

## **AN ENQUIRY INTO THE CHALLENGES IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH**

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### **Abstract**

Making a good ethical research work is not an easy task. This paper makes an attempt to discuss the challenges in academic research. This paper is qualitative in nature. The paper is based on the review of some available literatures. After reviewing the available literatures, the study finds that there are some problems in writing the research work in English, selection of the right topic, selection of the right methodology of writing paper, lack of motivation in writing paper, lack of good knowledge in specialization, lack of time and stress chiefly out of their preoccupation with other subjects also, lack of proper facilities provided by the institutions and most importantly lack of ethics. The study also provides some conclusions and recommendations to minimise the problem of doing a good ethical research work in an efficient and effective manner.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Academic Researchers report that there are significant challenges in finding enough time for all the activities essential to perform and manage their research. According to Guenther, W. T. 2020, now-a-days we are going through tremendous changes in the higher education sector through some major and minor changes. Our societies are challenged by macro-trends such as global warming, demographic change, urbanization, digitalization, resource scarcity or global environmental damages. These trends also have effect on research and teaching in the education sector at higher level. Yalcin, S. and Yalcin, S. A. 2017, say that academicians have foreign language problems, difficulties in the data analysis process, problems in publishing their researches, time problems in their researches, problems in the works which are collaborative in nature with colleagues and there are some problems in getting resources at international level. In this background, the objective of the present study is to make a descriptive discussion of the challenges in academic research and make some conclusions and recommendations to minimise the problems involved in academic research

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Objectives always endow with the route and direction to a research work to achieve its ultimate goal. The followings are objectives of this research work

- i. Present a brief discussion on challenges in academic research.

- ii. Provide brief concluding remarks and some recommendations to minimise the problems involved in academic research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Usually, any research study begins from some earlier studies either on the similar area or on some associated areas. This research study is also not an exception. Following are the review of literature of the earlier studies, which have been found to have any association with the present study arranged in chronological manner.

Claudias, S. K. (2016) makes an attempt to know the challenges of writing theses and dissertations among postgraduate students. He has reviewed a total of hundred and three research reports, including thirty nine theses and sixty four dissertations from three universities in Tanzania. The study finds that most (more than fifty percentage) of the candidates face numerous challenges in writing their theses and dissertations. According to the study the challenges are inappropriateness in presenting different chapters of the reports and lack of academic writing skills. The study also recommends that research methods courses offered in the universities should be reviewed in terms of contents and teaching approaches.

Azizah, A. U. and Budiman, A. (2017) aim at investigating the problems and challenges of university students in writing articles in English. They have used a structured questionnaire consisting of 24 questions related to problems and perceptions of the issues in relation to write an article in English. They have collected response from twenty students from one of the universities in Indonesia. The study finds that claiming knowledge is the most difficult aspect in writing the article and students agree that writing for international publication is considered as a crucial action in academic field, and they require to have support from universities for writing.

Yalcin, S. and Yalcin, S. A. (2017) make a case study to determine the occasions of academic research process and how these affect the research process. They have collected required data from thirty four academicians working in universities in Turkey through a semi-structured protocol form. The study uses ten open-ended research questions to determine the difficulties that the academicians come across during the research process. By descriptive analysis the study finds that the academicians have foreign language problems, difficulties in the data analysis process, problems in publishing their researches, time problems in their researches, problems in the works which are collaborative in nature with colleagues and there are some problems in getting resources at international level.

Sarkar, M. (2018) tries to examine the challenges in conducting educational research in Bangladesh. The study collects data through interviews with teachers, lesson observations and focus group interviews with students. The study finds that there have been difficulties in getting permission from key authorities, recruiting intended participants and using survey questionnaires.

Qasem, F. (2019) attempts to search the challenges faced by undergraduates when they are in the process of writing proposals and research projects at the primary stages. The study collects data through questionnaire and informal interviews with students and teachers of the College of Science and Arts, Al- Namas, University of Bisha, Saudi Arabia. After analysis of the collected data the study concludes that the common challenges/difficulties are difficulty in deciding the topic for research, lack of good knowledge of the methodology, lack of ability of finding out related, modern, and specialized references, not having curiosity in research, lack of understanding of the subject matter, lack of sufficient time, and research guiding.

Guenther, W. T. (2020) makes an editorial report on challenges for a new decade of academic research. According to him, now-a-days we are going through tremendous changes in the higher education sector through some major and minor changes. Our societies are challenged by macro-trends such as global warming, demographic change, urbanization, digitalization, resource scarcity or global environmental damages. These trends also have effect on research and teaching in the education sector at higher level. From one perspective these are big threats, but on some other perspectives these are also very promising opportunities. The author opines that the scholars should have the ability to cope up with the changes and react to demands for a change and updating of the research outlook.

