

The Importance of Research in Educational Institutions: Obstacles, Solutions and Strengthening it

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Abstract: Today, the crucial role of research in advancing the goals of the higher education system and achieving development is indisputable, but we observe a dearth of active participation of professors in such activities. Research endeavors give rise to new information and knowledge that are imperative for organizations. Nevertheless, numerous hindrances obstruct research and production. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the significance of research in educational institutions, identifying obstacles, solutions, and methods to expedite the process. The research design employed is applied-descriptive and the participant pool consists of Kabul University professors. To ensure a representative sample, a random sample of 80 individuals was selected to complete a questionnaire.

Introduction

Today, all developed and developing countries prioritize science and technology as the driving force behind their activities. This focus serves to maintain or create the foundation for development and improve competitiveness with other nations. Scientific research activities yield products of technological advancement, and when combined with other political, economic, and social efforts, sustainable development can undoubtedly be achieved (Mehr, etc: 2004).

There is a direct correlation between research and actual progress within each country. Sustainable development will not be achieved until universities and countries benefit from the advancements in managerial, applied, and developmental research in social, cultural, economic planning, as well as in educational programs. Without such research, achieving a true social concept is unattainable and reliance on others' research and technology products is necessary. It is evident that fostering and enhancing knowledge rely on evaluating universities' research output and identifying current issues to facilitate the development of research activities in the future. (, Ghafarzadeh et al., 2012- 89)

This is a time of renewed enthusiasm for higher education and research as a path towards global development. Initiatives such as the establishment of millennium centers and science academies in Afghanistan and other developing regions highlight the importance of human and social development through higher education and research. These themes are relevant to a report on the future role of higher education in a globalized era. In this paper, I avoid subjective evaluations and focus on the notion that science, research, and higher education are the most reliable routes to development. I argue that this once unchallenged notion can no longer be taken for granted. Instead, I concentrate on how international efforts in science, technology, and higher education have failed to address unresolved issues and challenges in this domain. Furthermore, I analyze how research and higher education have expanded in developing regions. These ideas are presented in the Introduction section. In the following sections, I will examine and demonstrate these principles, while suggesting a reassessment of traditional perspectives to enhance the connection between science and technology and society in a more efficient and responsible manner.

On the other hand, universities with their intellectual and spiritual capacities are deemed crucial for scientific production. Consequently, the organization of university research stands as a vital element for the holistic advancement of society. On the other hand, universities' faculty members carry out significant research activities and scientific productions. The more they enhance the quality of their services, the faster the country's development and scientific progress will advance. Nonetheless, research in Afghan universities reveals numerous shortcomings that academics encounter in executing research projects (Hulten , 2003).

Faculty members are a crucial resource for the growth and development of universities and the country as a whole. It is important to objectively evaluate obstacles in examining research issues (Hames, et al. 2004). This research aims to investigate research importance in Afghan educational institutions.

Research purposes

- Determining the status of research and research and development indicators of Afghan universities
- Identifying the problems and obstacles in the way of conducting scientific research in Afghanistan
- Providing general solutions in the field of removing obstacles to research in Afghan universities

Background Research

Borg's (2009) study found that teachers reported a low amount of study and research due to key factors of limited time, knowledge, and access to facilities. This limited their abilities and hindered their research efforts. Other results of the research showed that the lack of facilities and equipment, strict administrative regulations and high workload are among the obstacles to conducting research, as well as reducing the motivation of the researcher mostly due to wrong policies, lack of financial needs, mismanagement and inappropriate environmental conditions. Becomes.

(Haines& Haines, 1998, cited in zohur and fekri, 2003)

Khalili and Yadullah Rajaei conducted a study titled, "Examining Research Obstacles in Abhar Islamic Azad University and Providing Appropriate Solutions in Iran." The study's objectives were analyzed using variables such as administrative, legal, informational, cultural, and scientific barriers. The research population consisted of experts and researchers from the Islamic Azad University, Abhar Branch, and Sama Center. The research findings indicate that the university's regulations, fees, facilities, and atmosphere prioritize educational activities rather than research. (Khalili and Yadullah Rajaei, 2008).

One of the most important research obstacles that has been examined in most researches is related to financial issues. The results of several researches indicate the influence of financial factors on teachers not doing research. Necessary expenses for conducting research projects, the proper utilization of research credits, the lack of rewards for top researchers, insufficient research fees, unavailability of funds from educational institutions, absence of financial resources, and inadequate budgets are all obstacles in this category. These hindrances are enumerated herein. (Bland, 2005).

