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Strategies to Resolve Toxic Leadership Actions in Engineering Institutions which Impede Faculty Performance and Innovation

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Abstract

In this knowledge- driven 21st century, institutional development largely depends on outstanding leadership. Almost all global universities chose the best leaders with proven accomplishments to lead outstanding and intrinsically motivated faculty teams to contribute to knowledge and human capital. In developing countries, many average leaders have been selected to head the institutions due to political pressure. These average leaders turn to toxic leaders who control the growth of knowledge capital and human capital. This results in a loss of competitiveness in the country. Further, this affects the growth of outstanding faculty teams. Hence, there is a greater necessity to study the growth of toxic leaders in engineering institutions. From this study, it is found that toxic leaders planned to enter engineering institutions due to conducive factors which are scaffolding their radical growth. They facilitate the growth of informal organizations and assist the faster growth of coteries. It is found that Radical Activity Theory (RAT) provides an investigative tool to study the growth of toxic leadership in engineering institutions. This study suggests safeguarding the institute by creating integrity and desirable educational culture in autonomous institutions. To control the growth of toxic leadership, ten strategies have been identified. Further, it is recommended to create institutional and faculty reliance against toxic leadership. Implementation of these suggestions will safeguard the outstanding faculty teams and eliminate toxic leadership. Further studies are recommended to overcome the limitations of this study.

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I. Introduction

Educational institutes deeply depend on the vision, friendly attitude, and well-planned mission of their leaders. They have to support the high-performing faculty teams and assist them to reach excellence. Without their assistance, an institute can't grow in this competitive world. However, many toxic leaders have grown up in many institutions and are protected by their superordinates. Throughout the world many toxic leaders occupy chief executive officers (CEOs) posts in all types of organizations like the army, navy, air force, educational institutes (higher-education, engineering, agricultural, nursing, and medical education institutes), manufacturing companies, and government engineering departments, etc. This toxic leadership increasingly becomes a serious problem in all organizations today. After the Second World War, many soldiers in the USA committed suicide. Lipman-Blumen, J (2005) identified the cause which is due to toxic leadership in the military arena. She defines the toxic leader as "an individual who by his destructive behaviors and dysfunctional personal qualities inflicts serious and enduring harm on individuals, groups, organizations and communities". One can deduct the harmful behavior of toxic leaders through goal-free evaluation developed by Scriven (1993). Toxic leaders will deviate from the prescribed roles, norms, and standards.

Behaviors associated with toxic leadership include intimidation, dishonesty, coercion, and punishment (Janice Hamby, (2018). Many engineering institutions face very tough problems due to toxic leadership in establishing interdisciplinary postgraduate and doctoral programs even though the need for these programs has increased due to the globalization of the economy of many developing nations. Further, many outstanding-faculty teams could neither undertake sponsored research projects nor undergo many industries-driven and cutting-edge programs in digital technologies to overcome disruptions. Many toxic leaders do not recruit needed high-quality faculty members even though many of them are readily available. A close look at these problems reveals that there is constant unrest in the institutions due to a mismatch in leadership skills and the stated competencies for the CEO posts. Due to these problems, the graduates don't get appropriate industry-relevant curricula, participative and outcome-based instructional designs and delivery, case studies, on-the-job training, and industry-sponsored projects/dissertations. Ultimately these problems have to be resolved to bring back the dedicated and achievement-oriented faculty members who can develop cutting-edge programs, outstanding industry-ready graduates, and dedicated consultancy services to industries.

