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Analyzing the Effectiveness of Higher Education Commission's Research Policy in Promoting Faculty Career Growth and Development"

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Abstract

This study examined the efficacy of the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) research policy in fostering academic career advancement and progress through a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. A poll conducted among faculty members from several higher education institutions yielded quantifiable data regarding their perceptions of the HEC's policy, career advancement, publication records, and research funding. Comprehensive qualitative interviews provided valuable insights into individuals' personal experiences and the difficulties they encountered. Analyzed secondary data from HEC records and institutional reports to identify links between policy changes and career outcomes. The results indicated overall contentment with the policy, notable effects on research output and professional growth, while also emphasizing difficulties associated with funding and administrative obstacles. Suggested enhancements encompass augmenting research funds, streamlining procedures, and offering

specialized assistance to junior and less established academic members. These initiatives are intended to improve the overall effectiveness of the strategy and further encourage the growth of academic careers.

Keywords: Efficacy, Higher Education Commission, research policy, academic career advancement.

Introduction

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, founded in 2002, has played a pivotal role in the country's endeavors to reform its education system. The main objective of the HEC is to enhance the caliber of tertiary education, guarantee fair and equal opportunities for all, and foster research and innovation in academic establishments. This project was motivated by the recognition that a strong higher education sector is crucial for both national progress and global competitiveness. Over time, the HEC has implemented numerous regulations with the goal of improving the research capacities of faculty members, therefore promoting their career advancement and progress. The efficacy of these programs, however, continues to be a crucial subject of inquiry. An essential element of the HEC's approach is the provision of significant research funding to faculty members. These grants are intended to provide funding for groundbreaking research projects that can enhance the scholarly and practical understanding in diverse fields of study. The National Research Program for Universities (NRPU) and the Technology Development Fund (TDF) are exemplary instances of such endeavors. These initiatives aim to allocate financial resources to academic members in order to support their substantial research endeavors that may otherwise be limited by budget constraints. As per Ahmed et al. (2020), the NRPU has played a crucial role in boosting the quantity of research projects conducted by Pakistani academics, hence enhancing their professional development and the progress of knowledge in their specific areas of study. Aside from providing financial support, the HEC has also introduced a range of incentives to motivate faculty members to publish their research findings in prestigious international publications. Publication incentives encompass financial incentives and accolades, with the purpose of inspiring scholars to pursue excellence in their academic endeavors. This program is vital as it not only improves the prominence and influence of Pakistani research on the international platform but also assists faculty members in developing their academic profiles, which is necessary for career progression. According to Rehman and Anwar (2021), the publication incentives offered by the HEC have greatly boosted the quantity of top-notch research publications originating from Pakistan, hence enhancing the academic standing of Pakistani institutions. Professional development opportunities are an essential part of the HEC's research policy. The Commission arranges workshops, training sessions, and facilitates international collaborations to increase the research proficiency and capabilities of academic members. These professional development programs aim to provide faculty members with the most up-to-date research methodology, tools, and approaches, empowering them to carry out innovative research. As to Khan and Rehman (2021), faculty members who participate in these programs experience a beneficial effect on their research output and career advancement. This is because they acquire valuable skills and knowledge that can be directly applied to their research pursuits.

The HEC's research policy also focuses on quality assurance, which is considered a crucial issue.

In order to maintain the credibility and excellence of research carried out in Pakistani institutions, the HEC has implemented stringent peer-review procedures and ethical compliance norms. The purpose of these procedures is to maintain rigorous research standards and deter academic misconduct. According to Ali and Jabeen (2022), the quality assurance systems implemented by the HEC have successfully upheld the credibility and dependability of research outputs from Pakistani institutions. This is crucial for ensuring the professional credibility of faculty members. Although there have been good advancements, the efficiency of the HEC's research policy still faces problems. A major challenge encountered by faculty members is the limited accessibility to adequate research funding. Although the HEC has made considerable progress in offering financial assistance, there is often a higher demand for research grants than the available resources, resulting in fierce competition. Junior faculty members and individuals from less established universities may face greater difficulty in obtaining funding, making this scenario particularly problematic for them. According to Rehman and Anwar (2021), insufficient finance is a major obstacle to carrying out extensive and influential research initiatives, which can impede the professional advancement of faculty members. A further obstacle arises from the bureaucratic obstacles and administrative protocols involved in applying for and overseeing research grants. Faculty members frequently express that the procedure of seeking funds and adhering to administrative obligations can be laborious and burdensome, diverting their time and energy away from their actual research endeavors. Ahmed et al. (2020) observed that simplifying administrative procedures and minimizing bureaucratic obstacles could greatly improve the efficacy of the HEC's research strategy by enabling faculty members to dedicate more time to their research endeavors. Focused assistance is required for junior faculty members and individuals affiliated with less established schools. Although the HEC's policies have been largely beneficial in fostering research activity, they have not been equitably distributed among all faculty members. Junior researchers and individuals affiliated with smaller or less well-funded institutions may encounter supplementary obstacles in obtaining funds, disseminating their research, and accessing opportunities for professional growth. Khan and Rehman (2021) proposed that the implementation of specific support mechanisms, including as mentorship programs and dedicated financing schemes for early-career researchers, might effectively mitigate these inequities and promote fairer access to the advantages of the HEC's research strategy.

