LEAD2 MOOC Report

LEAD2 MOOCs

University Governance and Academic Leadership for Senior Leaders (Edition 6)
Academic Leadership for Mid-Level Leaders (Edition 1)
Leadership Development for Young Academic Leaders (Edition 3)
September 2021 - February 2022

PROJECT

Enhancing Academic Leadership and Governance of Chinese and European
Universities in the Context of Innovation and Internationalization (LEAD2)
Ref N° 598874-EPP-1-2018-BE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

This report is part of project deliverables of WP2 (D2.1 Improvement and implementation of
MOOCs) and part of WP3 (D3.2, internal quality assurance reports)

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Report time

Feb. 2022

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I. INTRODUCTION

The LEAD2 MOOCs are part of the results of the LEAD2 project, aiming to improve knowledge, skills and competencies of academic members and leaders on university governance and academic leadership. The MOOCs are open for all participants regardless of their countries, institutions, or academic positions. In Sep 2021, the sixth edition of the English and Chinese version of the MOOC on university governance and academic leadership (SAL), the third edition of the English and Chinese version of MOOC on Leadership Development for Young Academic Leaders (YAL) and the first edition of the English and Chinese version of MOOC on middle-level academic leaders (MAL) were launched with a total of 437 participants enrolled.

Participants were invited to fill in the welcome survey to evaluate users' expectations regarding the MOOC course, including closed-ended and open-ended questions. Through utilising a Likert scale, close-ended and open-ended questions inquired participants' level of agreement on their motivations for taking the course, the time they planned to spend for the course completion, their prior experience regarding online learning and professional training, their expectations for joining the course. Of 437 participants who registered for the MOOC courses, 107 respondents voluntarily took the survey. After collecting and cleaning data, data analysis has been set up: descriptive statistics have been calculated for the close-ended questions, while the qualitative approach has been applied for the open-ended questions.

This report presents the results of the survey as follow:

Socio-demographics	• Gender • Age • Education attaintment • Role • Region of residence
Motivation for taking the LEAD2 MOOC	• Main reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOC
Prior experience	• Professional development courses • Hearing about the LEAD2 MOOC
Expectations related to the MOOC	• Reasons for taking the course • Time planning to spend • Challenges to address • Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills to develop • Personal and professional goals (open-ended questions)

II. RESULTS

2.1. Sociodemographic characteristics

This section of the report presents the participants' sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, the region of residence, age, educational attainment, and academic roles. The results are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants

(N=106)	Category	Statistics	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	55	51,89
	Male	50	47,17
	Missing	1	0,94
Age (M = 36,49, SD = 8,58)			
	22-29	99	44
	30-39	63	28
	40-49	32	14.2
	50 or more	8	3.6
	Missing	23	102

Educational attainment

	Ph.D, J.D, or M.D (or equivalent)	45	42,45
	Master's Degree (or equivalent)	45	42,45
	Bachelor's Degree (or equivalent)	14	13,21
	Missing	2	1,89

Academic role

	Academic staff (non-manager)	52	41,94
	Department head, (Vice) Dean	28	22,58
	Administrative staff (non-academic)	23	18,55
	Researchers, etc.	19	15,32
	(Vice) Rector	2	1,61

Region of residence

	Asia	70	66,04
	Africa	14	13,21
	Europe	12	11,32
	Middle East	5	4,72
	America	4	3,77
	Oceania	1	0,94

As can be seen from Table 1, participants from these course editions were mainly female (51,89%). The mean age was 36.49 (M=36,49, SD= 8,58). Regarding the participants' education levels, 42,45% reported having a PhD's degree or a Master's degree, and 13,21% reported having a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Regarding the current academic roles, a majority of participants reported holding academic staff roles in their institutions (41,94%), 28% of the participants reported holding academic positions such as head of department, dean or vice-dean, 18,55% of users reported holding administrative staff position, while 1,61% selected "(Vice) Rector" option. Concerning the countries of residence, participants came from different countries around the world. Of these, 66,04% of users came from Asian countries, 13,2% reported coming from African countries, 11,32% of the respondents came from Europe, 4,72% of the respondents came from Middle East countries, and 4,71% of the users came from different countries in America and Oceania.

