

RESEARCH CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF GRADUATES IN CONDUCTING EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

The study is based on the research challenges faced by students in conducting research and their coping strategies. The main objective of the study was to know the hurdles and challenges which student face during conducting their Bs and MPhil research and how they overcome the challenges. The study used convenient sampling method. The study was mixed method in nature means both qualitative and quantitative methods were used and the data was collected online by the Google forms. The questionnaire Contains total 30 questions 25 closed ended and 30 open ended the participants for the qualitative part of data 80 participants were targeted while qualitative part of data 100 participants were targeted because we want to generalize the challenges which students face. The data was analyzed using percentage analysis for the quantitative part of data and thematic analysis for the qualitative part of the data. The conclusion of the study is that conducting quality research is difficult due to lack of proper resources like analysis software SPSS, N-vivo and plagiarism software ,lack of access to the e-data and digital libraries, lack of supervisor' corporation and financial constraint. The recommendations are made for the universities and HEC, To give access to research related software to the every research student. To give scholarship to the research student to overcome the financial constraint and also develop research support center in every university to facilitate students.

Keywords: Research, challenges, Graduates, software, mix method.

Introduction

Educational research is widely recognized as a part of higher education because it helps graduate students learn the knowledge and skills they need to look into educational problems in a proper way, check evidence carefully and help make new discoveries. Research tasks also help students improve their thinking solving problems and writing for academics, all of which are important for growing in their careers and studies. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Graduate students usually have to finish a research project or thesis as part of their studies. This includes finding a research problem looking at what others have written choosing the ways to do the research gathering and looking at data understanding what the results mean and sharing the results in a proper academic way. Even though research is seen as important, in postgraduate studies many students face big challenges when it comes to school work how to do the research and the rules of the institution during the research process (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). Research studies have shown that new researchers take time to choose a good research topic. They also struggle with coming up with research questions and reviewing what other people have written about the topic. On top of that they have trouble designing a plan for their research collecting good data and making sense of what they find. They even have a time writing in a way that is good enough for academic work. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kumar, 2019). One of the parts of doing research for students is collecting data. This is where they often run into problems that are very real and also problems with how they are doing their research. For example, they might take time finding people to participate in their research, getting permission from the right people in creating a good survey or test, getting enough people to respond who are dealing with ethical issues and making sure the data they collect is good and accurate (Pyhäältö, Stubb, & Lonka, 2009; Lee, 2008).

Such problems can slow down the research process making the final result not as good as it could be. Data collection is very important, in research and students often struggle with data collection, which is a critical stage of educational research. Research supervision is really

important for graduate students to do well in their research. (Phillips & Pugh, 2015; Kumar, 2019; Cohen et al., 2018). When students get supervision they get help with their research work, feedback that helps them improve, support when they are feeling down and guidance from professionals that helps them get better at doing research and feel more confident. One of the researchers found that this kind of support is very helpful. Regular meetings with their supervisor getting feedback on time and having a relationship with their supervisor are also very important for students to finish their thesis successfully (Pyhältö et al., 2009; Lovitts, 2001).

Similarly, institutional support is also very important for students when they are doing research. Universities that help students by giving them workshops on how to do research, letting them use libraries, helping them with statistics, giving them money for research and giving them good places to learn can really help students do better in their research and in school (Lee, 2008). On the other hand, when universities do not have good facilities, students do not have access to all the information they need, they do not get enough money for research and the university does not support research then it becomes very hard for students to do good research especially in countries that are still developing.

In Pakistan, colleges and universities have focused more on research work in the last some years. Students who are getting higher education still face many problems when they do research. These problems include not getting help from teachers, not enough training in research, not enough books in libraries, not enough money, trouble with writing not knowing the right methods and not being able to find good books to read (Grohnert et al., 2024). These problems make students feel less motivated and slow down their work on research projects. Recent research done in universities has shown that problems with teachers, problems with the university and not enough help for research are big issues for students doing postgraduate studies.

With these problems, students use many ways to deal with the difficulties of doing research. These ways include asking teachers and friends for help going to training sessions using learning materials, working with other students managing time better and learning on their own. These ways help students get better at research and feel more confident while doing their work (Pyhältö et al., 2009; Lee, 2008; Grohnert et al., 2024). The research that has been done so far about graduate students who are doing research has mostly looked at small parts of the problem like writing papers, getting guidance from supervisors or finishing their doctorate. Not many people have tried to look at the picture and see what the main problems are that graduate students face when they are doing research what kind of trouble they have when they are collecting data, how their supervisors and universities can help them and how they deal with these problems in universities in Pakistan.