The influence of the HEC's research policy can also be analyzed by comparing it to the policies of other countries. Globally, research strategies in higher education frequently prioritize common elements such as financial support, incentives for publication, and opportunities for professional growth. The European Union's Horizon 2020 program and the United States' National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding schemes place a high emphasis on research excellence and the advancement of faculty members (European Commission, 2022; NIH, 2023). These initiatives offer significant financial support and resources to facilitate impactful research, while also incorporating measures to assure the highest standards of quality and integrity. An analysis of these worldwide models in comparison to the HEC's approach can yield significant insights regarding potential areas for enhancement. In industrialized nations, there is typically a greater amount of funds allocated to research, which is easily accessible. This enables the undertaking of more ambitious and extensive research endeavors. Pakistani faculty members often face financial limitations that restrict their research capacities. Rehman and Anwar (2021) suggest that Pakistan

should augment its research funding budget and investigate additional sources of funding, such as industry partnerships and international collaborations, to address these limitations and improve the efficacy of the HEC's research policy. Another crucial element of the HEC's research agenda is its emphasis on fostering international relationships. The HEC intends to enhance the quality and impact of Pakistani faculty members' research by fostering collaborations with international institutions and researchers, which will expose them to global research norms and methods. These cooperation can also offer Pakistani researchers the chance to utilize superior research facilities and resources that may not be accessible within their own country. Khan and Rehman (2021) highlighted the significant role of foreign collaborations in enhancing the research capacities of Pakistani faculty members and augmenting the worldwide recognition of their work. The HEC's research policy prioritizes the dissemination and application of research findings. A crucial goal is to motivate faculty members to actively collaborate with industry and other stakeholders in order to transform their research into tangible and practical solutions. This strategy not only improves the societal influence of academic research but also offers faculty members chances to use their findings in real-world situations, which may be immensely fulfilling in their careers. Ahmed et al. (2020) emphasized that establishing strong connections between business and academia and encouraging the transformation of research findings into commercial products are essential elements of an effective research policy.

In addition to the concrete advantages of funding for research and opportunities for professional growth, the policies of the HEC also strive to cultivate a nurturing research environment within higher education institutions. Establishing a conducive climate that places importance on and provides assistance for research endeavors is crucial for maintaining continuous academic progress and advancement. This entails not just furnishing resources and incentives, but also acknowledging and commemorating research accomplishments. According to Rehman and Anwar (2021), institutional support and recognition play a crucial role in motivating faculty members to engage in research and strive for excellence in their scholarly endeavors. In order to optimize the efficiency of its research policy, the HEC could contemplate various strategic initiatives. Firstly, augmenting the total budget allocated to research funding and guaranteeing a fairer allocation of resources could alleviate the financial limitations experienced by numerous faculty members. Furthermore, by streamlining administrative procedures and minimizing bureaucratic obstacles, the grant application and administration process can be made more efficient, enabling faculty members to dedicate greater attention to their research. Furthermore, the inclusion of specific assistance measures for junior academics and researchers from less established universities could guarantee that the advantages of the HEC's policies are available to everyone. Ultimately, strengthening the connections between business and academia and facilitating the transformation of research findings into commercial products or services can amplify the influence of academic research on society and offer faculty members more chances to secure funding.

Research Objectives

1. To evaluate faculty members' perceptions of the HEC's research policy and its impact on their career progression.

2. To identify challenges faced by faculty members in accessing research funding and administrative support under the HEC's research policy.
3. To correlate the implementation of the HEC's research policy with changes in faculty publication records, research funding, and professional development activities.

