

Research Article

Exploring Leadership's Impact on Working Culture, Organizational Culture, and Institutional Development at Samara University, Ethiopia: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

The influence of leadership on working culture, organizational culture, and institutional development or trajectory requires more attention. This study examines the leadership style of Samara University President Mohammed Usman Darasa and its impact on the university. The researcher utilized qualitative research methods and conducted in-depth interviews with 50 individuals and 10 key informants. The results indicate that the president's leadership has had a positive impact on the university, resulting in a more dedicated and motivated workforce, a better work environment, implementing initiatives aimed at enhancing campus greenery and beautification, improved connectivity and visibility, enhanced technological adaptability, advanced service modalities, and leveraged eLearning management systems, as well as excellently hosted national and international events. The establishment of a strong leadership culture at Samara University includes various key indicators that demonstrate the president's commitment to promoting effective leadership. Changes in the working culture at Samara University are attributed to dynamics within the leadership culture. The organizational culture at Samara University is evolving by incorporating critical aspects such as the institution's atmosphere, values, and behavioral patterns. In this study, an exploration of Samara University's development trajectory was conducted, highlighting key indicators of its progress and outlining potential directions for future growth. However, it was noted that past leadership styles and middle and lower leadership competency still need improvement in the university's development. The study concludes that exploring leadership implications is crucial for organizational growth and recommends enhancing President Mohammed Usman Darasa's leadership style through capacity building and reinforcement mechanisms.

Keywords

Samara University, President, Mohammed Usman Darasa, Leadership Culture, Organizational Culture, Qualitative Research

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

An organization is a group of individuals working together towards a common goal. This entity can take many forms,

such as an educational institution or association, and operates within an external environment. Organizational leadership involves managing both individual and group needs simultaneously to achieve success [31]. Workplace culture is a

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powerful force that is intentionally cultivated and passed on to new employees [35]. It binds the organization together and employees want to take pride in their work, have positive relationships with coworkers and managers, and feel their work is meaningful. An organization's strength, weakness, and progress are dependent on its leadership. Leadership plays a pivotal role in the success and failure of any organization. In a constantly changing world, leadership is crucial for an organization's survival. It is central to developing organizational culture, changing working behavior, stimulating institutional trajectory, and determining organizational performance. Organizational performance directly mirrors leadership culture and quality. Successful leaders possess adequate skill, information, perseverance, persistence, and capacity to cooperate and collaborate to achieve organizational goals.

The way leaders interact with workers affects organizational behavior and performance [6]. Leadership styles can vary, with pragmatic leaders adjusting to different situations and considering indigenous leadership and logic. Leadership is the process of influencing a group to achieve a common goal, and leadership style as how that process is carried out [15]. Performance is the extent to which an organization achieves its predefined targets [5]. Effective leadership is critical to the success of modern business organizations, and theories have emerged to pave the way for modern leadership styles in the organizational context.

Leadership involves influencing staff behavior to achieve organizational goals [4]. Relationship-building, leadership style, empowerment, and staff motivation as significant factors affecting leadership effectiveness [43]. Improving leadership requires empowering employees, building relationships, increasing motivation, and developing leadership style. The concerned body should organize leadership capacity-building programs to enhance leadership effectiveness in selected public sectors. A good leader motivates and inspires workers to support organizational performance. Samara University's leadership culture needs scientific study to document outstanding achievements and eliminate barriers, while considering past experiences to consolidate current leadership dynamism.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, attitudes, beliefs, goals, and norms that collectively shape how employees behave in the workplace. It influences the organization's success, from recruitment and engagement to retention and performance. Leaders are essential for shaping and evolving the culture to meet the organization's needs. In Ethiopia, findings reveal the need for visionary leadership and to improve public service leadership [18]. However, deficiencies in effectiveness, efficiency, and leadership practice need to be addressed. This study evaluates the leadership cultures impact on working culture, organizational culture and institutional trajectory. Organizational culture shapes the

interpretative schemes and behavior of its members, influencing other components of organization such as strategy selection, leadership style, motivation, needs, and compensation systems [35]. Despite technological advancements and industry improvements, organizational culture remains a critical factor in success.

Organizational performance is crucial for survival in a dynamic world. In this regard, leadership culture is the foundation of performance and organizational culture. Leadership impacts behavior and shapes organizational culture, including values, beliefs, attitudes, and goals [21].

While the impact of leaders may seem intuitively appealing, most behavioral leadership studies focus exclusively on behavior and interactions or traits, competencies, and styles [15]. Leadership style is crucial in determining the success or failure of any organization, and ensuring effective leadership is becoming increasingly critical for modern businesses. Several theories have emerged, paving the way for modern leadership styles that can be understood in the organizational context.

Organizational and leadership dynamics impact performance. Organizational Culture influences behavior and institutional trajectory [8]. This research explored how top leadership could cause changes in working behavior. Understanding the dynamism model of organizational culture through the lens of organization is crucial. Institutional leadership must align with current demands to accelerate progress. The leadership culture and organizational performance of Samara University have not been adequately studied. It is necessary to consider the impact of past institutional elements on current leadership dynamics and institutional trajectory. Supporters of past leadership may work covertly, making it difficult to understand their behavior. A comparative analysis of past and present leadership styles is required to identify factors that influence the current institutional trajectory. Findings more likely show organizational cultures that should be promoted and past institutional elements that should be eliminated to accelerate institutional trajectory.

Therefore, this study aims to assess the impacts of leadership on organizational culture in improving working behavior and accelerating Institutional trajectory at Samara University. As a university with many customers, working behaviors are sensitive due to the nature of services provided. The organization's leadership is often blamed for the lack of organizational culture due to various challenges and constraints. Therefore, organizational culture is a highly susceptible area that can be exposed to a bad image. Samara University's leadership is currently addressing problems of organizational culture, working culture, and organizational trajectory in its distinctive leadership philosophy. Thus, this article aimed to assess President Mohammed Usman Darasa's term leadership impact on Samara University's working culture, organizational culture, and Institutional Trajectory. This research fills the gap that previous researches inadequately address the importance of individual leadership style for the working culture, organizational culture, and institutional development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Leadership and Organizational Culture

Under this subtitle leadership culture of organization is emphasized by focusing on leadership style.

