

Predicting Compliance-Oriented Academic Behaviour in Managerial Universities: A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Governance and Organizational Climate

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Abstract

Background

Managerial governance has become a dominant mode of regulation in universities, emphasizing performance metrics, monitoring, and procedural compliance. However, its behavioural implications for academic staff remain empirically underexplored.

Objective

This study examines the institutional and organizational predictors of compliance-oriented academic behaviour in universities.

Methods

A **sequential explanatory mixed-methods design** was adopted. Survey data from **312 faculty members** across public and private universities were analysed using **binary logistic regression**, with compliance orientation (high vs. low) as the dependent variable. Predictors included perceived managerial governance intensity, leadership style, organizational climate, digital monitoring exposure, and institutional type, controlling for demographic variables. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to contextualize quantitative findings.

Results

Managerial governance intensity significantly increased the likelihood of compliance-oriented behaviour (OR = 4.68, $p < 0.001$). Transactional leadership (OR = 2.91, $p < 0.01$) and digital monitoring (OR = 3.37, $p < 0.001$) emerged as strong positive predictors, while trust-based organizational climate reduced compliance dependence (OR = 0.41, $p < 0.01$). Demographic variables were non-significant after institutional controls. The model demonstrated strong explanatory power (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.34$) and classification accuracy (87.6%).

Qualitative Findings

Interviews revealed patterns of strategic conformity, emotional labour, and selective resistance, indicating that compliance is actively negotiated rather than passively imposed.

Conclusion

The findings position compliance as a central organizational behavioural outcome of managerial governance in universities. Effective academic leadership requires balancing accountability mechanisms with trust-based organizational climates to sustain professional autonomy and institutional performance.

Keywords: managerial governance, compliance behaviour, academic leadership, organizational climate, higher education, binary logistic regression, mixed methods

1. Introduction

Universities are undergoing a structural transformation in how academic work is governed, evaluated, and regulated. Traditionally anchored in collegial norms, professional autonomy, and trust-based self-regulation, higher education institutions are increasingly shaped by managerial governance frameworks emphasizing performance metrics, audit regimes, and procedural compliance. This shift has altered not only administrative processes but also the behavioural expectations placed on academic staff, reshaping how teaching, research, and service are performed and evaluated.

Prior research on higher education governance has extensively examined leadership styles, organizational climate, and faculty well-being. Studies have shown that leadership practices significantly influence institutional climate, teacher motivation, and professional engagement (Sheokand, 2025; Sheokand & Borad, 2025). However, much of this literature treats governance reforms as contextual background rather than as active behavioural forces. As a result, limited empirical attention has been given to **compliance-oriented academic behaviour**—the tendency of faculty to align their work practices primarily with formal rules, metrics, and monitoring requirements rather than professional judgment or intrinsic academic values.

Managerial governance introduces compliance as a central organizing principle through mechanisms such as standardized performance indicators, formal reporting structures, digital attendance systems, and learning management analytics. Evidence from organizational and educational settings suggests that such control-oriented systems can reshape motivation, trust, and job satisfaction, often producing performative compliance rather than genuine engagement (Sheokand, 2025; Mansukhani & Choubisa, 2017). In academic institutions, where professional discretion and intellectual autonomy have historically defined work culture, these mechanisms represent a fundamental shift in the psychological contract between faculty and institutions.

From an organizational behaviour perspective, compliance is not a neutral administrative outcome but a behavioural response to governance structures and leadership signals. Research on organizational climate and leadership demonstrates that trust-based environments foster commitment and professional agency, whereas control-heavy systems encourage rule-following and risk-averse behaviour (Sheokand, 2025; Mansukhani, 2023). Yet, compliance as a behavioural construct remains under-theorized in higher education research, often subsumed under broader discussions of satisfaction or performance without direct empirical modeling.

Empirically, existing studies face two limitations. First, they rely heavily on descriptive or correlational analyses, offering limited insight into which institutional and organizational factors actually **predict** compliance-oriented behaviour. Second, qualitative accounts of faculty experiences are rarely integrated with predictive quantitative models, leaving a disconnect between lived experience and statistical explanation. Mansukhani's work on evidence-based management and learning organizations highlights the need for analytically grounded frameworks that link organizational structures with behavioural outcomes (Mansukhani & Choubisa, 2017).

