

Students' Attitudes and Challenges towards Research Work in Southern Punjab, Pakistan

Khurram Khadim Rana

ranabrotheres333@gmail.com

MPhil Education, National College of Business Administration & Economics, Sub-Campus Multan, Pakistan

Sumbal Amjad

sumbal.amjad@rsmi.uol.edu.pk

Lecturer, University Institute of Radiological Sciences and Medical Imaging Technology, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, The University of Lahore, Lahore Pakistan, 54000.

Quratulain Talpur

Quratulain@muetkhp.edu.pk

Assistant Professor (English), Department of Basic Science & Related Studies, MUET Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Campus Khairpur, Sindh

Corresponding Author: *Khurram Khadim Rana ranabrotheres333@gmail.com

Received: 14-07-2025	Revised: 24-08-2025	Accepted: 08-09-2025	Published: 24-09-2025
-----------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------

ABSTRACT

In contemporary society, students' attitudes are more important than their experiences and academic learning. Maintaining a favorable attitude towards research is one crucial factor for achieving success and progress in a knowledge-based society. The study's objective was to examine the attitudes and challenges faced by M.Phil students toward research work in South Punjab. The study population comprised M.Phil students. A stratified sampling technique was used to choose a sample of 312 students from five universities in both the public and private sectors. Data collection was conducted using a self-developed questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The data underwent analysis using the statistical package for social sciences, employing both descriptive and inferential methodologies. Inferential analysis based on sector and gender was conducted using an independent sample t-test and ANNOVA (Analysis of Variance) for universities. These study findings concluded that students have a high intention to conduct research. Although students are interested in research, they still have some academic and institutional support, resource accessibility, supervisory support, time management and financial constraints, psychological aspects, and ethical practices related to research work.

Keywords: M.Phil students, South Punjab, research, universities

INTRODUCTION

Under the guidance of their research supervisor, university students consolidate their research work into a thesis or dissertation. The present research endeavor exemplifies the innovative contributions made by the scholars. They strive to do so while employing their most advanced critical thinking abilities to document it (Chong, 2015).

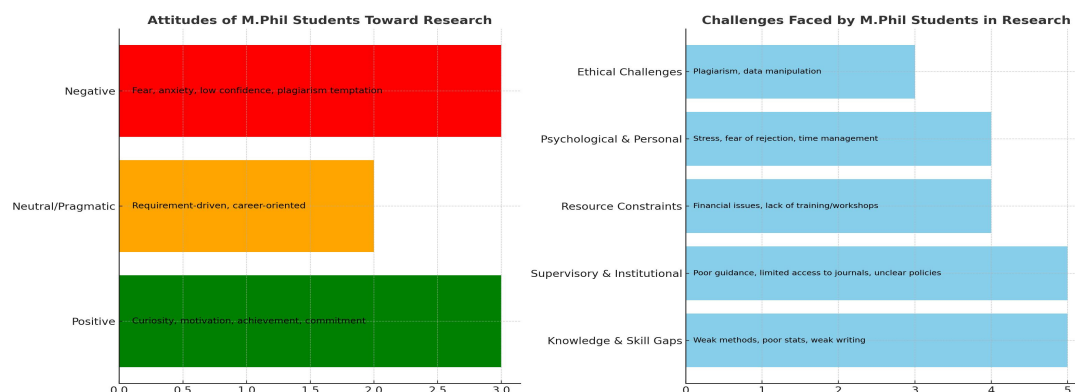
Despite the growing importance of research in professional practice, not all students perceive it as crucial for their personal and professional growth. According to their research beliefs, some students may not value research courses. In Pakistan, university students begin their research endeavors after successfully completing their coursework and passing comprehensive/qualifying examinations. During this stage of their degree, students choose a subject of interest in collaboration with their research supervisor. They next develop a study plan and conduct their research while accounted for the accessible population (Komba Sotco Claudius, 2016). Scholars' personal concerns and experiences, their dedication to their