Leadership can influence working behavior and organizational culture which in turn contribute to organizational performance [21]. Leaders can play the role of shaping workers behavior, responding to need, coaching, supporting and inspire them. Organizational values and leadership behavior are the foundation for institutional trajectory. Organizational culture is the values, attitudes, ideals, and goals that characterize the organization. Innovative leadership foster organizational culture which values innovation by emphasizing on promotion of ideas, incentivizing experimentation, and encourage curiosity and exploration. Dynamic leaders create enabling environment for organizational culture development. In this regard, this research finds out the strategy that current leaders are expected to follow to challenge the past leadership statusquo thereby create safe working environment for its workers to sustain the dynamism. Healthy organizational leadership aspires to create an inclusive culture where diversity can thrive. This requires steps to be taken toward behavior change, develop an environment, delegate colleagues equitably, resolve conflict fairly, and have empathy for one another. Workers of the organization can be the cause and consequence of organizational culture. In this regard leaders are expected to support team spirit, provide opportunities to workers to gain visibility celebrate team members' success, share credit with team members, build and sustain a culture of trust, share openly about their experience and positively model connectedness which create foundation of trust and a platform for shaping the organizational culture and improve organizational performance.

2.2. Organizational Culture and Working Behavior

Organizational success is highly impacted by working behavior and leadership style [21]. Organizational culture is very important factor of working culture which in turn influence workers behavior and also influenced by working culture. The implementation level of mission, culture, and values is the most important factor that determines the strength of organizational culture.

2.3. Organizational Culture and Institutional Trajectory

The current institutional trajectory is not free from the influence of the past institutional characteristics [23, 12]. Institutional impact has been recognized that it goes one step back and the current institutional trajectory is directly or indirectly the impacted status of institutional change. Exploring

the properties of the social elements that make up an institution is the central focus of this argument. The past institutional elements and the current institutional characteristics are found to have competitive interest and intention. Leadership is crucial to meet the organizational goal and achieve the institutional trajectory [26]. Organizational survival is highly dependent on leadership style and teamwork culture [4]. Leadership styles commonly practiced are transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, democratic leadership style and autocratic leadership style. Institutional trajectory is the outcome of competing logics, opposing legitimacies and rival individuals and groups activate resources, powers, and knowledge [34]. The institutional evolution is not linear because of those factors mentioned earlier that challenge institutional journey due to competing interests, controversies, ideals, and institutional logics which can be understood by comparative analysis. Past institutional cultures have enduring effect on the current institutional trajectory. Institutional trajectory is highly influenced by strategic leadership which can strengthen consolidation of new institution. Thus, studying leadership dynamism requires taking into consideration the institutional trajectory which could be explained by number internal and external dynamics that influence the current organizational culture and performance.

2.4. Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance

The critical analysis of organizational culture and organizational performance is the core focus of this study. This study investigates the hindrances to creating and developing organizational culture and development, exploring both empirical and theoretical evidence to understand the impact of leadership on organizational performance. Effective leadership that considers context and takes organizational actions is crucial in building organizational culture and influencing institutional trajectory [32]. However, traditional leadership approaches could be more effective in diverse organizations like Samara University, where many hurdles constrain the development of organizational culture.

3. The Research Methodology

3.1. Description of the Study Area

Samara University is located in the Afar national regional state. The main reason for its foundation was to facilitate the co-operation and development of Afar region and its society. Samara University, which is the second generation university in Ethiopia, was established about 17 years ago. It was established in 2007/8 G. C. Samara University (SU) went operational in 2007/8 academic year with 1867 students population placed in three faculties. Since its establishment, Samara University has been striving towards its mission and

vision by mobilising manpower it endowed with [16].

3.2. Research Design

The researcher employed explanatory qualitative research design. The qualitative approach that was used in this study was supported by indepth interview and key informant interview. Indepth interview shared the larger portion of participants since it allows the study to be more detailed. Besides, the key informant interview was used in order to enrich research data with detail and sensitive issues that are not addressed by in depth interview. The data was accessed through checklists prepared for both in depth interview and key informant participants.

3.3. Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data sources were used to enable the data to be complete that enhance its level of precision. The primary data of the research work was collected in depth interview, and key informant interview. The sources of data are Samara University community members and skakeholders from surrounding community. These community members are selected because of they are key stakeholders who know well the organisational scenario and surrounding community representatives were selected to crosscheck the accuracy of data there by helping leadership's informed decision in the future strategic plan and actions. The secondary data that was used in this research work entails Annual reports, file documents, magazines, brochures, newspaper, books, articles, journals and relevant writing on leadership issues need to be summarized, organized, interpreted and analyzed.

3.4. Study Population

The study population consists of Samara University's community members, the surrounding community, and key stakeholders. The Samara University community members reacted towards research questions properly and satisfactorily. Thus, staff members and students were selected because the researcher believes that they can accurately speak about their condition that existing in the institution the positive development trends and challenges face them in the institution. This shows that studying leadership culture is viable. The data was extracted from Samara University are prime ingredients for the research. This enabled researcher to study issues related with organisational leadership culture that contributed to organizational culture and its impacts upon institutional trajectory.

The Samara University's community members are target population because they are the right participants that can provide right information since they are involving in the organisational leadership they can speak better than others regarding the factors affected the institution so as to elevate institutional trajectory. In addition, local surrounding

community and regional stakeholders are target group to know whether University is contributing to regional development and serving community in align with its primary objective to serve the Afar Society in general and surrounding community in particular in teaching-learning, research and community service. Samara university staff who are newcomers and recently hired were excluded even if do engage in organisation behavior. Staff who are expatriates also excluded. From outside non Afar residents were excluded to know whether the University is serving Afar Community surrounding the University.

3.5. Sampling Technique and Data Collection Tools

Taking into consideration, the nature of data of study population which is small because the study area is single institution. As a result, the researcher decided to use purposive sampling technique for in depth interview and judgmental sampling technique for key informant interview. Thus, the researcher is convinced to apply explanatory qualitative research method by using purposive and judgmental sampling technique.

The in depth interview is administrated by interviewer. Thus, check list was the most effective and manageable data collection tool to access detailed information about organizational leadership. The researcher incorporated 40 interviewees from samara University community members from both staff and students and 10 interviewees from outside campus stakeholders or surrounding community. The researcher prepared a set of questions or checklists in English so as to make communication more understandable for Samara University community members and local data collectors translated into Afar Af for surrounding community and local stakeholders.

