of 100 university leaders from England, Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia suggests that the topic of university leadership and management is considered to be among the most important challenges of future. Therefore, university requires more resources because of government's budget constraints; besides, it faces strong objection raised by higher education officials (Saatchi, 2005). At this time, change and challenge in higher education have become something repetitive for leaders. However, the required type of leadership in this new context of globalization, demographic changes, advances in technology and research, different skills and as a result the need for retraining have become part of social necessity for them, particularly if they want to be successful leaders (Kezar, 2006). Formal leadership training is prevalent in business management, in education management as well as in public management of many organizations (Solan, 2010). Leadership development in university is a concept which is consisted of development of leader, training and education of the leader, and increasing leadership capacity in academics and students (Spralls *et al.,* 2010). The word leader has evolved over time like many other words; first, the word leader was linked to mythological gods' children and to wonderful and valuable concepts, and today, the word leader refers to the status or position of individuals in organizations and/or social institutes (Brewer, 2014). Leadership does not mean an individual or a position. It is a complicated moral relationship between the leader and the followers based on trust, duty, commitment, and a good shared vision (Ladkin, 2010). The first key element in social guidance is

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evolutionary leadership. Most books written about global problems or solution has been in relation to the topic of leadership. The concept of evolutionary leadership based on the best theories of transformational leadership and adaptive leadership is in our principles of scientific knowledge of earth and about the human being (Manga, 2004). The evolutionary argument is based on this assumption that leadership and followership in humans and probably in all social species have evolved in a shared manner (Van-Vugt, 2006). Evolutionary leadership may mean finding new ways for leadership: new ways for fostering motivation, when you cannot see your employees every day, new ways for outlining visions and building a new culture, and new ways in relation to thinking about things existing in the organization and things should be in the organization (Annunzio, 2010). Many researchers have pointed out the lack of sufficient leaders, and the need for effective leadership in higher education institutions. Effective leaders are required in higher education institutions for success in future planning, institutional changes and reforms, adaptation to global competition and technological changes, marinating sustainability, and updating curricula (Posthuma and Riyami, 2012). Smith (2006), in addition to pointing out different challenges faced by the higher education at the present age, proposed five factors or actions in management of higher education institutions including challenging processes, the necessity of creating a shared vision and gaining collective commitment to employees' empowerment. Stead (2005), in a study titled "Mentoring: a Model for Leadership Development", reviewed leadership needs within the three broad categories of pragmatism, effectiveness and sustainability. Values and challenges posed by this initiative as a model for leadership development are considered. Homer (2008), in a study titled "Mental Models and Transformative Learning: The Key to Leadership Development", concluded that he development of leaders should focus on acquisition of new mental models, models that offer more valid and useful ways for effectively dealing with the complex challenges of leadership. John (2010), in his PhD dissertation titled "Perception of 21st Century Community College Leaders on the Role of Relational Leadership", indicated that specific skill sets are identified as being necessary to become an effective relational leader in a 21st century community college. In addition, personal construction of leadership and social/cultural conceptualization of relational leadership were presented. Ngang (2013) conducted a study titled "Leadership Soft Skill of Deans in Three Malaysian Public Universities" from the views of their support staff. The eight components of leadership soft skills include collaboration/teamwork, communication skills, initiative, leadership ability, people development/coaching, personal effectiveness/personal mastery, planning and organizing, and presentation skills. Saatchi (2005) conducted a study titled "Designing Effective Leadership Model for Universities", in which he prioritized effective leadership criteria in order of importance as creating attraction, team building, collective empowerment, ongoing performance improvement, having a vision, self-assessment, being inspirational, and mentoring. Ejtehadi (2008) conducted a study titled "Leadership Components Based on Values and Proposing a Proper Framework for Enhancing This Approach in IAU". In this study 66 components were reviewed as the most important components of leadership style based on values. All the above factors have doubled the importance of conducting the present research in order to take an effective step towards identifying dimensions and components of leadership and current status of leadership in universities. By doing this study, precise, scholarly and scientifically supported materials can be presented in order to be able to eventually provide strategies for leadership growth and development. Given such trend, it has been attempted in this study to answer to fundamental questions; identifying dimensions and components of leadership in university as well as identifying the current status and strategies for the evolution of university leadership.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Methodology
The present study is descriptive-survey in terms of type of data and data collection method. Statistical population of this study includes faculty members of Islamic Azad University (IAU) of District 2 amounting to 1600 persons out of which 450 persons were selected as the sample size through random stratified sampling. In order to collect data, a researcher-made questionnaire of evolutionary leadership

