



Journal of Education & Humanities Research (JEHR)
Institute of Education & Research (IER), University of Balochistan, Quetta-Pakistan

Volume: 17, Issue-I, 2024; ISSN:2415-2366 (Print) 2710-2971 (Online)

Email: jehr@um.uob.edu.pk

URL: <http://web.uob.edu.pk/uob/Journals/jehr/jehr.php>

“Researchers’ Perception Regarding Administrative Processes in Higher Education Institutions of Quetta”

Abdul Qadoos: *Research scholar at Institute of Education & Research, Gomal University D. I. Khan*

Malik Amer Atta: *IER, Gomal University D. I. Khan*

Maria Khan: Research Scholar: *Department of elementary Teacher Education, AIOU, Islamabad*

Received: May 28, 2024

Accepted: June 26, 2024

Published: June 30, 2024

KEY WORDS

Research processes,
Research Protocols,
HEIS,

ABSTRACT

The current study aims to explore the perception of researchers regarding the administrative processes followed by them for pursuing a research in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The ponder point of the current study is either these administrative protocols are facilitating research activities or impeding the output of the research. To answer this question a quantitative approach was adopted to surveyed the respondents. A number of 600 contacted through web-based and paper based for response utilizing convenience sampling technique. A number of 513 researchers responded to the questions. The finding of the study suggests that in the surveyed HEIs, a simple and clear guideline is followed for pursuing research. Moreover, the finding also reveals that majority of the respondents consider administrative protocols are time consuming, DE motivational tasks and hurdle in doing quality research in their fields. Based on findings, it is recommended the HEIs administration should adopt research friendly protocols which will not only impact the overall productivity of the researchers but also improve the research culture of the HEIs.

1.0 Introduction

1.01. Administrative Research processes

The research process is carried out in HEIs in some formal way called research protocols or research rules. Some rules and regulations are available in any HEIs for conducting research, especially at the post-graduate level. Furthermore, a formal board or body observes or approves research work. The terminology of the board monitoring research activities varies in HEIs like the Board of Advance Studies in Research (BASR) or the Advance Studies Research Board (ASRB). The function and responsibilities of such boards vary across Universities. These bodies not only provide a written guideline for conducting research at the University level but also suggest amendments to research studies, title research methods to researchers, and provide feedback on research proposals submitted by research scholars. A well-designed research guideline ensures streamlining of the research process, reproducibility of research findings, validating research findings, enhancing research collaboration, and maintaining ethical conduct of the researchers and research work.

1.04 Statement of the Problem

The researchers in any HEIs across the globe followed a set of procedures to pursue research in their domain from research topic selection till final dissertation publication. This whole activity is done through structured procedure.

In our local context, HEIs are also following such protocols which they name it research rules, or research protocols. As there is lack of scientific evidence about the efficiency and efficacy of these rules. Moreover, what is usability and utility of such rules are questionable. To what extent these rules or procedures are facilitating researchers or it impeding their productivity and dwindling their motivation? To answer such questions, the current study aims to highlight the prevailing administrative protocols followed by the researchers in the HEIs of Quetta.

1.02 Research Objectives

Following are the main objectives of the current study.

- To analyze the available administrative research protocols in the HEIs of Quetta
- To explore the opinions of researchers regarding the administrative processes related to research in the HEIs of Quetta

1.03 Research Quetta

The following research questions are tried to answer in the current study.

1. What kind of administrative research procedures are followed in the HEIs of Quetta?
2. How researchers perceives research related administrative processes in the HEIs of Quetta?

1.05 Significance of the Study

This will be the foremost study in the local context which will highlight the available research related administrative rules and regulations. Moreover, the current study will also identify the opinion of the researchers regarding the usability and utility these research rules and regulations in pursuing research in local HEIs. As the research culture of any institutions are highly influences by the rules and regulations related to research, the current study will help the policy makers to adopt the research friendly protocols for a better research output. Moreover, the finding of the current study will be use to provide evidence based insight to policy makers for better implementation of policy related rules.

2.0 Review of Related Literature

The research process itself can be an intervention in educational studies, impacting outcomes (Boudah & Lenz, 2000). Educational information management in institutional research is a complex process influenced by various factors (Okada & Sheehy, 2020). Educational administration studies should focus on topics that are assumed to have a serious impact on understanding human behavior. The construction of reality depends on the methods of study we choose). Educational process data seem to help build up an explanatory model not only on the macro systems level but also on the classroom interaction level. The trends of frequently used data analysis procedures stayed relatively steady in educational

research during the last decade (Cohen, 1980).