Key informant interview was employed in order to extract pertinent information from very important members of the Samara University Community and stakeholders from surrounding community members. Seven key informants from Samara University community and three key informants from local stakeholders or surrounding community. Key informants were more knowledgeable than ordinary staff members owing to their working position in the study population. They provided useful and relevant information. Thus, the researcher selected 10 knowledgeable key informants.

Moreover, the researcher visited the organization. In so doing, the researcher assessed best experience of staff involvement which was mainly concerned in this study. Furthermore, the regional connectedness was assessed.

Furthermore, the researcher attended various meetings/workshops with Samara University community members to gain relevant information about organisational leadership and organisational culture. Therefore, the researcher employed these methods to access the relevant

information which essential input for research output.

3.6. Data Processing and Analysis Method

The qualitative data obtained through predetermined data collection tools were analyzed using appropriate methods of analysis. The qualitative data were analyzed by organizing, summarizing and interpreting the data collected qualitatively. In other words, qualitative data were analyzed descriptively in the form of narration. The thematic analysis method was applied.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Samara University and Its Leadership Culture

The development of a strong leadership culture at Samara University encompasses a variety of key indicators that demonstrate the institution's dedication to fostering effective leadership. The participants highlighted that the introduction of new indicators has played a pivotal role in cultivating a robust leadership culture that has supported the university's overall growth and development.

During an in-depth interview, the first participant (p1) emphasized that the current leadership has taken significant steps to ensure alignment with the institution's vision and mission. The top leader at Samara University ensures that the actions and decisions of leaders are in harmony with the university's vision and mission, thereby promoting a unified direction for the institution. The second participant (p2) confirmed that the university president is strongly committed to implementing professional development programs. This commitment is evident through the continuous professional development opportunities offered to faculty and staff, including leadership training, workshops, and seminars. The third participant (p3) affirmed that the university president has made substantial efforts to foster a collaborative environment aimed at encouraging a culture of collaboration and teamwork. This approach ensures that leaders work together across departments to achieve common goals. The fourth participant (p4) mentioned that the university's president actively invests in fostering transparent communication to establish effective communication channels. This ensures that information flows freely and transparently between all levels of the university.

The fifth participant (p5) argued that the university president actively promotes innovation and change management practices. This encourages leaders to be open to innovation and adept at managing change, thereby fostering new ideas and approaches to improve the university's operations and academic offerings. The sixth participant (p6) testified that the university's president is dedicated to developing ethical leadership based on moral behavior and decision-making. This involves setting an example for integrity and accounta-

bility. The seventh participant (p7) emphasized the university's role in establishing a student-centered approach, prioritizing students' needs and success at all leadership levels, and creating policies and programs that enhance the student experience and support academic achievement. The eighth participant (p8) asserted that Mohammed Usman Darasa's focus on community engagement has led to active participation with the local and global community, with his leadership team taking part in outreach and partnership initiatives.

The study emphasizes fair distribution of opportunities and resources and reports that the current leadership has made significant strides in creating an equitable and fair system. The current leadership has established a positive relationship with the local community and built a strong trust. There is a high level of connectivity between the University and external stakeholders. The current leadership is working to promote a new dynamic leadership spirit within the Samara University community, which has significantly contributed to the University's trajectory and institutional development. Additionally, Mohammed's leadership is praised for his courage in promoting equal opportunity distribution among community members. The leadership is credited with promoting an organizational culture that prioritizes organizational interests over individual or group interests.

The report highlights the efforts of the current leadership at Samara University to build a positive working culture and improve the leadership experience. It acknowledges past challenges of unequal opportunity distribution but notes the improvement under the current leadership. Suggestions include implementing more checks and balances, increasing community participation, and emphasizing the need for greater scrutiny and accountability among university leaders below the president. The university aims to specialize in its competency areas and is diligently working towards achieving this goal. There is also a recognized need to improve leadership services and honor the best performers. Furthermore, the finding emphasizes the University's need to improve its competency to transform from a comprehensive to an applied University. It highlights the positive transformation in the University's treatment of rights, opportunities, and obligations while suggesting the need for equal opportunities and rewards for outstanding performance. Moreover, progress has been made in reducing inequalities based on language, ethnicity, and religion, and the University is involved in community development initiatives.

Samara University's service delivery system requires transformational leaders who can implement system-based thinking to meet the demands of the Afar Region and Ethiopia's society. Leadership challenges include a lack of clear vision, poor communication, high variation in organizational performance, limited team building, inappropriate performance pressure, and insufficient qualified human resources [18, 41]. To address these challenges, a community-oriented leadership style is recommended, allowing employees to engage in various planning phases. Organizational leadership

faces significant challenges, including interference from higher officials, lack of decision-making power, and high turnover of senior staff [1]. The study recommends creating awareness-raising conferences, selecting leaders based on academic merit, and increasing community participation in institutional affairs. Leadership qualities such as ambition, conscientiousness, integrity, persistence, and honesty have long been associated with successful leaders [25]. Early leadership research focused on identifying characteristics such as congeniality, verbal fluency, intelligence, goodness, low emotionality, liveliness, and daring that contributing to a leader's success and advancement. Intelligence encompasses understanding, reasoning, and perception, including grasping facts and their relationships.

Organizational leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring the smooth functioning of an organization. It involves overseeing all parts of the organization equally and ensuring efficient performance. To achieve this, leaders must possess various characteristics that contribute to effective leadership [31]. These include honesty, integrity, confidence, skills, commitment, accountability, delegation, empowerment, creativity, innovation, empathy, resilience, emotional intelligence, humility, transparency, vision, purpose, teamwork, and instructional strategies [28]. Influential leaders must know these characteristics and incorporate them into their job performance. They must delegate tasks effectively, empower their employees to take ownership of their roles and encourage creativity and innovation to promote growth within the organization. Leaders must possess emotional intelligence, which allows them to understand and manage their emotions and those of their employees, leading to better decision-making and problem-solving. Furthermore, leaders must believe in themselves and their abilities while fostering positive viewpoints towards individuals and various aspects of the organization. This creates a culture of positivity and encourages employees to work towards achieving the organization's goals and objectives. Effective organizational leadership requires a combination of skills, traits, and strategies that contribute to the organization's success.