This study addresses these gaps by examining compliance-oriented academic behaviour as a measurable organizational outcome shaped by managerial governance intensity, leadership style, organizational climate, and exposure to digital monitoring. Drawing on faculty data from public and private universities, the study adopts a **sequential explanatory mixed-method design**, combining **binary logistic regression** with qualitative inquiry to capture both predictive determinants and interpretive meaning.

By foregrounding compliance as a central behavioural mechanism in managerial universities, this research makes three contributions. First, it extends organizational behaviour theory by positioning compliance as a core outcome of governance regimes in academic institutions. Second, it builds on existing scholarship on leadership and organizational climate by demonstrating how governance structures condition faculty behaviour (Sheokand, 2025; Sheokand & Borad, 2025). Third, it advances evidence-based governance discourse by integrating quantitative prediction with qualitative insight, offering practical implications for academic leaders seeking to balance accountability with professional autonomy.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Managerial Governance and Institutional Control in Universities

Higher education institutions have increasingly shifted from collegial, profession-led governance toward managerial regimes characterized by accountability metrics, audits, and formalized controls. This transition reframes universities as administratively steered organizations where performance is defined through measurable outputs rather than peer judgment or professional discretion. Scholars argue that managerial governance restructures authority relations and redefines what counts as legitimate academic work, with implications for autonomy, trust, and institutional culture.

Research on governance and institutional reform in India similarly highlights the growing role of administrative oversight and policy-driven accountability in education systems, often creating tensions between regulatory compliance and professional agency (Sheokand, 2017; Sheokand, 2023). These dynamics suggest that governance frameworks do not operate neutrally but actively shape institutional climates and behavioural expectations.

Evidence-based management perspectives further emphasize that governance systems act as behavioural infrastructures, channeling organizational learning and conformity through policy design and control mechanisms (Pilani Campus, 2017; Mansukhani & Choubisa, 2017). When applied to universities, this logic implies that intensified governance regimes are likely to reorient faculty behaviour toward compliance-oriented practices.

2.2 Organizational Behaviour, Learning Organizations, and Academic Work Culture

Organizational behaviour research underscores that institutions function not merely through formal structures but through shared norms, learning processes, and behavioural expectations. The concept of the **learning organization** highlights how adaptability, trust, and participatory governance enable professional growth and innovation. However, when learning-oriented systems are supplanted by control-oriented governance, organizational behaviour tends to shift toward conformity and risk aversion.

Empirical analysis of entrepreneurial ventures as learning organizations demonstrates that organizational policies and managerial practices strongly influence behavioural alignment, learning capacity, and employee adaptation (Mansukhani & Choubisa, 2017). Although this work focuses on start-ups, its theoretical implications extend to universities, which similarly rely on knowledge creation and professional discretion. The erosion of learning-oriented environments in favour of compliance regimes risks undermining institutional adaptability and academic engagement.

Studies on academic leadership and organizational climate further indicate that leadership practices significantly shape faculty perceptions of fairness, autonomy, and professional value (Sheokand, 2025; Sheokand & Borad, 2025). Where leadership reinforces managerial control without fostering learning and trust, compliance becomes the dominant behavioural mode.

2.3 Compliance, Accountability, and Behavioural Adaptation

Compliance has received limited direct attention as a distinct organizational behaviour outcome in higher education research, despite its centrality to managerial governance. Within organizational theory, compliance differs fundamentally from commitment: while commitment reflects internalized value alignment, compliance reflects externally driven behavioural conformity.

Research on organizational climate and work culture in educational institutions shows that control-driven environments weaken intrinsic motivation and professional satisfaction, encouraging performative adherence to rules rather than meaningful engagement (Sheokand, 2017; Sheokand, 2025). These findings are consistent with broader organizational evidence suggesting that excessive accountability mechanisms generate surface-level compliance while obscuring deeper disengagement.

