



Social Sciences Spectrum

A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, HEC recognized [Y-category](#) Research Journal

E-ISSN: [3006-0427](#) P-ISSN: [3006-0419](#)

Volume 03, Issue 04, 2024

Web link: <https://sss.org.pk/index.php/sss>



Check for updates

Evaluating the Impact of Higher Education Policies on Academic Performance and Institutional Growth in Pakistan

Aqeela Noor

M.Phil Scholar, Education Department, Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan

Email: aqeelanoor5848@gmail.com

Muhammad Safdar Tahir

M.Phil Scholar, Education Department, Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan

Correspondence: safdertahir2151@gmail.com

Muqadasa Zahra

M.Phil Scholar, Education Department, Ghazi University Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan

Email: muqadasazahra@yahoo.com

Article Information [YY-MM-DD]

Received 2024-11-23

Accepted 2024-12-27

Citation (APA):

Noor, A., Tahir, M, A & Zahra, M. (2024). Evaluating the Impact of Higher Education Policies on Academic Performance and Institutional Growth in Pakistan. *Social Sciences Spectrum*, 3(4), 425-434.

<https://doi.org/10.71085/sss.03.04.188>

Abstract

This paper analyzes how higher education policies influence academic landscape, and stimulate institutional development, particularly in developing countries, like Pakistan. This paper focuses on the impact of these policies on academic performance and institutional growth, in the area of resource distribution, faculty enhancement, curriculum changes, and governance methods. Data was collected quantitatively through a five point Likert scale questionnaire, distributed among 600 participants including students, faculty and administrators at 15 higher education institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan. Analysis revealed significant linkages between successful policy execution and the achievement of better academic results as a result of fair resource allocation and professional growth programs. However, challenges such as best governance practice, resource disparity, and compatibility to the industry needs still persist particularly in rural and poor areas. The analysis provides practical guidance and suggestions for decision makers to address these problems and enhance the effectiveness of higher education policies. To enhance comprehension and usability, detailed tables in which thorough data and results are organized, are provided. It contributes to the ongoing debate of higher education policies effectiveness and importance for the sustainable development and academic excellence.

Keywords: Higher education policies, Academic performance, Institutional growth, Resource allocation, Faculty development, Governance practices, Curriculum reforms, Equity in education.



Content from this work may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike 4.0 International License](#) that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgment of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal.

Introduction

The Role of Higher Education in National Development

Higher education promotes innovation, technological progress and socio economic growth, and is therefore a key partner in national development. Pakistan's higher education landscape has seen major changes in the last twenty years with the strategic policies and initiatives of Higher Education Commission (HEC) having a major role in the development of the higher education system of Pakistan. These reforms are intended to enhance academic results, stimulate research activities and promote the growth of institutions. But assessing their actual contribution is complicated by disparities in policy implementation and in socio economic inequalities all over the country.

Significance beyond Workforce Development

This is not only for having qualified individuals within the workforce but it also promotes critical thinking, creativity and lifelong learning. Higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing countries (DCs) including Pakistan are one of the most increasingly perceived players of development and progress in the society. Though such institutions have the capacity to develop, they are still subject to systemic issues —from funding shortages to antiquated curriculums and an absence of professional development opportunities for educators — that dull progress.

Impactful HEC Policies and Initiatives

But today, the HEC policies have seeped into the higher education landscape — most notably the TTS, funding programs for research, and quality assurance processes. In the international rankings, these regions have experienced a digital transformation of their universities and national higher education institutions and a constipating increase in their research output. Nevertheless, these measures have often been doubted in ensuring programmatic success and institutional growth in the long run. Consequently, universities in these SDCs have seen many national higher education institutions climb in several global rankings and a phenomenal rise in the volume of research output. But there is disagreement about the long term effect of such measures in producing equitable educational outcomes and supporting positive and sustainable institutional development. for research, and processes to ensure quality assurance. These regions have witnessed a digital transformation of their universities and national higher education institutions in various international rankings and a constipating increase in their research output. However, the effectiveness of these measures in the long run for ensuring equitable academic success and sustainable institutional development is often questioned. aver had a huge impact on Pakistan's higher education sector. As a consequence, universities from these SDCs, national higher education institutions have registered a rise in many global rankings and a staggering increase in research output. However, there is disagreement over the long-term impact of these measures in creating equitable educational outcomes and enabling positive and sustainable institutional development.