4.2. Working Culture and Working Behavior

Evaluating the working culture at Samara University entails delving into various crucial aspects to gain insight into the environment and dynamics within the institution. One aspect highlighted by the ninth participant (P9) is the significance of employee satisfaction. They emphasized the need for regular surveys and feedback mechanisms to measure overall employee satisfaction and pinpoint areas for improvement. Additionally, the tenth participant (P10) concurred, emphasizing the importance of enhancing employee satisfaction by considering work-life balance. The current leadership is actively working towards formulating methods to assess how well the University supports work-life balance for its staff.

Furthermore, the eleventh participant (P11) underscored the role of effective organizational communication and collaboration in fostering a positive working environment and strengthened connectivity, while the twelfth participant (P12) stressed the importance of reinforcing internal communication to evaluate the effectiveness of communication channels within the University. Notably, the current leadership is dedicated to promoting effective teamwork, as evidenced by the robust collaboration and support among departments and teams.

Moreover, participant 13 (P13) emphasized the pivotal role of leadership and management in shaping the University's working culture, a sentiment echoed by participant 14 (P14) who highlighted the significance of leadership styles and their impact on the working environment. The participant also observed the substantial influence of the current leadership styles. Additionally, participant 15 discussed how management practices play a pivotal role in determining the working culture and lauded the current president's commitment to fostering fairness and transparency in management practices and decision-making processes.

Professional development emerged as a key strategy for cultivating a positive working environment, as noted by participant 16 (P16). This sentiment was reinforced by participant 17 (P17), who highlighted the current president's focused attention on training opportunities and commitment to enhancing the availability and quality of professional development and training programs. Furthermore, participant 18 (P18) emphasized the president's dedicated efforts towards career advancement and support for the career center in creating opportunities for career growth within the University.

Inclusivity and diversity were cited as particular focal points of the current president, as articulated by participant 19 (P19) and participant 20 (P20). Both participants highlighted the president's essential diversity initiatives and their ongoing assessment to gauge their effectiveness in promoting diversity and inclusion. Participant 21 (P21) confirmed the president's active promotion of equal opportunities to ensure all employees have equitable access to resources.

Recognition and rewards were deemed crucial for fostering a positive working environment, an opinion shared by participant 22 (P22) and participant 23 (P23). Both participants underscored the instrumental role of recognition programs in evaluating the University's capacity to acknowledge and reward employee achievements, a focus area that the current leadership has appropriately emphasized.

Furthermore, participant 24 (P24) emphasized the current top leader's affirmative steps toward enhancing employee compensation and benefits, thereby contributing to an assessment of the competitiveness and fairness of these packages. The importance of the work environment in promoting a positive work culture and productivity was expounded upon by participant 25 (P25), who highlighted the significance of assessing the leadership's role in enhancing the quality and suitability of the physical work environment, accelerated

greenification and beautification initiatives.

Safety and well-being were underscored as pivotal in ensuring that Samara University provides a secure and supportive environment for all employees, as noted by participant 26 (P26). Additionally, participant 27 (P27) emphasized the leadership's active promotion of organizational values and mission to foster a positive working culture, while participant 28 (P28) expounded on the leadership's efforts to encourage behaviors aligned with these values to assess the University's daily operations and culture. Furthermore, participant 29 (P29) detailed the leadership's efforts to promote employee engagement, which serves as a gauge of employee involvement with the University's mission and goals.

The research explores the working culture of Samara University and the role of leadership in cultivating it. It highlights issues with time management, professionalism, and relationship dynamics among staff. The current leadership is actively striving to enhance service standards, improve staff motivation, and promote a better working environment. The aim is to create a more professional, efficient, and harmonious work culture to prioritize service quality and customer satisfaction. The working culture at Samara University was generally seen as good in terms of time utilization, but some participants noted poor time management skills among workers. There were mixed opinions on punctuality and professionalism, with some suggesting room for improvement. While workers were generally seen as responsive, friendly, and respectful in-service delivery, some instances of mistreatment towards customers were reported. Interviewees stressed the importance of better cooperation and coordination among workers, as well as creating more opportunities for career growth and development. Leaders at the university are working to address organizational problems, but interviewees observed only partial motivation among workers to achieve set organizational goals.

In order to maintain a positive and productive work environment, organizations must identify what motivates their employees and establish performance-based reward systems [10]. The role of leadership in fostering a positive workplace culture cannot be overstated. Leaders have a significant impact on employee motivation, innovation, collaboration, and absenteeism. Poor leadership or working culture can result in high employee turnover rates. Effective strategic leadership plays an active role in creating a positive working culture, adapting leadership styles to suit employees, and promoting ethical behaviour, commitment, professionalism, drive, and interpersonal relationships to boost performance. Immediate leaders act as advocates for their employees by providing resources and positive encouragement. The interpersonal role of a leader is crucial in promoting positive relations, boosting employee self-confidence, and improving behaviour [9]. Fair work incentives, such as salaries and promotions, are essential, and a motivating work culture should reward employees formally and informally. Leaders must ensure that every employee feels they are playing a dynamic and integral role in

the organization, fostering loyalty and increasing productivity and performance.

This study aims to explore the relationship between effective leadership and working culture. Personal qualities, team leadership, and operational processes in a given sector are indicators of effective leadership [2]. Developing positive leadership practices accepted by the community is essential for improving the working culture in an organization. Previous research has demonstrated that leadership style significantly impacts working culture and behavior. Hence, this study examines the interaction between leadership style and working culture to identify the factors influencing working behavior. Leadership style and culture are crucial in shaping working culture and behavior [3]. At Samara University, the current leadership style is believed to positively influence the working culture and behavior. Therefore, this study aims to discover the positive outcomes of the current leadership in terms of encouraging working culture, working behavior, and organizational performance. The current leadership at Samara University is committed to enhancing the organizational culture.

Samara University's experience demonstrates the significant impact of leadership style on both working culture and performance, providing valuable lessons for other institutions. The style of leadership employed can have a profound influence on employee performance and the overall development of the organization. Notably, autocratic leadership, in which the leader holds absolute power over their staff, has been found to have a negative impact on employee performance [44]. The effects of leadership extend beyond employee performance, with leadership style also influencing organizational culture, working behavior, and institutional trajectory [40]. This study discovered a strong and positive correlation between organizational leadership culture and working behavior, as well as a correlation between organizational culture and working behavior mediated by the working culture. Although differences in organizational culture and working behavior exist between organizations, these differences do not appear to have a significant effect on organizational performance. Instead, organizational performance is determined by a combination of leadership culture, organizational culture, and working behavior, which together determine the institutional trajectory.