II. Literature Survey

A leader who acts in self-interest, against the values of the parent institution, or ignores work rules with no apparent theme can be called toxic. Toxic leaders work for themselves or against the goals of their institutions, resulting in a dysfunctional environment. Toxic leaders work under the radar of a romanticized view of leadership, and they create stress for the organization and its members (Gary Winn and Ava Dykes, 2017). Lilly A. Mohamed (2021) researched strategies to resolve toxic leadership which impede employee innovation. Toxic leaders micromanage, threaten, and discourage employees from sharing ideas, causing a decline in innovation. He recommended using sustained counseling and training to resolve toxic leadership styles. Frost (1999) described toxic leadership as a type of action and practice by a

leader that produces pain and suffering in other people and the rest of the organization (Schyns and Schilling 2013). Seth Stone (2022) proposed that the negative effects of toxic leadership both the personal and professional lives of employees. Some of the negative effects caused by toxic leadership are the development of a negative attitude towards the leader, the emergence of a counter-productive work ethic, and personal and occupational stress levels are closely related to the negative effects of toxic leadership, organizational commitment was also affected by toxic behavior (Franco Gandolfi and Muhammad). Kayani and Imran Alasan (2021) focused on the conceptualizations of toxic leadership and analyzed the relationship between toxic leadership and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Toxic leadership is a type of leadership that is destructive to outstanding faculty members of an engineering institution (Franco Gandolfi and Seth Stone, 2022). Toxic leadership usually exhibits counter-productive work behaviors (Courtney Brown,2019). James Green identified four patterns of toxic leadership: egotism, ethical failure, incompetence, and neuroticism. Toxic leadership harms well-performing faculty teams through denying approval for bidding consultancy projects under international development agencies (IDAs), accepting internships in world-class universities, completing another semester in a foreign university, sharing the project gains, selecting higher academic cadres, reducing government-sanctioned pay scale, granting funds for ongoing research projects, etc. (Thanikachalam, 2016). Corrupt leaders dominate autonomous institutions, since, they are empowered to take decisions based on their discretions which shows unlimited autonomy without accountability. (Thanikachalam, 2021). The Boards of Governors have never constituted any standing committee to investigate the deviation against rules and regulations. (Thanikachalam. V, 2016). Toxic leaders work for themselves or against the goals of their organizations, resulting in a dysfunctional environment (Gary Winn and Ava Dykes, 2017). Toxic leaders micromanage, threaten, and discourage outstanding faculty members from sharing their ideas causing a decline in productivity (Lilly Abdulrahman Mohamed (2021). Meltem Akea (2017) stated that toxic leadership is destructive and harmful to employees and organizations. Blanca Klahan Acuna and Trevor Male (2022) have stated that the concept of toxic leadership has been widely investigated in diverse settings with most contributors agreeing its impact on followers can have negative effects on the victim’s well-being, job satisfaction, group productivity, and organizational commitment. However, the concept has not yet been sufficiently researched in tertiary educational settings like engineering colleges. Hence, in this paper an effort has been made to explore the causes of emerging toxic leadership, facilitating factors for growth, the impact on the faculty members and the attributes of the engineering graduates. Significant efforts have been undertaken to bring back a conducive environment with supportive leadership.

III. Objectives

Considering the need for ethical educational leaders in engineering institutions, the following objectives have been proposed for this research work:

1. Assess the causes for the growth of toxic leaders in engineering institutions in India
2. Identify the impact of toxic leaders on the well-performing faculty teams, graduates, and overall performance of the institute
3. Suggest effective measures to eradicate the growth of toxic leadership in engineering institutions and facilitate the contributions of dedicated and well-accomplished faculty teams.

IV. Research Methodology

Seven autonomous engineering institutions in one state were selected and observed for forty years and discussions were held with the dedicated faculty members on the discrete decisions of toxic leaders which are against the norms and rules periodically. The sample decisions are made by toxic leadership and the deviations made by them on selection, employment, funds allocations for departments, scaffolding required to develop interdisciplinary postgraduate programs, doctoral programs, offer consultancy projects, share the project gains, approving the conduct of international conferences, verifying by using the triangulation method, and the impact on the overall performance of the institute. Assessments were made on the impact of such discretions. Identification of available remedial measures, checking the suitability of these remedial measures, developing significant corrective measures, and validating them have been attempted. Developing a strategic process for bringing back a growth-based approach is considered the most important step.

