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**Author**

GONAIM, Faiza

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**Abstract**

Leadership in higher education is fundamental for institutional development and sustainability in today's rapidly changing world. The academic department is a fundamental unit for transforming the university's visions and goals into reality. The vigorous contribution of each department, which depends in turn largely on the effectiveness of the department chair, is important for universities' development. In contrast, higher education undervalues administrative positions in general and department chairs in particular, believing that an administrative role is a temporary task. The role of department chair is complex and ambiguous and the lack of formalized leadership preparation increases the complexity of such a significant role, and increases academic leadership avoidance. Preparing chairs for the position before they occupy it increases their effectiveness and assists them in overcoming difficulties. This paper addresses the global deficiency in leadership preparation for department chairs who occupies a critical position in universities, the effective characteristics of department chairs as they were identified in the literature and the challenges that they face. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)