In 2017, Fattahi Asal et al. conducted a study titled "Examining Obstacles to Conducting Research from the Perspective of Iranian Universities of Medical Sciences Faculty Members." The study found that the pre-university and university education systems present numerous obstacles to conducting research. To address these issues, it is necessary to provide more comprehensive scientific and cultural training to individuals before they enter the academic system. The pre-college education system can advance the education of individuals with an interest in research by designing research-oriented courses, coordinating educational workshops, and establishing extracurricular activities to foster research enthusiasm. The university's educational system could host workshops to cover research-related topics such as research methods, information search and retrieval, essay writing, and reference writing, among other subjects. (Fattahi Asal, 2018: 477).

Karimian et al. (2008) conducted an applied research study, titled "Obstacles and Challenges of Research and Science Production in Medical Science Universities." The study examines the obstacles and challenges facing research and science production in universities of medical sciences, in an objective and value-neutral manner, avoiding biased language and emotional appeals. The results indicate the need for improvements in research infrastructure, funding, and management. The study used a descriptive survey method and surveyed 227 faculty members from Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, selected through stratified sampling from a population of 550. Based on the results, faculty members confirmed the existence of obstacles in research activities. Financial obstacles had the highest average and political obstacles had the lowest average. However, faculty members' attitudes towards these obstacles did not impact their research activity levels. There were significant differences in faculty members' views based on gender, academic rank, field of study, and faculty/executive responsibility, but not based on service history. Analysis of linear combinations of independent and dependent variables demonstrated the effectiveness of ten obstacles with mediating variables of research activities. (Krimian et al., 2009).

Problem Statement

Unfortunately, a significant weakness of the research system in Afghanistan is that higher education tends to focus solely on its educational role. Presently, numerous reasons prevent most university faculty members from conducting scientific research. Analysis of the number of professors in Afghan universities and published articles in journals and scientific databases reveals an extremely low volume of scientific articles authored by professors. In this way, universities do not use the research potential of their professors, not only completely, but even half of it, and in fact, most of the professors' energy is spent only on educational issues. Identifying and removing current barriers to academic research would encourage more professors to participate in research, leading to increased scientific output and an enhanced international scientific standing for the country.

Hypotheses

Main hypothesis: Financial barriers, cultural barriers, organizational constraints, and limited access to scientific resources are among the hindrances to conducting research.

hypotheses-Sub:

- It seems that financial obstacles are among the obstacles to conducting research among university professors.
- It seems that lack of culture is one of the obstacles to conducting research among university professors.
- It seems that organizational obstacles are among the obstacles to conducting research among university professors.
- It seems that the lack of access to scientific databases is one of the obstacles to conducting research among university professors.

Research Methodology

The current study involves applied-descriptive research and examines the statistical population of professors from Kabul University and Balkh University. A questionnaire was randomly distributed to 80 participants.

Analyze

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the respondents regarding the place of work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	University Cable	40	50.0	50.0	50.0
	University Balkh	40	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics of the respondents categorized by their job location. The survey was distributed to 40 professors each from Kabul University and Balkh University as part of this study.

Table 2. descriptive statistics of respondents by education level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's degree	29	36.3	36.3	36.3
	master	42	52.5	52.5	88.8
	the doctor	9	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table (2) presents the descriptive statistics of the participants' education level, comprising 80 professors, 29 bachelors, 42 masters, and 9 doctors.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of students' responses by academic rank

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Professor	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Pohnmel	14	17.5	17.5	21.3
	Professor	39	48.8	48.8	70.0
	Pohnwal	20	25.0	25.0	95.0
	scholar	4	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the survey participants categorized by their academic rank. The results indicate that there are 80 tons, 3 Pohnyar tons, 14 Pohnmal tons, 39 Pohandavi tons, 20 Pohnwal tons, and 4 Pohand tons.

Table 4. descriptive statistics of the respondents by duration of intensity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5	14	17.5	17.5	17.5
	5-10	48	60.0	60.0	77.5
	10 more than	18	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics of the respondents based on their length of service. The results indicate that out of 80 participants, 14 served for 1-5 years, 48 served between 5-10 years, and 18 served for more than 10 years.

Table 5. descriptive statistics of Friedman's test

Financial barriers	0.89
Lack of culture	0.81
Organizational barrier	0.72
Lack of access to scientific databases	0.64

The findings of Friedman's test indicate that, when viewed from the perspective of professors, financial barriers, cultural deficiencies, and organizational limitations pose the most significant hindrances to research.