Research Question

1. What are the perceptions of faculty members regarding the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) research policy and its impact on their career progression?
2. What challenges do faculty members face in accessing research funding and administrative support under the HEC's research policy?
3. How do changes in the HEC's research policy correlate with faculty members' publication records, research funding, and professional development activities over time?

Significance of the Study

This study is important because it offers a thorough assessment of the impact of the HEC's research policy on the growth and development of academic careers. The research utilizes a mixed-methods approach to provide both quantitative and qualitative insights, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the policy's success. The results underscore the favorable consequences of the strategy, such as improved research output and professional growth, while also pinpointing significant obstacles, particularly in funding and administrative procedures. The recommendations can be used to inform policy revisions that will make the research policy more inclusive and supportive of all faculty members, particularly those who are at junior levels or affiliated with less established schools. This study ultimately enhances the continuous endeavors to enhance higher education research policies, guaranteeing their efficient support for the advancement and progress of academic careers.

Literature Review

Since its inception in 2002, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has played a crucial role in revolutionizing the country's higher education system. One crucial aspect of the HEC's mission is to facilitate research and development, which is vital for the academic and socio-economic advancement of the nation. The policies devised by the HEC are designed to augment the research capabilities of faculty members, so bolstering their professional development and fostering the overall progress of knowledge and creativity in Pakistan. This analysis aims to assess the efficacy of these policies in attaining their stated objectives. A key aspect of the HEC's strategy has been the allocation of significant research money through competitive grants. The National Research Program for Universities (NRPU) and the Technology Development Fund (TDF) are specifically designed to provide assistance for pioneering research initiatives. These grants offer academic members the essential financial means to engage in substantial research endeavors. Khan and Ali (2020) state that the NRPU has made a substantial contribution to the rise in research projects at Pakistani universities, hence creating a favorable environment for academic progress and advancement. In addition to providing financial assistance, the HEC has implemented several incentives to motivate

academic members to publish their research in prestigious publications with significant influence. The incentives provided consist of financial incentives and awards of recognition, which aim to inspire scholars to strive for excellence in their scientific pursuits. Publication in prestigious journals not only increases the visibility and influence of research conducted in Pakistan, but also strengthens the academic credentials of faculty members, hence allowing their professional advancement. According to Javed et al. (2021), the publication incentives offered by the HEC have resulted in a significant rise in the quantity of excellent research produced by Pakistani institutions. HEC's research policy places great emphasis on professional development. The Commission arranges workshops, training sessions, and foreign collaborations to improve the research capabilities of academic members. These programs are specifically designed to provide researchers with the most up-to-date methodology, tools, and procedures, allowing them to carry out advanced research. Various studies (Rehman & Anwar, 2021) have emphasized the beneficial effects of these professional development activities on faculty productivity and career advancement.

The HEC places significant emphasis on guaranteeing the excellence and reliability of research. The Commission has enforced rigorous peer-review procedures and ethical principles to maintain elevated levels of research quality. The purpose of these procedures is to deter academic misconduct and guarantee the credibility and dependability of research produced by Pakistani universities. Ali and Jabeen (2022) have found that these quality assurance procedures have successfully upheld the professional credibility of Pakistani researchers, which is vital for their academic trajectories. Although there have been some encouraging advancements, there remain notable obstacles that hinder the efficacy of the HEC's research policy. A primary concern is the challenge of obtaining adequate research funding. While the HEC does offer financial assistance, there is typically a greater demand for research grants than there are resources available, resulting in fierce competition. Junior faculty members and individuals from less established universities may face greater difficulty in obtaining funds, making this task particularly demanding for them. According to Ahmed and Batool (2020), the lack of sufficient research funds is a major obstacle to doing influential research, which can impede the professional advancement of academic members. An additional obstacle arises from the bureaucratic obstacles and administrative protocols involved in the process of applying for and overseeing research grants. Faculty members often express that the process of applying for grants is laborious and unwieldy, diverting their time and energy away from their real research endeavors. Simplifying these administrative procedures has the potential to greatly improve the effectiveness of the HEC's research strategy by enabling scholars to dedicate more time and attention to their scholarly work (Khan et al., 2021).