4.1. Planned Entry of Toxic Leaders in Engineering Education

Toxic leaders always plan their entry into an institution and develop their curriculum vitae to suit that institution. They get political support for their entry. They also link with the Chairperson on the selection committee. They get information of the future development of the institution and prepare to answer the questions raised by the interview committee. They manage to get the appointment order. They scan the institute environment, key people, ongoing projects, proposed projects, and possible selection of new faculty members. They always introduce their coteries. They ensure a safe environment for their growth. They develop a strategic plan for their growth and eliminate competitors. Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser (2007) have concluded that toxic leaders lack genuine concern for subordinates. They bully and intimidate because they see followers as “disposable resources they can see use as they see fit” (Lovelace, 2012). Of course, subordinates are not disposable resources: on the contrary, they are the very core-the building blocks- of institutional skills and knowledge in an institution where it takes years to know all the rules and gain insights (Gary Winn and Ana Dykes, 2019). Lovelace (2012) notes that toxic leaders “lack interpersonal skills or have destructive personalities which have an extremely negative effect on the climate of the organization.” Lovelace stated that toxic leaders support in-fighting, abuse their informational power and behave aggressively. Toxic leaders operate in environments best conducive to themselves. In many institutions, a set of mediocre faculty teams scaffolds the toxic leaders who are based on social affiliation to get substantial rewards.

4.2. Emergence of Toxic Leaders in Engineering Education

Many toxic leaders for autonomous institutions have been selected based on extraneous conditions. Later, they fully started exploiting the administrative autonomy in the selection of mediocre faculty members, promoting underperforming and unqualified faculty members using their discretions, and circumventing the rules, norms, and standards. Many unaccomplished faculty members have received political support for their unethical selection by eliminating well-

accomplished competing candidates who relied on their outstanding qualifications and accomplishments. Many toxic leaders scaffolded their coteries. Since there is no administrative audit of such discretions of toxic leaders based on their authority, the unethical process continued effectively. All the well-qualified and intrinsically motivated faculty never report the injustices done to them and hence the process is unchecked. Further, the toxic leaders use their unchecked discretions to coerce the soft faculty members. The coteries act as spies and report any measures like filing cases in the courts taken by the faculty associations. Many outstanding faculty members resign and join well-governed institutions for their growth and contributions. All the toxic leaders maintain very conducive relationships with the Board of Governors. They only prepare agendas for approval by the Board and omit all problems due to deviations.

4.3. Toxic Hexagon

Padilla, Hogan & Kaiser (2007) developed the toxic triangle which depicted destructive leaders, susceptible followers, and a conducive environment**.** According to their finding destructive leaders possess charisma, personalized power, narcissism, negative life themes and ideology of hate. The susceptible followers are divided into two groups, one conformer and the other colluders**.** They described conforms have unmet needs, low core self-evaluations, and low maturity whereas colluders possess ambition, similar world view, and bad values. According to them, conducive environments are composed of instability, perceived threats, cultural values, lack of checks and balances, and ineffective institutions. The toxic leaders enjoy unlimited scaffolding from superordinates, limited goals, and no performance audit. Hence toxic triangle needs to be updated. Based on the discussions from the intrinsically motivated faculty members of seven autonomous institutes, six factors have been selected to know the toxic leaders' growth. The following significant factors have been verified by a triangulation method which supports the growth of toxic leaders:

