

Thesis Supervision And Glitches Of Researchers

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ABSTRACT

Research is an integral component for postgraduate studies. Students working on thesis/dissertation writing need skill to write research reports following approved SOPs of the institution of their studentship. This study was conducted to search out required skills that needs to be learnt before starting to write a thesis/dissertation for research degrees. Moreover, searching of weaker areas in research supervision was also a aim of this study. Qualitative model of research was adopted in this study. A sample of 47 research scholars having or working on thesis writing at last stage were selected for data collection. In light of data analysis, based on literature review and field data its was concluded that a research scholar needs; a¹ skillful research supervisor, effective research training, art to trace and frame a valuable topic for research, literature search and its reporting skill adopting scholarly writing styles, resources detection and their utilization skill, a strong grip on research methodology and time management skill to write a valuable thesis. Moreover, in light of data from the field it was concluded that researchers face lot of issues regarding attitude of research supervisors. They reported that many supervisors do not try to be helpful for researchers. They don't give proper time to their supervisees and try to solve their issues as a guide. Moreover, researchers reported financial issues in conduct of research and admitted that they were not successful to detect or utilize available financial assistance. Researchers also reported non cooperative behavior of their colleagues to tackle their issues.

Key Words: Research Supervision, Research Skill, Researcher Issues, Thesis Writing.

INTRODUCTION

Research is a compulsory component for post graduate level degrees. Although thesis writing is optional for degree fulfilment requirements of bachelor and master's level degrees now a days but compulsory for the degree fulfilment requirements of many of the well-recognized universities in Pakistan and all around the world . At Ph. D level, thesis/ Dissertation writing and research publication in HEC approved and well recognized journals is compulsory.

Students enrolled in post graduate level degrees study courses to enhance their skills related to research. They do efforts to conduct and publish their research following the rules they study in books. But, studies exhibit that researchers face numerous problems during

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research conduction, report writing and research publishing (Burns, 2000). Sometimes lack of resources otherwise poor skill of researchers and defaulted supervision become reason for the delays, failures and stress among researchers. Consequently, most of the research scholars consider thesis writing and research publications as a formality to fulfill their degree requirement. While facing problems in research conduction post graduate level researchers just try to finish off the research in any condition to earn their degrees. Even they sometimes try to use the shortcuts and malpractices to achieve their target of degree achievement. When thesis with mistakes and lot of flaws is being submitted to the universities, institutions/ responsible bodies refer them to the evaluators for decision regarding approval of thesis.

Evaluators of thesis point out a number of weaknesses in postgraduate level thesis and sometimes suggest major or minor revisions in evaluation reports by external and internal examiners. Some of the evaluators also reject the thesis of postgraduate level (M. Phil & Ph D) research scholars after pointing out many mistakes and major weaknesses in thesis that create lot of stress among researchers. This also badly effect the reputation of supervisors and institutions. Present study aims to investigate the problems of post graduate level researchers and search out the responsible factors behind the failure of research scholars to produce quality research and find out solutions for promotion of quality research conditions in Pakistan. No doubt, research productivity and its quality is equal contribution of researcher and his/ her supervisor. Therefore, present study was planned to equally evaluate the negligence of research supervisors and weaker areas and problems of research scholars. Objectives of the study were;

1. Explore desired and workable skills for thesis writing and research supervision in the light of published literature and experience of researchers
2. Explore the issues/glitches of research scholars regarding their supervisors
3. Find out reasons for poor working of scholars in view of their own reports.

METHODOLOGY

This study followed qualitative survey method of research that demanded to search data from literature and researchers who ever conducted a research for post graduate level research degrees. Researcher decided to conduct this study using qualitative model of research keeping in view to record real experiences of researchers in the light of their observations and self-experiences including literature review.

Population of the study was researchers who conducted any research for M Phil or Ph D level research degrees. Keeping in view easy access to sample who could provide real data based on self-experience/ self-observation, M Phil and Ph D degree holders and M Phil/ Ph D research scholars at last stage of award of degree were decided to include in sample. It was assumed that they could best express their experiences and observations regarding under study issue because of having a real and immediate research experience with their supervisors, institution and systems in the institutions of their study.

Data Collection Procedure

Data of This study was collected in two stages. At first stage, literature review of published literature was done. At second stage, data from a sample of the study was collected.

