

DOI: 10.53555/ks.v12i4.3138

Exploring the Role of Higher Education Commission's Research Policy in the Career Development of University Faculty

Dr. Ayesha Afzal^{1*}, Dr. Irfana Rasul², Fiza Zia³, Iqra Munir⁴, Dr. Shahid Rafiq⁵

^{1*}Assistant Professor, University of Management and Technology, Lahore. Email: ayeshaafzal@umt.edu.pk

²Assistant Professor, University of Education, Lahore. Email: irfana.rasul@ue.edu.pk

³Instructor, Department of Education, Virtual University of Pakistan. fiza.zia@vu.edu.pk

⁴Instructor, Department of Education, Virtual University of Pakistan. iqra.munir@vu.edu.pk

⁵Assistant Professor, Emerson University Multan. Email: shahid.rafiq@eum.edu.pk

***Correspondent Author:** Dr. Ayesha Afzal

*Assistant Professor, University of Management and Technology, Lahore. Email: ayeshaafzal@umt.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

Pakistan is a country where we see strong teaching traditions at the university level but a feeble research culture. Researchers are more concerned with the increase in the number of publications for career development than work quality. This paper's core aim was to discover the role of the Higher Education Commission's research policy in university faculty's career development; the approach opted for the purpose was document analysis using the evaluative content analysis technique. Six research policies were purposively selected. Seven themes were drawn from these policies: *Research Skills Training, Self-Assessment & Value, Career Awareness, Future Goal Setting, Skills Training and Performing and Action Planning, and Skills boosting external opportunities*. The findings conclude that HEC research policies do not directly lead the faculty career development in Pakistan; however, the policy objectives and directed activities indirectly support university faculty's career development. Moreover, the scope of HEC policies is limited regarding the provision of research fundings. This study may be considered fruitful for several possible explanations and explorations regarding HEC policies for research as a career development opportunity among Pakistani universities' faculty.

Keywords: *Higher Education Commission, Research policy, Career development, University faculty.*

Introduction

Conceptually career is a broad-spectrum term, but it consists of a series of rank and clearly defined offices in a highly structured society. The individual has more freedom to choose or create his positions from many current positions (Sharf, 2016). If observed subjectively, a career is a perspective in which an individual observes his own life as the whole scan and infers the meanings of his various actions, attributes, and things he faces. Career is exhausted in a series of professional and business achievements (Vondracek et al., 2019). Career development is perceived as satisfying if supplanted with the systematic opportunities for growth, furnishing the employee's innate capacity and skills (Arif et al., 2019; Nazar et al., 2018). Meeting strategic objectives and managing change are observed as overall organizational goals for individual career development (King, 2004).

Many organizations are involved in search how to best design jobs that help individuals or job seekers to increase their ability to measure career and its opportunities, allowing the organization to upgrade the capacity required to encounter potential challenges and priorities (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006). The same is valid for university faculty throughout the globe (Mulhall & Ireland, 2014). Career is defined as a process that is directly linked with personal and organizational goals and makes an accretion of experiences developing from the job, tasks, and positions of a person or from transfer and promotions that the individual goes through working on these positions (Patton, 2019) highly wanted in the case of university faculty. The success and failure related to job experiences added over time constitute a person's career (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000; Baruch & Hall, 2004). During this period, the experiences are counted as a specific development phase, leading a person from one position to another. A chosen career nurtures the qualities of persons for building relationships and unleashing further potential. It is the process which specifies the linkage between organization and person, and the ups and downs of all about this relationship (den Boer & Hoeve, 2017). It is noteworthy how HEC policies facilitate this process.

Career development is linked with a series of change that occurs in a person's career; however, one should be mindful neither all changes are advantageous, nor every progression is developmental. The faculty may be granted a managerial position that would become a real blockade in career progression, as management experience is given little weightage compared to research. Therefore, the conception of career development also refers to the fact that one should consciously deliberate upon the factors leading to success or failure in career development. Such issues might be related to nonwork issues, varying individual potentials, and the space available for professional grooming (Bengtsson, 2011). Career development is based on both highly formal and less formal tasks any faculty performs in a university. That involves a choice among numerous alternatives such as preserving the current skills, envisioning the organization's future needs, and developing abilities to fulfill those needs. The

most crucial challenge is to deal with the unknown predicament lying in the way of career success, undermined as a barrier in getting promotions.

An increasing trend has been observed all over the world concerning staff training, strengthening employees performance, reinforcing values, corroborating to popular corporate culture for the university faculty as well, deeming that it would be helpful in career improvement (Cooper et al., 2005; Kaya et al., 2014). Do we still believe that one size fits all? Moreover, each program relegated for career development would be empowering the employees to progress in their relevant fields in the desired way; the policy guides have much to do with this issue, and all universities in Pakistan are bound to follow HEC. The personnel's career development programs' training accelerates workflow at workstations, increasing worker mobility and career stability (Sharf, 2016; Vondracek et al., 2019). The integration of career management and career planning is career development (De Vos & Cambré, 2017; Guo et al., 2019). Career development aims to accomplish the employees' desires, objectives, and expectations (Mulhall, 2014; Patton, 2019). The potent question arising here is: how successful has been HEC in providing policy guidelines to universities for developing different strategies matching with the goals, aims, and objectives that a faculty desires to achieve?

Research is considered the primary feature of academic life, embracing the creation and generation of knowledge systematically. Research-teaching nexus is much celebrated in previous research (Cilliers et al., 2010; Elen et al., 2007; Tight, 2016); However, the integration of research in teaching or vice versa may lead to several political, institutional, and disciplinary implications (Brew, 2010); therefore, many have disapproved this match. Still, some scholars advocate that universities must not consider this relationship as 'fractured engagement,' 'a marriage of convenience is a better term to describe it (Schapper & Mayson, 2010). They would argue that this enigmatic relationship ensures inquiry and knowledge acquisition and production; hence both research and teaching cause mutually benefit and strengthen each other (Harland, 2016).