2.2. Closed-ended questions
2.2.1. Motivation for taking the LEAD2 MOOCs

Participants were asked about the reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOCs. Details on this can be seen in *Figure 1*. More than 70% of survey participants reported that they want to gain new or broaden existing academic leadership skills. In addition, 65,71% of the participants reported the motivation on "personally enjoy learning about university governance and academic leadership", and 55,24% of the users selected the option of "wanting to broaden networking opportunities for future research and educational collaboration".

Similarly, 55,24% of the attendees wanted to gain deeper insights into the Chinese and/or European higher education structures and governance. 53,33% of the respondents reported that they want to learn more about university governance and academic leadership practices. 52,38% of the users reported wanting a better understanding of the practices and decisions of academic leaders in their institution, while 42,86% of the users wanted to learn current approaches and trends in HE governance. 26,67% of the respondents reported wanting to obtain the certificate. 12,38% of the users selected the option of "learning more about university governance and academic leadership practices in China and/or Europe". 4,76% of the users selected "other" option.
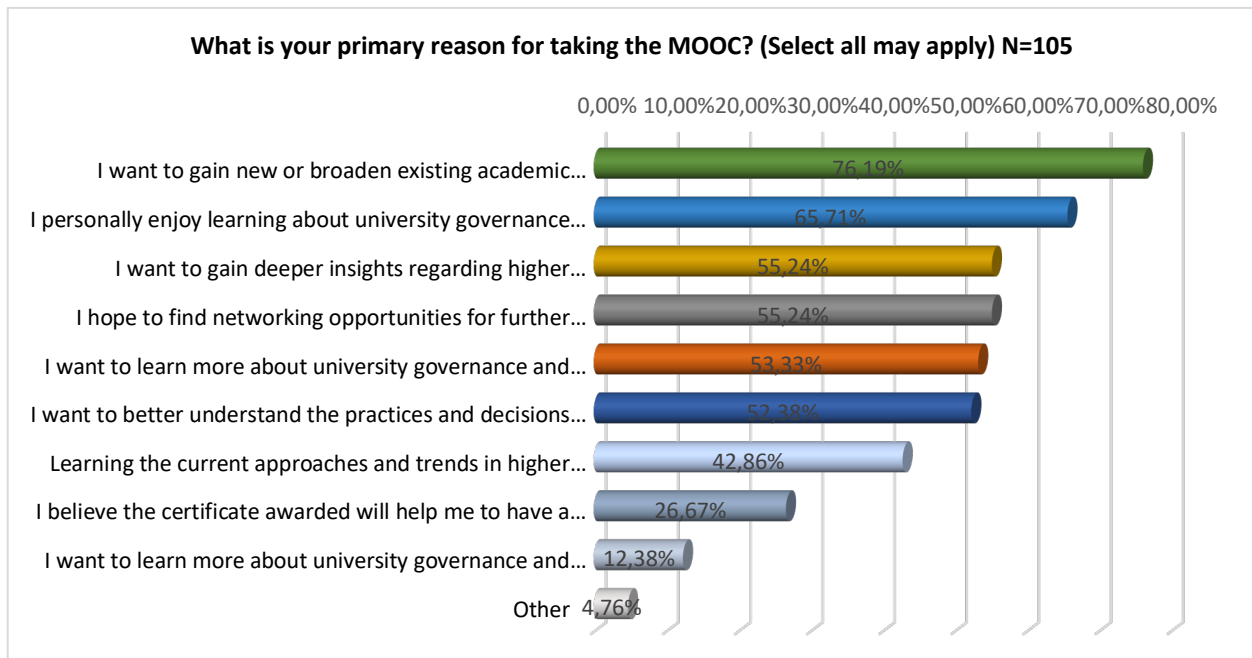

Figure 1. Reasons for taking the LEAD2 MOOCs.