Ioannidis et al., (2014) Explain the role of following clear guidelines for new researchers in the study How to Make More Published Research true. According to him, having clear guidelines from proposal submission to report writing helps the researcher know the research study's goals and expectations. Moreover, it helps the researchers publish quality research, minimize biased result publication, and follow ethical considerations.

In another study, The Preregistration Revolution. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Nosek, Ebersole, DeHaven, & Mellor (2018) find that preregistration involves publicly registering research plans before conducting a research study and this preregistration policy improves transparency in research as it enables researchers to provide recorded programs and design of the study. Moreover, it helps the researchers focus on the approved action plan and deter the researcher from deviation from the original goal. Documenting study protocols in advance makes it easier for other researchers to replicate the study, ensuring the findings are robust and reliable (Nosek et al., 2018).

In a study, Moher, Schulz, Simera, and Altman (2010) highlight the need for reporting guidelines and their impact on the overall research process. The finding of the study reveals that reporting guidelines

provide completeness and transparent reporting. The consensus and Delphi technique used in reporting guidelines helps improve the research output of the researchers. Moreover, Peer review ensures the rigor and clarity of reporting guidelines, while endorsement promotes widespread adoption and use (Moher et al., 2010).

Smidt, Bouter, & Tomlinson (2015), in a study, The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic, emphasizes that having clear prior writing and publishing guidelines for researchers enhances clarity and transparency. Furthermore, this guideline also helps in improving the quality of writing. The guidelines emphasize the importance of providing sufficient details in the report, enabling others to replicate the review and update it in the future (Smidt et al., 2015).

Koenraadt (2017) explained that research protocols provide a structured framework for conducting research, outlining the steps, procedures, and timelines involved. Clear protocols can enhance efficiency and reduce unnecessary delays in research activities.

Well-documented research protocols facilitate the reproducibility of research findings, ensuring that other researchers can replicate and validate the results. Detailed protocols enable proper quality assurance and adherence to rigorous research standards,

enhancing the reliability and credibility of research outputs. Ioannidis, et. al., (2014).

Hall, Feng, Moser, Stokols, Taylor, and Nebeling (2008) explained that research protocols provide a clear structure for collaboration within and across research teams or institutions. Consistent protocols facilitate effective communication, coordination, and collaboration among researchers. Collaborative research protocols can enhance productivity by leveraging team members' expertise, resources, and diverse perspectives.

Nosek and others (2015), in a study, Promoting an open research culture, stated that research protocols enable the replication and extension of studies by providing a clear description of research methods and procedures. Replication and extension studies contribute to scientific progress and enhance research productivity. Transparent and accessible protocols allow other researchers to build upon previous work and generate new knowledge.

Research protocols ensure that ethical considerations and regulatory requirements are incorporated into research design and implementation. Adhering to ethical standards and regulations enhances research integrity. It minimizes potential setbacks or delays due to non-compliance, as Resnik, Rasmussen, Kissling (2015) stated in a study titled 'An International Study of Research Misconduct Policies.'

While these examples demonstrate the potential impact of research protocols on research productivity, it is important to note that the effectiveness of protocols may vary depending on the specific research context and individual practices. Furthermore, it is advisable to consult additional literature and studies specific to the field of research for a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Åkerlind (2008) conducted a study focusing on supervisors' opinions or perceptions regarding research conducted at the University level. According to him, University research has multiple characteristics, including rigorous and methodological, remaining in theoretical or conceptual tradition, developing new knowledge, explaining, arguing, and conceptualizing. They are theorizing, thinking deeply, and developing insights into the field of the study.

Kiley and Mullins (2005) determine the individual supervisors' perception of the research process. The finding of the study reveals that researchers see research as;

- Technical- a scholarly process regarded as the rigorous application of systematic method;
- Creative/innovative- the development of new knowledge and innovative ways to discover knowledge
- Integrating complexity- collecting new

information and data in a new way

- New ways of seeing-research results in new ways of seeing the world, oneself, or a problem.

3.0 Research Methodology

The current study implies qualitative approach to answer the research questions. Survey design was adopted to conceptualize the current study. The quantitative data were the opinions of the researchers who are pursuing research in the surveyed HEIs. Sample of the current study was selected on utilizing stratified sampling technique by identifying main faculties which enrolled researchers in post graduate degrees. The sample of the current study comprises of those research scholars who are doing their research in the post graduate degree program either as a research student or research supervisor. A number of 600 researchers were contacted for research purpose, among those a number of 513 respondents responded to the research questionnaire. The opinions of the researchers were collected through research questionnaire via web-mail and paper based survey. The opinions of the respondents were measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

4.0 Data Analysis

Descriptive data analysis technique was adopted to answer the main research questions of the study. The major findings including the demographic of the respondents and their opinions are highlighted in the following tables.