A group of 15 Ph D degree holders worked under different supervisors from five universities in Pakistan was consulted and requested to report their issues with supervisors, institutions and procedures for the purpose to highlight issues of researchers and device a plan to facilitate future researchers using a google form. Some of them were working on teaching positions in different universities. They were given an option to forward the tool further to their links having M Phil/Ph D degree or working at the last stage of M Phil/ Ph D degree. Therefore, on return response of 47 persons was received. Data received from 47 respondents was 32% having M

Phil/ Ph D degree and 68% under the process of award of M Phil/ Ph D degree at last stage. Male (32%) and female (68%) having experience to work with private (19%), Public sector universities (79%) in Pakistan and foreign public sector Universities (2%) provided data of the study. It was promised that name, identity and institution of respondents will not be opened or published at any stage.

Research Tool of the study

This study used open ended questionnaire. Respondents were requested to describe their problems during research and brief experience regarding their objections, issues and undesirable experience against behavior of supervisor, institution, procedures or any other related to institution.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis of data was done finding out key sentences of respondents from their responses. Received responses were sorted out under three themes namely; Supervisor's Behavior, Colleague's Cooperation and Finance and Funding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To achieve the objectives of the study and fulfilling conditions of research process, literature on topic was searched to explore needed and workable skills for thesis writing. A short description has been given in the following.

Training of Researcher

Researchers need knowledge, skill and resources to conduct research and report results of their study in any form of research report. Research scholars having **training** design a research according to scientific procedures and plan meetings with supervisor, officials, experts and samples of the study. They evaluate suitable option among the multiple possibilities. Course work is a source of getting initial training regarding the research conduction. Research scholars are demanded to compulsorily attend the classes and learn the art; how to conduct research and report results in the research reports. According to Nelson and Beedy (2008), training of research team members is indispensable to the successful application and complete action of a research project. Training needs should be recognized before and during the conduct of the research. It should include individuals training and group training sessions. According to Kahn, Conn, Pavlath & Corbett (2016) areas for training of PhD researchers in writing their dissertation contain; decision about the identification of needed areas of the study, elaborating techniques to write introduction of the study, research questions, framing the experiments for data collection, getting command on art of scientific writing and art to edit data. Furthermore, Lynn, McAlpine., Corinne., Boz. (2023) added that PhD researchers should have command on art of goal setting and discussions. A scholar should be trained in highlighting the different perspectives of under study topics and understand to meet the writing challenges in demanding scenarios.

Review of schemes of studies of all research level degrees gives an impression that universities in no way award degrees to graduates unless passing the courses related to research skills mastery. On the other hand, good institutions also organize optional research training seminars and sessions for students enrolled in research degrees to provide additional chances to comprehend procedures related to research skills. But, mostly research scholars do not prefer to avail training opportunities during the study period. In most of the situations, they do not take interest to attend training sessions arranged in universities and many times cannot search productive sources/ places for training and learning. Hashmi (2014) mentioned that researchers face difficulty to find funds and approach libraries to pursue standard research. Due to lack of

training they even face difficulty to cover the confidentiality issues during research. Therefore, Hasan, Mehmood, and Mirza (2014) suggested suitable research culture of multiple events where supervisors cooperate research scholars and scholars, conduct meetings with professionals, supervisor and experts in the field to extend research skills of research scholars. Researchers also need to focus inventions. Therefore, Beydoun and Saleh (2023) stressed to train employees of organization to be able to attain job related goals. They viewed that with diverse types and absolute costs, institutions should select the suitable productive trainings considering that innovation is a central value for some institution excelling in each action. Therefore, institutions should frame smart, cost effective and need based research trainings of researchers and their supervisors/ guides to produce quality research.

Time Management Skill

Lack of training in research, create hurdles to researchers to manage time and complete the research timely. A major issue with senior and part time research scholars is that majority of scholars work for wages along with studying. They take study as a part time activity instead of taking job as a part time activity for research scholars (Ali & Ahmed, 2017).. This sometimes make students lazy to prefer research on their job or business. On the other hand research scholars are unable to manage time to run studies along with business/ job and other social activities (Boccar, 2013). Due to lack of time management or poor time management researchers waste their resources due to missed deadlines. Poor time management can result in missed deadlines, imperfect projects, and work with disruptions (Smith et al., 2020).. According to Mgeleka (2015), time management and work performance normally go together. Different factors hindering effective use of time such as break, inefficiency, unproductive meeting, and procrastination and unlike human traits delay of information. According to Johnson and Brown (2020) People do not have the habit of managing their time. This results about laziness and careless towards accomplishment of their task on time. Williams (2021) suggests institutions to integrate time management training among research scholars during research coursework. This requires Provision of training sessions on planning and executing research projects professionally to help scholars in developing better time management skills and ultimately improve their academic and professional productivity Therefore, need of the issue is to teach need of time management to researchers during course work and provide training sessions to plan and execute projects with effective planning and time management.