2.2.2. Prior experience and hearing about the LEAD2 MOOCs

Below is the set of variables related to previous experiences of the participant regarding other online courses, professional development courses, and how they heard about the LEAD2 MOOCs.

2.2.1.1. Prior experience with professional development training on academic leadership

Participants were asked whether they had participated in any professional training or course about university governance and academic leadership before. The findings reveal that a majority of the participants have not experienced professional training on this theme. It can be seen in *Figure.2*, a majority of the participants had not experienced professional training on this theme before (56%) participated while a number of respondents who did experience were 42%.
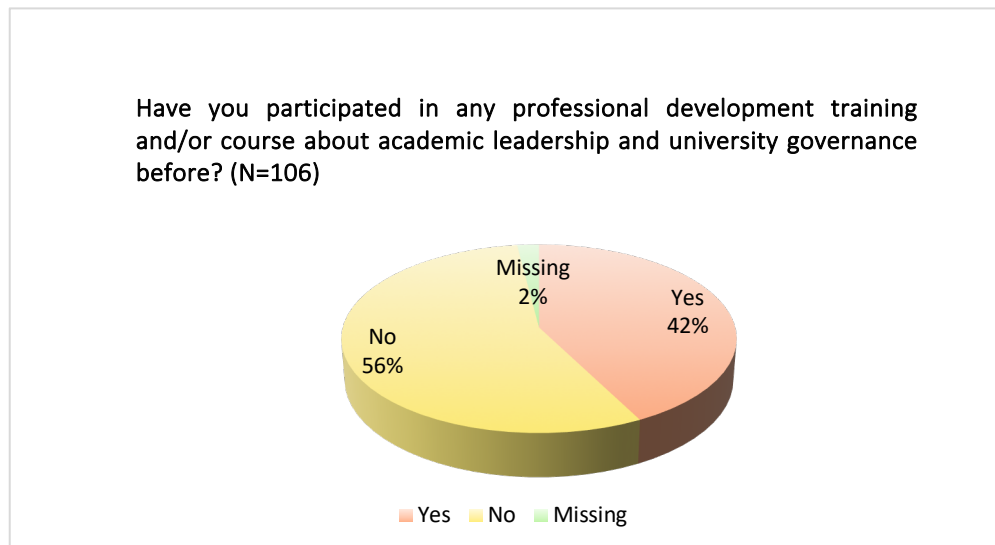

Figure 2. Previous experience with professional development training on academic leadership

2.2.1.2. Hearing about the LEAD2 MOOCs

Users were asked about how they knew about the LEAD2 MOOCs. The results are depicted in *Figure 3*. The findings reveal "my institution is a LEAD or LEAD2 project partner" received the highest votes, which accounted for 49,52% of total observations, followed by "through a social media site (e.g. Facebook)" (16,19%. Several participants reported that they hear about the MOOC through a newsletter/website or from a web search (14,29% and 13,33%, respectively). 8,57% of the respondents selected the "other" option, and 3,81% of the respondents selected the option of "from a university event". The findings show the importance of web search, networking, and social media in advertising the online course on university governance and academic leadership.
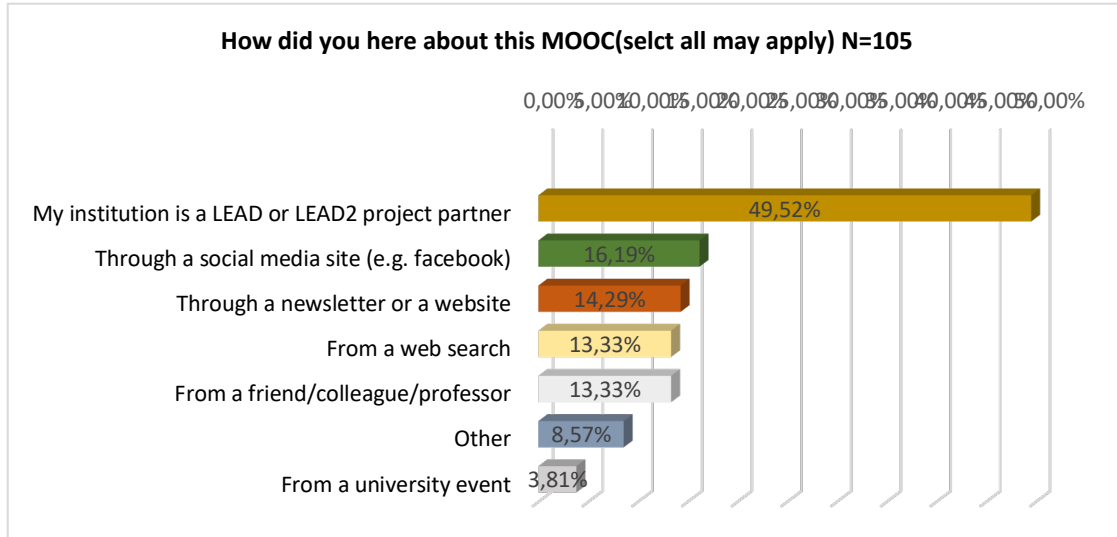
How did you here about this MOOC(selct all may apply) N=105