1. ***Autonomy with Limited Accountability***: Administrative autonomy, academic autonomy, and financial autonomy have been granted to autonomous institutes for their faster growth of human and knowledge capital without any bureaucratic obstruction, micro- management, and enabling the institutions for creating learning organizations. Many toxic leaders with limited vision, focus on their self-growth.
2. ***Unethical Support of the Super Ordinates***: Many toxic leaders can get never-ending support from political leaders based on their caste-based support, bribery, religion, state, etc.
3. ***Continuous Support from Coteries:*** Most of the coteries who are having extrinsic motivation, and a low vision for institutional development, but looking for the line of least resistance (LLR) always support the toxic leaders to get more assistance for leave, travel grants, nomination to international programs, and rewards.
4. ***Weak but Outstanding Faculty Members:*** This fraction always continues to work but neither complains nor seeks any political support. Because of their high-quality work, toxic leaders claim their performance due to their administrative guidance. In all the administrative reports the names of the performing teams are excluded.
5. **Limited Goals**: Most autonomous institutes continue to work on initial and outdated goals in engineering education but they neither demand radical innovations growth nor fix updated goals to meet the challenges of fast-growing digital technology.
6. ***No Performance Audit on Success and Failures***: The Boards of Governors never fix goals for accomplishment. The

problems faced by the outstanding faculty members during planning and implementing complex consultancy projects are not solved.

4.4. Growth of a Toxic Leader's Coteries

It is observed that the coteries have frequent visits with information collected from the outstanding faculty members and their plans for academic growth. Now toxic leader is equipped with critical information and he plans to sabotage the growth of outstanding faculty teams. He feels that they surpass his achievement and he plans to stop many innovations like planning new interdisciplinary postgraduate programs, bidding for consultancy projects under International Development Agencies (IDAs), preparing to submit research projects under various national councils, funding agencies, etc. He plans to stop their efforts and declines to forward the proposals. Further, he studies the reactions and resistances. As long as there is no direction to forward the proposals from the chairperson, he further takes strong action to stop the proposal. This discouragement discourages the faculty team from preparing various proposals. Hence there is a need to identify other existing methods to check the behavior of toxic leader. The high-performing faculty team can't approach the legal institutions for remedy since the toxic leader can take his discretion. Usually, after a short tenure (three years or five years), the toxic leaders will leave the institute.

4.5. Routine Activity Theory (RAT)

After the Second World War, the economy of the USA started expanding. During this time, crime rose significantly. As a part of the Crime Opportunity Theory proposed by Marcus Felson and Lawrence E. Cohen (1979) on the assessment of crime rate changes in the USA from 1947 to 1974. Felson and Cohen concluded that the prosperity of the USA's contemporary society offered more opportunities for crime to occur. This theory can be utilized as an investigating method to check the growth of crimes in an autonomous educational institute. Routine Activity Theory (RAT) considers crime as an event and relates crime to its environment. Felson and Cohen concluded that the prosperity of Western society offered more opportunities for criminals. Autonomous institutes also offer more opportunities for crime.

At present the Indian autonomous institutes which provide academic, administrative, and financial autonomies contribute a conducive administrative environment that offers more opportunities to toxic leaders (who are managed to get selected despite low academic accomplishments) to commit crimes in the higher education institutions. In routine activity theory (RAT), crime is likely to occur when three essential elements of crime converge: space (a safe autonomous institute), time (working hours), a motivated offender (a toxic leader), a focused target (intrinsically motivated and high-performing faculty member) without any godfather or political support. Most of the toxic leaders may not possess prescribed qualifications like Ph.D., and high-academic accomplishments (outstanding published papers in international journals & conferences, patents, rewards for their outstanding academic contributions, established interdisciplinary postgraduate & doctoral programs, outcomes from interdisciplinary research projects, successful consultancy projects, new concepts, models, and theories to solve complex programs, etc.). They feel that these accomplished faculty teams will succeed in administrative growth and they will prescribe more stringent performance standards which may affect the growth of a toxic leader and even difficult in continuing in the leadership position. This is one of the root causes of the toxic actions of a destructive

leader.