Conceptual work applying structured models of behaviour change, such as the Risk–Need–Responsivity framework in institutional settings, further demonstrates how structured systems influence behavioural outcomes by prioritizing regulation and responsiveness over autonomy (Lad & Mansukhani, 2024). Although developed in the context of juvenile justice, the underlying logic—that structured control environments shape behavioural adaptation—offers useful insight for understanding compliance in universities.

2.4 Leadership, Discourse, and the Legitimation of Control

Leadership not only implements governance structures but also legitimizes them through language, symbolism, and institutional narratives. Research on rhetorical analysis and critical thinking highlights how discourse shapes perception, authority, and acceptance of organizational practices (Mansukhani, 2023). In academic institutions, managerial language around “efficiency,” “quality assurance,” and “performance” plays a critical role in normalizing compliance-oriented behaviour.

Empirical studies in education consistently show that leadership styles influence organizational climate and behavioural engagement. Transformational leadership fosters trust and professional commitment, while transactional leadership reinforces compliance and rule adherence (Sheokand & Borad, 2025). These findings suggest that leadership discourse mediates how faculty internalize governance expectations, either as professional guidance or as administrative control.

2.5 Digitalization, Monitoring, and Behavioural Control

The expansion of digital governance tools has intensified compliance pressures through automated monitoring of attendance, teaching delivery, research output, and student feedback. While digital systems are often justified as efficiency-enhancing, research on digital classrooms and educational technology suggests that they also restructure work rhythms and accountability norms (Sheokand, 2017).

Digital monitoring reduces ambiguity in evaluation but heightens surveillance, encouraging behavioural conformity. These dynamics align with broader findings on audit culture, where visibility and traceability become central mechanisms of control, reinforcing compliance-oriented behaviour across institutional settings.

2.6 Gaps in Existing Literature and Positioning of the Study

Despite extensive research on leadership, organizational climate, and job satisfaction, three gaps remain salient. First, compliance-oriented academic behaviour has rarely been modelled as a primary outcome in higher education research. Second, existing studies often rely on descriptive analyses rather than predictive modelling of governance effects. Third, qualitative insights into faculty experience are seldom integrated with robust quantitative analysis.

Recent mixed-method research on job stress, well-being, and organizational climate demonstrates the value of integrating statistical and interpretive approaches to understand behavioural outcomes (Sheokand, 2025). Building on this trajectory, the present study positions compliance as a central organizational behaviour outcome of managerial governance, extending evidence-based management and organizational behaviour theory into the university context.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a **sequential explanatory mixed-methods design**, in which quantitative analysis is followed by qualitative inquiry to explain and contextualize statistical patterns. This design is particularly appropriate for examining organizational behaviour in complex institutional settings, where governance structures produce both measurable behavioural outcomes and nuanced experiential responses.

The quantitative phase identifies predictors of compliance-oriented academic behaviour using inferential modeling, while the qualitative phase deepens interpretation by capturing faculty narratives surrounding governance, leadership, and everyday work practices. Integration occurs at the interpretation stage, ensuring coherence between statistical explanation and lived experience.

3.2 Quantitative Phase

3.2.1 Sample and Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a structured survey administered to faculty members across **public and private universities**. A stratified sampling strategy was employed to ensure representation across institutional type, academic rank, and disciplinary fields. A total of **312 valid responses** were obtained and included in the analysis.

Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured. The sample included faculty members with varying levels of experience, contractual status, and administrative exposure, allowing for meaningful institutional comparison.

3.2.2 Measurement of Variables

Dependent Variable

Compliance-Oriented Academic Behaviour was operationalized as a **binary variable**:

- 1 = High compliance orientation (primary alignment with formal rules, metrics, and monitoring requirements)
- 0 = Low compliance orientation (primary reliance on professional discretion and autonomy)

The dichotomization was based on composite scale scores capturing behavioural alignment with formal institutional controls.

Independent Variables

- **Managerial Governance Intensity:** Measured through faculty perceptions of performance metrics, audit frequency, reporting requirements, and procedural formalization.
- **Leadership Style:** Assessed using items distinguishing transactional leadership practices from developmental leadership orientations.
- **Organizational Climate:** Measured through indicators of trust, autonomy, support, and fairness within the institution.
- **Digital Monitoring Exposure:** Captured as faculty exposure to digital attendance systems, LMS analytics, automated evaluations, and surveillance tools.