Challenges in Resource Distribution

The big issue here is that resources and opportunities are not fairly allocated between public and private institutions, and between urban and rural settings. Rural colleges typically do not have access to the most basic of amenities and have less to work with, whereas urban institutions of higher education generally have better facilities, greater access to financing, and stronger potential for international partnerships. They will ask important questions about the inclusiveness and the fairness of current higher educational frameworks. Tween urban and rural settings. Urban

institutions of higher education generally have better facilities, greater access to financing, and stronger potential for international partnerships, while rural colleges struggle with access to the most basic of amenities and have more limited resources. Severe interlocutors will raise important questions about the inclusiveness and fairness of current higher educational frameworks.

Governance Challenges

Furthermore, governance plays a major role in all higher education to ensure that the policies work. A sound decision making process is aided by transparent and accountable governance structures that immutable block chain ledgers make possible. Unfortunately, this is not the case for many of the institutions in Pakistan, where the governance and bureaucratic inefficiencies and political interference that undermine institutional autonomy and effectiveness lead to the deaths of a thousand cuts, and academic output and institutional growth deteriorate. Tan, which face deaths by a thousand cuts at the hands of the governance and bureaucratic inefficiencies and political interference that plague institutional autonomy and effectiveness, resulting in deteriorating academic output and institutional growth.

Lack of correspondence with labor Market

A further key area of concern is the alignment or otherwise of higher education policies with labor market needs. As the global economy becomes more complex, and the work needed to support it more varied, there is greater reliance on graduates who combine academic subject knowledge with practical skills to apply that knowledge. However, the difference between academia and industry needs is growing, posing a new question to policymakers and educators. global economy and the types of work required for it, there is a greater reliance on graduates who combine both academic subject knowledge with the practical skills necessary to apply it. Yet, the gap between what academia produces and industry needs continues to widen, thus creating a new challenge for both policymakers and educators.

Study Aims and Objectives

The main objective of this study is to analyze these key problems by evaluating higher education policies on academic outcomes and institutional development in Pakistan. The research also aims to determine how much funding, faculty training, infrastructure and quality assurance mechanisms as key areas of significance correspond to the needs of academic stakeholders in Germany and Hungary. The findings of this study are likely to provide evidence based insights that will guide future politicians, resulting in concrete recommendations for modifications to existing frameworks as well as implementation of novel strategies that could lead to better actions taken within Pakistan's tertiary institution's programs. This align with the needs of academic stakeholders in Germany and Hungary. This study's findings are likely to generate evidence-backed insights that could guide future politicians, resulting in concrete recommendations for adjustments to current frameworks and implementation of novel strategies that could lead to improved actions taken within Pakistan's tertiary institution programs.

Literature Review

Policy Frameworks and Academic Outcomes

The influence of policy frameworks upon academic environments is underpinned by several studies. Khan et al. (2021) state that resource allocation policies directly affect student performance and faculty job satisfaction. Universities can have up to date facilities for students and faculty to be shared with, learning materials and technological tools that all work together to create an atmosphere that fosters academic excellence; all these they can do this by using resources

allocated wisely. Faculty development programs that are offered as professional training and advanced research are found to improve the quality of teaching delivered as well as the volume of research produced (Ahmed and Raza 2020). These programs enable educators to become highly skilled in advent grade teaching methodologies and meet the world's parameters of academic provision. Another policy oriented area which balances theory and practice is curriculum reform. According to Rehman et al. (2018), an industry aligned curriculum enhances employability and energizes institutional growth through increased linkages with the private sector aculty job satisfaction (2021). By allocating resources wisely, universities can provide students and faculty with access to up-to-date facilities, learning materials, and technological tools that are essential for fostering academic excellence. According to Ahmed and Raza (2020), faculty development programs comprising professional training and advanced research result in a notable enhancement in the quality of teaching delivered and the volume of research generated. These initiatives allow educators to become proficient in advanced teaching methodologies in line with global measures of academic delivery.