Research-teaching nexus is much celebrated in previous research (Cilliers et al., 2010; Elen et al., 2007; Tight, 2016); However, the integration of research in teaching or vice versa may lead to several political, institutional, and disciplinary implications (Brew, 2010), therefore, many have disapproved this match. Still, some scholars advocate that universities must not consider this relationship as 'fractured engagement,' 'a marriage of convenience is a better term to describe it (Schapper & Mayson, 2010). They would argue that this enigmatic relationship ensures inquiry and knowledge acquisition and production; hence, both research and teaching mutually benefit and strengthen (Harland, 2016). However, research-based teaching is a different phenomenon from counting faculty research as a performance indicator. When both of these issues combine, they create a plethora of problems for faculty and higher education management. Since research participation is considered beneficial for faculty, students, and the university leading to a better economy of the country, it is imperative that the higher education regulating agency, the HEC in Pakistan, must have formulated comprehensive policies to benefit all its stakeholders. Such as students (in the form of quality teaching and learning), faculty (in the form of better prospects for career development), university (in the form of better ranking), and the society (in the form of improved knowledge economy).

The use of emerging techniques of research plays a vital role in the career development of university faculty. The research activities enlighten learning and offer a productive and intellectual platform for understanding society's issues and problems and its solutions (Nadeem, 2011). The embodiment of research rests upon practical examination, testing, and experimentation to arrive at new directions for further investigation. Comprehensively, the foundations of higher learning center around the idea of research providing innumerable pathways to travel on the path of discovery. Without confining to any particular discipline, the seekers of knowledge would advantage through intra-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and cross-disciplinary research for tending to issues through logical and precise probes into the phenomena.

This bent of mind is to be created; HEC is also trying to implant this attitude among Pakistani universities' faculty. The success of HEC would depend upon the coding of messages in a policy framework, the understanding of the message, and enacting it in a research culture, which is at its incipient stage (Altaf et al., 2019). At present, HEC is striving to enhance the scope and pace of research, on the one hand, that is the quantity of research; on the other, it appears to be impatient to reach international standards, the quality of research (Naveed, 2013). Before determining how these efforts would be conducive for encouraging researchers to legitimize their efforts for meaningful and productive research, it is worthwhile to explore the guidelines' content hoping to assure a quality research culture in Pakistani universities. The scientific and systematic study of society is destined for social sciences, concentrating on human enigma and issues arising within social life among human relationships (Punch, 2013; Weber, 2017).

It was confessed in the study, *'The Research in South Asia: An Examination of the Distributed Diary Writing,'* that there is little research in social and business sciences conducted in Pakistan to address its social, financial, and technical issues comprehensively. Similar is the case with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, as observed from diary papers recorded in Scopus. India is the leading South Asian nation to have some noteworthy advancement in different research areas, a considerable volume of research in business, trailed by sociology and finance. The plethora of business research can be attributed to a significant number of business and management institutes in India. Nevertheless, South Asian nations have not put enough in such research (Arunachalam, 2011; Lodhi, 2012).

Preceding the foundation of the HEC, Pakistan has not ascribed any national goals for research, and the advancement of research was subjected to the prudence of university faculty. In 2002, the HEC took a significant step forward to build up a research culture in universities, but whether or not HEC could determine national goals for research, specifically in social sciences and humanities, is the burning question. An extensive ten-year audit of research execution by HEC highlights the sole authority of HEC in determining the direction of research, as illustrated in Fig 1. Therefore, it is rationalized that a push from the center is a prerequisite to sustain quality research culture in the universities; hence, investment in projects leading to impact factor publications fits the would-be solution to problems rampant in the society (Kumari et al., 2017).

Fig 1. The Ten-year Audit of Research Execution by HEC

Source: *The News Arshad Yousafzai* April 16, 2020.

In 2020 new, the system was fully implemented; HEC has recognized those research journals in the categories of W, X, and Y, which were recognized by the HJRS system. The response of University teachers' to the HJRS was varied. The faculty members, predominantly represent the Federation of All Pakistan Universities Academic Staff Association, have raised concerns over the current overhaul.

A recent publication informed that research-based universities will lead the market (Naveed and Suleri, 2015). In contrast, universities staying isolated from HEC, industry, and society's goals shall lag far behind, casting no shadow on collaborative efforts to generate think tanks (Managing bodies). However, all these goals do not sound realistic in the context of constant cut down of government spending on higher education and an outstandingly low degree of research and development (R&D) spending. According to figures quoted by the state department, Pakistan, under 0.25% of GDP, is currently spent on higher education R&D, which is not even 50% of the spending in any other country in South Asia. Given the low degree of subsidizing for, and the high strategy effect of sociology research, the published report suggests that research financing should be expressly designated for social science research. The rules for trusted status in research ought to be set up. Specifically, the research plans and policies to organize both the academic (Scholars) and professional (Employees) research, and the reinforcing of the Government research policy (HEC) has a legitimated role in providing R&D facilities for the regulated universities in Pakistan (Bano, 2012).

A helpful 2013 examination subsidized by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) gives a review of elements that lead instructive strategy research, including college divisions, private segment consultancies, government foundations, and giver organizations. The examination shows that universities' significant unrealized potential to take part in strategizing research goals of HEC (Naveed, 2013), a topic that is vital to research.

Aim of the Study

HEC is the statutory body in Pakistan regulating universities' research and development practices providing guidelines for the professional development of faculty, but whether these initiatives lead to the desired career development as well? The research was particularly carried out to exploring the role of HEC research policies in promoting the career development of faculty working in the universities of Pakistan. This exploration was conducted using the official documentation about these research policies by HEC.