- My institution is a LEAD or LEAD2 project partner: 49,52%
- Through a social media site (e.g. facebook): 16,19%
- Through a newsletter or a website: 14,29%
- From a web search: 13,33%
- From a friend/colleague/professor: 13,33%
- Other: 8,57%
- From a university event: 3,81%

Figure 3. How did participants hear about the LEAD2 MOOC?

2.2.3. Expectations related to the LEAD2 MOOCs

2.2.3.1. Time planning to spend

In the expectation category, MOOC participants were also asked about the number of hours per week they planned to spend on the course. Between 2 and 4 hours and less than 2 hours were predominantly chosen by respondents in the MOOC course.

It can be seen in **Figure 4**, 53,33% of the attendees reported that they intended to spend 2-4 hours per week for learning, while 23,81 % of the participants wanted to spend less than 2 hours a week learning the course. Some users chose the schedule between 4-6 hours (20%) or more than 6 hours (2,86%).
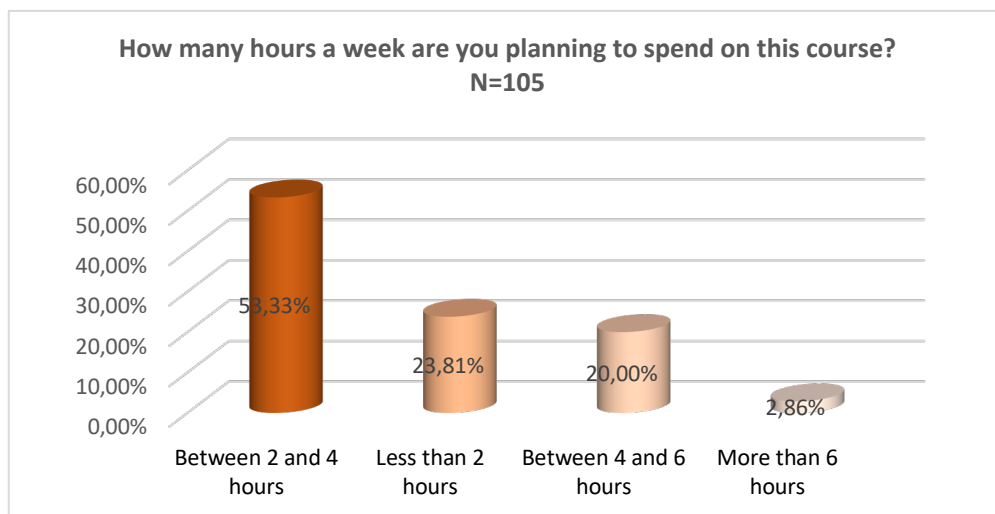

How many hours a week are you planning to spend on this course? N=105

- Between 2 and 4 hours: 53,33%
- Less than 2 hours: 23,81%
- Between 4 and 6 hours: 20,00%
- More than 6 hours: 2,86%

Figure 4. Planned number of hours a week to spend

2.2.3.2. Challenges to address

Figure 5 plots the percentages of users' expectations on the effectiveness of the course regarding given challenges. Users predominantly chose between the two options, namely very helpful or extremely helpful. In other words, a majority of respondents believed that the MOOCs would be very or extremely useful to address the ongoing challenges within academic institutions.