This study aims to investigate what kind of problems graduate students face when they are doing research about education in universities in Pakistan. What are the biggest problems that students have when they are doing research, what kind of trouble they have when they are collecting data, how their supervisors and universities can help them and how students deal with these problems. This study also tries to suggest some ways to make research better for students in universities. The goal is to help make research training and supervision and to make universities more supportive of graduate students who are doing research. Graduate students who are doing research in universities will benefit from this study and it will help to make the research environment better, for them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A growing number of studies show that doing research at the graduate level is not usually an easy process for students who are not well prepared. In Pakistan, a case study of research students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa found that social science researchers felt very discouraged

because the instructional programs were not well developed. There were not trained research staff the research frameworks were not clear and the research projects were not designed properly. This was mostly because higher education policies in this area had not been built using a methodological approach (Naz et al. 2012). This problem is also seen in a study of students in Peshawar. The study found that students had problems with reading and writing for academics. They did not have computer and software skills and they faced problems because the libraries were not well equipped and the course content was out of date (Rehman et al. 2023).

A recent study about student-researchers in studies found five main issues. These issues were: difficulty choosing and focusing on a topic problems in getting participants and collecting data stress in working with advisors and panels problems throughout the research process and a lot of stress on the students mental and physical health (Castillo & Laguerta 2025). All of these studies together show that the challenges faced by graduate researchers in Pakistan are similar to those around the world.. They also show that there are specific problems related to resources and policies, in Pakistan. Similarly, data collection is really tough for students. It is one of the parts of doing research. (Castillo & Laguerta,2025) said that getting people to participate and dealing with the details of collecting data are problems. These problems are different from the challenges that graduate students face when they are doing research.

When graduate students are doing fieldwork they often have three kinds of problems. The first kind of problem is when the student does not have money or the right equipment. The second kind of problem is when the people they are studying do not want to participate or do not give answers. The third kind of problem is when the students supervisor does not give them help when they are collecting data. For people who do research about education data collection is even harder. This is because they often have to use methods. Sometimes, they have to use both methods, which is called a mixed-method design. This kind of design needs time and more resources. It also needs the student to know a lot about both kinds of methods. This can be a burden for graduate students who do not have a lot of help, from their university.

Graduate students experience with research is really shaped by the people who supervise them. This is something that people have noticed over and over in their studies. (Han et al. 2022) found that when students feel like their supervisor is supporting them they are more likely to think they can come up with new ideas and actually do something with them. The supervisor helps the students with the parts of their research but also gives them the confidence to keep going even when things get tough. The university also plays a role in helping graduate students with their research. This is in addition to the help they get from their supervisors. If the university does not have library resources, computers and classes to prepare students for research then students have to work really hard to make up for what is missing (Rehman,2023). When students have to do everything on their own, it can be really stressful. So it seems like the quality of the supervisor and the universitys support systems together determine how supported a graduate student feels during their research.

The coping literature broadly separates two types of coping. One is problem coping. This means dealing with or changing the thing that causes stress. The other is emotion coping. This means handling the feelings that come from a situation without changing the situation itself (Lazarus & Folkman 1984). Both types of coping appear in the graduate research literature. They are often used together. Mercer and Thomas (2024) looked at how doctoral researchers deal with stress. They found that the common helpful strategies were using thoughts to cope, getting help from others and doing fun activities. The helpful strategies included thinking about the same thing over and over working too much and. Importantly. Some people said they had no coping strategy at all. Their results also showed that the ways people cope changed based on where students were in their research. It also changed based on things like age, gender and

background. This shows that coping is not something people are born with. It changes as researchers go through parts of their studies.

Objectives

1. To identify the major challenges faced by graduate students during the conduction of educational research.
2. To examine the difficulties faced by graduate students during the data collection.
3. To explore the role of supervisors and institutional support in facilitating research students.
4. To identify the coping strategies adopted by students to overcome challenges they faced during research.
5. To propose recommendations for improving research culture in universities.

Research questions:

1. What are the major challenges faced by graduate students during the conduct of educational research?
2. What are the difficulties encountered by graduate students during data collection?
3. What was the role of supervisor and institutional support in facilitating educational research?
4. What are coping strategies adopted by graduate students to overcome research related challenges.
5. What are the proposed recommendations for improving research support systems in Pakistani universities?