Resources Search and Efficient Usage of Available Funds

Quality research also requires **material and resources in terms of time and money**. Research scholars conduct research for degree purpose only. Mostly they spend their own funds on research during the period of study. They do not try to get awareness and training to attain financial assistance from funding authorities. Although, financial assistance for research is limited in Pakistan but not absolutely at zero level. Many times Higher Education Commission, Universities and other international funding agencies announce researchers to submit their projects and demand for research grants. Researchers working for degree reports that offer of research grants is not provided to scholars working for academic degree. This facility is given to faculty. On the other hand, problem is that scholars and even their supervisors take less interest to obtain such facilities because of poor skill to frame/plan research project for the purpose to apply for research grant and general perceptions of favoritism culture in allocation of research grants to the researchers.

Mackway (2003) views that a scholar should have command on to search funds according to his estimate to complete his project successfully. Yusuke, Keigo, and Taketo (2016) stress to develop command on to publish research papers and attend conferences that require money. Therefore Dolgin (2019) suggest researchers to get command on skill to attain funding from

foreign governments and external institutions. Severin and Egger (2021) reports that researchers face issue to qualify in peer review process for publication of research findings and funds attaining due to impact of biasness in peer review process.

Jafery (2005) reports that poor research quality as discussed and reported at different forums is due to absence of research funding. This leads to provide a culture in institutions for research scholars to work in bad conditions and finally spend their own resources that sometimes motivate or compel scholars to use dishonest means in reporting the research procedures about actual conditions where research is conducted. According to Sattari, Jung, Berkes and Weinberg (2022), the big impacts of research funding on research output are ripple. Moreover, funders focus on research output from research projects. The researchers need to get funding from organizations stressing that training to get funding involving staff, trainees and projects to improve research output. Funding agencies need to focus to spread funding opportunities for needful researchers at large scale involving a spread of employees and researchers. In current age, this task is easy to achieve because of use of social media for advertising opportunities to all.

Supervisor's Skills and Behavior

Supervisor's skill and behavior play vital role in production of valuable thesis. Expert and dedicated supervisors train their research scholars to tactfully manage their time and resources. They trace out the talent in researchers and try their best to utilize their abilities. They never leave them alone and give a feeling to be very supportive, approachable and loving (Ali, 2015). But, in cases where supervisors who are less professional, self-centered, less experienced, over worked and also less dedicated to their profession do not perform their duties according to demands of the profession and professional code of ethics. After observing such situations, Waseem (2013) reported that supervisors usually give less quality time to their supervises. They do not communicate; how to improve the documents and procedures. Researchers get stress in cases where irrelevant supervisors are assigned to researchers in a sense that research topic and area of study less match to the expertise of supervisors.

According to Almusaed and Almssad (2020), research supervision is the act of looking over the work of a junior researcher who lacks practical knowledge and skill of what he is doing for degree requirement. Every qualified and senior faculty member cannot be a thesis supervisor on any area of study. Ideally, the supervisor must have thorough expertise and experience in the field of investigation. He should be able to think the level and issues of researcher and discover the ways to handle novel topics and especially the issue under study. He should be an example for his supervisees not only in their area of research, but also in areas linked to practical issues linked to his/her researchers. The motto of every researcher is to produce his quality dissertation timely. Therefore, supervisor should help researcher in every way to achieve his target under the limits. Many students do not complete their required program because of lack of supervisor training to handle the issues of researchers on specific issue.

Broegaard (2018) has reported that PhD scholars criticize supervision style indicating their unclear directions. He emphasized that flexible and cooperative guiding tactics should be adopted in cross-cultural settings. Dube (2024) indicated that research supervisor behavior with Ph.D. scholars is not effective. It is a topic of criticism in numerous studies. For the sake of rapid growth of valid knowledge and enrich the quantity of information, research supervisory mechanisms need serious attention for improvement.

Selection of Suitable and Valuable Topic

The researcher acquires knowledge in the field chosen for research and have to conducts meaningful research for results prove to be very useful in the society (Herma, 2022). The

research problem launches an instance for writing and a concentration that directs what researcher wants to say. It characterizes the main subject material of scholarly statement and the means by which researchers attain other topics of discussion and the discovery of new knowledge and understanding (Alvesson, Mats & Sandberg, 2013).