Participants were asked to evaluate whether the course would be useful to address the challenges of globalisation and internationalisation. Notably, a substantial majority of respondents expressed high expectations of the productiveness of the course on addressing the selected obstacles. As can be seen in *Figure 5*, respondents predominantly chose the two options of "very helpful"(41,58%) and "moderately helpful" (33,66%). 13,86% of the users reported "extremely helpful" while the number of respondents who chose the top options of "slightly helpful" or "not helpful" was just about 10%.

The results of users 'expectations toward the usefulness of the course on addressing the challenge of academic leadership for internationalisation are indicated in figure 5. As shown in the figure, 45,45% of respondents reported "very helpful" and 20,20% reported "extremely helpful". 25,25% of users reported "moderately helpful". A few of the participants chose options of "slightly helpful" (9,09%) and no participant selected the "not helpful" option.

Concerning users' perception of the usefulness of the course concerning addressing the challenges on research and innovation capacity of the university, participants predominantly chose the option "very helpful" and "extremely helpful". To be specific, a majority of participants agreed on the argument that the course would be "very useful" (41,58 %) or "extremely useful" (18,81%) to address the given challenge. 27,72% of the users selected the "moderately useful" option. 10,89% of respondents supported the argument that the course will be "slightly useful". Only 0,99% of the respondents selected the "not helpful" option.

As for the challenge of changing university governance structure, a majority of participants agreed on the argument that the course will be "very useful" (35,64%) or "extremely useful" (15,84%) to address the specific challenge regarding university governance structure. 27,72% of the users thought the course was "moderately useful". 15,84% of the respondents selected the "slightly helpful" option. A few respondents supported the argument that the course will be "not useful" (4,95%).

Participants were asked to evaluate whether the course would be useful to address the challenge of changing academic leadership skills and enhancing knowledge. As shown in the figure,

a majority of users believed that the course would be "very helpful" or "extremely helpful" to address the chosen challenge (50,52% and 22,68%, respectively). While the percentage of users who reported "moderately helpful" is 23,71%, just a few numbers of users reported "slightly helpful" (3,09%). No participant selected the "not helpful" option.

To what extent the MOOC course help you to address the following challenges?
N=105

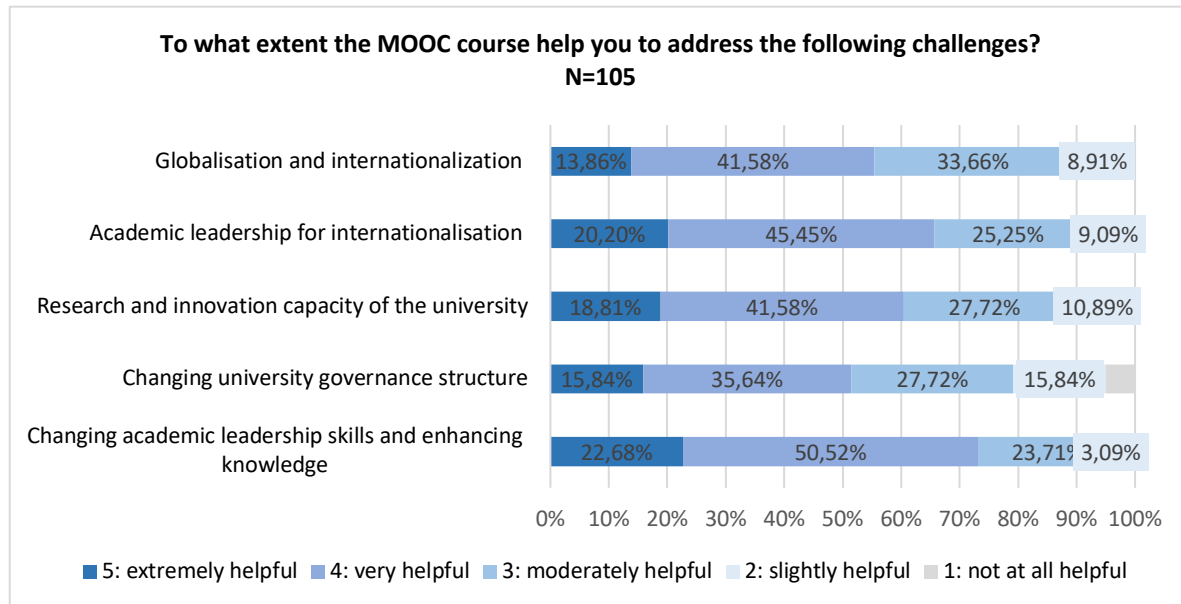|	5: extremely helpful	4: very helpful	3: moderately helpful	2: slightly helpful	1: not at all helpful
Globalisation and internationalization	13,86%	41,58%	33,66%	8,91%	
Academic leadership for internationalisation	20,20%	45,45%	25,25%	9,09%	
Research and innovation capacity of the university	18,81%	41,58%	27,72%	10,89%	
Changing university governance structure	15,84%	35,64%	27,72%	15,84%	
Changing academic leadership skills and enhancing knowledge	22,68%	50,52%	23,71%	3,09%	