4.6. Growth of Informal Organizations

Most of the toxic leaders support the growth of informal organizations which is counter-productive to the goals of the organization. Usually, they choose a set of faculty members and undertake well-paying consultancy projects from various development organizations and leave the planned academic development activities. Whenever other well-performing faculty members submit project proposals to bid for projects under international development agencies, the toxic leader will hand over the project proposal to his/her informal organization. The members of the informal organization will include many external members and proceed with the technical proposal developed by the original faculty member. In due course, there will be many conflicts. The members of the informal organization will neglect the planned institutional work. The toxic leaders establish limited liability companies by using the resources and taking on external projects. They choose their coteries and eliminate high-performing faculty teams (HPFT). Further, they withheld the innovative projects submitted by the HPFTs. Even the proposals are reviewed and suggestions are made to improve. This is one of the deviant behaviours of toxic leaders.

4.7. Creation of Integrity with Desirable Educational Culture in Autonomous Institute

The Governing Council/ Board of Governors receives many complaints and submissions from the Teacher Association on the unfair actions of the toxic CEO. The Chairperson of the Board can constitute an external committee of experts and investigate the deviations from the norms and standards. Once a final investigation report has been submitted, the Board of Governors can enforce integrity with a desirable educational culture which will ensure a conducive environment for planning innovative programs.

4.8. Environmental Criminology and Crime Control in Autonomous Institutes

Crime Pattern Theory is a complex amalgamation of rational choice theory and routine activity theory. It indicates that crime does not occur randomly in time, place, or social cohesiveness (Glen Kitteringham, 2012). Toxic leaders always target well-performing faculty members and discriminate against them. Some of the examples are denying approval to join an international program whenever the faculty member was selected through the proper channel, whenever a faculty was selected to present a set of innovations at an international conference, or a faculty receive an invitation to conduct a development program. The toxic leader will utilize these opportunities and deny permission based on his discretion. These acts impact the sociocultural, economic, legal, and environmental balance. These crimes can be controlled through a policy framework that defines the desirable programs, frequency, time, duration, and the return on institute's energy investments. A team of experts has to be constituted for examining the proposal or invitation and give a recommendation to the Board of Governors who can act on the recommendation. This approach will control the crimes of toxic leaders.

4.9. Controlling the Growth of Toxic Leadership in Engineering Education

The following ten methods are synthesized based on the feedback from various senior faculty members who served autonomous institutes. The following ten methods were recommended by them to curb the growth of toxic leaders:

1. ***Limiting the Tenure of the Toxic Leaders:*** Many toxic leaders get continuous extensions beyond tenure which reinforces their deviant behavior. Hence, this should be curbed to improve the culture which enables accomplished faculty to undertake innovative projects. A few toxic leaders are managed to get higher posts and leave safely.
2. ***Obtaining Quarterly Feedback from the Faculty Members and identifying the Deviant Behavior of Toxic Leaders:*** The Board of Governors could form a standing committee to check all deviations created by toxic leaders. Based on the analysis of feedback from the standing committee, the deviations could be identified and appropriate corrective measures can be undertaken. Normally it is to be done one month before the Board meeting so that the report can be placed in the Board agenda and the decision of the Board.
3. ***Establishing an Inquiry Committee and Resolving the Issues:*** Many autonomous institutions constitute inquiry committees only after the retirement of toxic leaders based on the complaints. However, the deviations are identified and steps could be taken to resolve the issues. This may caution the growth of future toxic leaders. Outstanding educational leaders could be invited to be the head of the inquiry committee.
4. ***Submitting Plaints in the Courts and Implementing the Judgement*** Many victims approach high courts through writ petitions whenever they have constitutional rights and file writ petitions. This approach will take a longer period and is also very costly. Once justice is rendered, the victims can get needed compensation.
5. ***Prescribing Higher Order Tasks and Checking the Progress***: This is another academic solution. Based on the vacancies, the toxic leaders could be posted to appropriate departments where they can't deviate from the norms and standards. This may involve a transfer from the existing job.
6. ***Collecting Monthly Feedback from the Faculty on the Deviant Behavior of the Toxic Leader and Curbing it by Transferring him/her to Other Institutions:*** If a greater number of institutions are under the university, periodic transfers will curb the growth of toxic leaders. In new institutions, the support of coteries will be lost.
7. ***Recruiting well-accomplished faculty members and replacing the toxic leaders***: Sometimes toxic leaders are temporarily recruited under various interdisciplinary vacancies, even though they may not possess prescribed qualifications. The ad hoc posts are not to be extended for a long period. Some institutes create a dean for postgraduate programs and take away substantial authority from toxic leaders.
8. ***Stopping Reemployment and Succession Planning by Toxic Leaders***: Some toxic leaders efficiently plan succession; they take voluntary retirement and hand over the post to their coterie. The coterie will manage to get the leadership post unethically. Many universities employ toxic leaders beyond superannuation. This type of reemployment should be curbed.
9. ***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion***: Institutions commit to increasing diversity which includes race and ethnicity, gender, political perspectives, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, culture, nationality, religion, age, and physical challenges. Further, the institutes should commit to working actively to challenge and respond to bias, harassment, and discrimination. Establish a policy of equal opportunity for all faculty members. Never discriminate based on race, color, nationality, age, marital status, sex, physical challenges, religion, religion, height, and weight. The