Research design

A mixed method design was used, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for the collection of data. In qualitative part 5 open ended questions and in quantitative part 25 closed ended question were made, the closed ended questions were measure 5-point Likert scale

Population of study

The population of the study was the students of BS and MPhil graduates from any universities of Pakistan who have completed a thesis, any research project, or dissertation as part of their degree.

Sample of the study

The sample of the study is approximately 100 graduates of different universities. 100 graduates for the quantitative part and 80 for qualitative part of the study. Only those graduates were part of sample who have any research experience and they can provide information regarding the challenges encountered during the research process.

Sampling technique

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used for collection of data.

Data collection

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire containing 30 items, developed by the researcher. In which 25 questions were closed ended and 05 were open ended.

Data collection procedure

The questionnaire was developed by using Google Forms and shared electronically through WhatsApp with eligible participants

Data analysis

The collected data is analyzed using descriptive statistics, percentage only for quantitative and thematic analysis for qualitative questions.

Delimitations of the study.

1. The study is delimited to the graduates who have done any thesis, research project etc. as a part of their degree.

2. The graduates of BS and M.Phil. were the part of study.

Literature review.

Data analysis.

Data analysis contains both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Qualitative data is analyzed through thematic analysis while quantitative data is analyzed through percentage analysis.

a. Qualitative analysis.

1. Research Challenges

Theme	codes	Interpretation
Resources and Financial Constraints	Shortage of funding; limited resources; procurement delays; financial burdens; lack of any grants	Graduates repeatedly described insufficient funding and limited resources as major challenge.
Limited or no Access to Research Resources	Paid journals; no access to plagiarism software, digital databases, library access	graduates reported difficulty accessing relevant scholarly literature and no plagiarism software provided by universities.
Research Methodology and Data Analysis	SPSS software; quantitative data analysis; research formats; statistics	Many graduates struggled with using SPSS and quantitative data analysis.

2. Supervisor Support and Research Guidance

Theme	Codes	Interpretation
Insufficient Guidance	Lack of time provided; insufficient feedbacks; lack of clear directions; unclear guidelines; limited	Supervisory support varied, with many reporting inadequate guidance.
Supervisor Behavior	Pressure; inflexibility; disrespect; delayed feedback	Some respondents perceived supervisors as unsupportive or overly controlling.

3. Data Collection Challenges

Theme	Codes	Interpretation
Institutional Access	Delayed Permissions, administrative barriers, lack of access to hospital/school	Taking Permissions for the data collection was difficult despite having official letters.
Participant Cooperation	In-service teachers, unwilling participants, lack of interests, busy schedules of teachers	Participants usually don't fill questionnaires properly and in-service teachers often did not cooperate at all, mostly they have busy schedules
Quality of responses	Incomplete questionnaires, inaccurate responses; fake data; careless answers	Poor-quality of responses provided by responded is a big cause of invalid data.
Ethical Issues	COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.	Due to Consent and pandemic restrictions, and sudden closure of educational institutions data collection procedure was delayed

4. Coping Strategies

Theme	codes	Interpretation
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Self-learning	Books, online and e-courses, independent study, self-skills development	graduates relied on self-directed learning and skill development
Peer- guidance	Seeking help from seniors, peers, YouTube videos, artificial intelligence	Graduates took help from seniors, watch YouTube videos for guidance and Ai tools also helped them

5. Recommendations

Theme	codes	Interpretation
Strengthening of Research Support	Responsible Supervisor, hands-on workshops, proper SPSS trainings, responsible co-supervisors	Graduates suggests that super-visors should be responsible and guide students properly, also universities should develop research support centers. Proper hands-on trainings on SPSS software should be provided.
Improve research support	Built Research labs, access to plagiarism software's, digital libraries, centralized database system, research funding	Universities should invest in research labs, research support centers, give access to plagiarism software to the students who are enrolled in the universities. Moreover, centralized research database system of every university and access to the student. research funding should be provided to the research students monthly.

1. Research Challenges

The thematic analysis revealed that Graduates faced a variety of research-related problems. The most commonly mentioned concerns were financial and resource constraints, such as insufficient financing, restricted research resources, and the high cost of conducting research. Many Graduates also noted a lack of institutional support, particularly access to plagiarism detection tools, paid academic databases, and contemporary scholarly publications. Time management, SPSS and quantitative data analysis, topic selection, distinct populations, and insufficient research infrastructure all identified as important problems.