Researchers mostly face problems to conduct research and report results in thesis because of working on the topics that are less smartly or wrongly selected. Topic of the study should be related to interest and expertise of the researcher. It should be novel from some aspect and also should be the need of the time. A good topic of the research never indulge the researcher to a situation where completion of study become impossible due to unavailability of data from the field of study in materialistic or non-materialistic ways. A right topic enable researcher to work with dedication, interest and zeal.

The reason behind selection of unsuitable topic is mostly lack of expertise of researchers and non-serious attitude of supervisors and bodies responsible for acceptance and approval of research problems. Mostly, non-serious scholars finalize topic keeping in view the option to complete research comfortably, easily, timely and ignore other factors for selection of ideal topic of the study. In result of unsuitable and less valuable topic of the study finally create countless problems for researchers in competition of study and write report honestly and up to the standard.

Methodology Related Issues

Every topic is new in nature and demands methodology according to nature of investigation. Intelligent researchers investigate truth using the best suited method utilizing available material and non-material resources. Observation of research reports gives an impression that research scholars do not critically evaluate the multiple options of investigation before finalizing the method of study. Researchers normally follow the tradition of senior scholars and just try to complete the task of thesis writing without thinking the new options related to research methodology. The evaluation of chapter related to research methodology in many theses a reader just find similarities in reporting. Most of researchers do not understand that every research needs a new way of investigation. Moreover, just report of what was done is insufficient unless describing the reasons for choosing and adopting an option among the multiple options available to a researcher. Reasons behind the problem can be poor knowledge of researchers, non-serious attitude of researchers or the careless and accommodative behavior of supervisors. In a report by Ghost (2021) researcher should adopt a novel procedure to conduct a new research to make it attractive for publisher because there is no logic to apply older technique of research on a research problem where new ways to conduct the study are available.

Literature Review Issues: Search and Reporting

Literature review on problem under study and relating new topic of the study with past work is an important part of all type of research reports (Leavy, 2020). This part facilitate reader to overview data about theme, theory and methodology to past research output and builds a foundation for need of new research (Paul & Criado, 2020). It should be well organized and successfully communicate the reader about in depth overview of all available information with a justification for need of current study and logic of further work stressing demand of new research (Karunarathna, Gunasena, , De Alvis & Jayawardana, 2024).

In thesis writing, report of literature review requires serious effort of researcher. Literature review process and its reporting needs skill of researchers. Availability of resources is basic need to perform review of literature and prepare its report. Literature on published research is

although easy now a days because of availability of published data on different websites. But, researchers needs access to websites and tactics to access data and report it in research reports adopting standard procedures of citations and referencing. Major problem researchers face in citations and referencing is; poor availability of internet connection, cost of internet and no or less access to databases. Many researchers are also not skillful to cite literature differentiating sources as primary or secondary, individual or group task, cite reference of three or more than three authors. Supervisors even do not promote the expertise to their research students regarding tactics to avoid the plagiarism? In many situations researchers do not accredit the original source because of their negligence of skill or doing effort to present other's work by their own effort ignoring the research ethics. But, supervisors ignore to explain their researchers about the result of plagiarism on researcher's future sometimes dwell researchers in problems in future. According to Kousha and Thelwall (2024), artificial intelligence can support researchers to search literature and write a comprehensive report but to monitor the issues regarding literature and detect plagiarism prior to submission of report to supervisors and evaluators is not possible unless having its training.

During working with researchers mostly, it has been observed that research scholars duplicate materials from old unpublished research reports or paraphrase the published text to show new work as a novel record of research with their name. This attitude no doubt gives a benefit to researchers to submit their work timely but in the long run gives a loss not to the researchers but also damage the theme of producing new literature. Many times even efficient supervisors find no way to verify whether their scholars are submitting novel and original work to them or just fulfilling the conditions of degree award. Although, plagiarism check and submission of Turnitin report along with thesis is a condition of thesis submission to the university now a days but in case new researchers change the original text of past reports just doing paraphrasing to show plagiarized work as original do professional dishonesty. Novelty check of work become more difficult when already submitted unsubmitted thesis are not submitted to websites of organizations. Therefore, multiple factors influence the submission of duplicate reports by new researchers that finally destroy quality of research and harm future of new researchers.