work, their socioeconomic circumstances, their communication and management skills, and the stress they endure during this period can all contribute to these challenges (Bocar, 2009). University students are crucial in a nation's development as prospective researchers (Alduraibi, Aldosari, Alharbi, Alkhudairy, Almutairi, Alanazi, & Almosa, 2024). Nonetheless, it is unfeasible to harness the creative abilities of students for knowledge generation and national advancement without acquainting them with research endeavors (Anbari & Jadidi, 2013). Universities must prioritize the importance of student research and educate university authorities about the challenges students encounter in their research pursuits. Furthermore, 70% of medical students are disinclined to engage in research due to various obstacles, including limited access to information resources, inadequate proficiency in English, restrictive administrative regulations, insufficient research funding, and a lack of capability to compose formal research proposals. Consequently, it is vital to examine the obstacles to research endeavors among university students. Most studies in Iran have investigated the research obstacles faced by faculty members, but the research hurdles encountered by university students have received comparatively less focus (Ashrafi-Rizi, Zarmehr, Bahrami, Ghazavi-Khorasgani, Kazempour, & Shahrzadi, 2014).

The relationship between these challenges and the following factors may be involved: personal concerns and experiences encountered while applying knowledge; dedication to work; socioeconomic conditions; communication; management skills; stress experienced during this period of time (Bocar, 2009) institutional factors, such as support from university administration, mentoring from research supervisors as well as senior fellows; funds and facilities provided to scholars by the university (Safari, Navazeshkhah, Azizi, Ziaei, & Sharafi, 2015); supervisor-related issues, such as the scholar's relationship with their supervisor, the supervisor's knowledge and interests; interaction/communication between them; and supervisor feedback (Yousefi, Bazrafkan, & Yamani, 2015).

This study attempts to completely assess the attitudes and challenges of M.Phil students towards research activity in South Punjab, comprising both public and private universities. "M.Phil attitude" is defined as students' mindset, perceptions, and intentions toward engaging in research at an advanced academic level, including their passion, commitment, and approach to scholarly inquiry. Challenges connected to the research topic include but are not limited to access to resources, time management, methodological issues, and supervision-related challenges. By analyzing the various challenges experienced by students in diverse institutional settings, this research intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the barriers that hamper progress in M.Phil thesis research. Additionally, the study aims to give information on the kind of research activity conducted by M.Phil students', including literature evaluation, data collection, analysis and thesis writing.

Figure 1: Attitudes and Challenges of M.Phil Students in Research



Source: Author's own elaboration

On the left, attitudes of M.Phil students are represented as positive, neutral, and negative. On the right, the main problems are listed: gaps in skills, supervision issues, shortage of resources, psychological stress, and ethical concerns. This indicates how these problems directly affect and tend to shape students' attitudes towards research — e.g., poor supervision or a lack of resources may drive students from a positive to a negative attitude.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides the literature that is relevant to the topic. Leydesdorff (2010) asserts that research, learning, and teaching are critical processes and competencies for students, especially at the postgraduate level. These initiatives substantially enhance educational practices and broaden scientific services throughout society. Dadipoor, Ramezankhani, Aghamolaei, and Safari-Moradabadi (2019) assert that the research program necessitates a comprehensive vision that demands serious, adaptable, and pragmatic focus from university administrators, as well as, crucially, from higher authorities.

Currently, "research-based learning" and its diverse manifestations of components are a significant and appealing area of focus in higher education. The convergence of research and education is achievable with the integration of research into higher education, particularly within the educational domain (Ramsden, Prosser, Trigwell, & Martin, 2007). While it is not feasible to develop individuals directly, we must create an atmosphere that fosters their growth and enhances their creative abilities in the field of production science. In recent years, expert-driven research, such as vertical development, has faced significant scrutiny, emphasizing the importance of the local community's involvement in research (Kamali, 2018).

Students perceive research components to be highly important for the successful attainment or completion of their degree (Jan & Jabeen, 2021). Attitude towards research, anxiety towards research, and research self-efficacy are three considered crucial elements for determining success or failure in research. Analysis of the literature reveals that attitude towards research is one of the three primary elements that significantly influence research success. The essence of this study was the difficulties encountered by M.Phil students in south Punjab while conducting their Master of Philosophy research (Waas, Verbruggen, & Wright, 2010).

Dadipoor, Ramezankhani, Aghamolaei, and Safari-Moradabadi (2019) assert that the research program necessitates a comprehensive vision that demands serious, adaptable, and pragmatic focus from university administrators, as well as, crucially, from higher authorities. Numerous individuals believe that colleges serve as the nucleus of intellectual discourse and reflection on the challenges confronting modern society. In the past fifteen years, a significant strength of higher education has been its expansion across all disciplines. Higher education is now critical because it provides a significant source of knowledge generation (Farzaneh, Amani, Taleghani, Fathi, Kahn mouei-aghdam, & Fatthzadeh-Ardalani, 2017).