There is a requirement for more specialized assistance to be provided to junior faculty members and individuals from smaller or less financially supported universities. Although the HEC's policies have typically been beneficial in boosting research activity, the distribution of benefits is not equitable. Junior researchers and individuals affiliated with less prominent institutions may have additional obstacles when it comes to obtaining grants, publishing their research, and accessing possibilities for professional growth. To mitigate these differences, it would be beneficial to introduce specific measures, such as mentorship programs and dedicated financing schemes, aimed at supporting early-career researchers (Rehman & Anwar, 2021). An analysis of

the HEC's research policy can also be conducted by comparing it to international standards. Internationally, research policies in higher education frequently prioritize comparable elements, including financial support, incentives for publication, and opportunities for professional growth. For example, the Horizon 2020 initiative of the European Union and the financing schemes of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the United States provide priority to research excellence and faculty development (European Commission, 2022; NIH, 2023). These initiatives provide significant financial assistance and resources to facilitate impactful research, and they incorporate measures to assure the highest standards of quality and integrity. An analysis of these global models in comparison to the HEC's approach can offer significant insights into possible areas for enhancement. In industrialized nations, there is typically greater and more accessible financial support for research, enabling the pursuit of more ambitious and extensive initiatives. Faculty members from Pakistan frequently encounter financial limitations that restrict their research capacities. To alleviate these limits and boost the efficiency of the HEC's research policy (Javed et al., 2021), it is recommended to increase the overall budget for research financing in Pakistan and explore alternate funding sources, such as corporate partnerships and foreign collaborations.

Facilitating global partnerships is another crucial element of the HEC's research strategy. The HEC intends to enhance the quality and impact of Pakistani faculty members' work by fostering collaborations with international institutions and researchers, which will expose them to global research norms and methods. These cooperation can also offer Pakistani scholars the chance to utilize sophisticated research facilities and resources that may not be accessible within their own country. Khan and Rehman (2021) assert that foreign cooperation have significantly bolstered the research prowess of Pakistani faculty members and amplified the worldwide recognition of their work. The HEC's policy also highlights the distribution and implementation of research findings. A primary goal is to motivate faculty members to actively collaborate with industry and other relevant parties in order to apply their research findings to real-world problems. This strategy not only improves the societal influence of academic research but also offers faculty members chances to use their work in real-world situations, which may be immensely fulfilling in their careers. Ahmed et al. (2020) emphasize that establishing strong connections between business and academia and encouraging the transformation of research findings into commercial products are essential elements of an effective research policy. Aside from the concrete advantages of research funding and professional growth, the policies of the HEC are designed to cultivate a nurturing research environment within higher education institutions. Establishing a conducive climate that places importance on and provides support for research endeavors is crucial for maintaining continuous academic progress and advancement. This entails not just furnishing resources and incentives, but also acknowledging and commemorating research accomplishments. Rehman and Anwar (2021) assert that institutional support and recognition play a crucial role in motivating faculty members to engage in research and strive for excellence in their scholarly endeavors.

In order to optimize the efficiency of its research policy, the HEC could contemplate various strategic initiatives. Augmenting the overall budget allocated for research funding and establishing a fairer allocation of resources could alleviate the financial limitations experienced by numerous faculty members. By simplifying administrative procedures and minimizing

bureaucratic obstacles, the grant application and administration process can be made more efficient, enabling faculty members to dedicate greater attention to their research (Javed et al., 2021). To ensure that the benefits of the HEC's policies are available to everyone, it would be beneficial to establish specific support mechanisms for junior faculty and researchers from less established schools. In addition, strengthening the connections between business and academia and encouraging the conversion of research findings into commercial products could amplify the societal influence of academic research and offer faculty members more chances to secure funding (Ahmed & Batool, 2020).

Ultimately, the research strategy implemented by the HEC has made notable progress in fostering the advancement and professional development of faculty members in Pakistan. The allocation of research money, incentives for publishing, opportunities for professional growth, and quality assurance methods have jointly bolstered the research aptitude of academic members in Pakistan. Nevertheless, in order to enhance the policy's efficacy, it is important to tackle obstacles such as financial limitations, administrative obstacles, and inequalities in resource availability. Through the acquisition of knowledge from global benchmarks and the execution of well-planned strategies, the HEC may persistently construct a strong and encouraging research atmosphere that promotes scholarly superiority and aids in the advancement of the nation.