2. Supervisory Support and Research Guidance

Graduates reported inadequate academic guidance, insufficient mentoring, delayed feedback, and limited interaction with supervisors. Several Graduated respondents described negative supervisor's behaviors such as excessive pressure, inflexibility, and lack of respect towards students and their ideas. However, a few Graduates acknowledged that supportive and knowledgeable behavior of supervisors positively influenced their research progress.

3. Data Collection Challenges

Data collection was one of the most difficult stages. Graduates experienced delays in obtaining institutional permissions, lack of cooperation from in-service teachers whether is qualitative data collection or quantitative data collection, difficulty reaching participants for authentic data collection, poor questionnaire completion, inaccurate responses, and challenges obtaining informed consent. Scheduling interviews, repeated follow-up, and the COVID-19 restrictions further complicated the data collection process.

4. Coping Strategies

Graduates mainly relied on self-directed learning through YouTube, chat GPT, research books, online resources, and e-courses. They sought guidance from supervisors and those who supervisors were not good to them they seek guidance from seniors and peers.

developed research and usage of SPSS skills independently, practiced effective time management, and remained persistent through repeated follow-up two words that are collection and adaptive problem-solving.

5. Recommendations for Improving Research Support Systems

Graduates recommended stronger supervisory support through regular the meetings and timely feedbacks, increased relevant research workshops and research trainings, improved access to digital libraries, plagiarism software's, research laboratories, and statistical software's, greater financial support should be provided to the research students especially those who need it. simplified institutional permission procedures, and integration of research activities throughout university programs. Moreover, there should be research support system in every university, the co- supervisor should also be assigned equal responsibility of the student if the supervisor is not good or busy then co- supervisor should be responsible for guiding the student

b. Quantitative analysis

Percentage Analysis:

Section A: Research Challenges

1. I faced difficulties in selecting an appropriate research topic.
The majority of respondents (51.7%) agreed that selecting an appropriate research topic was challenging. Whereas, 31% participants disagreed. This suggests that research topic selection is a significant issue for most participants.
2. I experienced challenges in developing a research proposal.
The majority of respondents (58.6%) agreed that developing a research proposal was challenging. Whereas, 21.8% participants disagreed. This suggests that developing a research proposal is a significant issue for most participants.
3. Lack of access to plagiarism-checking software created difficulties during my research work.
The majority of respondents (59.7%) agreed that lack of access to plagiarism-checking software created difficulties during their research work. Whereas, 25.2% participants disagreed. This suggests that lack of access to plagiarism-checking software is a significant issue for most participants.
4. Limited access to research resources affected my research progress.
The majority of respondents (55.1%) agreed that access to research resources was challenging. Whereas, 24.1% participants disagreed. This suggests that limited access to research resources is a significant issue for most participants.
5. Managing time while conducting research was challenging.
The majority of respondents (63.2%) agreed that managing time while conducting research was challenging. Whereas, 20.7% participants disagreed. This suggests that managing time while conducting research is a significant issue for most participants.

Section B: Data Collection Challenges

6. Obtaining permission from institutions for data collection was difficult.
The majority of respondents (50.6%) agreed that obtaining permission from institutions for data collection was difficult. Whereas, 28.7% participants disagreed. This suggests that obtaining permission from institutions is a significant issue for most participants.
7. Lack of cooperation from participants affected my data collection process.
The majority of respondents (49.4%) agreed that lack of cooperation from participants affected their data collection process. Whereas, 29.9% participants disagreed. This suggests that lack of cooperation from participants create difficulties for most researchers.
8. It was difficult to access the required participants for my study.

The majority of respondents (43.6%) agreed that accessing the required participants for their study was challenging. Whereas, 31% participants disagreed. This suggests that accessing the required participants is a significant issue for most participants.

9. I experienced a low response rate during data collection.

The majority of respondents (45.9%) agreed that they experienced a low response rate during data collection. Whereas, 28.7% participants disagreed. This suggests that most researchers experience a low response rate during data collection.

10. Collecting complete and accurate data was challenging.

The majority of respondents (71.3%) agreed that collecting complete and accurate data was challenging for them. Whereas, 12.6% participants disagreed. This suggests that collecting complete and accurate data is a challenging for most participants.