Organizational leadership heavily relies on the implementation of a positive working culture. The way people work is directly influenced by the working culture they are surrounded by, which in turn determines the effectiveness and success of an organization [13]. It's no secret that working culture has a profound impact on the performance of an organization, which is a direct outcome of the working behavior of its staff. After conducting extensive research, it was found that the past working culture of Samara University had a negative impact on the organizational performance and overall trajectory of the institution. This negative outcome is believed to be the result of a poor leadership culture that failed to

establish a good working culture. It's important to note that the degree of leadership culture, specifically the degree of supportiveness for innovative working culture, plays a critical role in determining the direction of organizational progress. Therefore, it's clear that there is a significant positive relationship between leadership culture and working culture.

Despite the challenges and resistance of past working cultures, the new leadership has made remarkable progress in transforming the poor working culture at Samara University. However, the study suggests that employees may still feel demotivated due to the lack of fair payment. Poor relations between lower leaders and employees are also significant challenges for a good working culture. Additionally, the absence of an attractive working environment and the lack of necessary skills and capacity of workers further may hinder progress. The service delivery system requires more sophistication, and a better-organized bureaucratic structure is essential for enhancing customer satisfaction. Furthermore, limitations in the working culture lead to poor working behavior, which in turn slows institutional progress. Therefore, it is vital to focus on improving the quality, capacity, and effectiveness of workers and leaders to enhance the institutional trajectory.

The higher education sector in Ethiopia faces complex challenges that impede institutional development. A research study was conducted to explore these challenges and identify potential solutions. Despite numerous strategic initiatives and policies to transform the working culture, the changes have slowly materialized. The primary impediment to institutional progress is the need for more community involvement in achieving the organization's goals and objectives [38]. The cited study identified several critical challenges facing organizational leadership, including inclusivity, stakeholder participation, environmental sustainability, societal pressures, change management, performance gaps, and gender inequality. To address these hurdles, leaders must foster a culture that promotes stakeholder participation in the planning process, mobilize stakeholders, and encourage innovation and change. Effective leadership is essential in leading change and driving forward organizational performance. The research findings suggest that leaders should decentralize leadership tasks, incentivize staff to participate in leadership teams, and encourage community members to become involved in leadership to enhance organizational performance and secure institutional sustainability.

Servant leadership is a highly relevant and effective approach to providing employees with the necessary empowerment and participative job characteristics directly linked to their overall satisfaction and that of the customers they serve [20]. While numerous studies have been conducted on different leadership styles globally, there is still a pressing need for more literature on organizational leadership and working culture, specifically within the context of Samara University. This is because there is a solid and undeniable connection between the leadership style adopted by an organization, the

overall working culture within the workplace, and the working behavior of employees. Therefore, gaining a deeper understanding of these critical factors is essential to create a more positive and productive work environment that benefits all stakeholders involved.

The research examined the impact of leadership culture at Samara University on its working culture. It found that leadership culture plays a critical role in driving working behavior and that the university's president has been instrumental in shaping the working culture. The study suggests a strong and positive association between leadership culture and working culture, as well as between working culture and behavior. The current leadership at Samara University is seen as a best practice for other Ethiopian universities to follow.

4.3. Organisational Culture

When examining the organizational culture at Samara University, it is crucial to delve into various key aspects that shed light on the institution's atmosphere, values, and behavioral patterns. In a comprehensive interview, participant 30 (P30) emphasized the significant impact of leadership and management practices on the organizational culture at Samara University. Participant 31 (P31) highlighted the influence of the current president's leadership style on shaping the organizational culture, pointing out that efforts to foster a new leadership system have proven valuable in evaluating the impact of leadership styles on both organizational culture and employee morale among top leaders.

Moreover, participant 32 (P32) underscored the attention given to decision-making processes, which aids the current leadership in assessing the transparency and inclusiveness of these processes. Participant 33 (P33) indicated that the university's presidents have actively worked on communication as a means to promote the desired organizational culture, with a particular emphasis on enhancing internal communication channels. In addition, participant 34 (P34) noted that the current leadership has taken steps to encourage feedback mechanisms, thereby enabling the top leaders to scrutinize the collection, dissemination, and implementation of feedback.

Furthermore, participant 35 (P35) articulated the current leadership's emphasis on improving employee engagement and satisfaction as part of the broader objective of nurturing a robust organizational culture. Participant 36 (P36) reported the leadership's support for conducting surveys and feedback-gathering activities to gauge employee sentiment and perspectives. Additionally, participant 37 (P37) asserted that the current leadership has been proactively promoting effective communication through the regular administration of surveys to gauge employee satisfaction and engagement. Moreover, participant 38 (P38) highlighted the leadership's commitment to enhancing work-life balance, culminating in the development of a mechanism to assess the University's support for its staff in this regard.

Participant 39 (P39) noted that the current leadership has

taken concrete steps to actively promote and prioritize the values and ethics that form the bedrock of the University's organizational culture. Meanwhile, Participant 40 (P40) highlighted that the leadership has been diligent in cultivating and advocating core values, a practice that they believe contributes to shaping the organizational culture. Moreover, it was stressed that the top leader should play a pivotal role in identifying and reinforcing the core values that are being promoted and upheld within the University.

Furthermore, Participant 41 (P41) shared insights into how the current leadership has been proactively engaged in developing and upholding ethical standards, with a focus on evaluating adherence to these standards and practices. Participant 42 (P42) also underscored the attention that the current leadership has given to promoting inclusivity and diversity, highlighting that initiatives aimed at fostering diversity and inclusion have been effective in shaping the University's organizational culture.

In addition, Participant 43 (P43) concurred with the view that the current leadership has been instrumental in promoting the University's organizational culture, particularly by ensuring equal opportunities for all employees to access resources and opportunities. Moreover, Participant 44 (P44) emphasized the significant emphasis placed by the current leadership on professional development, noting that they have actively promoted and facilitated training programs while also ensuring a focus on evaluating the availability and quality of these programs.