Research Methodology

The research methodology utilized a mixed-methods approach to analyze the efficiency of the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) research strategy in fostering academic career growth and development. A survey was initially performed to obtain data on faculty members' impressions of the HEC's research policy, career progression indicators, publication records, and research funds received. The survey was distributed to faculty members across different higher education institutions. Following the survey, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with specific faculty members to obtain more profound understanding of their personal experiences and the influence of the HEC's policies on their career advancement. In addition, a secondary analysis of data was conducted utilizing HEC records and institutional reports to establish a correlation between policy changes and the career outcomes of faculty members over a period of time. The data were examined using statistical methods for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data, resulting in a thorough comprehension of the policy's efficacy.

Data Analysis

This section provides a comprehensive examination of the data obtained via surveys, in-depth qualitative interviews, and analysis of secondary data. The analysis sought to evaluate the efficacy of the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) research policy in fostering the advancement and progress of faculty careers. The results are categorized into quantitative and qualitative analyses, which are then followed by an evaluation of secondary data.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative research concentrated on survey data obtained from faculty members across several higher education institutions. The data offered valuable insights into faculty members' perceptions of the HEC's research policy, markers of career advancement, publication records, and received research money. Analyzed using descriptive statistics, the survey responses have been shown in the subsequent tables.

Table 1: Faculty Members' Impressions of HEC Research Policy

Impression Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Satisfied	120	24%
Satisfied	180	36%
Neutral	100	20%
Dissatisfied	60	12%
Very Dissatisfied	40	8%
Total	500	100%

Table 1 demonstrates that a substantial majority of the participants (60%) indicated contentment with the research policy of HEC. The faculty members largely responded positively to the policy, as shown by their high degree of satisfaction. The neutral responses (20%) indicated that a segment of the faculty neither endorsed nor opposed the policy's efficacy, whilst a smaller proportion (20%) conveyed discontent.

Table 2: Career Progression Indicators

Career Indicator	Average Score (out of 10)
Research Publications	7.5
Conference Presentations	6.8
Research Funding Received	5.2
Professional Development	6.1

Table 2 displayed the mean scores for different indications of career advancement. The research publications had the highest average score of 7.5, suggesting that faculty members consider this area to be essential for their professional advancement. Conference presentations and professional development opportunities were rated highly, indicating their significance in advancing teaching careers. Nevertheless, the research financing obtained a lower mean score of 5.2, indicating probable difficulties in obtaining sufficient financial support.

Table 3: Research Funding Received

Funding Range (in USD)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 10,000	150	30%
10,000 - 50,000	200	40%
50,000 - 100,000	100	20%
More than 100,000	50	10%
Total	500	100%

Table 3 described the allocation of research funding received by faculty members. 40% of the participants received money in the range of 10,000 to 50,000 USD. This study suggests that although a significant number of faculty members were able to obtain research funding, the sums they received were typically moderate. A smaller proportion (10%) obtained financing over 100,000 USD, indicating that acquiring substantial donations was less frequent.

Table 4: Publication Records

Number of Publications	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
0-5	80	16%
6-10	150	30%
11-15	130	26%
16-20	90	18%
More than 20	50	10%
Total	500	100%

Table 4 included a comprehensive summary of the publication histories of the faculty members. The statistics revealed that a significant percentage of participants (56%) had authored a range of 6 to 15 research publications. This tendency indicated that a substantial proportion of faculty members were actively involved in research and publication endeavors. However, a mere 10% of individuals possessed over 20 articles, suggesting that the occurrence of extensive research production was infrequent.

Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis involved thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted with selected faculty members. The interviews aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of the personal experiences and perceptions of faculty members regarding the HEC's research policy. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes and patterns in the interview data.

Theme 1: Impact of Research Policy on Career Advancement

Many faculty members highlighted the positive impact of the HEC's research policy on their career advancement. They noted that the policy provided a structured framework that encouraged research activities, publication efforts, and professional development. Several interviewees mentioned that the emphasis on research output and quality had motivated them to pursue higher standards in their work, leading to improved career prospects and academic recognition.

Theme 2: Challenges Faced

Despite the positive impact, faculty members also discussed several challenges associated with the HEC's research policy. A common issue was the difficulty in accessing sufficient research funding. Many respondents mentioned that while the policy encouraged research activities, the availability of funds was limited, making it challenging to undertake large-scale projects. Additionally, bureaucratic hurdles and administrative procedures were frequently cited as obstacles that hindered smooth implementation of research initiatives.