HEC has been using multiple incentives for promoting research and development; the funding for both public and private universities does not rest solely upon the volume of research produced but the quality of research. Linking the faculty promotions with the number and the quality of research is one such strategy, incumbent upon all universities to follow. Faculty

of Pakistani universities have been reported to be enthusiastically engaged in enhancing research output (as measured by publications). The policy has scaled up gradually since 2002, induction of HEC, Pakistan; to augment the pursuit of quality research and faculty career development, the establishment of the ORIC, Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization, is mandatory for every university in Pakistan registered with HEC. ORIC aims to centralize, increase research funding, teamwork, publication, capability development, distribution & commercialization of research projects. Parallely workout, the HEC provides funds to establish QEC, Quality Enhancement Cells, ensuing universities to progress and display university excellence.

Methodology

The qualitative approach was chosen to understand the HEC's mission for faculty development and using research as a tool. The intent was to assess how much HEC has been successful in communicating this intent through various policies over time. This approach helped the researcher comprehend the governance point of view, instead of limiting the approach to users' (faculty) point of view or third-party reporting (media or previous research). Handling a huge data of selected six policies was not an easy task completed step by step: (first importing, then coding, then setting the query, then interpreting and then writing).

Research policies were lengthy documents; getting specific data related to the faculty's career development was dealt with as an iterative process. Given the well-known problem associated with collecting, categorizing, and organizing vast qualitative data, the assistance of software applications like NVivo was deemed necessary. Policies were imported in the software and explored for terms like the university, faculty, and career development (Bilda et al., 2006).

This study employed the emergent approach, which consisted of four steps, 1) three persons (the researcher, her supervisor, and an NVivo expert) examined the data; 2) they created an initial code list independently; researcher and supervisor used manual coding, while the NVivo expert used auto-coding; 3) researchers assured that coding was reliable (a 95% agreement was reached that is 0.8 for Cohen's kappa) (Stemler 2015). Finally, inter-rater reliability was checked; Weber (1990, p.12) recommends: "different people should code the same text in the same way," and ours was 97% (Best & Kahn 2006; Tong et al., 2020).

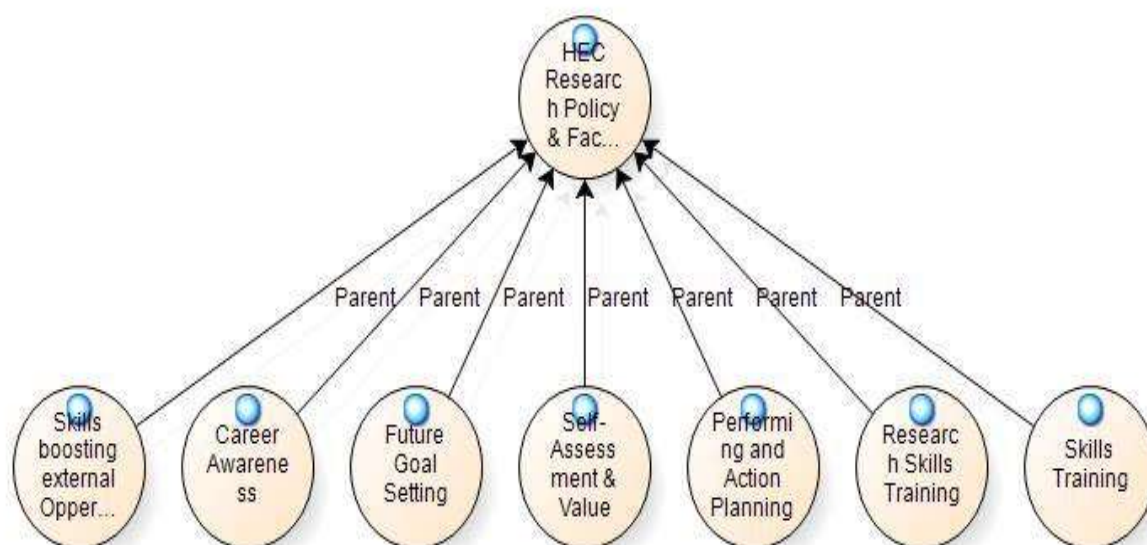
Three major types of research policies are displayed at the HEC web page (Research & Development, Services for the faculty & scholarships for faculty). Six research policies were purposively selected from the archives of the HEC website in March 2020, primarily related to research grants provided by HEC. It was assumed that available research grants act as an incentive for the faculty to pursue research and lead through professional career development. There were four types of research grants provided to university level teachers by HEC, Pakistan; research policy related to acquire and distribute the grants were selected. The selected HEC research policy documents were as follows:

1. National Research Program for Universities (NPRU)
2. Travel Grant for Presentation of Research Papers (TGPRP)
3. Pakistan Program for Collaborative Research (PPCR)
4. Establishment of Offices Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC)
5. Faculty Development Program (FDP) Under the scholarship
6. HEC Problem Based Applied Interdisciplinary Research Programs (PBAIRP)

