

**The Role of University in Transforming Self-Understanding  
and Meaning of Life in Students – A Critical Study of the  
University of Management and Technology (UMT)**



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Lahore  
2015**

## **Abstract**

Currently, there is a shift towards intangible outputs of the connection of university to the meanings and life of students and faculty. However, it needs to be investigated how far a university is successful in its additional role. The present study is an attempt in the same direction where the University of Management & Technology Lahore (UMT), is critically analyzed in terms of outcomes of its role and its capacity for developing self- understanding, exploring meanings of life, and unfolding the evolving self to newer meanings by virtue of self- directed renewal and reference process.

Any attempt to capture reality, keeping in view the principles of a critical study, would not easily lend itself to the dictates of a single perspective, theoretical paradigm, and methodology. It requires configuration of an innovative blend of theoretical and methodological alternatives enabling a holistic and multidimensional approach for a robust and rigorous framework. The present study begins with the interpretive and hermeneutic study of the university philosophy as it can be inferred by its stakeholders within their context as to the goals and objectives of the university and its input and meanings for the self- understanding and meanings of life. It is to be defined as what characteristics and qualities it plans to develop among its students and what approaches it envisages as effective in realizing its vision in the realm. In the second phase, a selected segment of student body is surveyed for these characteristics and qualities to appraise how far the university is successful in instilling these into its students. The third and forth vi

phases attempt to appraise the university pedagogy and classroom environment to ascertain how these are aligned and relevant to its vision statement. The fifth and six phases take the feedback of the parents and employers outside the university to appraise how significantly they appreciate the characteristics and qualities, university is striving to inculcate into its students. As a result, a statistically significant difference has been noticed between these two observations which reflect a successful inculcation of these qualities in the student during their stay at the university. It has also been observed that the university pedagogy and the classroom environment is significantly helping students to mold their understanding of life, its meaning and contributing to their self- development.

It has also been found out that employers have their own set of skills; they want to look into their children and hires respectively. Most of the time, this skill set does not match with what university thought in its vision statement. The required set of skills may vary from organization to organization according to the demand of job but every employer agrees on a point that students should have clear vision of their life. They must be capable to define and express their expectation from life.

It is pertinent to mention that UMT has been selected as a focus of this study because it avows to share the responsibility for contributing to the self- understanding and seeks to play a role in the ongoing process of discovery of meanings of life. At a later stage, a comprehensive study of all institutes of higher education can be undertaken to determine their rank in terms of their commitment to this vital role. vii

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

**The typical role of an education system is to devise mechanism for the transfer of the knowledge gained by one generation, to the other (Schultz, 1971; Astin, 1977, 1993). There is no indication for the source of knowledge which makes this concept of education and knowledge completely different from that of divine religions which believe that the God Himself is the ultimate source of knowledge. But whatever be the source, almost every religion believe that an education system is crucial to develop individuals and the society (Sacerdote and Glaeser, 2001; Glaeser and Sacerdote, 2008, 2001).**