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with three institutional, mental and cultural dimensions and with 16 indices and 80 questions in 5-point Likert scale ranging from very high to very low was used. The validity of the questionnaire was approved of by the experts including the advisor and readers. The Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire has been 0.98 after having been completed by 30 respondents. In order to analyze the data at the level of inferential statistics, one-sample t-test has been adopted for determining the current status of the variables (via SPSS software).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
In order to examine the current status of leaders' evolution in universities with respect to the identified dimensions and components, first, descriptive indices of each dimension and its components was presented and then it was examined how significant the extracted components were in terms of the obtained mean by using one-sample t-test. In this method, the observed mean for each component has been compared to each expected mean (average score of 3).
Since the questionnaire of the study has been designed in 5-point Likert scale, and its average score is 3, the expected score has been considered to be 3.

Table 1: The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of institutional evolution and its components

Expected mean= 3

Significance level	Degree of freedom	t statistics	Mean difference	Standard deviation	Mean	Variables
0.874	449	0.16	0.01	0.83	3.01	Vision
0.000	449	-3.70	-0/16	0.93	2.84	Being inspirational
0.000	449	-5.86	-0.23	0.85	2.77	Ongoing collective empowerment
0.000	449	-5.75	-0.25	0.94	2.75	Team building
0.013	449	-2.50	-0.11	0.89	2.89	Ongoing performance improvement
0.000	449	-5.03	-0.20	0.86	2.80	Performance monitoring
0.000	449	-4.27	-0.16	0.79	2.84	Institutional evolution (total)

As it is seen in the above table, apart from the component 'vision' which does not have a significant difference with the theoretical mean (p=0.874), there is a significant difference for the dimension of 'institutional evolution' and its other components between sample mean and expected mean for the dimension of 'institutional evolution' and its other components (because p<0.05). As such that the observed mean for 'being inspirational', 'ongoing collective empowerment', 'team building', 'ongoing performance improvement', 'performance monitoring' and the total 'institutional evolution' is less than expected mean (3) (mean difference is negative), therefore, according to the opinions of the respondents, the current status of these components is undesirable and below average.
Insignificance of the component of 'vision' means that the current status of this component is at an average level. In other words, respondents lack consensus on this component, in such a way that some have deemed it desirable and others have equally considered it undesirable.

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Table 2: The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of mental evolution and its components

						Expected mean= 3
Significance level	Degree of freedom	t statistics	Mean difference	Standard deviation	Mean	Variables
0.019	449	2.36	-0.10	0.89	2.90	Challenging processes
0.000	449	-4.75	-0.19	0.87	2.81	Creating shared views
0.106	449	-1.62	-0.07	0.63	2.93	Modelling after
0.939	449	0.08	0.00	0.87	3.00	Allowing others to act
0.108	449	1.61	0.07	0.97	3.07	Being hopeful
0.128	449	-1.53	-0.06	0.82	2.94	Mental evolution (total)

As it is seen in the above table, only the mean difference of components of 'challenging processes' and 'creating shared views' is significant with the theoretical mean (because $p<0.05$). As such that the observed mean for 'challenging processes' and 'creating shared views' is less than the expected mean (3) (mean difference is negative), therefore, according to the opinions of the respondents, the current status of these components is undesirable and below average.

The mean difference for other components as well as the total 'mental evolution' is not significant with the theoretical mean ($p>0.05$). Insignificance of their mean difference means that the current status of these components is at an average level.

Table 3: The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of cultural evolution and its components

						Expected mean= 3
Significance level	Degree of freedom	t statistics	Mean difference	Standard deviation	Mean	Variables
0.125	449	1.54	0.06	0.88	3.06	Transformation
0.132	449	1.51	0.06	0.86	3.06	Selecting values
0.973	449	0.03	0.00	0.94	3.00	Selecting new views
0.307	449	1.02	0.04	0.87	3.04	Cultural evolution (total)

As it is seen in the above table, mean difference of the dimension of 'cultural evolution' and its components is not significant with theoretical mean (because $p>0.05$). Insignificance of the differences means that the current status of the dimension of 'cultural evolution' and its components is at an average level.