Data Analysis

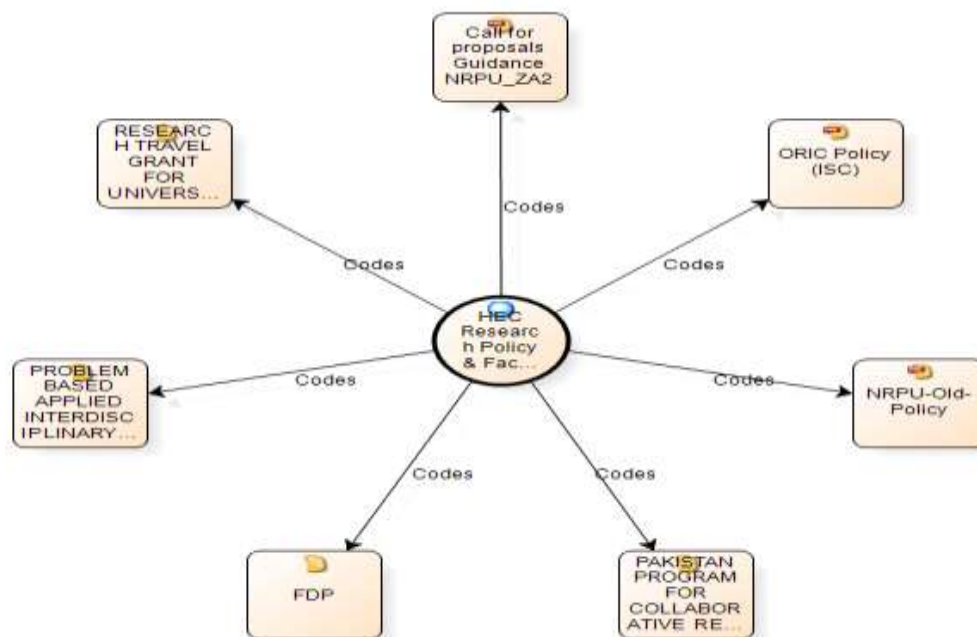
The conducted test are illustrated below as projected by NVivo to ensure the trustworthiness and empirical data support of the present study:

Fig 2. Overall Effect of the Six Research Policies on Career Development of Faculty



The model depicted above of the concluded themes shows the overall effect of these six research policies on university faculty's career development. The derived themes also manifest the latent factors of these policies that impact the career development of faculty.

Fig 3. Latent Factors of Policies that Impact the Career Development of Faculty

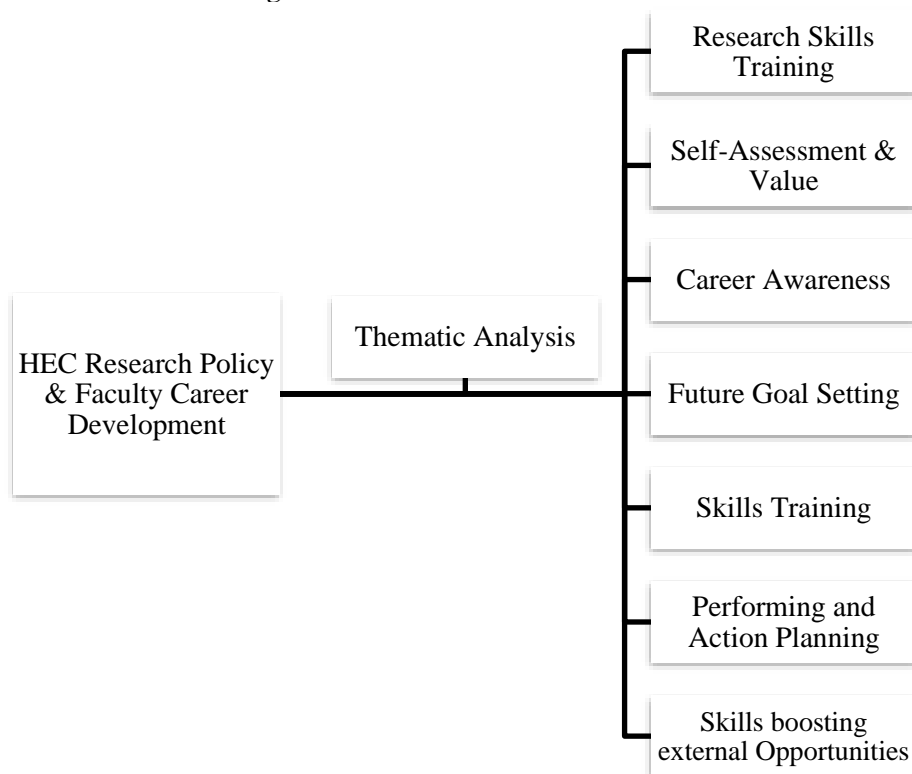


The analysis displayed above of the six selected and analyzed HEC research policies for a university teacher. The comparison of these sources was also conducted to compare the policy, and concluded results were reported in the given table no 1.

Fig 4. Nodes Clustered by Word Similarity



The figure (place as Nodes by Word similarity) theme similarity chart shows the subjective association between concluded themes. It was found that the least similar were performing and future goals of university teachers by the funded research policies of the Higher Education Commission. The association between the themes and policies was ultimately assessed by conducting a word similarity test using N-Vivo. The depicted above cluster shows the association among all concluded themes of the study. However, the implicit and explicit effect of this research policy is also summarized in the given table. Inter themes association and the policies were explored. To assess the role of the key-term, HEC was explored by a tree chart given below. This chart unveils the policy argument after and before the word HEC (See Appendix A). The selected HEC research policy documents were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, and themes were noted. The details of each concluded theme given:

Fig 5. The Extracted Themes

The above figure displayed the study's concluded themes based on six purposively selected research policies by HEC, Pakistan. Seven themes were derived using inductive code selection. The detail of theoretical and empirical evidence regarding each concluded theme is given in detail in the next section.

Table No 1 Summary of the HEC research policy documents analyses in the current study