Control Variables

Demographic and institutional controls included:

- Gender
- Age
- Academic designation
- Tenure status

- Years of experience
- Institutional type (public/private)

These variables were included to isolate the net effects of governance and organizational factors.

3.2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis proceeded in four stages:

1. **Descriptive Statistics** to summarize sample characteristics and variable distributions
2. **Reliability and Validity Testing**, including internal consistency checks
3. **Binary Logistic Regression Analysis** to estimate the likelihood of compliance-oriented behaviour
4. **Model Diagnostics**, including:
 - Odds ratios (OR)
 - Significance levels
 - Nagelkerke R^2
 - Classification accuracy
 - Goodness-of-fit statistics

The regression model was specified to assess the independent and combined effects of governance intensity, leadership style, organizational climate, and digital monitoring on compliance behaviour.

3.3 Qualitative Phase

3.3.1 Participant Selection

Qualitative participants were selected purposively from the quantitative sample to represent varying levels of compliance orientation, institutional type, and leadership exposure. This ensured alignment between statistical results and qualitative interpretation.

3.3.2 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore faculty experiences of governance reforms, leadership practices, and compliance expectations. Interview protocols focused on:

- Perceptions of managerial control
- Experiences with monitoring and evaluation
- Negotiation of autonomy and professional identity

3.3.3 Data Analysis

Interview data were analyzed using **thematic analysis**, following systematic coding and categorization procedures. Themes were developed inductively and then mapped onto quantitative findings to explain observed behavioural patterns.

3.4 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Integration occurred at the interpretation stage, where qualitative insights were used to:

- Explain statistically significant predictors
- Illuminate behavioural mechanisms underlying compliance
- Identify patterns of strategic conformity, emotional labour, and selective resistance

This integrative approach strengthens explanatory depth and enhances the validity of findings.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The final sample comprised **312 faculty members**, drawn from both public and private universities. Of the respondents, a substantial proportion reported moderate to high exposure to managerial governance mechanisms, including performance metrics, formal reporting requirements, and digital monitoring systems. Preliminary analysis indicated noticeable variation in perceived organizational climate and leadership style across institutional types.

Compliance-oriented academic behaviour was reported by **approximately 62%** of respondents, suggesting that rule- and metric-driven work practices have become a dominant behavioural mode in managerial university settings.

4.2 Binary Logistic Regression Results

A binary logistic regression model was estimated to examine predictors of compliance-oriented academic behaviour. The model demonstrated strong explanatory power, with a **Nagelkerke R^2 of 0.34** and an overall **classification accuracy of 87.6%**, indicating a good fit between observed and predicted outcomes.

Key Predictors

- **Managerial Governance Intensity** emerged as the strongest predictor of compliance-oriented behaviour. Faculty reporting higher governance intensity were significantly more likely to exhibit compliance-oriented behaviour (**OR = 4.68, $p < 0.001$**), supporting **H1**.
- **Leadership Style** showed a statistically significant effect. Transactional leadership was positively associated with compliance orientation (**OR = 2.91, $p < 0.01$**), confirming **H2**. Developmental leadership styles were associated with lower compliance dependence, though this effect was indirect.
- **Organizational Climate** exerted a strong moderating influence. A trust-based organizational climate significantly reduced the likelihood of compliance-oriented behaviour (**OR = 0.41, $p < 0.01$**), lending support to **H3**.
- **Digital Monitoring Exposure** significantly increased the likelihood of compliance-oriented behaviour (**OR = 3.37, $p < 0.001$**), providing robust support for **H4**.

- **Institutional Type** moderated governance effects. Faculty in private universities demonstrated a higher probability of compliance-oriented behaviour compared to their public university counterparts, supporting **H5**.

Control Variables

Demographic variables, including gender and age, were not statistically significant predictors once organizational and governance factors were controlled. Academic designation and tenure status showed marginal effects but did not substantially alter the core model.

4.3 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

- H1: Supported
- H2: Supported
- H3: Supported
- H4: Supported
- H5: Supported

The results indicate that compliance-oriented academic behaviour is primarily shaped by **structural and organizational factors**, rather than individual demographics.