## **CHALLENGES IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH**

It is not so easy to make a good ethical academic research. There are a number of challenges in making academic research. The challenges may be stated as follows:

### **1. Time Constraint**

The most important significant challenge that academic researchers face is finding enough time for all the activities required for conducting and managing their research. Researchers state that they feel tension not only in their research, teaching, and administrative activities but even in terms of an inability to maintain a work-life balance. Academicians have to invest around forty five percentage of their time just to do the administrative tasks.

### **2. Funding Agencies**

In most of the organisations, the researchers have to find out the funding agencies and make applications by themselves without the help from organisations and most of the organisations do not have any research office or cell to provide any kind of assistance regarding this. So, to most of the researchers it is not an easy task to find out the funding agencies and making applications. Rather now-a-days most of the funding agencies are not giving any kind of assistance mainly to the social science research.

### **3. Impact of Outcome**

Most of the researchers always require knowing the effect of their research outcome in practical field outside the academia. It is also important for the institutions also for their reputation and allocation of fund in future. But till now the most suitable methods of meaningful measurement are unclear.

#### **4. Raw Data**

Some of the important factors to ensure the quality of research in an institution are resource available, the processes in place and the scholars involved. Now-a-days, the advancement in technology has changed the demands for transparency in sharing research. Researchers are now obligated to make their raw data openly available with their published research work. Sometimes most of the researchers find that it is difficult to do so in the context of current research data management solutions.

#### **5. Institutional Profiles**

It is very important to keep the profile of the researchers updated, complete and accessible. But in practical situation, there are a number of channels like LinkedIn, Institutional Websites, Google Scholars, and many more and the profile of the researchers are scattered in more than one channel. On the other hand, some of the researchers do not have institutional profile.

#### **6. Culture of Research**

Promoting a culture of research in an institution is an important factor to increase the motivation and viability of researchers. Research office or research cell and the library have an important role to play in meeting the challenges faced by the researchers in the dynamic academic environment. Institutions should ensure that it has all the facilities to promote the culture of research.

#### **7. Motivation and Patience**

To be successful in academic research, the researchers should have the motivation and patience to do the research work efficiently and effectively. Sometimes a doctoral work or post doctoral work or a project work or a good research work may take a long period of time. There is also a problem when we go to publish our research work. It may take significantly long time to go through the review process. The researcher should have that patience and motivation to be steady throughout that much of time.

#### **8. Self-Belief and taking risk**

Doing a good research work needs self-belief and confidence in one-self. Researchers should do SWOT analysis continuously to track the right path as it is a long term decision. Lack of confidence may effect in seeking professional help that may require completing the research work.

#### **9. Performance Appraisal and Time Management**

Researchers should make a proper plan before going to make a research. They should have a proper plan to make the things done in an appropriate time in appropriate manner. After a certain period of time they should make the analysis of what they have done and what they want to do. If there is any deviation, proper corrective measures should be taken in proper time as it is a long term decision.

#### **10. Focus and Direction**

Good researches always take some time and it will have a long term effect. Sometimes there may have some obstacles through which a researcher may have to pass. In that time focus or a clear direction is an important factor for getting success.

#### **11. Networking and Collaborations**

For doing a good research the researchers may have to take help from many sources, like for collecting data, for statistical and econometric tools and techniques, for publications and many more. So researchers should have the capability to build a good network in their own field and in some inter-disciplinary field.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the above discussions the study may conclude that the broad challenges can be summarized as the following

1. Writing the research proposals, projects, and papers in English,
2. Selecting the right topic.
3. Selecting the right methodology of writing proposals.
4. Lack of motivation in writing proposals and projects and research papers.
5. Lack of good knowledge in specialization.
6. Lack of time and stress chiefly out of their preoccupation with other subjects also.
7. Lack of proper facilities provided by the institutions.
8. Lack of Ethics

To make the research process successful starting with or from selecting topic till finalising the results the study makes the following recommendations and suggestions to curtail challenges and help the researchers do well in academic research.

1. Institutions should make some arrangement regarding effective solution for the foreign language problems mainly in English of academicians
2. Some solutions can be developed regarding the overloading tasks to the academicians mainly regarding administrative tasks.

3. Several seminars, workshops, training and other academic steps can be taken to overcome the deficiencies of the researchers regarding statistical and econometric tools and techniques.
4. Some facilities and incentives can be provided to ensure the culture of research in the institutions and to motivate the researchers for making more good research.
5. In the curriculum some lessons about the problems that can be faced by the researchers in publishing can be included.
6. Institutions can make some collaboration to ensure the resource available for doing good research work and publication of those research outcomes in an efficient and effective manner.

Lastly, it is worth writing that making a good research is not an easy task. It is essentially the product of motivation, patience, direction, effective training and proper guidance and most importantly good ethics regarding research.

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