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study used the primary data that was collected from M.Phil programs at Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Women University Multan, NCBA&E Multan, Institute of Southern Punjab Multan, and Times Institute Multan. The study included 120 students from BZU, 101 from WUM, 66 from NCBA&E Multan, 70 from the Institute of Southern Punjab Multan, and 23 from Times Institute Multan by using stratified sampling techniques. Below, we display the breakdown of the factors based on statements and reliability elements.

Table 1: Reliability of Research tool (factor wise)

Factors	Items	Cronbach Alpha
General Perception about Research Work	8	0.817
Attitude about Research Work	11	0.858
ChallengestowardsResearch	21	0.799

Table 2: Reliability of Research tool (overall)

Tool	No. of Items	Chronbach's Alpha
Questionnaire for Students	40	0.901

The table above displays the reliability statistics of research instruments. It was assessed that the reliability of the study tools, specifically the questionnaire, using Cronbach's alpha. It was found the reliability coefficient for the questionnaire to be 0.901.

The analysis of the data divided in three sections. The first section focuses on analyzing the demographic information of the selected respondents. The second section presented a descriptive statistical analysis of M.Phil students' attitudes and challenges toward research work in South Punjab. The third and final section deals with the analysis of differences in participants' views based on different demographic variables, i.e., sector, gender, universities.

Analysis of Respondents' Demographic Information

This section presents the analysis of the demographic information of the study respondents. The demographics included location, gender. The analysis of demographic information was done using descriptive statistical techniques, i.e., frequency and percentage, and the results are presented in table.

Table 3: Demographic Information of Sample Respondents (N = 312)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University Sector	Public	173	55.4
	Private	139	44.6
	Total	312	100.0
Gender	Male	127	40.7
	Female	185	59.3
	Total	312	100.0
University	Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan	92	29.5
	The Women University Multan	81	26.0
	NCBA&E Multan	58	18.6
	Institute of Southern Punjab Multan	60	19.2
	Times Institute Multan	21	6.7
	Total	312	100.0

Descriptive Analysis of the attitudes of students toward research in universities

Each statement of the questionnaire response was analyzed during descriptive statistics (i.e., percentages, means, and standard deviations).

Objective No.1: To determine the attitudes of students toward research in universities located in Southern Punjab.

Table 4: M.Phil Students' General Perception Regarding Research (N = 312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
1	I find the content of my M.Phil course to be intellectually stimulating.	24 7.7%	251 80.4%	27 8.7%	10 3.2%	0 0.0%	3.96	.441
2	I believe the skills and knowledge gained from my coursework will help.	74 24.6%	206 66.0%	20 6.4%	12 3.8%	0 0.0%	4.12	.451
3	I find support from my teachers and mentors in my research journey.	85 27.2%	186 59.6%	18 5.8%	16 5.1%	7 2.2%	4.24	.623
4	I am satisfied with the facilities provided for research activities.	35 11.2%	219 70.2%	34 10.9%	19 6.1%	5 1.6%	3.83	.764
5	M.Phil coursework has improved my critical thinking and analytical skills.	78 25.0%	197 63.1%	25 8.0 %	9 2.9%	3 1.0%	4.12	.795
6	I feel highly motivated to engage in research and academic discussions.	73 23.4%	187 59.9%	35 11.2%	16 5.1%	1 0.3%	3.98	.730
7	My teachers encouraged me to work harder for M.Phil academically.	77 24.7%	185 59.3%	30 9.6%	15 4.8%	5 1.6%	3.95	.802
8	I am confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully through research.	67 21.5%	211 67.6%	24 7.7%	7 2.2%	3 1.0%	4.06	.706
Total							4.03	0.689

Table 4 shows a mean statement value of 4.24–3.83. M.Phil students have general research views. The highest mean value of statement No. 3 was 4.24, suggesting that teachers and mentors support my research (SD =.623). 57.1% of M.Phil students said their coursework improved their critical thinking and analysis (M = 4.12 and SD =.795). 66% of students said their M.Phil coursework will help them with future research (M = 4.12 and SD =.651). 67.6% of students believe they can make a relevant research contribution (M = 4.06 and SD =.706). Student motivation to participate in academic discussions and research debates was 68.3% (M = 3.98 and SD =.730). 80.4% of M.Phil students found their course content intellectually engaging for research (M = 3.96 and SD =.441). 59.6% of M.Phil students found their research tough (M = 3.95 and SD =.802). 59.6% of M. Phil students were satisfied with their research resources and facilities (M = 3.83 and SD =.764). These statistics indicate that pupils want to research.

