



Extended Abstract

Analysis of the Main Components of Research Management Quality and Knowledge Production in the Islamic Azad University Units of Kurdistan and Kermanshah



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Received: ۲۰۲۵ December ۲۳ | Revised: ۲۰۲۶ January ۱۸ | Accepted: ۲۰۲۶ January ۱۹

Introduction

The aim of the present research is to identify the dimensions, components, and key indicators of research quality and scientific production in the Islamic Azad University branches in the provinces of Kurdistan and Kermanshah. This study is designed to thoroughly examine and analyze the status of research quality in these universities.

Theoretical Framework



As an influential institution in the social, economic, political, and cultural progress of any society, the university has three main functions, which are: ۱- knowledge production (research); ۲- knowledge transfer (education); and ۳- knowledge dissemination and dissemination (services). Among these three functions, the production of science and knowledge is the most important function of universities in modern industrial societies (Bagheri, Dowlatabadi, and Enfayeli, ۲۰۱۵).

Science is considered one of the most important components of a country's power at the international level and enables that country to play a more important role in the development of the global community and have a greater impact on other countries, thus achieving its goals and objectives more quickly and easily (Raymond, ۲۰۰۷).

The main activity of universities is in two areas: education and research, but the quality of research services is a factor that distinguishes high-level universities from their competitors. Research and science production are essential and fundamental needs of any society (Norouzi et al., ۲۰۱۲).

In Iran, in the twenty-year vision document, Iran is targeted as a country with the first scientific and technological position in the region. To achieve this position, it is necessary to continuously review and compare the state of science production in Iran with the countries of the target region to determine the points of movement, the boundaries of competition, and the rival countries. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out some kind of active planning and forward-looking measures in line with Iran's scientific position based on the current state of science production in Iran. The university, as a knowledge-producing organization, is responsible for the main task of research and achieving these important goals (Khorasani et al., ۲۰۱۵).

The fundamental issue of research is the quality of science and research production. Considering the total world science production in the past decade, Iran ranks ۲۱st in the quantity of world science production and ۳۲nd in its impact, and in ۲۰۱۷, Iran succeeded in achieving ۱۷th in world science production. Currently, the most important indicators of science production worldwide are "the number of scientific articles indexed in reputable international databases and the number of citations given to these articles."

The number of indexed articles indicates the "quantitative growth of scientific production" and the number of citations given indicates the impact of published articles, in other words, their quality level (Boldyrev, ۲۰۲۴).

Another indicator of the quality of researchers and scientific institutions in the process of producing science in national and international arenas is the scientific impact index, which examines the impact of researchers in the subject area in question by calculating the citations to each published article and the distribution of citations over time.

The research status of the Azad University is acceptable compared to the country, because according to the information on the Web of Science database, the Azad University produced ۶,۲۴۴ articles in ۲۰۱۱, which increased to ۹,۰۵۸ in ۲۰۱۵ and to ۲۱,۰۶۶ in ۲۰۱۷ (since the beginning of the year). Accordingly, the growth percentage of this university was ۱۳,۳ in ۲۰۱۵ and ۲۶,۳ in ۲۰۱۶.

Data extracted (۲۰۰۸-۲۰۱۷) from the ESI database shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran ranks first among all Islamic countries in the ۱۰ years in question with ۱,۷۷۵,۷۷۳ citations



received. The results indicate that the Islamic Republic of Iran has accounted for ۲۱,۲ percent of the total citations of all Islamic countries.

The number of highly cited articles by scientists in the country has increased from ۴۷ in ۲۰۰۸ to ۴۱۱ in ۲۰۱۷, thus increasing more than ۸-fold, with an average annual growth of ۲۴,۲۱ percent, and has had the highest growth rate in the quality of science production among Islamic countries (Islamic World Science and Technology Citation and Monitoring Institute, ۲۰۱۸).

Methodology

This study is designed to thoroughly examine and analyze the status of research quality in these universities. Methodologically, this research is classified as an applied study and employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data.

The statistical population of this research includes all faculty members, researchers, and research managers of the Islamic Azad University branches in Kermanshah and Kurdistan during the academic year ۱۳۹۸ (۲۰۱۹-۲۰۲۰), totaling ۲۹۸ individuals.

For sample selection, ۲۲۲ individuals were randomly chosen from the statistical population using Morgan's table. To collect data, a questionnaire designed by the researcher was utilized.

Discussion and Results

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, both content and face validity methods were employed, and its reliability was estimated at ۰,۸۷۸ through the calculation of Cronbach's alpha based on a pilot test conducted on a sample of ۱۵ individuals.

The findings of the research indicate that based on consultations with experts and a review of theoretical foundations and previous studies, the final model was designed around five main dimensions: culture, human resources, facilities and financial resources, management and structure, and education.

The identified dimensions and indicators in this research are directly aligned with enhancing research quality and scientific production, and they can serve as a basis for planning and designing quality improvement models in universities.

Conclusion

In summary, this study has achieved a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this field by identifying and analyzing the factors affecting the quality improvement of science and research production in the universities of Kurdistan and Kermanshah.

The results show that the components of culture, budget and facilities, management and structure, education, and human resources directly affect the quality of research. This study particularly emphasizes the importance of research culture and research-oriented governance and serves as a reliable source for future decisions in improving the quality of science production in universities. Despite the achievements of this study, some limitations should be considered.

One of these limitations is the limited number of samples studied, which may affect the results. Also, the lack of sufficient data in some areas and the lack of access to some information sources can affect the accuracy of the results.

In addition, focusing on two specific provinces may not generalize the results to other regions, and more research is needed in different parts of the country. Therefore, based on the results of this study, it is suggested that universities and higher education centers design and



implement appropriate educational and cultural programs that emphasize the importance of research and creativity to improve the quality of research.

Also, establishing a comprehensive system for evaluating the quality of research and promoting inter-university and international cooperation can help improve the state of research in these universities. Finally, providing financial resources and research facilities and creating a suitable environment for researchers to increase their motivation and scientific spirit are other measures that should be put on the agenda.

Contribution of authors

All authors have participated in this research in equal proportion.

Ethical approval

All ethical considerations have been met.

Conflict of interest

No conflicts of interest are declared by the authors.



فصلنامه علمی رویکردهای نو در مدیریت دولتی

The scientific quarterly of
New Approaches in Public Administration



JNAPA