4.01 Quantitative Data Analysis

Table no. 4.1 Frequency and Percentage of the Demographic Variables of the Study

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	
Gender	Male	261	49.00
	Female	272	51.00
Parent University	UOB	258	48.40
	SBKWU	119	24.30
	BUIITEMS	156	29.30
Qualification	Master	91	17.10
	MPhil.	335	62.90
	Ph.D.	97	18.20
	Post. Doc.	10	1.90
Faculty	Natural Sciences	91	17.10
	Social Sciences	335	62.90
	Other faculties	97	18.20
Researcher Status	Research Scholar	369	69.20
	Supervisor	164	30.80
Research Experience	No experience	99	18.10
	1 to 5 years	62	57.00
	6 to 10 years	79	14.60
	11 to 15 years	30	5.10
	More than 15 years	21	3.20
Job Designation	Lecturer	242	45.40
	Ass. Professor	56	10.50

Table No. 4.01 reflects the demography of the respondents for the current study. A number of 261 respondents in the study were male and 272 were female. Considering the parent university, a number of 48.40% respondents were from the University of Balochistan (UOB), 24.30% were from SBKWU and a number of 29.30% respondents were from BUIITEMS. Moreover, the qualification of the respondents were Master (17.10%), MPhil. (63%), Ph.D. (18%), and Post. Doc. (2.0%).

Considering the faculty of the respondents, the majority of the respondents (335) were from the faculty of social sciences, while a number of 91 of the respondents were from the faculty of natural sciences and 97 of the respondents belonged to other faculties.

Considering the researcher status variable, a great number 69% of the respondents were research scholars while 30% of the respondents were research supervisors. Furthermore, the research experience variable reflects that a number 62 of the respondents have research experience of 1 to 5 years, 99 respondents have no research experience, 79 respondents have research

experience of at least 10 years. The majority of the respondents of the current study were lecturers (242), while 40 % of the respondents of the current study did not mention their jobs.

Table No. 4.02 Means score and Standard Deviation against the questionnaire statements

Serial No.	Statements	M	S.D.
1	A clear guideline is available for doing research work in your university	3.50	1.09
2	A simple administrative process from synopsis to thesis submission is followed in your university	3.63	1.05
3	Following research related administrative processes decrease your motivational level towards research activities.	3.50	1.12
4	Following research related administrative procedures are time consuming tasks.	3.80	0.90
5	Research-related administrative rules in your university become a hurdle for doing quality research.	3.56	1.07
6	The decisions taken by research boards are communicated on due time	3.01	1.09
7	Written information related to research work is disseminated among university researchers	3.19	0.96

The table no 4.02 reflects the opinions of the researchers regarding research processes followed by the researchers in the HEIs. The results reveals that majority of the respondents were agree ($M= 3.50$, $SD= 1.09$) with the statement that a clear guideline is available for doing research in their HEIs. The table reflects that a great number of the respondents ($M= 3.63$, $SD= 1.05$) agreed that the administrative process from synopsis to thesis submission is followed and it is simple in nature.

The statement 3 which highlights the motivational level of the researchers explained that majority of the respondents ($M= 3.50$, $SD= 1.12$) feel less motivational towards research activities while following administrative procedure. Moreover, a great number of respondents ($M= 3.80$, $SD= 0.90$) stated that research related administrative processes are time

consuming tasks. While a great number of respondents ($M= 3.56$, $SD= 1.07$) consider the research related administrative tasks are hurdle in doing quality research.

A number of respondents ($M= 3.01$, $SD= 1.09$) slightly agree with the statement that the decisions taken by board member are communicated on due time. Along with that a number of respondents ($M= 3.19$, $SD= 0.96$) also agree that written communication are disseminated among researchers of the universities on due time.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

Main aim of the current study was to explore the views of the researcher regarding the administrative research process in their HEIs. The findings reveals that research scholars followed research guidelines which are simple in nature but most of the respondents consider it time consuming tasks. These findings are consistent with the finding of Koenraadt (2017). Koenraadt explained that research protocols provide a structured framework for conducting research, outlining the steps, procedures, and timelines involved. Clear protocols can enhance efficiency and reduce unnecessary delays in research activities (2017).