Curriculum reform is another policy-oriented area that strikes a balance between theory and practice. Rehman et al. (2018) contend that a curriculum aligned with industry requirements increases employability and energizes institutional growth through greater linkages with the private sector.

Challenges in Implementation

Policies of higher education in Pakistan are made in line with international best practices but the implementation suffers from systemic inefficiencies. According to Malik et al. (2019), rural higher education institutions suffer from lack of resources, such as insufficient financing, outdated infrastructures and lack of availability of trained staff. However, urban ruler inequity and cost constraints make this a difficult and expensive problem to solve. External meddling in governance of many HEIs influences resource management and decision making process (Akhtar, Niazi, 2020). The lack of autonomy at institutions affects institutional performance and reduces stakeholder trust.st practices but implementation suffers from systemic inefficiencies. Malik et al. (2019) notes that rural higher education institutions often experience a lack of resources, including inadequate financial support, outdated facilities, and limited availability of trained staff. Apollo can bridge this divide and provide quality education without the two existing problems of urban-ruler inequity and cost constraints.

Policy implementation is hampered by political interference. Many HEIs have external meddling in governance, which affect resource management and decision making process (Akhtar, Niazi, 2020). This lack of autonomy affects institutional performance and reduces stakeholder trust.

Institutional Growth

Academic prestige, research output, student numbers and building infrastructure are just some of the elements which are included in institutional growth as a multifaceted concept. Catalyst institution, transparent governance procedures have been positioned. According to Karam (2018), Aslam et al. (2018) stated that institutions with effective governance structures have increased capability to secure funds, advocate for international partnerships and improve their world ranking. Research and innovation is the basis of institutional advancement. The role that grants and research funding play towards the academic goals were highlighted by Nazir et al. (2020). But they pointed out that the skewed distribution of research funding typically goes to traditional universities, giving emerging institutions a distinct disadvantage. This gap is impeding holistic development of the higher education ecosystem. restage, research output, student numbers, and building

infrastructure. Transparent governance procedures have been positioned as an institution facilitating catalyst. Aslam et al. according to Karam (2018) that institutions with effective governance structures possess increased capability to secure funds, advocate for international partnerships and improve their world-ranking.

Institutional advancement is dependent on research and innovation. Nazir et al. (2020) highlighted the role that grants and funding for research play towards the academic goals. However, they noted that the skewed distribution of research funding often favors traditional universities, which puts emerging institutions at a disadvantage. This gap hinders the holistic development of the higher education ecosystem.

Equity and Inclusivity in Higher Education

Higher education policy should be both equitable and inclusive — they are indispensable and welcome. As stated by Shafiq and Ahmed (2021), lower socio economic students who don't have enough finance, limited access to top tier university, and lesser support networks find it difficult. Capacity building initiatives including scholarships and setting up satellite campuses in peripheral location, are thus required as massive intervention to address these challenges, like a lack of finances, limited access to top-tier universities and inadequate support networks. Massive intervention aimed at addressing these challenges is required, including capacity-building initiatives, scholarships, and establishing satellite campuses in peripheral locations.