Figure 5. Percentage of expectations on how helpful the MOOC will be to address a given challenge.

Consistent with the frequency analysis, the descriptive analysis indicated that a majority of the participants reported high expectations on how the course helps address given challenges. As shown in *Table 2*, the mean scores were high to be considered the sign of high satisfaction perceived for each scale item with the relatively lower mean of M= 3.56 (SD= .91) achieved for "globalisation and internationalisation".

Table 2. Mean and standard deviations for expectations on how the MOOC would be helpful to address a given challenge.

Specific items	M	SD
Globalisation and internationalisation	3.56	.91
Academic leadership for internationalisation	3.93	.76
Research and innovation capacity of the university	3.82	.88
Changing university governance structure	3.66	.94
Changing academic leadership skills and enhancing knowledge	3.77	.87

2.2.3.3. Competencies, knowledge, skills to develop

Participants were asked the extent to which they believed the course would provide them with upgraded specific competencies, knowledge, and skills. The results are plotted in *Figure 6*. In

general, the majority of participants agreed that the course would be useful in order to master academic leadership skills, understand current challenges for HEIs, understand different approaches in university governance, and gain knowledge about knowledge about university structures.

As shown in *Figure 6*, the highest frequent options were "academic leadership skills" (47,62%), followed by the option of "understanding about current challenges for HE" and "understanding about different leadership approaches in university governance (46,67% for both options). 35,24% of the participants selected "knowledge about university governance structures" option (35,24%) while 30,48% of the respondents selected "understanding university governance structures in Europe and/or China. Only 7,62% of the respondents selected the "other" option.
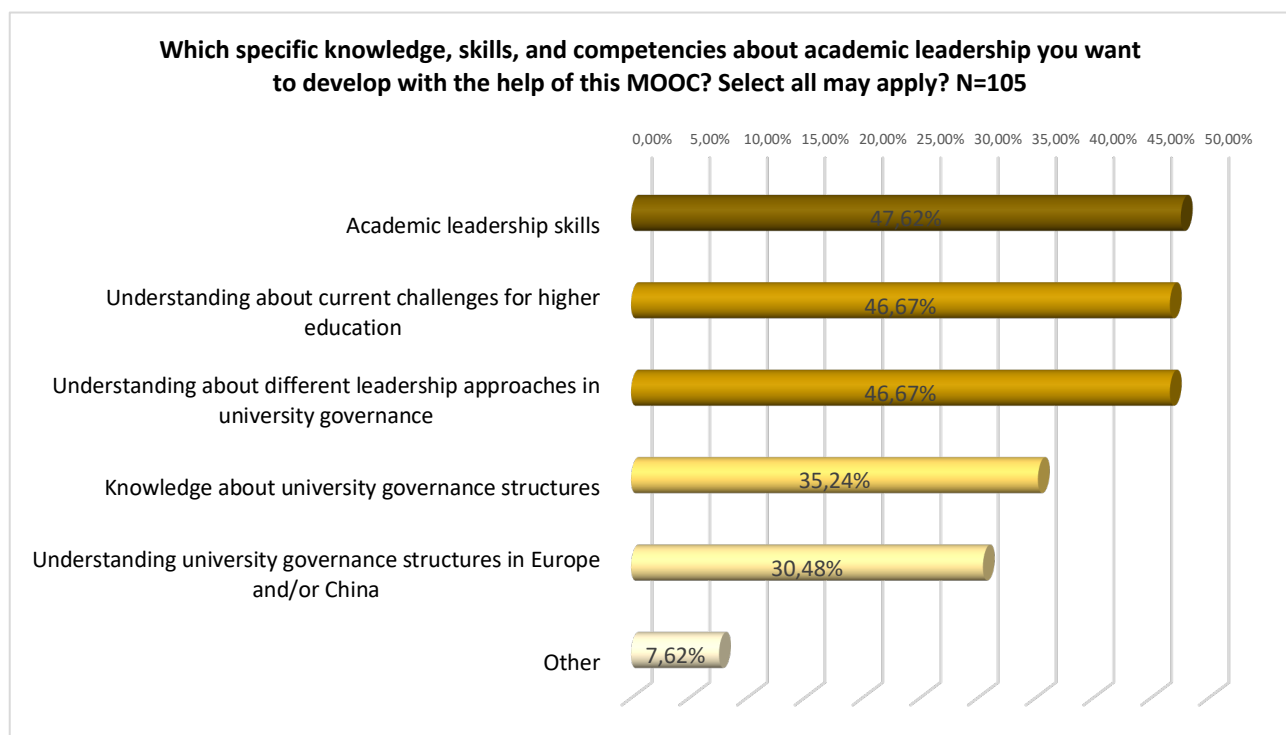

Figure 6. Specific competencies, knowledge, and skills to gain about academic leadership

2.3. Open-ended questions

To gain deeper insights into the motivation for taking the course, participants were asked to share about how the MOOC can help them meet their personal and professional goals. The comments generally clustered around the relevance of the topics, the opportunities to enhance knowledge, leadership skills, and the chance to broaden the professional network. The results are consistent with the quantitative findings.