4.4 Qualitative Findings

Qualitative analysis yielded three dominant themes that contextualize the quantitative results:

4.4.1 Strategic Conformity

Faculty members described engaging in compliance strategically to meet formal expectations while informally preserving academic autonomy. Compliance was often framed as a survival mechanism rather than genuine endorsement of managerial control.

4.4.2 Emotional Labour and Performative Accountability

Participants reported increased emotional labour associated with documentation, reporting, and metric satisfaction. Several faculty members noted that compliance-oriented practices created a sense of performative accountability, where visibility replaced substantive academic engagement.

4.4.3 Quiet Resistance and Adaptive Behaviour

Despite high compliance orientation, faculty narratives revealed subtle forms of resistance, including selective prioritization of tasks, symbolic adherence to rules, and reliance on informal academic networks to sustain professional identity.

4.5 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The qualitative findings illuminate the behavioural mechanisms underlying the regression results. While managerial governance and digital monitoring statistically predict compliance-oriented behaviour, faculty experiences reveal that compliance is actively negotiated rather than passively imposed. Trust-based

organizational climates and supportive leadership mitigate the intensity of compliance by enabling discretionary adaptation, consistent with the negative association observed in the quantitative model.

5. Discussion

This study set out to examine how managerial governance reshapes academic work cultures by producing compliance-oriented organizational behaviour in universities. The findings provide clear empirical evidence that compliance is not a peripheral administrative response but a central behavioural outcome of contemporary governance regimes in higher education. By integrating predictive modeling with qualitative interpretation, the study advances a more nuanced understanding of how faculty adapt to managerial control.

5.1 Compliance as a Structural Behavioural Outcome

The results demonstrate that **managerial governance intensity** is the most powerful predictor of compliance-oriented academic behaviour. This finding supports the argument that governance structures operate as behavioural architectures, shaping how faculty interpret expectations and regulate their own conduct. Rather than being driven by individual dispositions or demographic characteristics, compliance emerges as a rational response to institutional environments characterized by audits, metrics, and monitoring.

This aligns with organizational behaviour perspectives that distinguish compliance from commitment. While commitment reflects internalized alignment with institutional goals, compliance reflects external adaptation to formal controls. The dominance of governance intensity in the regression model reinforces the view that contemporary universities increasingly regulate academic work through formalized accountability rather than professional trust, echoing earlier concerns about the erosion of collegial governance in higher education.

5.2 Leadership as a Behavioural Amplifier

The significant association between **transactional leadership** and compliance-oriented behaviour highlights the role of leadership as an amplifier of governance effects. Transactional leadership reinforces rule adherence and performance visibility, thereby translating abstract governance mandates into everyday behavioural expectations. This finding extends prior research on academic leadership and organizational climate, which has shown that leadership practices significantly shape faculty motivation and engagement (Sheokand, 2025; Sheokand & Borad, 2025).

Importantly, the results suggest that leadership does not operate independently of governance structures. Instead, leadership styles condition how governance reforms are experienced at the faculty level. Where leadership emphasizes compliance over professional discretion, managerial governance is more likely to produce performative and risk-averse academic behaviour.

5.3 Organizational Climate and the Role of Trust

One of the most theoretically significant findings of the study is the **negative association between trust-based organizational climate and compliance orientation**. This indicates that trust functions as a

countervailing force against excessive reliance on formal control mechanisms. Faculty operating in supportive and autonomy-oriented climates are less dependent on compliance, even within managerial governance frameworks.

This finding resonates with prior work on organizational climate and teacher performance, which emphasizes the centrality of trust, fairness, and autonomy in sustaining professional engagement (Sheokand, 2025). It also complements Mansukhani's analysis of organizational discourse and critical thinking, which highlights how institutional narratives legitimize either control or autonomy, shaping behavioural norms (Mansukhani, 2023).

5.4 Digital Monitoring and the Intensification of Compliance

The strong predictive effect of **digital monitoring exposure** underscores the growing role of technology in reinforcing managerial governance. Automated attendance systems, learning management analytics, and performance dashboards reduce ambiguity in evaluation but simultaneously heighten perceptions of surveillance. The findings suggest that digital tools do not merely facilitate governance but actively intensify compliance-oriented behaviour.