Section C: Supervisory Support and Research Guidance

11. My supervisor provided sufficient time and guidance throughout my research work.

The majority of respondents (52.9%) agreed that their supervisor provided sufficient time and guidance throughout their research work. Whereas, 36.8% participants disagreed. This suggests that getting time and guidance from supervisor is not a significant issue for most researchers.

12. My supervisor was available when I needed academic assistance related to my research.

The majority of respondents (52.9%) agreed that their supervisor was available when to provide academic assistance related to their research. Whereas, 25.2% participants disagreed. This suggests that getting supervisor's assistance is not a significant issue for most participants.

13. My supervisor maintained a professional and supportive attitude during the supervision process.

The majority of respondents (60.9%) agreed that their supervisor maintained a professional and supportive attitude during the supervision process. Whereas, 16.1% participants disagreed. This suggests that supervisor's attitude is not a significant issue for most participants.

14. My supervisor assigned me personal or non-academic tasks unrelated to my research. The majority of respondents (74.7%) disagreed on the statement that their supervisor assigned them personal or non-academic tasks unrelated to their research. Whereas, 14.9% participants agreed. This suggests that supervisor's unprofessional behavior is a not a significant issue for most participants.

15. I felt uncomfortable or pressured by my supervisor's behavior during the research process.

The majority of respondents (48.6%) disagreed on the statement that they felt uncomfortable or pressured by their supervisor's behavior during the research process. Whereas, 27.5% participants agreed. This suggests that most participants don't get uncomfortable or pressured by their supervisor's behavior during the research process.

Section D: Coping Strategies

16. I needed assistance from my supervisor to overcome research challenges.

The majority of respondents (63.2%) agreed that they sought assistance from their supervisor to overcome research challenges. Whereas, 16.1% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants seek assistance from their supervisor to overcome research challenges.

17. I consulted peers or classmates when facing research difficulties.

The majority of respondents (70.1.7%) agreed that they consulted peers or classmates when facing research difficulties. Whereas, 16% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants consulted peers or classmates when facing research difficulties.

18. I used online resources and digital tools to solve research-related problems. The majority of respondents (93.1%) agreed that they used online resources and digital tools to solve research-related problems. Whereas, 2.3% participants disagreed. This suggests that online resources and digital tools provide assistance to most participants for solving research related problems.

19. I improved my time-management skills to complete research tasks. The majority of respondents (81.6%) agreed that they improved their time-management skills to complete research tasks. Whereas, 9.1% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants improved their time-management skills to complete research tasks.

20. I participated in workshops, seminars, or training sessions to strengthen my research skills.

The majority of respondents (52.8%) agreed that they participated in workshops, seminars, or training sessions to strengthen their research skills. Whereas, 26.4% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants participated in workshops, seminars, or training sessions to strengthen their research skills.

Section E: Recommendations

21. Universities should provide more research training programs for students. The majority of respondents (85.1%) agreed on the statement that universities should provide more research training programs for students. Whereas, 8% participants disagreed. This suggests that for most participants want universities to provide more research training programs for students.

22. Universities should facilitate easier access to participants and institutions for research purposes.

The majority of respondents (86.2%) agreed that universities should facilitate easier access to participants and institutions for research purposes. Whereas, 8% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants want universities to facilitate easier access to participants and institutions for research purposes.

23. Supervisors should provide more frequent and structured feedback to students. The majority of respondents (82.8%) agreed that supervisors should provide more frequent and structured feedback to students. Whereas, 5.7% participants disagreed. This suggests that frequent and structured feedback is a need for most participants.

24. Universities should improve access to digital libraries, plagiarism software, and research databases.

The majority of respondents (87.4%) agreed that universities should improve access to digital libraries, plagiarism software, and research databases. Whereas, 5.7% participants disagreed. This suggests that most participants want universities to improve access to digital libraries, plagiarism software, and research databases.

25. Research mentoring and support programs should be established for student researchers.

The majority of respondents (87.4%) agreed that research mentoring and support programs should be established for student researchers. Whereas, 4.5% participants disagreed. This suggests that research mentoring and support programs are a need for most participants.

Findings

The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings provides a thorough picture of the challenges, research support systems, coping methods, and institutional reforms connected with postgraduate research. While quantitative data indicate the prevalence of research-related concerns, qualitative findings explain the experiences and contextual variables that underpin these issues. Together, the data revealed' research experiences are influenced by a combination of personal, academic, methodological, and institutional elements.