Items	NPRU	TGPRP	PPCR	ORIC	FDP	PB/AIRP
Full name	National Research Program for Universities	Travel Grant for Presentation of Research Papers	Pakistan Program for Collaborative Research	Establishment of Offices Research Innovation and Commercialization Faculty Doc & Web	Faculty Development Program Under the scholarship Faculty Web	HEC Problem Based Applied Interdisciplinary Research Programs Faculty Web
Subject Doc/Web By HEC Core Aim	Faculty DOC To provide financial aid to teachers across the country, NRP provides a platform for academicians to boost their professional skills. The main focus of NPRU encourages partnerships between academic and university faculty and end-users.	Faculty DOC Academic events are considered a significant factor in the professional development of researchers. To boost the professional skills of faculty, this is granted to all university teacher in Pakistan	Faculty Web The university faculty from Pakistan to go abroad for research and development advanced countries HEC provides financial aid. University teachers visit foreign institutions to exchange excellence in the applicable research area.	To motivate & facilitate HEIs to contribute to research, HEC established ORIC in universities to encompass all the research activities - from R & D's proposal to the commercialization of research.	With the aims "to facilitate DAIs to serve socio-economic development of the country, the FDP was started by HEC; its core aim was to provide the career development opportunities to the teacher to boost the professional skills	This HEC sponsored research project's core aim was to boost the faculty career and solve the problems through R & D practices of university faculty.
Grant/fund	5-20 (Million) PKP	70% of the total expended amount. HEC policy	Varies case wise Per diem US\$100 up to US\$2000 & Per month US\$2000	As per Research & HEC policy given at HEC Web	Varies from project to project as per HEC rules	Varies from project to project as per HEC rules
Implicit/Explicit CD Activities	Implicit Research projects Impact on society in terms of research effects. PI & Co-PIs involvements. Project teams coordination	Implicit/Explicit Registration & Accommodation as per HEC policy exposure, knowledge sharing, developing linkages, problem-solving Academic, Conferences, Seminars	Implicit/Explicit visiting foreign institutions exchanging excellence. Collaboration	Implicit research activities strategic & operational support turning invention impact of research & community welfare	Explicit Research & Development. PI & Co-PIs involvements. Project teams coordination	Implicit/Explicit Research & Development. PI & Co-PIs involvements. Project teams coordination

Table No 2 *Weighted Percentage and word frequency of the six policies and key-terms for the study*

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
Research	8	210	1.64%
University	10	208	1.62%
HEC	3	149	1.16%
ORIC	4	109	0.85%
NPRU	4	93	0.73%
Proposal	8	79	0.62%
Faculty	7	70	0.55%
Year	4	59	0.46%
universities	12	58	0.45%
Full	4	54	0.42%
Funding	7	52	0.41%
Grant	5	39	0.30%
Career	8	39	0.30%
development	11	38	0.30%
Policy	6	37	0.29%
Projects	8	37	0.29%
Institute	9	32	0.25%
Program	7	32	0.25%
Allowed	7	31	0.24%
Education	9	31	0.24%
Principal	9	31	0.24%
National	8	30	0.23%
Professor	9	30	0.23%
Required	8	30	0.23%
Award	5	29	0.23%
investigator	12	29	0.23%
professional	12	11	0.09%
publication	11	10	0.08%
Teacher	7	7	0.05%
allowance	9	2	0.02%

Discussion on Themes

Research Skills Training: during the initial scrutiny, it was found that the principal purpose of all HEC research policies was to enhance university faculty's research skills. HEC wants to develop a knowledge-based economy and skilled teachers in Pakistan through these HEC sponsored research policies. In the study of (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000), it was explored that the research and practical problem-solving skill has a significant factor in employees' career development. In the current content analysis, it was also explored that the main aim of ORIC, NPRU, and indigenous scholarship was providing the faculty opportunity for developing research skills.

"The purpose of the FDP is to encourage and reward existing faculty for developing their teaching skills in key areas of their expertise. It caters to enhancing the education level and encourages young non-PhD faculty members to contribute to nation-building with their technical and professional enhanced knowledge. The programme focuses on strengthening university academics through qualified foreign faculty and enhancing teaching and learning effectiveness in Pakistan. It will also bring opportunities to develop research projects and build capacity in both partner countries' education systems. The program provides an opportunity for learning abroad for research and development as non-PhD faculty members of selected universities to pursue their PhD degree abroad. The Programme offers PhD scholarships in specific disciplines for each participating university".

(Research Policy FDP)

As per the above stated theoretical and empirical argument, it was concluded that the FDP, HEC sponsored research policy for university teachers has an explicit effect on university teachers' career development in Pakistan. However, other HEC policies have a significant role in career development as per stated core objectives. The researchers are advised to explore and measure all published indicators quantitatively to determine the exact magnitude of these indicators on university teachers' career development.

Self-Assessment & Self-Value: the process of career development self-awareness identifies skills, interests, values, and performance to determine the extent and types of positions according to the interest and prove a good fit in the future. This theme was termed as self-assessment and self-value. It was explored that the purpose of four among six policies (NPRU, TGPRP, PPCR, and ORIC) advocated career development in terms of such indicators and activities. The ORIC policy document clearly stated:

"It is expected that ORIC Management, in each university, would work on commercialization of research and helping startups to incubate, grow, create new jobs, products, services, markets, carry out innovation and bring in funding."

(Research Policy ORIC)

Career Awareness: The next theme named career awareness, is the process of working to develop a comprehensive understanding of possible career areas, opportunities, fields, and influencing factors on jobs with the individual's personal preferences, strengths, and qualifications vital to succeed in the profession.

"Pakistan Programme for Collaborative Research allows for university faculty working in Pakistan to go abroad or for researchers from technologically advanced countries to come to Pakistan. Preference is given to faculty members visiting foreign institutions that have recognized excellence in the relevant research area. The visits can last between one to four weeks but can be extended to more than four months in case of sabbaticals. The visits are limited to one person (the visiting fellow) going to one institute/department in the host institution. The visiting fellow and a person from the host institution (the host) are co-applicants of the proposal. This funding's main aim, which is open to all research fields, is to initiate or consolidate international collaborations. Short research activity between the host institution and the visiting fellow should be carried out during the stay to realize this aim. Preference will be given to activities that will support: Submission of papers to peer-reviewed scientific journals (co-authored by the visiting fellow and the host)".

(Research Policy PPCR)

"The project must be an effort of the joint research work being carried out by the applicants — preparation of joint research proposals to be submitted to funding bodies. There must be previous communication with the applicant on the matter. Training for lab techniques in Pakistan for postgraduate students. Scientific or academic sabbatical in Pakistani universities. Curriculum review by the Pakistani universities and/or HEC. The aim is to have an exchange of knowledge that is beneficial to both co-applicants. The attendance of congresses, conferences, workshops, seminars or talks is not envisioned in this programme".