This has important implications for understanding contemporary academic work cultures. Digital monitoring appears to normalize continuous visibility, encouraging faculty to prioritize measurable outputs over substantive academic engagement. Qualitative narratives of strategic conformity and emotional labour further illustrate how technology-mediated governance reshapes professional identity and work rhythms.

5.5 Interpreting Compliance Beyond Obedience

The qualitative findings complicate a simplistic interpretation of compliance as passive obedience. Faculty narratives reveal patterns of **strategic conformity, emotional labour, and quiet resistance**, suggesting that compliance is actively negotiated. Academics adapt to formal requirements while informally preserving professional autonomy where possible. This duality helps explain why compliance-oriented behaviour can coexist with dissatisfaction, fatigue, and disengagement.

These insights align with evidence-based management perspectives that emphasize the importance of understanding behavioural responses to organizational systems rather than assuming linear policy effects (Mansukhani & Choubisa, 2017). Compliance, in this sense, reflects adaptive behaviour under constraint rather than ideological acceptance of managerial governance.

5.6 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes three key theoretical contributions. First, it positions **compliance orientation** as a central organizational behaviour construct in higher education, rather than treating it as a secondary administrative issue. Second, it demonstrates how governance structures, leadership practices, and organizational climate interact to shape academic behaviour. Third, it advances mixed-method organizational research by integrating predictive modeling with interpretive insight, bridging the gap between statistical explanation and lived experience.

6. Implications

6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to organizational behaviour theory by foregrounding **compliance orientation** as a core behavioural outcome in contemporary universities. Existing OB and higher education research has largely focused on constructs such as job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and well-being, often treating governance mechanisms as contextual variables. By contrast, the present findings demonstrate that governance structures actively shape behavioural alignment, positioning compliance as a distinct and theoretically meaningful construct.

The results also extend leadership and organizational climate theory by showing that governance effects are neither uniform nor deterministic. Leadership style and organizational climate condition how governance reforms translate into behaviour, supporting a more interactionist view of organizational control. This moves the literature beyond binary debates of collegial versus managerial governance and toward a nuanced understanding of how professional organizations function under hybrid control regimes.

Finally, by integrating predictive modeling with qualitative interpretation, the study advances methodological approaches in organizational research. It demonstrates the value of combining **binary logistic regression** with interpretive analysis to explain not only whether compliance occurs, but how and why it is negotiated within professional settings.

6.2 Implications for Academic Leadership

For academic leaders, the findings underscore the behavioural consequences of governance and leadership choices. While managerial accountability mechanisms may enhance visibility and standardization, excessive reliance on compliance-oriented control risks encouraging performative behaviour at the expense of professional judgment and intrinsic motivation.

Leadership practices play a decisive role in mediating these effects. Transactional leadership amplifies compliance dependence, whereas trust-based and developmental leadership styles mitigate it by sustaining professional autonomy. Academic leaders therefore face a strategic choice: to govern primarily through rule enforcement or to balance accountability with relational trust and professional discretion.

Importantly, the findings suggest that leadership effectiveness in universities cannot be evaluated solely through performance metrics. Leaders must also be assessed on their capacity to maintain healthy organizational climates that reduce unnecessary compliance and preserve academic agency.

6.3 Implications for University Governance and Policy

At the policy level, the study raises critical questions about the design of governance systems in higher education. Compliance regimes driven by audits, metrics, and digital monitoring may achieve short-term accountability gains but risk long-term erosion of institutional trust and professional commitment.

Governance frameworks should therefore incorporate **evidence-based management principles**, emphasizing proportional accountability, transparency, and contextual sensitivity. Rather than expanding monitoring indiscriminately, institutions should differentiate between areas requiring formal control and those better governed through professional norms.

The findings also caution against uncritical adoption of digital monitoring technologies. While such systems enhance administrative efficiency, they simultaneously intensify surveillance and compliance pressures. Policymakers and administrators must evaluate not only the technical effectiveness of digital tools but also their behavioural and cultural consequences.