1. The study found that research challenges were the most significant hurdles for graduates during the research process. The quantitative findings show that a significant proportion of respondents had difficulty identifying research topics, drafting research proposals, using plagiarism-checking software, getting research resources, and efficiently managing time. Respondents also noted significant obstacles in gathering complete and accurate data.
2. Qualitative findings offer a greater understanding of these barriers. Participants consistently cited financial restrictions as a serious impediment to practically every level of their research. Limited personal resources and limited institutional financial assistance made it difficult for them to purchase research materials, travel for data collecting, and access subscription-based publications and databases.
3. A number of participants emphasized the lack of plagiarism detection tools offered by the university as a significant issue, stating that it undermined their confidence in verifying the originality of their work before to submission. Additionally, respondents stated that they had little statistical understanding, especially with regard to SPSS and quantitative data analysis, and that they had insufficient access to research software, which made data analysis more challenging and time-consuming.
4. The convergence of both data indicates that research concerns are multidimensional, rather than isolated. Financial constraints, technological limits, methodological obstacles, and restricted institutional resources all impacted students' capacity to do high-quality research. These findings suggest that improving research infrastructure and providing more institutional assistance could alleviate many of the challenges faced by postgraduate researchers.
5. The data show that supervisory assistance is vital in influencing students' research experiences. some of the respondents considered their supervisors as available, supportive, and professionally involved throughout the research process. while Many respondents say that they lack receiving academic support the form supervisors. moreover, unavailability of external supervisor for the final defense also was a challenge.
6. One of the most challenging stages of research has been identified as data collection. According to quantitative results, many respondents had trouble getting institutional approval, getting access to participants, getting sufficient response rates, and gathering correct and comprehensive data. These results show that real-world fieldwork difficulties had a significant impact on how research was implemented.
7. They also reported limited or no cooperation from in-service teachers and other respondents, with some participants indicates that questionnaires were returned incomplete. Such difficulties increased the time which was required for data collection and created concerns regarding data.
8. The combination of these findings implies that data collection issues go beyond methodological concerns and are rooted in wider institutional and administrative constraints. Strengthening collaboration between universities and data gathering locations might help to overcome these challenges and increase research efficiency.
9. Despite significant hurdles, postgraduate students displayed remarkable resilience by employing a wide range of coping mechanisms. According to the quantitative data, students actively sought advice from supervisors those whose supervisors were cooperative and also from peers, accessed online learning resources, improved their time management skills, and took use of online research-related training opportunities.
10. The qualitative findings showed that the students relied heavily on self learning, repeated follow-up with institutions, and collaboration with seniors, classmates to overcome research difficulties. Participants described that the persistence and continuous effort as

necessary for completing their research successfully and timely, particularly when institutional support was inadequate.

Discussion

This study provides an integrated understanding of graduates' research experiences by combined quantitative and qualitative data based evidence. The findings show that research challenges are complex, involving institutional, budgetary, methodological, and administrative aspects in addition to individual competence. The qualitative findings clarify how these difficulties impact research experiences and educational progress, while the quantitative results show how common these issues are. Together, these findings show that the strengthening of institutional research support systems is how much essential for improving postgraduate research quality

The findings show that research planning, methodology and access to resources, remain major concerns of the graduates during research. Difficulties in synopsis or proposal development, access to the plagiarism checking software, time management and research resources were constantly identified in the quantitative analysis, while qualitative data highlighted the financial constraints i.e travelling for data collection, hard binding of thesis and publications, limited access to subscription-based journals, insufficient statistical skills, and insufficient institutional support.

The findings suggest that research capacity is not only by influenced by students' motivation but also by the availability of university support. the universities have expanded degree programs and increased the expectations for research productivity, but the support has not been developed at the same pace. Many students were expected to do high-quality research without access to the tools typically thought to be necessary for scholarly work.

Universities must strengthen the research capacity by expanding and easy access to digital libraries, free plagiarism-detection softwares for students, statistical software, and methodological support services. Such investments would improve research quality

Supervision is a key determinant of postgraduate research experiences. Quantitative data findings show the supervisors as available and supportive, whereas qualitative findings reveal that some students experienced delayed feedback from supervisors, lack of proper guidance, and limited meetings with supervisors while waiting for them hours outside their offices.