Globalization in Higher Education

Globalization has transformed higher education enhanced by cross border collaboration, knowledge transfers and international student mobility, according to Saeed et al. (2021). The Pakistani higher education institutions have proceeded to enter into partnerships with institutions abroad Fundraising and global research support and progress through the partnerships. Pakistan's higher education sector is unable to benefit from globalization because of absence of concerted approach to international. Fortunately, Pakistan's higher education sector has not been able to benefit from globalization due to the lack of concerted approach to internationalization. Faculty exchange programs, coupled with joint research projects and global research support have been developed through partnerships. Lack of concerted international approach hinders Pakistan's higher education sector in benefiting from globalization. According to Saeed et al. (2021), Pakistani higher education institutions have proceeded to set up partnerships with the international institutions. Faculty exchange programs, joint research projects and global research support have been facilitated through partnerships. Pakistan's higher education sector is not able to benefit from globalization due to lack of concerted approach to internationalization. det al. (2021) suggest the Pakistani higher education institutions have gone ahead with establishing partnerships with the international institutions. Partnerships have fostered faculty exchange programs, joint research projects and access to global research support. Pakistan's higher education sector is hindered in reaping the benefits of globalization due to the lack of a concerted international approach.

Technology Integration

Technology in higher education must be considered after COVID-19 pandemic. Business and Employment Techniques Business management techniques knowledge sharing through e-learning, Virtual classrooms, and electronic resources revolutionized educational techniques known as reskilling. In their recent work, Hussain et al., (2022) identify that various forms of digital resources can improve accessibility and flexibility in learning spaces. Speaking of the challenges they noted that the urban-rural digital divide poses a real issue for technology adoption in Pakistani higher education institutions. tual classrooms and online resources changed educational

methodologies. Hussain et al. (2022) highlight the potential of digital tools to enhance accessibility and flexibility in educational environments. The urban-rural digital divide presents a real barrier to technology adoption in Pakistani higher education institutions, they noted.

Faculty Development and Leadership

Faculty development is fundamental element of academic success and institutional growth. According to Ahmed and Raza (2020) the importance of continuous professional development programs in shaping educators with the qualities essential to academic and industry demands. Leadership training for administration is important for institutional growth, as effective leadership helps in policy implementation, stakeholder interest, and strategic planning.

Student interest and Stake

Student interest and stakes are important for academic success and institutional growth. According to Haider and Siddiqui (2021), policies that preferences for student well-being, i.e mental health stake, career development, and co-curricular activities, provide to a holistic educational experience. These stakes not only increase student achievement but also develop a sense of belonging and loyalty to the institution.

Methodology

Component	Description
Research Design	Quantitative approach using a structured questionnaire
Instrument	Five-point Likert scale questionnaire
Target Population	Students, faculty, and administrators from 15 HEIs in Pakistan
Sampling Technique	Stratified random sampling to ensure representation from diverse HEIs
Sample Size	600 participants, including 200 students, 200 faculty members, and 200 administrators
Data Collection	Online and in-person surveys
Data Analysis	Descriptive and inferential statistics
Variables Studied	Policy awareness, resource allocation, faculty development, governance practices, infrastructure quality
Software Used	SPSS for data analysis

The study developed a quantitative method, bt employing five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The population for the survey is students, faculty, and administration from 15 HEIs across Pakistan, validating sample from both public and private institutions. Data were analyzed through (SPSS) by using descriptive and inferential statistics, all the key points are mentioned in the table.

Research Design

It develops a quantitative approach that is most effective for the calculation of correlations between variables and for making statistical conclusions.

Instrument

A structured questionnaire by using five point Likert scale is the main instrument for data collection

Target Population

- The participants are from students, staff and administration from 15 higher education institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan, thus a variety of views from diverse stakeholder groups are guaranteed.

Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling enhances the general findings by assuring proportionate representation from different types of HEI (e.g. public vs. private, urban vs. rural, etc.).

Sample Size

There are 600 participants in the sample, with an even distribution among students, professors, and administration, to provide a fair perception of the stakeholder's viewpoints.

Data Collection

- The data were collected through five point Likert scale questionnaire developed by itself.

Data Analysis

The gathered data is analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. SPSS tool is used for data analysis.

Variables Studied

Key variables are policy awareness, resource allocation, faculty development, governance practice, and infrastructure quality. The understanding of impact of higher education policies depends upon these factors which are linked directly to the research objectives. The important policy related variables are aware 'of policy, 'how resources were allocated, 'faculty development' 'types of governance practices and 'quality of infrastructure'. Concerned policies of higher education are directly associated with these objectives, their understanding being necessary to comprehend the effects of policies of higher education.