leaders should commit to pursuing deliberate efforts to ensure that their campus is a place where differences are welcomed, different perspectives are heard and every faculty feels a sense of belonging and inclusion.

10. ***Develop a Faculty Handbook***: This should provide all needed information on resources, policies, rules, grants, and commitments for support to bid for projects, sharing the project gains, permission to participate in conferences, and joining foreign universities for research.

4.10. Creating Institutional and Faculty Resilience Against Toxic Leadership

Introduce counselling, coaching, and mentoring for new entrants. Install Closed Circuit Television Video cameras in all places to verify the movements of coterie and toxic leaders. The delegate needed authority to plan interdisciplinary graduate and postgraduate programs. Allot funds for bidding for consultancy projects. Follow the norms for sharing project gains. Constitute a committee to review and select the consultancy proposals. If any proposal needs any modification, allow sufficient time to bring changes. No CEO will be allowed to handover the won projects to external organizations. Don't involve competitors to suggest the financial decisions. All the letters of invitation should be displayed on the web of the institute.

4.11. Desired Safeguards to the Faculty Members: Protection from academic exploitation by toxic leaders

- ***Research Guidance***: All the guides have to upload the names of the research scholars, the titles of the research projects, members of the doctoral committee, papers published, synopsis of the thesis, and thesis in pdf format. Authorship should not be trampled or exchanged.
- ***Competitive Consultancy Projects under International Development Agencies*** The project's own, faculty team, client details, approved cost of the project, amounts received, expenditure incurred, submitted project documents, project completion reports, and acceptance of the final document are to be preserved without any destruction. The project gains are to be shared as per the approved norms.
- ***Publications:*** Research papers of the faculty members should not be tampered with. There should not be any obstruction to publishing textbooks, drawing manuals, laboratory manuals, workshop manuals, case studies, video programs and multimedia learning discs. Authors can choose co-authors based on their expertise.
- ***Visiting Faculty Positions***: Faculty members have to be permitted to accept visiting faculty invitations from international universities as per the norms of the Ministry of Education.
- ***National Consultancy Projects:*** Faculty members have to be permitted to bid for consultancy projects based on their expertise and there should be norms to prepare financial proposals. After winning the project, the faculty team should not be transferred.
- ***Reemployment of the Best 10% of the Outstanding Faculty Members*** Reemploying 10% of outstanding faculty members is to be done based on the norms fixed by the Ministry of Education.
- ***Selection for Higher Posts:*** The credentials of the faculty should not be tampered with by the toxic leaders for preparing the comparative statement for placing before the selection committee. The government-approved pay scales are to be implemented.