Participant 45 (P45) emphasized that the University's organizational culture emphasizes the facilitation of career advancement. They highlighted that the current leadership is dedicated to promoting opportunities for career growth and progression within the institution. Participant 46 (P46) noted that the organizational culture at Samara University appears to prioritize the current leadership's approach to recognizing and rewarding employees. Participant 47 (P47) highlighted that the University's organizational culture is designed to incorporate recognition programs, which are assumed to be evaluated by top leadership to gauge the effectiveness of employee recognition and rewards, laying a strong foundation for fostering a positive working culture and a robust organizational environment. Additionally, Participant 48 (P48) mentioned that the current leadership actively promotes competitive compensation and benefits packages, essential for assessing fairness and competitiveness. Furthermore, Participant 49 (P49) emphasized the importance of the work environment as a key factor in shaping the University's organizational culture.

The current leadership has taken proactive measures to foster a positive work environment at Samara University. According to Participant 50 (P50), the organizational culture heavily relies on the quality and appropriateness of the physical workspace, which the leadership ensures. P50 believes that the promotion of organizational culture is closely tied to safety and well-being, and commended the current leadership for their efforts in ensuring a safe and supportive environment

for all employees. Additionally, it was noted that the university's organizational culture is contingent upon its organizational structure, which the current leadership has been working diligently to enhance. This improved structure serves as a strong foundation for the cultivation of a flourishing organizational culture. The informant highlighted the significance of hierarchy and staff roles, emphasizing the efforts of the current leadership to advance organizational structure and clarify roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, the informant stressed the importance of leadership's promotion of collaboration to evaluate departmental and team interactions and support. The informant also underscored the university's focus on innovation and change management as key drivers of organizational culture. Adaptability emerged as a crucial focus, with the current leadership working to enhance the university's ability to adapt to changes and innovate. Based on the findings, it is evident that the current leadership has prioritized the development of Samara University's organizational culture to nurture a more positive and productive environment for both its staff and students.

The findings highlight the significance of Samara University's leadership culture and the efforts made to promote a culture of inclusivity, transparency, and worker empowerment. The current leadership emphasizes the importance of engaging all community members, valuing staff equally, and promoting professionalism and ethical behavior. The report also discusses the positive impacts of the university's local connectivity initiatives on the area's development. Additionally, it addresses the organizational culture introduced by organizational leader and the significance of effective collaboration within regional, national, and global connectivity.

Organizational culture is crucial in selecting appropriate organizational development strategies, as it impacts all other management aspects [35]. The shared cultural values and beliefs of an organization's members shape their perception of the organization and determine the most effective way to bring about change. The choice of a suitable, efficient, or helpful approach to change the organization will depend mainly on the shared assumptions and values of the community and leaders built in their interpretative schemes. Whether the changes are incremental or radical, comprehensive or partial, directed from the top down or the bottom up, focused on the change of the hard or the soft component of the organization, will all be determined by how the leader and the members of the organization perceive its functioning and the most practical, effective, or suitable way of bringing about change.

Organizational culture refers to the unwritten rules and norms that shape the behavior of employees, including the company's structure, work processes, attitudes, values, traditions, and leadership styles [11]. Organizational leadership is based on the bureaucratic "structural functionalist model" of leadership [31]. It views culture as a complex system where its parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. Organizational culture comprises the guiding principles em-

employees are expected to follow without objection [30]. Culture comprises traditions, behavior patterns, and belief systems that determine how an organization functions and its chances of success. The values and beliefs of an organization's personnel are closely tied to its culture, and the norms resulting from culture significantly impact employee performance and profitability.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the president of Samara University is a highly effective leader who is fully committed to promoting good governance and leading the university towards success. Unfortunately, not all leaders prioritize good leadership and organizational culture, which can have a negative impact on organizational performance. It is important to note that many factors contribute to this disparity, and having professional knowledge and experience is crucial for promoting professional ethics that influence organizational culture [24].

The research emphasizes the importance of effective leadership in promoting a positive organizational culture at Samara University. It acknowledges the university's efforts in motivating leaders and mobilizing stakeholders but also highlights the need for improvement in guiding employees, fostering a positive work environment, and addressing potential misuse of power. The finding underlines the critical qualities that leaders must possess and the necessity of providing training and support to promote a robust organizational culture. Additionally, it stresses the importance of integrating a diverse workforce and prioritizing realistic goals to ensure the institution's growth and development.

According to a recent study, the effectiveness of leadership in developing organizational culture and cultivating shared vision is the most crucial factor in determining the success of an institution. The study highlights that effective leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping both organizational culture and institutional trajectory [42]. Therefore, it is imperative that organizational leadership focuses on developing a clear institutional trajectory and a positive organizational culture. The study emphasized the need for Samara University's top leader to consider the effectiveness of middle and lower leadership roles in building and securing a successful organizational trajectory. The empirical study revealed that effective leadership is the key to building a strong organizational culture and a sustainable institutional trajectory. The study also suggests the need for improving the effectiveness of middle and lower leadership roles in developing a clear institutional trajectory through effective leadership. Thus, leadership effectiveness is crucial in building a successful institution, and the study recommends a focus on improving leadership effectiveness at all levels of the organization.

4.4. Institutional Trajectory

The assessment of the institutional trajectory at Samara University involves a thorough analysis of several crucial factors to gain insight into its progress, obstacles, and future

course. In terms of institutional trajectory, the first key informant (KII1) highlighted that ensuring progressive institutional trajectory hinges on academic performance and quality. The participant indicated that the current leadership has taken essential steps to enhance curriculum development, ensuring its effectiveness and relevance through the implementation of modular systems. The informant also noted the leadership's efforts in improving student outcomes, leading to enhanced graduation rates, higher employment rates for graduates, and overall improved student performance.

The second key informant (KII2) underscored the significance of research and innovation in the institutional trajectory. They elaborated on the leadership's commendable focus on research output, emphasizing the importance of both quantity and quality of research publications and projects. Furthermore, the informant highlighted the leadership's promotion of innovation initiatives, emphasizing the university's commitment to fostering innovation and forging collaborations with industry partners.