The most frequent comment was about the relevance of the topics. Shared by participants, they find that the MOOC is interesting, and it is expected to help participants learning more about university governance and academic leadership.

"I am currently employed by Accademia Europea di Firenze as Admissions and Student Integration Coordinator. I am hoping to move up to a position as Assistant Director of Academic Affairs. We service a very diverse student population from all over the globe: the Americas, Europe and Asia. I am hoping that I will be able to apply the knowledge I acquire through this course in a way that benefits all stakeholders involved: the institution, faculty, staff members and students." (female, 49)

"I am a Curriculum Implementation Programme Manager for the Distance Education department in one of my country's premier national Universities. This is a new position created to address the long curriculum leadership over more than two decades of this department's existence, and there are many areas that need polishing, advancing and sustaining. I also view myself as a senior leader and count myself to become the next head of my department or a better leadership position than where I am now. With these two clear-cut needs in mind, I have realised the importance of equipping myself not with the content and skills but also to be able to learn, especially from the world education leaders. Since. Europe and China are leading in providing the best education, and I am happy to learn from their shared experiences and expectations in this course. Not only that but, through participating and discussing I am also looking forward to learning from others internationally and be able to compare and contextualise my leadership activities within my department and institution." (female, 45)

"I am currently holding an administrative position in my department. I hope to do a reality check for our daily practices. If I learn any new helpful ideas/solutions, I will be happy to introduce them to my department." (female, 35)

Participants also expressed expectations on enhancing and broadening knowledge on university governance and academic leadership. Of this, having comprehensive or extensive knowledge in academic and institutional leadership, understanding university structures, gaining new insights into university governance and academic leadership, exploring various perspectives of leadership in different academic cultures were emphasised.