Table 5: Perceptions of M. Phil Students' Attitude Regarding Research Work (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
9	I think that research work is positive activity.	116 37.2%	167 53.5%	15 4.8%	10 3.2%		4.22	.786
10	Teachers can find solutions to educational issues and problems through research.	96 30.8%	187 59.9%	14 4.5%	15 4.8%	--	4.17	.720
11	MPhil researchers can expand the existing body of knowledge in various fields.	83 26.6%	185 59.3%	20 6.4%	19 6.1%	5 1.6%	4.03	.848
12	Research work is the main source of innovation.	106 34.0 %	172 55.1%	30 9.6%	4 1.3%	--	4.21	.715
13	The main source of motivation and keeps me energetic.	86 27.6%	187 59.9%	30 9.6%	4 1.3%	--	4.09	.790
14	Research work expands critical thinking and analytical skills among students.	116 37.2%	177 56.7%	14 4.5%	5 1.6%	--	4.29	.629
15	Research work motivates students to actively	83	204	20	5	--	4.17	.605

	engage in academic discussions.	26.6%	65.4%	6.4%	1.6%			
16	I believe that students must opt for research work instead of course work at the M.Phil./MS level.	93	167	34	4	14	4.03	.930
		29.8%	53.5%	10.9%	1.3%	4.5%		
17	I perceive my M.Phil program research as academically challenging.	34	209	30	24	15	3.71	.931
		10.9%	67.0%	9.6%	7.7%	4.8%		
18	I am confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully through my M. Phil research.	73	225	14	--	--	4.19	.494
		23.4%	72.1%	4.5%				
19	Overall, I am satisfied with my M.Phil experience in research.	77	216	15	4	--	4.17	.563
		24.7%	69.2%	4.8%	1.3%			
Total							4.12	0.728

Table 5 shows a mean statement value of 4.29–3.71. It shows how M.Phil students view research. Statement No. 14 had the highest mean value of 4.29, showing that research improves students' critical thinking and analysis (SD =.629). According to M = 4.22 and SD =.786, 53.5% of students concurred that conducting research is a worthwhile endeavour. 55.1% of students said research drives innovation (M = 4.21 and SD =.715). 72.1% of M.Phil students were confident in their abilities to contribute meaningfully (M = 4.19 and SD =.494). M = 4.17 and SD =.563), 69.2% of students were happy with their M.Phil research experience. 65.4% of students said research stimulates them to participate in academic conversations (M = 4.17 and SD =.605). 59.9% of students thought instructors could utilise research to solve educational concerns (M = 4.17 and SD =.720). 59.9% of students said research motivates and energises them (M = 4.09 and SD =.790). 53.5% of M.Phil./MS students thought they should do research instead of courses (M = 4.03 and SD =.930). 67% of students stated that they view my M.Phil programme research as intellectually rigors (M = 3.71 and SD =.931), and 59.3% of students said that MPhil researchers may add to the body of knowledge already existing in many domains (M = 4.03 and SD =.848). These statistics indicate high student research intentions.

Objective No.2: To examine the challenges faced by M.Phil students' regarding dissertations at universities in Southern Punjab.

Table 6: M.Phil Students' perception regarding Academic and Institutional Support (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
20	My institution offers adequate workshops and training on research methodologies.	69	200	28	15	--	4.04	.709
		22.1%	64.1%	9.0%	4.8%			
21	There is a lack of a supportive research community within my institution.	25	124	48	110	5	3.17	1.052
		8.0%	39.7%	15.4%	35.3%	1.6%		
22	My institution encourages and facilitates collaboration with peers.	69	195	23	20	5	3.97	.835
		22.1%	62.5%	7.4%	6.4%	1.6%		
23	I face significant hurdles in getting approval for research activities from my institute.	34	143	37	88	10	3.33	1.10
		10.9%	45.8%	11.9%	28.2%	3.2%		
24	Access to relevant research materials, both in hard and soft copy, is made by my institute.	24	184	56	43	5	3.57	.879
		7.7%	59.0%	17.9 %	13.8%	1.6%		
Total							3.62	0.91