The third key informant (KII3) emphasized the leadership's attention to infrastructure development and resource management, emphasizing its critical role in shaping the institutional trajectory. They noted the leadership's efforts in ensuring the adequacy and maintenance of physical infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. Additionally, the leadership's prioritization of technology to bolster institutional development and facilitate progress was emphasized.

The fourth key informant (KII4) brought attention to the financial health of the institution, which the current leadership has diligently managed to support ongoing institutional development. They highlighted the leadership's efforts in seeking diverse and stable funding sources, including government grants, tuition fees, and external financial sources. The informant also stressed the leadership's effective budget management, securing the efficiency of financial operations and allocation, thereby positively impacting the institutional trajectory.

The fifth key informant (KII5) highlighted that the present leadership has placed a strong focus on enhancing satisfaction among both students and staff. They have achieved this through the consistent use of surveys and feedback mechanisms to assess satisfaction levels. The participant also noted that the leadership has prioritized the sustainability of institutional development by investing in support services such as counseling, career guidance, and academic advising.

Moving on to the sixth key informant (KII6), he emphasized that the current leadership has actively promoted community engagement through various outreach programs. The university's participation in community service and outreach initiatives has been a key focus. Additionally, the leadership has made strategic investments in partnerships to bolster the institution's trajectory, with the university president taking noteworthy steps to strengthen connections with local, national, and international organizations.

In the case of the seventh key informant (KII7), it was mentioned that the current university president has made significant efforts to enhance governance and leadership within the institution. The president has implemented mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the university's leadership and governance structures, thereby promoting leadership effectiveness. Moreover, strategic planning has been a key area of focus, with the president closely monitoring the implementation of strategic plans and goals.

The Eighth key informant interviewee (KII8) highlighted that the current leadership, guided by the principles of inclusivity and diversity, has actively worked towards ensuring that the institutional trajectory is firmly rooted in these values. This has been evidenced through their concerted efforts to promote diversity and inclusion within the university community. The interviewee also emphasized the leadership's dedication to providing equal opportunities for all students and staff, thereby fostering a healthy institutional trajectory.

Furthermore, the ninth key informant interviewee (KII9) mentioned that the current leadership, led by Mohammed Usman Darasa, has prioritized adaptability and resilience in driving the university towards a progressive trajectory. This has involved a strategic focus on change management, crisis resilience, and sustainability practices, aimed at ensuring the long-term security of the institution.

Additionally, the tenth key informant interviewee (KII10) provided a comprehensive overview of the current leadership's multifaceted approach under Mohammed Usman Darasa, President of Samara University. This entailed specific emphasis on academic performance, quality enhancement, applied research and innovation, infrastructure development, effective resource management, financial performance, as well as the satisfaction of students and staff. The interviewee further highlighted the leadership's initiatives covering community engagement, governance, leadership, inclusivity, diversity, adaptability, and resilience as critical areas for continued growth and success.

Samara University has undergone significant transformation under the leadership of Mohammed Usman Darasa. The leadership has focused on accelerating infrastructural development, improving the service delivery system, and nurturing a culture of peace on campus. The university's institutional trajectory reflects its commitment to enhancing the quality of education and research, prioritizing the welfare of students and staff, and creating a peaceful and conducive environment for learning and research.

Samara University has achieved remarkable success in the first national exit exam, ranking among the top 15 out of 45 government universities in the country. The university's leadership, particularly the President, has been committed to ensuring students' success and has provided necessary support and resources, including infrastructure development and a secure internet network. The current leadership has taken responsibility for addressing long-standing issues such as insufficient toilet facilities, lack of cafeteria access for staff,

and overall security concerns, which were not adequately addressed by the previous leadership. The new leadership has also focused on fostering a sense of ownership and belonging among the university community by increasing collaboration and participation in university affairs.

Informants have suggested outsourcing certain services and implementing a mixed group leadership style. It is also important to provide effective motivational packages and emphasize an excellent academic environment at Samara University. The university's developmental journey should include infrastructure construction, green area cultivation, and collection of stakeholder feedback. Success stories at Samara University should highlight peacekeeping and security measures, infrastructure development, and the positive impact on the university and local community.

The stakeholders at Samara University highlighted several critical issues, including the lack of proper healthcare facilities, shortages of clean water, problems with lighting, and inadequate toilet facilities. They suggested strategies to address these issues, such as hiring qualified physicians, ensuring enough ambulances, and repairing outdated facilities. The community also emphasized the need to scale up the water supply, maintain peace and security through open discussions, and improve community services. Overall, the current leadership of Samara University is highly regarded, with an emphasis on helping the next generation and sustaining progress.

To ensure that all individuals in leadership positions are working towards the organization's development and its best possible trajectory, top leaders should implement mechanisms that promote accountability and transparency. The perception of leaders and the community regarding the top leaders' close supervision and leadership style plays a significant role in determining the leaders' effectiveness in promoting institutional trajectory [14, 36].

Effective leadership plays a crucial role in shaping organizational culture and driving the organization forward. At Samara University, the current leadership has successfully adapted to the organization's specific context. However, past experiences and challenges continue to hinder the university's progress, and the current leadership must learn from these experiences and overcome these challenges. Visionary and dynamic leadership styles significantly influence organizational performance and accelerate institutional trajectory. It's crucial for leaders to understand the organizational vision, mission, and culture and to implement strategic plans to achieve better performance. Leaders implementing these plans need to be evaluated to ensure accountability for their actions and impact on the organization.

Leadership style plays a significant role in the development of organizational culture, which in turn, determines the future of the institutional journey [15]. As such, leaders should focus on dealing with different problems that arise in promoting an organizational culture that helps achieve the desired goals using a dynamic approach. The current leadership at Samara

University has undoubtedly changed the working environment by inspiring and motivating employees to change, create, and innovate beyond their perceived limits. Interviewees have endorsed the current leadership role in shifting the institutional trajectory towards a dynamic scenario.

To promote the performance of the organization, employees should be rewarded and recognized for their work community performance, and given close directions to middle and lower leaders. Continuous guidance has positive and significant effects on promoting the performance of the organization. Thus, the leadership of an organization should focus on playing a role model and motivating stakeholders in the organization and surroundings so that all stakeholders should consider taking leadership in a non-traditional way that is decisive for the organizational development and institutional trajectory. Hence, visionary and dynamic leadership styles are key to achieving accelerated institutional trajectory, and the leadership of an organization should focus on promoting an organizational culture that helps achieve the desired goals.