The study shows that the data collection is one of the most difficult phases of the research. Difficulties i.e, institutional permissions, participants' cooperation, and collecting of complete responses specially questionnaires were consistently reported in both datasets.

The findings show that the barriers encountered during the data collection were not only methodological but also administrative and organizational. The graduates depend on formal approval from the head offices, schools, colleges, hospitals, or government organizations before collecting the data. Variations in administrative procedures and limited institutional cooperation prolonged the research timelines and reduce response rates.

Regardless of the challenges indicated, the findings show that postgraduate students actively use adaptive coping mechanisms. Students reported obtaining advice from supervisors those who were cooperative otherwise they took help from peers and seniors, consulting colleagues, utilizing online learning resources, improving time management skills, and participating in research training. Qualitative data showed the that persistence and self-directed learning were central towards overcoming research barriers.

The combined findings have a number of ramifications for higher education. Stronger research infrastructure, better digital resources, organized supervision, simpler institutional access, and increased practical research trainings were all frequently suggested by participants. moreover, most importantly research support center in every university is most important.

Conclusion

This study investigated graduate students' research experiences by assessing the problems they faced, the supervisory support they got, the difficulties encountered during data collecting, the coping methods they used, and their ideas for enhancing research support systems. The topic analysis demonstrated that research is a complicated and rigorous process driven by academic, institutional, economical, and personal issues.

The findings show that financial limitations, limited access to research resources, subscription-based publications, and the lack of university-provided plagiarism detection software all significantly impede students' research progress. Time constraints, challenges with quantitative data analysis, and insufficient research infrastructure all hindered the execution of research. These problems highlight the need for more institutional support to improve students' research capacity.

This research study also find out that supervisory support plays a crucial role in shaping the students' research experiences. While some of the participants appreciated constructive guidance and timely feedback provided by their supervisor, and many reported insufficient supervision, delayed responses/, insufficient time meetings, and limited academic support. Active supervision was steadily identified as a much important factor in improving the research quality, motivation level, and timely completion of the research work. Data collection appeared as one of the most challenging phase of the research. graduates experienced difficulties in obtaining permission from institutions and other organizations, while many also reported a lack of cooperation from teachers specially in-service teachers and other research participants. Besides, incomplete questionnaires, inaccurate or missed responses, and low participant engagement level negatively affected the quality and reliability of the data. These findings give emphasis to the importance of institutional collaboration and participant awareness of research to facilitate successful research.

Despite all the challenges, graduates revealed spirit by adopting various coping strategies, including self-directed learning, consultations with senior students and peers, continuous skills development, effective time management, and persistent follow-up with participants. These approaches empowered many students to overcome difficulties and successfully complete their research work.

Recommendations

1. The universities should provide E-books, Data banks, SPSS software, (turn it in) plagiarism software to every research student.
2. The universities should organize regular national or international workshops and certified trainings on research. Also, training on research methodology and separate training on qualitative and quantitative analysis like SPSS, N-vivo and other academic writing tools. The training should be hands on and week long, these training should be free for the students.
3. HEC should introduce mandatory professional development programs for the research supervisors and made it compulsory for them to provide time leaf feedback research ethics supervision management and publication guidelines and HEC should be straight policies for supervisor so that they cannot torture the students during the research supervision. Supervisor performance should also be periodically evaluated using transparent quality standards.
4. HEC should made it compulsory for each and every University in Pakistan to develop a proper and huge research support center and the people who will be appointed in research support center should be expert in conducting research so they can provide support to the student and they can monitor the performance of supervisors regularly.
5. HEC should work on publications procedure and journal clubs so that student do not have to pay heavy fees for their publications this is the extra burden on students.

6. HEC should made it mandatory for every university to provide research grant to the research students even if its minimum amount, but it should be mandatory for the needy students.
7. There should be a research board or ethical committees in every educational institution like school, college, offices and hospital who can facilitate the research students when they come for the data collection in their institutions.
8. Awareness and importance of research should be provided to the each and every institution so that they should corporate with the research students or the person who is conducting research, In Pakistan we don't have research culture specially the head of institution are mostly those that have old qualifications and they do not have research exposure so they do not know importance of the research and that's why they do not cooperate much.
9. By implementing on these recommendations which are provided by students themselves in qualitative data part, HEC can improve research quality, students will be more motivated toward research. These implementations will not only enhance motivation and number of research students but also contribute to the enhancement of Pakistan's national research productivity innovative capacity and international academic competitiveness.

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