- ***Communication of Government Circulars***: The CEO has to faithfully communicate the government circulars, invitations to develop industry- relevant graduate and postgraduate programs based on the seed funds, bilateral training programs, planning for national seminars/workshops, internships in selected companies, and proposals for offering summer schools.

V. Discussion

In this 21st Century, the global competition for developing human capital and knowledge capital is maximum. The institutional leadership has to facilitate the development of engineering education, planning outstanding programs, extending the expertise to industries, undertaking diverse global faculty development programs, and bringing outstanding textbooks, laboratory manuals, drawing manuals, and case studies. Unfortunately, toxic leaders without any outstanding accomplishments, intrinsic motivation, or mission to achieve needed human capital and knowledge capital emerge due to corrupt recruitment. Their planned entry has to be curbed but it is very difficult due to the support of high- powered politicians. Hence steps have to be taken to create integrity to facilitate desirable educational culture in autonomous institutions. Adequate crime control methods have to be institutionalized. Significant steps are limiting the tenure of toxic leaders; obtaining quarterly feedback from the faculty members and identifying the deviant behavior; establishing an inquiry committee and resolving the issues; submitting plaints to the courts and implementing the judgments; prescribing higher-order tasks and checking the progress; collecting feedback from the faculty on the deviant behavior of the toxic leader and curbing by transferring him/her to other institutions; recruiting well-accomplished faculty members and replacing the toxic leaders; stopping reemployment; increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion; and developing appropriate faculty handbook. The Boards of Governors have to safeguard the outstanding faculty members from uncontrolled exploitation by toxic leaders. The faculty team will have to be facilitated to publish textbooks, manuals, research papers, and bidding for projects. Various government initiatives to retain outstanding faculty members have to be implemented.

VI. Conclusions

The bureaucratic control of the higher education institutes was replaced by offering needed autonomy for faster growth of human and knowledge capital by the Ministry of Education. Many toxic leaders have utilized this conducive autonomy and they started to work for themselves or against the goals of their institutions resulting in a dysfunctional environment and causing extensive damage to the growth of high-performing faculty teams. The Boards of Governors have to take steps to defend outstanding faculty members and engineering institutions from toxic leaders. Authentic and dedicated leaders can alone facilitate the contribution of the institutions through high-performing faculty teams. In this knowledge-based economy, the engineering institutions have to be facilitated to grow and contribute to the economy. This paper suggested ten steps for eliminating the growth of toxic leaders. The selection of leadership should focus on the outstanding qualities, accomplishments, mission to develop high-quality graduates, interdisciplinary postgraduate, and doctoral programs, providing consultancy to engineering departments, MNCS, multinational companies (MNCs), International Development Agencies (IDAs), planning diverse global faculty development programs, and bidding for complex consultancy projects

under various international development agencies. The cooperation of the Board of Governors, the Ministry of Education, and faculty associations are very much required. Many foreign direct investments in design, product development, and manufacturing center around the availability of outstanding faculty teams and graduates with desired attributes. Hence, every Board of Governors should recruit toxic-free leaders.

VII. Limitations of this Study

Even though this study observed seven autonomous institutions in a state over forty years, there can be more complex problems in other states in a fast-developing country like India. The focus on engineering education, autonomy, recruitment methods, institutional governance, funding, and cooperation of industry may vary from state to state. These factors have a greater impact on the growth of toxic leadership which has to be explored.

VIII. Suggestions for Future Research

Hence, a detailed study can be commissioned to get data on the planned growth of higher education, engineering education, institutional autonomy, powers dowelled to the governing councils, and the growth of deviant leaders and faculty members in other states. Otherwise, there can't be an adequate return on investments on engineering education and the high-performing faculty teams are to be facilitated to bring innovation in engineering education. Any developing country has to facilitate the contribution of engineering institutions to the radical growth of the economy by supplying human capital and knowledge capital. There is no shortcut.

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