"I hope that this course will further expand my knowledge. I feel that being able to see the perspective of other people and organization can further widen my understanding." (male, 45)

"I would like to learn more about international higher education institutions, helping to be able to use some of that knowledge in my own institution." (male, 49)

"This course helps me to gain knowledge about university governance and academic leadership as well as deeper insights regarding higher education structures and governance. In addition, the course also provides me skills and practices to design and develop higher education programs suitably in the future." (female, 37)

"This course will give a better understanding about university leadership and governance that being practiced in other countries. The lesson learn could be applied in my institution." (female, 45)

Indicated by a majority of the participants, the course is the potential to enhance competencies and skills in academic leadership. In this light, respondents mainly highlighted the goal of taking this MOOC was to enhance skills regarding academic leadership. Many participants shared that they hold administrative positions in academic institutions. Unfortunately, they pointed out the lack of professional development training within their institutions. Thus, the goal of taking this MOOC was to sharpen professional skills. Respondents expected that the course would help them to upgrade professional skills and then can assist them in administrative work.

"Based on the current situation of running the university, the course seems to offer a good starting point for effecting changes in the modern governance of universities. The course will help me to initiate changes for better running and governing universities in the 21st century." (male, 42)

"Not only focussed on disciplinary skills but able to provide a more complete profile thanks to understanding of the organization, context, and scenario characteristics." (male, 37)

Another theme highlighted by respondents was about preparing future career. Several participants shared their ambition to obtain a promotion in academic institutions. To that end, taking the MOOC and earning certificate was highlighted as a good start.

"This course will boost my performance at my work. It will help perform better in carrying out in the field of higher education management." (male, 37)

"I am currently studying and researching in the field of higher education, and I believe that academic leadership will go some way to helping me understand the research related to higher education, and I hope that I will be able to acquire such skills for a career in higher education management." (female, 41)

Several participants highlighted the opportunities for exchanges, networking and collaboration.

"As a lifelong learner, I want to learn more and feel useful by applying my skills to change society positively. Then, professionally, I expect to meet many people for networking and collaborative activities." (male, 35)

"I studied the MOOC course, actively participated in the training sessions organised by LEAD2, actively interacted and learned more with colleagues from other universities and had the opportunity to participate in offline exchanges." (male, 25)

"Apart from meeting people with various experiences that we can share, I am very interested in building networks to have teams and collaboration in research projects. What I believe, no one can succeed alone. Attending this course does not only expand my knowledge on the higher learning institutional setup and operations but also will add value to my academic qualifications." (Male, 49)

One participant posits that the course potentially helps them design a new training course in the future.

"This course helps me to understand more about university governance and academic leadership. Therefore, I can have knowledge and skills to design higher education programs suitably in the future." (female, 37)

III. CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of the Welcome survey was to explore learners' perceptions of motivation to join the LEAD2 MOOCs and their expectations. The findings reveal different reasons for joining the MOOCs shared by learners, their prior experience, and their expectations when following the MOOCs.

Concerning the main reasons for taking the MOOCs, the results reveal that the most frequent reasons reported by learners are "broadening existing academic leadership skills", "personally enjoy learning about university governance and academic leadership", and "wanting to broaden networking opportunities for future research and educational collaboration". Thus, apart from engaging participants, organizing online platforms for learners, including MOOC discussion forums, LEAD2 community on Online Knowledge Base, and Padlet are equally essential to connect MOOC learners. Regarding expectations related to the course, most users planned to spend 2 and 4 hours per week learning activities. Thus, it is essential to keep learners active and accomplish the learning tasks. To that end, course facilitators play an essential role in notifying learners about their learning progress, encouraging learners to actively contribute to the discussion forum, and supporting them if they have any questions regarding the course. Concerning expectations, most of the participants highly agreed that the course is potential to enhance knowledge and skills in university governance and academic leadership.