Shortly, it is concluded from literature review that new researchers requires to attain skill of finding ways to explore novel and significant topics for their research. They severely need to get command on techniques/ art to search past literature and write its report tactfully following quality standards of scholarly writing. Moreover, research competition and report writing is not possible for researchers unless understanding research methodology as per needs of required and applicable research paradigms, learning the procedure to conduct a research and report methodology and steps of research with logics, preparing data analysis report, appropriate time management and searching ways to find out sources of funds. This all is impossible without a learnt and skillful research supervisor who can monitor activities of supervisees and guide tactfully.

RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE SURVEY OF THE STUDY

To achieve the target, to answer researcher's criticism regarding researchers' behavior, role of institutions and problems during research for completion of degree , a sample of research scholars were chosen. All were registered in Ph D or M Phil research. They were given list of open ended questions and requested to provide data in oral or written form. They were requested to write their objections about supervisors and institution and its resources for research conduction. After analyzing data, statements where researchers pointed out their objections were separated and their objections were divided under sub sections.

- Supervisor's Behavior,
- Colleague's Cooperation
- Finance and Funding

Scholars' Issues Regarding Behavior of their Supervisor

Keeping in view role of supervisor in research and thesis writing and its submission, researchers were asked to evaluate the behavior of their supervisors and report their objections without mentioning their name. therefore, some of the respondents provided data according to their own experience during research. According to data; A researcher reported that

I faced a major issue to have appointment with my supervisor. Whenever, I tried to contact him, I spent lot of time in waiting to have a meeting. Even when, my supervisor gave me appointment and I went to meet my supervisor to discuss some matter, he was not free. The attendant asked me to wait and supervisor forgot that I had appointment with him. Many times, after long waiting, I was asked to return without meeting and come on the next day. This like situations gave me so pain that I felt me helpless but supervisor felt no guilt.

Another respondent reported

Whenever, I asked my supervisor to have a detailed meeting, he agreed. I was always welcomed by the supervisor for guidance but in real sense he always talked me in such manners that I got no clear direction for work. Directions of my supervisor were always suspicious, had multiple meaning and confusing for me. I always wanted a guide who could direct me to finish work in a short time but lack of clear direction indulged me to waste time for doing errors again and again.

A respondent explained his objection in following manners

Whenever I consulted my supervisor, he asked me to meet in group of his all supervisees. During discussion, he always focused attention to his favorite students. He praised them and tried to discuss their queries. I was many times snubbed to have detailed discussion. Whenever I asked for a separate discussion, he pointed out his busy schedules. This at last, he gave me a lesson that I have to work by self or may be getting direction from my other fellows and professionals in the market to complete the tasks timely. I concluded that my supervisor has a motto to focus some scholars and others have no worth near to him. I don't know, why he was doing discriminations and wanted to give benefits to some of my fellows? This made me to think that my supervisor was biased and wanted to target me without any reason.

Wording of a scholar was

I felt lack of skill to handle some issues during research. I was urged that some skillful person should train me for; how to elaborate procedures? How to treat data for analysis? How to report findings skillfully without errors? I found myself unskilled in handling these issues. My course work could not trained me in research skills. I had theoretical knowledge but was unable to apply my knowledge into practice. Whenever, I described my issue with supervisor, he criticized my skill instead of providing me the guidance to solve my issues. In fact, I was good in covering research issues in theory but poor in implementing my knowledge into practice.

One scholar reported

I tried to consult one of faculty member in the department for guidance. His scholars always praised for skill and polite and appealing attitude of their supervisor. When I met him, he denied to help me and said **you are not my responsibility**. He suggested me to consult only my supervisor. I was astonished that he refused to guide me when I was also student of same organization.

After review of above respondents' responses, it was abstracted that supervisors do not schedule meetings with scholars. They take scholars casually and don't bother about wastage of time that is caused because of irresponsible behavior of supervisors. Supervisors don't guide seriously and sometimes focus to promote their favorite students. Whenever, scholars found themselves confused, supervisors don't give clear direction. When scholars try to consult other experts in the department, supervisors deny to help supervisees of their fellows. Scholars find themselves helpless because neither their own supervisor nor their other teachers try to solve their issues. It is also eminent that supervisees always wanted shortcuts and clear directions of supervisors but supervisors wanted that their supervisees should learn by trial and errors techniques and utilize their own efforts to learn by self-experiences. A major issue of favoritisms by supervisors was also observed in data provided by the sample.

Financial Issues of Researchers

Research process demands use of expenses. Research conduction for degree requirement is not sponsored by any agency in Pakistan. Research scholars are bound to follow schedule of departments within university to complete research process and submit its report in the form of thesis and published research paper as per requirements of the degree. Majority of scholars in Pakistan are full time students and use own finances. A group of students when consulted at the research stage, they reported their problems. A case wise report by groups has been reported below.