(Research Policy PPCR)

Future Goal Setting-- The fourth theme concluded based on the assessed policy document of HEC, Pakistan R & D (Research & Development) is "Goal Setting" for the future. Moreover, it emphasized setting predefined goals to motivate yourself in career progress and career development towards the vision and activities to raise professional skills. It was concluded that the policies implicitly affect setting goals and required actions to raise confidence in career development.

"The following incentives are considered helpful to incentivize students for their involvement in innovation and thinking about entrepreneurship as a career: Students with strong business ideas/ innovations will enable the KPI. Hence the incentives are targeted towards motivating the students. Student(s) with the most viable business idea will be supported for business plan competition. The best three ideas will be awarded up to PKR 100,000/-. Students involved in the most viable business ideas will be awarded certificates from the institutional head and HEC in recognition of the hard work done regarding commercialization".

(Research Policy ORIC)

Skills Training-- theme fifth is skills training, sometimes called career development training program. These transferable research skills training increase the level of employability of the faculty. Further, it also includes practical training along with its related aspects:

"Create awareness of local business eco-system comprising, Local businesses, Local clusters/ processes, Local Skills, Local Raw material, Opportunities to link-local business to global value-chains. Opportunities for local tourism, where student and faculty could grow into a fore-runner of business by providing tour guides, interpreters, local historians to places of historical or touristic interest".

(Research Policy ORIC)

"Dearth of research literature/equipment is a major impediment to the productivity of many creative and talented faculty members/researchers in all disciplines in universities/degree awarding institutions. In most cases, researchers need substantial financial support for research projects to allow them to pursue. In the absence of such facilities, researchers, specifically, the younger ones, are discouraged and are forced to seek better opportunities in developed countries. To avoid this brain drain, the HEC has initiated a research grant program under which creative researchers are awarded research grants. To meet the current challenges of researchers working in local universities/DAIs of Pakistan and promote the R & D with facilitation, HEC runs the National Research Program for Universities (NRPU)/requirements. Following are the existing guidelines of NRPU that have been modified from time to time to address different aspects".

(Research Policy NPRU)

Performing and Action Planning-- Career development, through which one can develop employability by growing and strengthening skills, self-awareness, knowledge, and abilities. Consequently, employees can perform self-sufficiently at high levels.

"Any faculty member engaged in contract research or industrial collaborative research or helped his/ her students in the launch of business will be awarded three basic salaries on successful completion of the project. Faculty members involved in the most viable business ideas will be awarded certificates from the institutional head and HEC to recognize the hard work done regarding commercialization. Such faculty members' business ideas may also be given preference while awarding the research grants sanctioned by HEC. These faculty members may also be nominated to attend seminars /workshops /conferences arranged by HEC, nationally as well as internationally, on a preference basis. Successful commercialization of technology and/ or successfully running a startup and/ or mentoring a student startup will be considered in faculty promotion criteria".

(Research Policy ORIC)

"Academic events are significant for the professional development of researchers and scholars. They serve as sources for guidance, exposure, knowledge sharing, developing linkages, and problem-solving. Academic Conferences, Seminars, and Symposia provide academicians opportunities to understand the latest developments in their field and validate research findings while creating opportunities for future academic collaborations. Such events are the cornerstone of the academic environment. To cultivate this environment, the Higher Education Commission has set up a special Research Travel Grant Fund for University faculty, PhD scholars, and MS students at Pakistani Universities. Under this program, an academician or student selected to present research work at a national or international academic event is eligible for getting funding from his/ her academic institution. The academic institute will ultimately seek funding from HEC by applying for reimbursement. The objectives of funding are, 1) To extend financial assistance to faculty and researchers to present their research work at national and international events; 2) To share academic and research experiences and achievements at national as well as international level; 3) To share scientific ideas with national/ international researchers, get exposure to the latest trends and techniques in research, and 4) To explore opportunities for national and international collaborations":

(Research Policy TGPRP, p.1)

Skill boosting external Opportunities: the last but not the least derived theme is skills enrichment. The empirical argument that was scrutinized is given:

The research policy, interdisciplinarity, address complex problems that cannot be dealt with from a single disciplinary perspective alone. Such problems require people from different disciplinary perspectives to work together, sharing ideas, theories, and practices to reach appropriate solutions. Interdisciplinary research and effective collaboration between people from different disciplines provide substantial benefits to scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders to maximize interdisciplinarity's potential benefits for future research activity. Higher Education Commission (HEC) initiated an Interdisciplinary research grant program-

Problem Based Applied Interdisciplinary Research Programme (PBAIRP) *to foster interdisciplinarity and generate space to develop more innovative and high-impact research that delivers solutions to the challenges facing Pakistan. This program is specially designed to address the country's contemporary issues and develop better and more relevant answers to face present-day problems of the country through an interdisciplinary approach.*

(Research Policy PBAIRP)**Conclusion**

The findings of the current study identified a significant role of HEC's research policies in the faculty's career development. A central tension has gradually disrupted the heart of the university in executing these policies. On the one hand, some argue that the university's sole purpose is to animate its faculty's professional skills. As Huxley had announced in 1894, universities' essential aim is to create opportunities for its faculty to research the research culture's progression and not expand management. On the other, it is difficult to deny that higher education has consistently evolved within universities through the faculty's professional practices. Similarly, in Pakistan, HEC offers several research policies to the university faculty to discover faculty advancement by universities' R & D department. The current study findings assessed that the HEC funded policies were not directly proposed for faculty career development, but the activities and core objectives (reported in data analysis) of the funded policies played a significant role indirectly.