Conclusion

The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of institutional evolution and its components suggest that apart from the component of vision which does not have significant difference with the theoretical mean, there is a significant difference for other components between sample mean and expected mean; therefore, respondents have deemed the current status of components of being inspirational, ongoing collective empowerment, team building, ongoing performance improvement and performance monitoring undesirable. Institutions are consisted of a set of actions and thoughts which are created and expanded by the individual, and the individual is then faced with them and they impose themselves on the individual more or less to be developed and evolved. Outlining the vision is considered the key element of most leadership frameworks. University leaders should play an active role in describing a desirable future and strengthening the commitments to it. Leaders in the organization should encourage the individuals to have

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an active role in outlining the vision of the university and involve them in this dimension; university leaders should enhance creative thinking and insight in individuals in order to achieve such a goal. Empowerment is a kind of capability development and providing the conditions for individual growth and development. Statistical results show that leadership is incapable in this dimension. Inspirational motivation is described as fostering and increasing motivation in followers by leaders. Increasing motivation results in a shared vision and image of the future for the followers. Team building is a planned activity for improving tasks and interpersonal and problem solving skills. Failure to form effective teams in university is the factor effective in lack of access to better performance. Given the obtained results that the institutional dimension is at a level below average, one of the reasons may be university leadership's and management's unfamiliarity with and not applying this component. The results related to this dimension of evolutionary leadership can be considered consistent with the study conducted by Saatchi (2005) titled "Designing Effective Leadership Model for Universities", in which he prioritized effective leadership criteria as creating attraction, team building, collective empowerment, ongoing performance improvement, having a vision, self-assessment, being inspirational, and mentoring, thus it can be concluded that leader's familiarity with presented components is a factor for the improvement of the effectiveness of leadership and university activities.

The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of mental evolution and its components suggest that the respondents deemed the current status of university in case of components of challenging process and creating shared views undesirable, and the components of modelling after, allowing others to act and being hopeful have been considered to be at an average level. Leadership requires a level beyond acuity and insight, and leaders in educational institutions should have a disciplined conscious mind as well as the ability to analyze and reason out the problems. Challenging the processes in the organization requires the development of risk taking and proposing innovative strategies for the development of the organization as well as not being afraid of failure and mistakes for achieving success and victory. Creating a shared view is not part of a subject and it means sharing future dreams of the leaders with other members of the organization. Practical measures for operationalizing these components require mangers' familiarity theoretical concepts of the components; thus university leaders should be able to turn the organizational environment into an active and dynamic environment for the future growth and development of the organization and grant more freedom of action and risk-taking ability to employees in order to achieve a brighter future for the university. Dimensions and components of this dimension of the study are consistent with the studies conducted by Homer (2008) titled "Mental Models and Transformative Learning: The Key to Leadership Development" as well as by Stead, Smith and Ngang (2013) on the identification of leadership skills in components of collaboration, team work, initiative skills, personal master. Identifying above dimensions and components and internalizing them among educational leaders will be a factor for university's growth and development.

The results of one-sample t-test for the dimension of cultural evolution and its components indicate that respondents considered components of the dimension of cultural evolution to be at an average level. Cultural models claim that beliefs, values and ideologies are the main elements of the organizations. Individuals have specific beliefs and attitudes which affect their behavior and understanding others' behavior. At the time of establishment, organizations are committed to development and promotion of culture and leadership development in cultural development is one of the priorities of the organization. Personal development is skill which assists the organization's leader in recognizing his/her strengthens and weaknesses, accepting criticisms and receiving feedback from others and being prepared to take necessary action to improve capacities. Values are the things the leaders believe in and are the things which have the highest importance for groups or individuals and are about the basic principles comprising the basis of leadership actions. Selecting new views develops the ability to better understand and visualize the environment for future and how to achieve it; and it is a rare skill a limited number of leaders can achieve. Therefore, given the results obtained from the assessment of data, it can be said that identifying the cultural dimensions and components and its development in leadership is an effective factor for growth and development of leadership in university. The results related to this dimension of study are in

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line with study conducted by Gradner (2010). The research findings indicate the relationship between individual's construction of leadership and social cultural concept of leadership. Given the results obtained from data, and identifying and understanding the dimensions and components of evolutionary leadership as well as the current status in university, it can be concluded that growth and development of leadership dimensions in three cultural, mental and institutional dimensions is a necessity and university policymaking should be in line with selecting individuals, who are aware of concepts and theoretical principles of leadership, for leadership in such sensitive institution. Besides, this necessity is felt to offer programs for growth and development of above dimensions and components for the leaders, who are not professional in the field of university leadership. Furthermore, investment in growth and development of leaders and selecting leaders from among professionals for leadership in universities can be a fundamental factor for enhancing the performance of leadership in university and the achievement of university ideals.

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