I was expecting that some of the organization should provide me sponsorship for competition of my research. It was surprising for me that some data bases demanded me to pay for purchase of materials published on different websites. When I searched some standardized tools, data bases demanded money to purchase. I was unable to purchase data/research tools on payment even when I was not paying my semester fee easily.

A respondent reported that

Research publication before thesis submission was mandatory. I produced a good paper but when I applied it for publishing, editors demanded me a huge money to pay as publication fee. When I denied to pay, my paper was not published. I moved towards unpaid journal. The editors refused saying that my paper will not be published in the journal within time period according to my demands because of long list in waiting. Unluckily, incentives for quality research production and its publishing was not available to me because no one properly guided me about the art to gain sponsorships. At last I published my work in a paid journal only to fulfil the demand of dissertation submission just a formality but not happily.

A respondent explained

I was in search of organizations and persons who could award me financial support keeping in view my talent and urges to work hard in the field but after searching a lot, I came to know that long procedures are required to achieve financial supports in the form of awards of research funds and scholarships. I analyzed that by searching and utilizing such grants, my time schedule for completing the tasks could badly disturbed. I wanted some sections in my university who could support me at right time when I was in need.

A respondent reported

During research, I was not full time student. I take a letter from my supervisor regarding seek of permission to use library of a university in my native city. I consulted library staff of concerned section. He denied to provide me the access saying “we have no agreement with your institution for collaborations”. I suggested my supervisor to develop collaborations with renowned libraries of the country and local institutions. He said, he has no authority and responsibility to do this process

In conclusion, the challenges faced by researchers in securing financial support, accessing essential research materials, and publishing their work highlight significant barriers within the academic landscape. The lack of readily available sponsorships, high publication fees, and restricted access to standardized tools and libraries create obstacles that hinder the progress of quality research. Moreover, the bureaucratic complexities involved in obtaining research funding and scholarships further exacerbate these difficulties. Addressing these issues requires institutional reforms, including the establishment of dedicated support mechanisms within universities, collaboration with libraries, and financial aid programs for researchers. Providing proper guidance on securing sponsorships and funding opportunities can significantly ease the burden on researchers and contribute to a more inclusive and supportive academic environment.

Lack of Colleagues’ Cooperation

A group of researchers working under multiple supervisors was asked to report their problems about cooperation from their fellows. The report is as below.

One researcher reported

“I usually consult my colleagues/ fellow researchers and senior fellows to find out solutions of my problems. Normally my colleagues guide me for ways to sort out the issues in their own ways. But, problem I mostly faced was that techniques were not 100% correct to reach the solution of issues.

Another researcher said

“Sometimes, I felt that I wasted money and time because technique of my other colleagues did not found fit to solve my issue”.

One of the scholar reported

“my colleague working under other supervisor usually hidden useful acts to answer my queries. He is in fact selfish and wants to speed up his task and gain his target to achieve degree earlier to me”.

One researcher said

“my colleague do not treat me in fair way. He mostly tries to keep his progress hidden to me”.

One narrated

“my colleague keeps in mind secrecy issue to prove him better than me in eyes of supervisor”.

Shortly, the researchers reported facing challenges in seeking help from colleagues. While some colleagues provided guidance, their techniques were not always effective. Others felt they wasted time and money following unsuitable methods. Some scholars experienced secrecy and

unfair treatment, with colleagues withholding useful information to gain a competitive advantage and impress supervisors.

DISCUSSION

Research is an art and its supervision needs a deep understanding regarding required role of research supervisor. A research degree student is required to qualify course work before starting to research. Aim of qualifying course work is to develop required skill in researchers for conduct of research under supervision of a research supervisor and enable researcher to conduct independent research in future life. This research has identified some weaker areas in research supervision and role of researchers along issues of researchers with their supervisors. A Critical discussion on salient results of this study is as under.

An important factor highlighted by this study is that every researcher requires training in utilization of available resources to conduct a valuable research. In fact, researchers need a robust foundation of knowledge, skills, and resources to conduct and report research effectively. Training through coursework, seminars, and interactions with experts is crucial for PhD scholars to master scientific procedures, research writing, and goal setting. This study has highlighted that Unfortunately, many scholars do not fully utilize these training opportunities due to challenges such as funding constraints, confidentiality issues. Therefore, they face difficulties in research execution. Cost-effective training programs significantly can enhance research quality and innovation. Therefore, institutions must prioritize the creation of such programs to bridge the gap between available training and its utilization by scholars.