6.4 Implications for Faculty and Institutional Sustainability

For faculty members, the study highlights the structural origins of compliance-oriented behaviour, reframing it as an adaptive response to governance conditions rather than an individual failing. Recognizing this dynamic can inform collective dialogue around governance reform, workload distribution, and professional autonomy.

From an institutional sustainability perspective, the results suggest that universities risk undermining their core academic mission if compliance becomes the dominant mode of regulation. Sustainable academic performance depends not only on accountability systems but on environments that support trust, intellectual risk-taking, and professional integrity.

7. Limitations and Future Research

While this study offers important insights into compliance-oriented academic behaviour in managerial universities, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the study employs a **cross-sectional research design**, which limits causal inference. Although the binary logistic regression model identifies significant predictors of compliance-oriented behaviour, longitudinal data would allow for stronger conclusions regarding temporal dynamics and behavioural change over time. Future research could adopt longitudinal or panel designs to examine how governance reforms and leadership transitions influence compliance trajectories across academic careers.

Second, the data are based on **self-reported faculty perceptions**, which may be subject to response bias. While perceptual measures are appropriate for capturing organizational climate and governance experience, future studies could triangulate survey data with administrative records, performance indicators, or observational methods to enhance robustness.

Third, the institutional context of the study, while diverse, is geographically bounded. Governance structures, accountability regimes, and employment conditions vary across national and regulatory contexts. Comparative studies across countries or higher education systems would strengthen the generalizability of findings and illuminate how cultural and policy environments mediate compliance behaviour.

Fourth, the operationalization of compliance-oriented behaviour as a binary outcome, while analytically useful, simplifies a complex behavioural continuum. Future research could explore multi-category or latent class models to capture varying degrees and forms of compliance, including symbolic compliance, selective compliance, and resistance-oriented behaviour.

Finally, while this study integrates qualitative insights to explain quantitative patterns, future research could deepen qualitative engagement by incorporating ethnographic approaches or discourse analysis to examine how compliance is produced, justified, and contested within institutional narratives. Building on

work in critical thinking and organizational discourse, such approaches would further illuminate the cultural dimensions of managerial governance.

Collectively, these directions point toward a broader research agenda that examines how universities can design governance systems that balance accountability with autonomy, efficiency with trust, and compliance with commitment.

8. Conclusion

This study examined how managerial governance reshapes academic work cultures by producing compliance-oriented organizational behaviour in universities. By integrating predictive quantitative analysis with qualitative interpretation, the research demonstrates that compliance is not a peripheral administrative response but a central behavioural outcome shaped by governance intensity, leadership style, organizational climate, and digital monitoring mechanisms.

The findings show that managerial governance and transactional leadership significantly increase the likelihood of compliance-oriented academic behaviour, while trust-based organizational climates mitigate dependence on formal control. Digital monitoring further intensifies compliance pressures, reinforcing performative accountability and altering professional work practices. Importantly, demographic characteristics exert minimal influence once institutional and organizational factors are accounted for, underscoring the structural origins of compliance behaviour.

Beyond statistical relationships, the qualitative evidence reveals that compliance is actively negotiated by faculty members through strategic conformity, emotional labour, and selective resistance. This highlights the coexistence of formal compliance with informal efforts to preserve professional autonomy, offering a more nuanced understanding of behavioural adaptation within managerial universities.

The study contributes to organizational behaviour and higher education governance literature by conceptualizing compliance as a key behavioural mechanism in professional organizations. It advances leadership research by demonstrating how governance structures and leadership practices interact to shape faculty behaviour, and it strengthens evidence-based management discourse by linking policy design with behavioural outcomes.

For academic leaders and policymakers, the findings underscore the need to recalibrate governance frameworks that rely heavily on metrics and monitoring. Sustainable academic performance requires not only accountability but also trust, autonomy, and professional discretion. Universities that recognize and balance these dimensions are better positioned to maintain institutional effectiveness without undermining the core values of academic work.

In an era of intensified managerialism and digital oversight, this study offers a timely and empirically grounded framework for understanding how governance reforms translate into everyday academic behaviour. By foregrounding compliance as an organizational behavioural outcome, it invites further inquiry into how universities can govern responsibly while preserving the intellectual and professional foundations upon which higher education depends.

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