It seems that financial impediments are one of the factors that contribute to the non-performance of research among professors.

Table 6. Pearson correlation coefficient test

		Financial barriers	Barriers to research among professors
Financial barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	.917 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	91	91
Barriers to research among professors	Pearson Correlation	.917 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

The results from Table 6 indicate a strong, positive, and significant correlation between financial and research barriers among university professors. The findings confirm the hypothesis that financial obstacles contribute to professors' reticence to conduct research.

Hypothesis: The findings confirm the hypothesis that financial obstacles contribute to professors' reticence to conduct research. Additionally, it appears that a dearth of research culture may further impede research efforts.

Table 7. Pearson correlation coefficient test

		Cultural barriers	Barriers to research among professors
Cultural barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	.827 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	91	91
Barriers to research among professors	Pearson Correlation	.827 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

Table 7 results reveal the correlation coefficient between cultural barriers and research barriers among university professors. The findings indicate a strong and significantly positive relationship between these two barriers, confirming the research hypothesis that cultural barriers are influential factors in professors' decision not to conduct research.

Hypothesis: Additionally, the hypothesis infers that the barrier to research is organizational in nature.

Table 8. Pearson correlation coefficient test

		Organizational barriers	Barriers to research among professors
Organizational barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	.801
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	91	91
Barriers to research among professors	Pearson Correlation	.801	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

The data presented in Table 8 indicates a correlation between organizational barriers and barriers to conducting research among professors. The findings suggest that organizational obstacles are the third most significant barrier to conducting research among professors.

Hypothesis: The hypothesis is that the lack of access to scientific databases hinders research progress.

Table 9. Pearson correlation coefficient test

		Lack of access to databases scientific	Barriers to research among professors
Lack of access to scientific databases	Pearson Correlation	1	.801
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	91	91
Barriers to research among professors	Pearson Correlation	.801	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

Table 9 displays the correlation coefficient between professors' limited access to scientific databases and the research obstacles they encounter. The results reveal that the lack of access to up-to-date and authoritative articles from such databases is identified as the fourth major barrier.

Discussion and Conclusion

The research findings indicate that among the six factors hypothesized, financial barriers are the foremost impediment to conducting research among professors. This aligns with prior studies, such as those conducted by Sohrabi and Faraj Elahi (2009) and Bahrami (2008), which highlight the significant impact of budget restrictions on the research activities of educators and researchers. Presenting a research project or participating in a national or international conference demands financial resources. Researchers encounter significant obstacles in obtaining credit and performing optimally, which may unintentionally entice them towards pursuing education while abandoning research activities. The results review shows that the shortage of research culture presents another barrier. Currently, many researchers, planners, and policymakers are concerned about the absence of a strong, clearly defined research framework within higher education, particularly in the United States. Inadequate research infrastructures, limited research space, and a struggling research culture within the higher education system pose significant challenges in fostering development in this area. Ensuring a strong research foundation is crucial for the advancement of higher education and its ability to meet the demands of today's rapidly evolving and increasingly competitive world. In order to fill the scientific gap between Afghanistan and realize the development goals in all its dimensions, it is necessary to promote the culture of research.

The third organizational barrier is identified as an obstacle to conducting research. Organizational support, especially sufficient time and research direction, is the most critical factor for applied research. A limitation that exists in conducting research is the shortage of efficient and specialized research teams in higher education. The fourth hurdle to research is the lack of trust in research outcomes identified in this study. The value of research lies in its ability to yield applicable results. Evidence suggests that higher education institutions struggle to apply research findings effectively. Additionally, there remains a lack of precise and defined relationship between research and decision-making. It is therefore crucial for research to produce applicable results, as this is fundamental to the philosophy of research - which seeks to uncover facts and knowledge. The findings of the study should inform policies and decisions. The main challenge faced was the limited availability of scientific databases. While conducting quality research is essential, effectively communicating the results to decision makers, policymakers, and other researchers is equally important. Failure to disseminate well-executed research results in a timely manner would render it inefficient.

Difficulties

Research methods courses in the country's higher education system are not given enough emphasis and are mostly theoretical, lacking in practical application. Furthermore, the number of research methods courses offered during the training period is insufficient to meet the research demands of society.

Offers

- Establishing communication and partnerships with housing ministries, organizations, and manufacturing industries in the country is crucial.
- Using opinions of experts in research
- To prevent redundant research and maximize the utilization of research findings, it is imperative to establish a research database that allows for collaborative research efforts.

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