The absence of adequate research training presents significant challenges for researchers, particularly in managing time and completing their studies on schedule. Senior and part-time scholars often prioritize their jobs over research, treating their studies as secondary activities. This behavior can lead to procrastination and an imbalance between research and other responsibilities. Poor time management results in missed deadlines, wasted resources, and incomplete projects. Factors such as inefficiency, procrastination, and unproductive meetings further hinder productivity. According to Müller and Jenkins (2019), time management and work performance are closely linked, emphasizing the need for training in effective planning and time management during coursework. Such training enhances researchers' efficiency and productivity, aligning with our findings. Therefore need is to focus attention to improve training of researchers during course work and evaluate with valid ways before prompting them to start research.

In Pakistan, many scholars fund their research independently due to a lack of awareness and training in securing financial assistance. Organizations such as the Higher Education Commission and international agencies offer grants, but these are often limited to faculty members. Poor proposal-writing skills and perceived favoritism further discourage scholars from applying for funding. This scenario is consistent with the findings of Khan et al. (2021), who noted that inadequate funding and lack of training in grant acquisition negatively impact researchers' participation in research activities, ultimately affecting research quality. Expanding training in grant acquisition and promoting funding opportunities through social media can significantly enhance research output, as suggested by Mirza and Patel (2022).

A prominent issue pointed out in this study was defective topic selection by researchers. This is due to superficial attention of researchers towards research and just work on any topic to gain a degree. This also indicate the poor work of committees responsible for approval of topics before starting the research in practice.

Literature indicates that Selecting the right research topic is essential for conducting meaningful research that benefits society. A well-defined research problem guides scholarly discussion and fosters knowledge discovery. However, researchers often face challenges in choosing significant and unique topics. This difficulty may arise from a lack of expertise or a non-serious attitude of supervisors, leading to poor topic selection. Consequently, this can result in data collection and research completion difficulties, ultimately affecting the final report's quality and credibility. Institutions must address this issue by assisting researchers in choosing valuable topics that contribute to knowledge growth and future innovations.

A prominent issue highlighted by this study was that many researchers adhere to traditional methodologies without critically evaluating alternative options, often replicating previous approaches rather than innovating. This tendency results in research methodology sections that lack originality and justification for the chosen methods (Bryman, 2016). Factors contributing to this issue include limited knowledge of research scholars, lack of seriousness, and supervisors' leniency (Patton, 2015). This situation highlights the need for responsible bodies to monitor supervisors' roles, ensuring that unjustified work is not approved without contributing anything new.

A well-executed literature review is crucial for building upon existing research and ensuring academic rigor. However, challenges such as limited resource accessibility, high costs, and citation difficulties can hinder its effectiveness. The rise of AI in research presents both opportunities and risks, particularly concerning plagiarism detection and research integrity (Smith, 2018). Addressing these issues through proper training, ethical research practices, and improved access to scholarly materials is vital for maintaining credibility in academic work.

Research has consistently highlighted several critical issues in academic supervision, including irregular meetings, lack of guidance, favoritism, and reluctance to support external advice. These supervisory shortcomings cause delays and frustration for scholars, who often seek structured guidance rather than trial-and-error learning (Grant, 2003; Lee, 2008). Structured and regular supervision is crucial for the timely and effective completion of research projects, and the absence of it can significantly impede scholars' progress. Additionally, favoritism and the refusal to consider external advice create an inequitable research environment, which can further demotivate and disadvantage students (Hemer, 2012). Improving supervision practices by implementing regular meeting schedules, providing comprehensive guidance, and encouraging openness to external input is essential for fostering a fair and supportive research environment.

Financial Constraints and Access to Resources is a major issue for researchers. This issue is more with those who work only to earn a degree. This study has also indicated that researchers face significant challenges due to financial constraints, limited access to research materials, and high publication fees. These barriers often hinder the progress and quality of research output. Financial constraints limit researchers' ability to access necessary resources and materials, further complicating their work. High publication fees also pose a substantial burden, particularly for scholars from underfunded institutions or low-income countries, reducing their chances of sharing their findings with the global academic community. Bureaucratic hurdles further complicate funding opportunities, making it difficult for researchers to obtain the financial support they need. To create a more inclusive and supportive academic environment, institutional reforms, financial aid, and better support mechanisms are necessary. These could include reducing publication fees, improving access to research materials, and streamlining funding application processes.