Results and Discussion

Metric	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Significant Findings
Policy Awareness	3.8	0.76	Moderate awareness among stakeholders
Resource Allocation	4.2	0.64	Direct impact on academic performance
Faculty Development	4.0	0.71	Strong correlation with teaching quality
Infrastructure Quality	3.7	0.80	Disparities between urban and rural HEIs
Governance Practices	4.1	0.69	Positive influence on institutional growth

Key Findings

- **Policy Awareness:** Stakeholders had a moderate level of policy awareness, however the level of knowledge varied among rural and urban institutions.
- **Resource Allocation:** It was found that resource allocation was a critical factor affecting academic performance and hence rural institutions are confronted with resource deficits.
- **Faculty Development:** Faculty development programs were strongly positively correlated with teaching quality.
- **Infrastructure Disparities:** Higher infrastructure quality was observed in urban HEIs, which in turn improved academic performance and growth of the institution.
- **Governance Issues:** A key finding is of governance, with institutions having more robust structures of governance performing better in terms of academic and research outcomes.

Implications

- **Policy Development:** It recommends that policy refinement should be on equitable distribution of resource especially for rural institutions.
- **Curriculum and Industry Alignment:** There is also the need for more reforms of the curriculum to fit in with the dynamic demands of the current and future world job market.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that higher education policies matter in affecting academic performance and institutional development in Pakistan. Findings suggest that if these conditions are not met, there will be no sustainable progress. Policies of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) have produced noticeable progress, yet significant hurdles remain, including the reduction of urban rural disparities in institutions and alignment of curricula with the labor market.

Moderate stakeholder awareness of policies, significant effects of resource allocation on academic outcomes, and a positive relationship between faculty development initiatives and teaching quality are identified as findings of the research. Poor quality of infrastructure and bad governance inefficiencies highlight areas needing immediate attention. The challenges impede the equitable growth of higher education institutions and limit their ability to contribute to the national development.

To resolve these problems policymakers should improve governance practices, distribute resources equitably, and encourage interventions specific for underprivileged and rural regions. In addition, it is appropriate to boost the international cooperation and use technology to increase the ability and the international name of the Pakistani higher education institutes.

The evidence based insights this study provides contribute to the discourse on the effectiveness of higher education policy. This calls for detailed approach to the policy formulation and implementation regarding education where higher education plays a role of fasten moving force towards academic excellence and socio economic growth in Pakistan.