The role of organizational culture in improving performance cannot be overstated. A positive organizational culture that prioritizes collaboration and teamwork is key to achieving this goal [33]. Furthermore, all types of organizational culture, including clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy, have a statistically significant impact on employee performance [19].

In addition, the study found that leadership plays a critical role in fostering a positive organizational culture. Effective leaders must exhibit selfless leadership and avoid selfishness. They must also provide training and demonstrate unwavering commitment to empowering the community and promoting a strong working culture. Moreover, leaders must be attuned to the needs of their community and take their concerns seriously, recognizing that they are the organization's most valuable asset.

The study also highlights the importance of leadership in driving organizational performance and addressing the challenges of good governance [22]. While there are various leadership theories, the focus should be on practical solutions that address institutional trajectory issues. Many interviewees noted that leaders with the same level of competency are best suited to manage organizational culture and institutional trajectory.

The study's primary objective was to understand the current state of leadership and its impact on organizational goals. It is crucial for leaders to have a clear understanding of their roles and the impact they have on organizational culture, working behavior, institutional trajectory, performance, and competitiveness in a rapidly changing world. By providing a comprehensive understanding of leadership culture and its effects on organizational performance, this study offers valuable insights that can help leaders enhance their effectiveness and achieve success.

Leadership is a complex process that requires leaders and followers to work collaboratively to achieve common goals.

Different situations call for different leadership styles, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to leadership. The study highlights the importance of leaders and followers working together to achieve their goals [37]. At Samara University, empirical studies have shown that the leadership practices are participatory, which has resulted in high levels of community satisfaction. However, the organization faces several challenges, including the need for more commitment from its leaders and resistance to change from the community [39].

To address these challenges, the organization must benchmark best leadership development practices, provide timely training and development opportunities to enhance employee skills, and build organizational capabilities to ensure future success. Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that top leaders practice dynamic leadership, which involves simulating a strong organizational culture.

Further studies are needed to analyze leadership practices, styles, organizational performance, and community attitudes at Samara University. Position holders/leaders should model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart [17]. The leadership study's findings indicate that the organization's leadership needs to plan and invest resources in developing the dynamics of leadership for all leaders and community members at Samara University. This approach will help improve organizational performance from all angles.

A dynamic model of leadership practices should be suggested and implemented for all position holders/leaders at Samara University. This will help them become successful leaders, leading to organizational success and a good institutional trajectory. By investing in leadership development, Samara University can create a strong organizational culture that fosters collaboration, innovation, and growth.

In a recent report, it was found that top leaders in public universities tend to adopt a transactional and laissez-faire leadership style, with a high institutional readiness for change [7]. The leadership style adopted by top leaders has a significant impact on the success of the institution. While some argue that transformational leadership is the best approach for driving institutional change and development, others contend that transactional and laissez-faire leadership can effectively achieve organizational goals. Regardless of the leadership style, what is crucial is the institutional readiness for change, which presents an opportunity for the University to improve its institutional trajectory.

To achieve this, a dynamic leadership style that is not limited to top leadership is necessary. It is essential to take into account organizational strategy and policy to ensure that the leadership style permeates all levels of the institution. Failure to do so can result in a lack of uniform dynamic leadership, which can negatively affect the institution's trajectory, leading to a negative working culture and nonfunctional position holders.

The concept of governance is more inclusive than traditional government and administration, reflecting the increas-

ing range of participants in these processes [27]. Good governance is a function of effective leadership that focuses on achieving the mission and goals of an organization by delivering products and services that meet the needs of customers. Effective leadership is characterized by openness, accountability, participatory decision-making, and overall effectiveness.

The study aimed to assess the impact of leadership on the institutional trajectory of Samara University. The current leadership, particularly the President, is trying to satisfy the community and regional stakeholders by demonstrating pragmatic and effective leadership. Exemplary commitment is noticeable in implementing dynamic leadership in the organization, which bodes well for the institution's future trajectory. However, there are concerns about the need for better preparation for individuals being promoted to higher positions, the competence of leaders, and the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems. Additionally, there are issues with coordination with stakeholders at all levels, rent-seeking attitudes, and a general lack of commitment from the middle, lower leadership and community members.

The aim of this study was to explore the impact of organizational leadership culture on the overall effectiveness of leadership, organizational culture, working culture, and institutional trajectory. It was found that the leadership style adopted by leaders, particularly those in top positions, has a significant impact on the overall performance of the organization. In light of the current uncertain and dynamic challenges faced by institutions, leaders are required to practice adaptive leadership at every level [29].

Furthermore, the research suggests that a dynamic leadership culture, characterized by a focus on building and maintaining a strong organizational culture, has been instrumental in improving institutional performance and trajectory. The tireless efforts of top leaders to construct and nurture a strong organizational culture have been shown to have a meaningful impact on overall performance and competitiveness in the dynamic world. The findings indicate that the more dynamic leadership is practiced at Samara University, the higher the level of organizational goal achievement and overall success and effectiveness. The research also highlights the strong connection between leadership culture and organizational performance, as well as the pace of institutional trajectory.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Samara University, under the leadership of Mohammed Usman Darasa, has made significant progress in transforming the institution. The leadership has prioritized organizational goals, maintained connections with the external community, and shifted the university's stagnant pace to dynamic progress. The President has restructured scholarship opportunities, improved the working culture, and emphasized professionalism over personal relationships. This has led to improved cooperation and coordination among staff members, enhanced

service provision, and increased customer satisfaction. The leadership has also focused on staff development, career progress, and community engagement, gaining trust and recognition from the Afar Society. Overall, Samara University has undergone a dramatic transformation under the current leadership, making it a top choice for students and faculty.

The findings suggest that in order to improve the organization and leadership culture, it is important to promote a strong organizational culture, serve as role models for better leadership styles, ensure fair distribution of opportunities and rights, establish clear communication of leadership's vision, recognize and honor the contributions of the top performers, implement mechanisms to manage staff behavior, prioritize the design of mechanisms that encourage professional service delivery, empower lower and middle leaders to act professionally and independently, promote sustainable organizational performance, and foster a symbolic organizational culture.

Abbreviations

KII	Key Informant Interview
IDI	In-depth Interview
P	Person/Participant
GC	Gregorian Calendar
SU	Samara University

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