This study has highlighted that researchers face difficulties in Seeking Assistance from Colleagues. Researchers often encounter difficulties when seeking assistance from colleagues,

instead of relying solely on a single supervisor. While some researchers may receive guidance from colleagues, the suggested techniques are not always effective. In many cases, attempts to gain cooperation from colleagues are unsuccessful, leading to wasted time and resources. Additionally, some researchers experience secrecy and unfair treatment as colleagues withhold information to gain a competitive advantage. This lack of cooperation within the academic community highlights the need to foster a more collaborative environment. Encouraging open communication, sharing of resources, and mutual support among researchers can help build a more cohesive and productive research community. Promoting collaboration rather than competition can lead to more significant advancements in knowledge and a more supportive academic culture.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Researchers require knowledge, skills, and resources to conduct and report research effectively. Training through coursework, seminars, and meetings with experts is essential for PhD scholars to master scientific procedures, research writing, and goal setting. However, many scholars do not utilize training opportunities, facing challenges in funding, confidentiality, and research execution. Institutions should provide structured, cost-effective training programs to enhance research quality and innovation.
2. Lack of research training creates challenges for researchers in managing time and completing their studies on schedule. Senior and part-time scholars often prioritize jobs over research, treating their studies as a secondary activity. This can lead to procrastination and difficulty in balancing research with work and social responsibilities. Poor time management results in missed deadlines, wasted resources, and incomplete projects. Factors like inefficiency, procrastination, and unproductive meetings further hinder productivity. Since time management and work performance are closely linked, researchers should be trained in effective planning and time management during their coursework to enhance their efficiency.
3. Many scholars in Pakistan fund their research independently due to a lack of awareness and training in securing financial assistance. While organizations like the Higher Education Commission and international agencies offer grants that are often limited to faculty. Poor proposal-writing skills and perceived favoritism mostly discourage scholars from applying for funding for execution of research. Experts stress the importance of funding, publishing, and attending conferences but due to inadequate funding researchers do not participate in research activities and this ultimately affects research quality. Expanding training in grant acquisition and promoting funding opportunities, especially via social media, can enhance research output.
4. Effective supervision is crucial for producing quality research. Skilled supervisors support, and help researchers to manage resources effectively. However, unprofessional and inexperienced supervisors fail to provide proper guidance. This lead to stress and lower research quality. Therefore, supervisors should be well-trained, flexible, and cooperative to enhance research outcomes and improve supervisory mechanisms.
5. Selection of right research topic is crucial for conduct of meaningful research that should ultimately benefit the society. A well-defined research problem guides scholarly discussion and knowledge discovery. However, researchers often struggle but, do not choose right, significant and unique topics, which may stem from a lack of expertise or the non-serious attitude of supervisors. Poor topic selection can lead to difficulties in data collection and research completion and ultimately affect the quality and credibility of the final report. Therefore, institutions need to critically consider this

issue and help researchers to choose valuable topics for research that should be helpful for growth of knowledge and helpful to invent something for future.

6. Many researchers follow traditional methodologies without critically evaluating alternative options, often replicating previous approaches rather than innovating. This results in research methodology sections that lack originality and justification for chosen methods. Factors contributing to this issue include limited knowledge of research scholars, lack of seriousness, and supervisors' leniency. Therefore, need is to monitor role of supervisors by responsible bodies who are ultimately responsible to approve unjustified work without producing anything new.
7. A well-executed literature review is essential for building upon existing research and ensuring academic rigor. However, challenges such as limited resource accessibility, high costs, and citation difficulties can hinder its effectiveness. The rise of AI in research presents both opportunities and risks, particularly concerning plagiarism detection and research integrity. Addressing these issues through proper training, ethical research practices, and improved access to scholarly materials is crucial for maintaining credibility in academic work.
8. Research has consistently highlighted several critical issues in academic supervision, including irregular meetings, lack of guidance, favoritism, and reluctance to support external advice. These supervisory shortcomings cause delays and frustration for scholars, who often seek structured guidance rather than trial-and-error learning. Therefore, regular supervision is crucial for the timely and effective completion of research projects.
9. Financial constraints, limited access to research materials, and high publication fees pose significant challenges for researchers. Bureaucratic hurdles further complicate funding opportunities. Therefore, institutional reforms, financial aid, and better support mechanisms can help to create a more inclusive and supportive academic environment.
10. A further research on large scale is required for in depth investigation of the issue to prepare a good plan for quality conduct of research.

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