References

- Ahmed, F., & Raza, H. (2020). Faculty development programs in Pakistan: A pathway to academic excellence. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 32(2), 45-59.
- Akhtar, M., & Niazi, M. (2020). Governance challenges in higher education institutions of Pakistan. *Journal of Policy Analysis*, 16(3), 88-105.
- Ali, S., & Hussain, T. (2019). Curriculum alignment and employability: A case study of Pakistani universities. *Education for Employment Journal*, 22(1), 65-77.
- Aslam, M., Iqbal, Z., & Tariq, R. (2018). Governance and institutional growth: Evidence from higher education in Pakistan. *Higher Education Policy*, 15(1), 77-93.
- Chaudhry, N., & Ahmed, K. (2018). Addressing resource gaps in higher education: A framework for Pakistan. *Educational Resources Review*, 14(4), 99-112.
- Haider, S., & Siddiqui, A. (2021). Student engagement and its impact on academic success: Insights from Pakistani universities. *Journal of Student Development*, 29(2), 33-47.
- Hussain, T., Ahmad, N., & Khan, S. (2022). Digital transformation in higher education: Challenges and opportunities in Pakistan. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 29(3), 101-119.
- Jamil, F., & Akbar, A. (2020). Policy implementation in higher education: A comparative study of urban and rural universities. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 18(3), 89-104.
- Khan, A., Malik, S., & Yousaf, M. (2021). Resource allocation and academic performance: An empirical study of Pakistani HEIs. *Educational Research International*, 28(3), 120-135.
- Malik, N., Ahmed, T., & Khan, U. (2019). Challenges in higher education policy implementation in rural Pakistan. *Journal of Policy Studies*, 14(4), 99-112.
- Nazir, R., Saeed, A., & Abbas, F. (2020). Research funding and institutional growth in higher education: A critical analysis. *Research and Development Journal*, 35(2), 89-112.
- Parveen, R., & Qureshi, S. (2021). Gender disparities in higher education policies of Pakistan. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 24(1), 55-69.
- Qayyum, R., & Khan, H. (2020). Examining faculty satisfaction with governance in Pakistani HEIs. *Journal of Higher Education Governance*, 13(3), 90-108.
- Qureshi, S., & Zafar, R. (2019). Bridging the skills gap: An analysis of higher education curricula in Pakistan. *Education and Skills Development Journal*, 21(2), 72-88.
- Rahman, F., & Shah, A. (2019). Faculty perceptions of quality assurance mechanisms in higher education institutions in Pakistan. *Journal of Academic Quality*, 16(4), 47-62.
- Rehman, F., Shah, A., & Ali, R. (2018). Bridging the gap: Curriculum reforms for employability in Pakistan. *International Journal of Education Reform*, 14(1), 33-47.
- Saeed, A., Akhtar, S., & Niazi, M. (2021). Globalization and its implications for higher education in Pakistan. *Journal of Global Education Studies*, 20(4), 67-82.
- Shafiq, H., & Ahmed, M. (2021). Addressing equity in higher education: Challenges for marginalized communities in Pakistan. *Educational Equity Journal*, 18(3), 45-61.
- Siddiqui, M., & Farooq, N. (2020). The role of technology in higher education post-pandemic. *Journal of E-Learning and Educational Technology*, 27(3), 85-99.
- Tahir, Z., & Hussain, R. (2020). A comparative analysis of governance practices in public and private universities in Pakistan. *Governance in Higher Education Journal*, 12(2), 51-67.

- Tariq, R., & Ahmed, K. (2018). Exploring faculty perceptions of research funding policies in Pakistan. *Journal of Research Policy Analysis*, 22(1), 44-58.
- Waseem, F., & Asghar, Z. (2021). Equity and inclusivity in higher education: Challenges for underprivileged regions in Pakistan. *Journal of Inclusive Education*, 19(2), 89-103.
- Zafar, R., & Rahim, A. (2019). International collaborations and their impact on Pakistani higher education institutions. *Global Education Review*, 25(4), 77-91.
- Zaman, H., & Tariq, U. (2020). Faculty leadership development programs in Pakistan: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Academic Leadership Studies*, 19(1), 66-80.
- Ahmad, M., & Iqbal, S. (2021). The impact of governance on the effectiveness of higher education policies in Pakistan. *Governance Studies Quarterly*, 15(4), 45-60.
- Khan, S., & Malik, A. (2020). Analyzing the role of infrastructure in academic performance. *Infrastructure Studies in Education*, 10(3), 100-115.
- Latif, S., & Ahmad, Z. (2019). Student support services and their contribution to institutional growth. *Higher Education Development Journal*, 17(4), 82-96.
- Malik, F., & Yousuf, S. (2020). Exploring technology adoption in rural HEIs of Pakistan. *Educational Technology Review*, 28(1), 67-79.
- Rehman, A., & Shahid, T. (2021). Addressing the digital divide in higher education: Evidence from rural Pakistan. *Journal of Digital Equity in Education*, 13(2), 89-105.
- Saeed, H., & Aslam, Z. (2021). Enhancing research output in higher education through collaborative networks. *Research Collaboration Studies*, 18(3), 72-88.
- Shah, N., & Farooq, A. (2020). Governance reforms in higher education: Learning from regional case studies. *Policy Studies in Education*, 14(3), 95-108.
- Zaman, U., & Tariq, M. (2019). An evaluation of quality assurance frameworks in Pakistan's higher education sector. *Journal of Educational Quality*, 15(2), 58-73.