Implications

It was also concluded that the NPRU and ORIC research policy is offering maximum activities for the university faculty to boost their career. One could contend that the university faculty practicing R&D funded offerings in career development by HEC in academic and professional research is ORIC. The Career Services policies determine how to compose a path and quest for entry-level positions in a profession. As the years passed and the world had emerged changes, similarly, employees' career development was a crucial task for universities, and funded research plans were started to endorse these steps by HEC. These steps were proved useful in the career advancement of professionals. Recently, at the university level, HEC started Grand Challenge Fund, outstanding liability for helping faculty considering their fates in an increasingly accommodating way. However, the limitation was observed that it is only for shortlisted universities. An ongoing report by New York Fed, for instance, found that 62% of late university teachers were working in occupations that necessary a degree, just 27% of graduates were utilized in career development that identified with their major in any unique style.

The study conducted by Baruch (2000) reported that the faculty were bound to portray educating conduct or pursue academic research practices as an obligation, while funded research practices were optional. The faculty requires the insight and provisions of regarded instructors for career advancement. Faculty of universities felt their career development problems was due to research experiences (Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). Faculty improvement advancement needs to improve through a conducive research-based mechanism. The ultimate point is that the HEC research policies are directly not emphasizing career development. However, all the activities and the policies' objectives are supporting the career development of university faculty. The embodiment of research rests upon practical examination, testing, and experimentation to arrive at new directions for further investigation. Comprehensively, the foundations of higher learning center around the idea of research providing innumerable pathways to travel on the path of discovery. Without confining to any particular discipline, the seekers of knowledge would advantage through intra-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and cross-disciplinary research for tending to issues through logical and precise probes into the phenomena. This bent of mind is to be created; HEC is also trying to implant this attitude among Pakistani faculty. To enliven a society, a primary need, the current research practices, instead of following harsh bureaucratic procedures of HEC, making a viable mechanism would be the key to developing faculty professional skills (Arif & Ilyas, 2013).

The research is organized in diverse ways in universities, with a comprehensive, multi-center model seen as best. The pioneer league can change staff and various departments' attitude by recognizing their efforts and strengthening them with proper incentives. The aim is wealth creation by developing human and social capital (Abell & Lederman, 2007; McCulloch, G. & Crook., 2008; Kirtania, 2018). It is noteworthy how HEC policies facilitate this process.

Other research indicates that the research goals of HEC have digressed from the improvement of teaching and learning towards the material aspect of the knowledge economy, that is, the commercialization of the research products (Altaf et al., 2019). This situation has severely compromised the social sciences research conducted in the universities. If universities kept treating their staff as knowledge labor fixing them into their compartmentalized holes, the dream of possessing human assets would not be translated into a vision. All over the world, a board spectrum of practices is opted to create and empower scholastics research to improve research culture in the universities through joint efforts for cutting edge research (Rajesh & Barani, 2016; Stupnisky et al., 2019; Daumiller et al., 2020).

Keeping prioritized national goals in the research agenda is usually the essential commitment of governing bodies making research policies (Shabbir & Khalid, 2016). Whether or not the same is the case with HEC? HEC has to clarify that research is a means to an end, faculty development. Faculty hopes that there is no goal displacement occurring where means itself become the end. International research also emphasizes that too much stress upon research has compromised higher education's focal mission, that is, teaching; Butler (2007) pleads for a balanced approach.

Although universities are keen on staff development activities, the professional development process is limited, and elements are unconnected (Sunal et al., 2001). Faculty development would be more meaningful if the faculty is extended opportunities in the research into the discipline's teaching. By opting for classroom action research or self-study research, university faculty will become more competent in teaching, critical for undergraduate programs (Castle et al., 2006; Samaras & Pithouse-Morgan, 2018).

Another research revealed that emotions, especially related to faculty research publication and citation counts, significantly affect the faculty's research attitude. Enjoyment reflects positive affect, whereas anxiety and boredom negatively impact both teaching and research while keeping other social-environmental predictors constant (Stupnisky et al. 2019). To exercise faculty development in Pakistan's universities, choosing motivational contingencies is the most critical factor (Daumiller et al., 2020), still neglected by university governance systems in Pakistan.

Future Directions

There is an alarming trend in the standing value of academic and professional research in Pakistan. It is successively being censored in the universities by the Higher Education Commission gradually. However, the concentration in this field and imposts have remained restricted to quantity dimensions, totally overlooking the quality. Specifically, in this context, the existing empirical effort was conducted to evaluate the quality and worth of research in Pakistan in the faculty's career development in quantifiable terms. A clear-cut and applicable index of social sciences in Pakistan should be developed, apprehending multiple dimensions that are predominantly significant in the Pakistani social science perspective. The study results show that Pakistani social science research underwrites more to public debates and policy inventions than pushing the edges of a knowledge-based economy for further research. HEC should expand the scope of these research policies in Pakistan. It is recommended for future researchers to conduct this study quantitatively for a more precise result.

References

1. Abell, S., & Lederman, N. G. (Eds.) (2007). *Handbook of Research in Science Education*. Lawrence Erlbaum
2. Altaf, A., Hassan, I. e., & Batool, S. (2019). The role of ORIC in the evolution of the triple helix culture of innovation: The case of Pakistan. *Technology in Society*, 56, 157-166
3. Arif, S., & Ilyas, M. (2013). Quality of work-life model for teachers of private universities in Pakistan. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 21(3), 282-298
4. Arif, S. Iqbal, J., & Khalil, U. (2019). Factors Influencing Students' Choices of Academic Career in Pakistan. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(1), pp. 35-47
5. Bagdadli, S., & Gianecchini, M. (2019). Organizational career management practices and objective career success: A systematic review and framework. *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(3), 353-370.
6. Bano, S. (2012). *The role of universities in transforming a developing economy into a knowledge-based economy: the case of Pakistan*. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southampton, UK).
7. Baruch, Y., & Peiperl, M. (2000). Career management practices: An empirical survey and implications. *Journal of Human Research Management*, 39(4), 347-366.
8. Baruch, Y., & Hall, D. T. (2004). The academic career: a model for future careers in other sectors? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 64(2), 241-262.
9. Bengtsson, A. J. (2011). European policy of career guidance: The interrelationship between career self-management and production of human capital in the knowledge economy, *Policy Futures in Education*, 9(5), 616-627.
10. Best, J. W. and Kahn, J. V. (2006) *Research in education* (10th ed.), Boston, MA, Pearson Education.
11. Bilda, Z., Gul, F., Gu, N, and Maher, M., 2006, Software Support for Collaborative Data Analysis in Collaborative Design Studies, in *Quality and Impact of Qualitative Research*, in Ruth, A. (Ed) *Quality and Impact of Qualitative Research*. 3rd annual QualIT Conference, Brisbane: Institute for Integrated and Intelligent Systems, Griffith University, pp 40-50.
12. Brew, A. (2010). Imperatives and challenges in integrating teaching and research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 29(2), 139-150.
13. Butler, L. (2007). Assessing university research: A plea for a balanced approach. *Science and Public Policy*, 34(8), 565-574