Theme 3: Professional Development Opportunities

The interviews revealed that professional development opportunities, facilitated by the HEC's policy, played a crucial role in faculty career growth. Many faculty members appreciated the availability of workshops, training sessions, and international collaborations that enhanced their research skills and academic knowledge. These opportunities were seen as valuable resources for career development and were positively received by the respondents.

Theme 4: Personal Experiences and Satisfaction

Personal experiences varied widely among faculty members. While some expressed high satisfaction with the support provided by the HEC, others felt that the policy did not adequately address the needs of junior faculty or those from less established institutions. Several respondents mentioned that more targeted support and resources were needed to ensure equitable opportunities for all faculty members, regardless of their institutional affiliation or career stage.

Theme 5: Recommendations for Improvement

Interviewees provided several recommendations for improving the HEC's research policy. These included increasing the availability of research funds, simplifying administrative procedures, and offering more targeted support for junior faculty. Additionally, respondents suggested that the HEC should focus on creating a more inclusive policy framework that addresses the diverse needs of faculty members across different institutions.

Secondary Data Analysis

The secondary analysis of HEC records and institutional reports aimed to establish a correlation between policy changes and the career outcomes of faculty members over time. The analysis focused on key metrics such as publication records, research funding, and professional development activities.

Correlation between Policy Changes and Publication Records

The analysis of HEC records indicated a positive correlation between policy changes and the publication records of faculty members. Institutions that implemented the HEC's research policy more rigorously showed a higher rate of faculty publications. This trend suggested that the policy's emphasis on research output had a significant impact on the research productivity of faculty members.

Research Funding Trends

The analysis of research funding data revealed that while the overall availability of funds increased over time, there were disparities in the distribution of funds across different institutions. Larger and more established institutions tended to receive a higher proportion of research funding, while smaller institutions faced challenges in securing adequate support. This finding highlighted the need for more equitable distribution of research funds to ensure that all faculty members had access to necessary resources.

Professional Development Activities

The analysis of professional development activities indicated that the HEC's policy had a positive impact on the availability and quality of training programs and workshops. Faculty members from institutions that actively promoted professional development reported higher levels of satisfaction and career advancement. This trend suggested that professional development opportunities were a critical component of the HEC's research policy and contributed significantly to faculty career growth.

The comprehensive data analysis provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the HEC's research policy in promoting faculty career growth and development. The quantitative data highlighted general trends and satisfaction levels, indicating that the policy was generally well-received by faculty members. The qualitative data offered nuanced insights into personal experiences and challenges, revealing the complex dynamics of policy implementation. The secondary data analysis further validated the positive impact of the policy on faculty career outcomes, while also highlighting areas for improvement. Overall, the mixed-methods approach facilitated a thorough understanding of the HEC's research policy's efficacy. The findings suggested that while the policy had a positive impact on faculty career growth, there were several challenges and areas that required attention to ensure more equitable and effective support for all faculty members. Recommendations for improvement included increasing research funding, simplifying administrative procedures, and offering more targeted support for junior faculty and those from less established institutions. These measures could enhance the overall effectiveness of the HEC's research policy and further promote academic career growth and development.

Conclusion

The thorough data analysis unveiled valuable insights regarding the efficacy of the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) research policy in fostering academic career advancement and

progress. The quantitative data revealed that a significant majority of faculty members expressed satisfaction with the policy, emphasizing its favorable influence on research publications, conference presentations, and professional growth prospects. Nevertheless, obstacles such as inadequate research funding and bureaucratic obstacles were also recognized. The qualitative analysis highlighted the beneficial impact of the policy on professional progression, while also uncovering the varied personal experiences and degrees of satisfaction across faculty members. In addition, the secondary data analysis revealed a good link between the execution of policies and improvements in publishing records and professional development activities. However, it also brought attention to discrepancies in the allocation of financing. In summary, the mixed-methods approach yielded a comprehensive comprehension of the policy's effectiveness. It indicated that the HEC's research policy has indeed facilitated the advancement of academic careers. However, there are still some issues that need to be addressed in order to further improve its effectiveness.

Recommendations

In order to enhance the efficacy of the HEC's research strategy, it is advisable to augment the accessibility of research funding, streamline administrative protocols, and offer more specialized assistance to junior academics and individuals affiliated with less established universities. In addition, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) should prioritize the establishment of a comprehensive policy framework that caters to the varied requirements of faculty members in different schools. This framework should guarantee fair and equal chances for career advancement and professional development.

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