Moreover, a great number of respondents consider it as a hurdle in doing quality research work. Although, the quality of research work impeded with many other factors, the surveyed researchers consider administrative research protocols / processes as a hurdle. One of the interesting finding of the study was that majority of the respondents consider following research related guidelines discourages their motivation. One of the reason of such finding is that in the survey HEIs the researcher has to go through a number of

offices or officials for submitting a research proposal prior the approval of the research boards usually Board of Advance Studies and Research (BASR) (a formal research body consist of 12 to 15 senior research and administrative members of various faculties). The involvement of these officials not only consume the time of the researcher but it also demotivates the researchers. This is the reason the research scholars either research students or supervisors called time consuming and demotivating factor.

A minor number of the respondents agree with the dissemination of the information related to research work on due time and decisions taken by research boards are announced in letter and spirit on right time.

From the above discussion, it is concluded that the researchers in the surveyed HEIs followed particular research guidelines, although the nature of such guidelines are simple and clear but researchers found it time consuming, less motivating and a hurdle in doing quality research work. Although, the research quality impacted from multiple factors but researchers in the surveyed HEIs consider the administrative protocols as a reason. One of the reason of such findings is that researcher de trail from the original idea which he or she find interesting or motivational if the advance board suggest changes in the topic of their research study or interest. Another plausible explanation of such finding is that researcher shifted his/ her energy from doing research to do paper work.

As the studies suggests that researchers motivates intrinsically (Jindal-Snape and Snape, 2006; Lounsbury et al. 2012) and extrinsically (Lam, 2011), considering the current study the findings suggests that

following administrative research related process extrinsically demotivate the performance of the researchers.

The naïve researchers are suggested to ponder the ways and technique which we can save the time and energy of the research scholars. It is well known that without following a certain administrative guideline related to research tasks, one cannot pursue his or her research in the surveyed HEIs but need of hours is that HEIs should adopt such kind of policies which have logical grounds. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the HEIs administration should utilize researchers' friendly policies and practices which not only enhance the motivation of the researchers but also the productivity of the researchers.

6.0 References

- Åkerlind, G. S. (2008). An academic perspective on research and being a researcher: An integration of the literature. *Studies in higher education*, 33(1), 17-31.
- Boudah, D. J., & Lenz, B. K. (2000). And now the rest of the story: The research process as intervention in experimental and qualitative studies. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 15(3), 149-159.
- Cohen, S. (1980). Aftereffects of stress on human performance and social behavior: a review of research and theory. *Psychological bulletin*, 88(1), 82.
- Hall, K. L., Feng, A. X., Moser, R. P., Stokols, D., Taylor, B. K., & Nebeling, L. C. (2008). The ecology of interdisciplinary research: Implications for health policy. *Health Affairs*, 27(2), 390-398.
- Ioannidis, J. P. A., Greenland, S., Hlatky, M. A., Khoury, M. J., Macleod, M. R., Moher, D., ... & Tibshirani, R. (2014). Increasing value and reducing waste in research design, conduct, and analysis. *The Lancet*, 383(9912), 166-175.
- Jindal-Snape D, Snape JB (2006) Motivation of scientists in a government research institute: scientists' perceptions and the role of management. *Manag Decis* 44(10):1325–1343. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740610715678>.
- Kiley, M., & Mullins, G. (2005). Supervisors' conceptions of research: what are they?. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 49(3), 245-262.
- Koenraad, R. (2017). A structured approach to protocol development for research in global health. *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 111(6), 235- 238.
- Lam A (2011) What motivates academic scientists to engage in research commercialization: gold, ribbon or puzzle? *Res Policy* 40(10):1354–1368. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2011.09.002>.
- Lounsbury JW, Foster N, Patel H, Carmody P, Gibson LW, Stairs DR (2012) An investigation of the personality traits of scientists versus nonscientists and their relationship with career satisfaction: relationship of

personality traits and career satisfaction of scientists and nonscientists. *R&D Manage* 42(1):47–59.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9310.2011.00665.x>.

Moher, D., Schulz, K. F., Simera, I., & Altman, D. G. (2010). Guidance for Developers of Health Research Reporting Guidelines. *PLoS Medicine*, 7(2), e1000217. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1000217

Nosek, B. A., Ebersole, C. R., DeHaven, A. C., & Mellor, D. T. (2018). The preregistration revolution. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(11), 2600-2606.

Okada, A., & Sheehy, K. (2020, December). Factors and recommendations to support students' enjoyment of online learning with fun: A mixed method study during COVID-19. In *Frontiers in education* (Vol. 5, p. 584351). Frontiers Media SA.

Resnik, D. B., Rasmussen, L. M., & Kissling, G. E. (2015). An international study of research misconduct policies. *Accountability in Research*, 22(5), 249-266.

Smidt, N., Bouter, L. M., & Tomlinson, A. (2015). The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic Reviews. *BMJ*, 372, n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.