14. Castle, S., Fox, R. K., & Souder, K. O. H. (2006). Do professional development schools (PDSs) make a difference? A comparative study of PDS and non-PDS teacher candidates. *Journal of teacher education*, 57(1), 65-80.
15. Cilliers, F. J., & Herman, N. (2010). Impact of an educational development programme on teaching practice of academics at a research-intensive university. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 15(3), 253-267.
16. Cooper, C. L., Argyris, C., & Starbuck, W. H. (Eds.). (2005). *The Blackwell encyclopedia of management*. Blackwell.
17. Daumiller, M., Stupnisky, R., & Janke, S. (2020). Motivation of higher education faculty: Theoretical approaches, empirical evidence, and future directions. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 99, 101502.
18. den Boer, P., & Hoeve, A. (2017). A routine perspective on implementing reflective career conversations in education. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 45(2), 178-187.
19. De Vos, A., & Cambré, B. (2017). Career management in high-performing organizations: A set-theoretic approach. *Human Resource Management*, 56(3), 501-518.
20. Elen, J., Lindblom-Ylänne, S., & Clement, M. (2007). Faculty Development in Research-Intensive Universities: The role of academics' conceptions on the relationship between research and teaching. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 12(2), 123-139.
21. Guo, W., Wang, L. & Wang, N. (2019). Research on the impact of carer management fit on career success. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 56(4). 394-402
22. Harland, T. (2016). Teaching to enhance research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 35(3), 461-472.
23. Kaya, C., Ceylan, B. (2014). An empirical study on the role of career development programs in organizations and organizational commitment on job satisfaction of employees. *American Journal of Business*, 3(3), 178-191.
24. Kirtania, D. K. (2018). Bibliometric Study of Indian Open Access Social Science Literature. *Library Philosophy and Practice*; Lincoln, 0(0), 1-14.
25. Lodhi, A. S. (2012). A pilot study of researching the research culture in Pakistani public universities: the academics' perspective. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 473-479.
26. McCulloch, G. & Crook, D. (Eds) (2008). *International Encyclopaedia of Education*. Routledge.
27. Mulhall, S. (2014). Careers and career development. in B. Harney and K. Monks (Eds.) *Strategic HRM: Research and Practice in Ireland* (pp. 211-229), Orpen Press.
28. Nadeem, M. (2011). Re-searching research culture at higher education. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, 5(1), 41-52.
29. Nazar, R., Chaudhry, I. S., Ali, S., & Faheem, M. (2018). Role of quality education for sustainable development goals (SDGs). *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(2), 486-501.
30. Patton, W. (2019). Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back. In W. Patton (Ed.). *Career Development as a Partner in Nation Building Australia* (pp. 165-208). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill | Sense.
31. Rajesh, R. & Barani, G. (2016). A Study on Faculty Performance Management Practices in Higher Education Institutions. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 6(4), 330-334
32. Samaras, A. P., & Pithouse-Morgan, K. (2018). Self-study research in a polyvocal professional community design *Teaching, Learning, and Enacting of Self-Study Methodology* (pp. 245-257): Springer.
33. Schapper, J., & Mayson, S. E. (2010). Research-led teaching: moving from a fractured engagement to a marriage of convenience. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 29(6), 641-651.
34. Shabbir, M., & Khalid, M. I. (2016). Humanizing research culture system through quality assurance practices in the universities of Pakistan. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 38(1), 235-250
35. Sharf, R. S. (2016). *Applying career development theory to counseling*: Nelson Education.
36. Stemler, S. E. (2015). Content analysis. *Emerging trends in the social and behavioral sciences: An Interdisciplinary, Searchable, and Linkable Resource*, 1-14.
37. Stupnisky, R. H., Hall, N. C., & Pekrun, R. (2019). Faculty enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom for teaching and research: instrument development and testing predictors of success. *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(10), 1712-1722.
38. Sullivan, S. E., & Arthur, M. B. (2006). The evolution of the boundaryless career concept: Examining physical and psychological mobility. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69(1), 19-29.
39. Sunal, D. W., Hodges, J., Sunal, C. S., Whitaker, K. W., Freeman, L. M., Edwards, L., Johnston, R. A., & Odell, M. (2001). Teaching science in higher education: Faculty professional development and barriers to change. *School Science and Mathematics*, 101(5), 1-16.
40. Tight, M. (2016). Examining the research/teaching nexus. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 6(4), 293-311.
41. Tong, F., Tang, S., Irby, B. J., Lara-Alecio, R., & Guerrero, C. (2020). The determination of appropriate coefficient indices for inter-rater reliability: Using classroom observation instruments as fidelity measures in large-scale randomized research. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 99, 101514
42. Vondracek, F. W., Lerner, R. M., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2019). *Career development: A life-span developmental approach*: Routledge.
43. Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic content analysis*. Sage.
44. Weber, M. (2017). *Methodology of social sciences*: Routledge.