Table 6 shows a mean statement value of 4.04–3.17. It shows how M.Phil students view academic and institutional research support. Statement 20 had the highest mean value of 4.04, suggesting that their school offers adequate research methodology seminars and training (SD =.709). 62.5% of students said their school promotes peer collaboration (M = 3.97 and SD =.835). 59% of students indicated that their institute provided hard and soft copy research materials (M = 3.57 and SD =.879). 45.8% of students reported substantial difficulties gaining institute approval for research (M = 3.33 and SD = 1.10). 39.7% of students said their college lacks a supportive research community (M = 3.17 and SD = 1.052). These findings imply that students are interested in research but have academic and institutional support.

Table 7: M.Phil Students' perception regarding Resource Accessibility (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
25	I have sufficient access to academic journals and databases for my research.	28 9.0%	217 69.6%	34 10.9%	23 7.4%	10 3.2%	3.74	.846
26	Finding the necessary research materials and facilities is a challenge for me.	63 20.2%	200 64.1%	19 6.1%	25 8.0%	5 1.6%	3.93	.851
27	I frequently struggle to access the digital research tools or software required for my research.	53 17.0%	174 55.8%	42 13.5%	43 13.8%	--	3.76	.894
28	Research faces a significant challenge in accessing and utilization computer software.	53 17.0%	171 54.8%	43 13.8%	45 14.4%	--	3.74	.906
Total							3.81	0.884

Table 7 indicates that the mean value of statements was between 3.93 and 3.74. It demonstrates the M.Phil students' perception regarding resource accessibility for research work. Statement No. 26 had the highest mean value of 3.93, indicating that finding the necessary research materials and facilities is a challenge for me (SD =.851). 55.8% of students agreed that they frequently struggle to access the digital research tools or software required for my research (M = 3.76 and SD =.894). 54.8% of students agreed that researchers face a significant challenge in accessing and utilizing computer software (M = 3.74, SD =.906). For my research, 69.6% of students agreed that they had sufficient access to academic journals and databases (M = 3.74 and SD =.846). These results suggest that although students are interested in research, they still have more resource accessibility to conduct research

Table 8: M.Phil Students' perception regarding Supervisory Support (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
29	I receive adequate guidance and support from my research supervisor.	78 25.0%	195 62.5%	34 10.9%	--	5 1.6%	4.09	.704
30	My supervisor is readily available for consultations and feedback.	78 25.0%	179 57.4%	50 16.0%	--	5 1.6 %	4.04	.745
31	The feedback from my supervisor is clear and helps me in my research.	84 26.9%	185 59.3%	38 12.2%	5 1.6%	--	4.12	.666
Total							4.08	0.705

Table 8 indicates that the mean value of statements was between 4.12 and 4.04. It demonstrates the M.Phil students' perception regarding supervisory support for research work. Statement No. 31 had the highest mean value of 4.12, indicating that their supervisor's feedback is clear and helpful in their research (SD =.666). 62.5% of students agreed that they receive adequate guidance and support from their research supervisor (M = 4.09 and SD =.704). 57.4% of students agreed that a supervisor is readily available for consultations and feedback (M = 4.04 and SD =.745). These results suggest that although students are interested in research, they still have more supervisory support to conduct research.

Table 9: M.Phil Students' perception regarding Time Management and Financial Constraints (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
32	Balancing research with other academic responsibilities is challenging.	39 12.5%	221 70.8%	38 12.2%	14 4.5%		3.91	.648
33	I have enough time to dedicate to my research activities.	33 10.6%	181 58.0%	53 17.0%	45 14.4%		3.65	.855
34	The cost of accessing necessary resources significantly hinders my research.	20 6.4%	204 65.4%	55 17.6%	33 10.6%		3.68	.749
35	I have sufficient financial support (scholarships, grants, etc.) for my research needs.	30 9.6%	144 46.2%	48 15.4%	66 21.2%	24 7.7%	3.29	1.134
Total							3.63	0.847

Table 9 indicates that the mean value of statements was between 3.91 and 3.29. It demonstrates the M.Phil students' perception regarding time management and financial constraints for research work. Statement No. 32 had the highest mean value of 3.91, indicating that balancing research with other academic responsibilities is challenging (SD =.648). 65.4% of students agreed that the cost of accessing the necessary resources significantly hinders their research (M = 3.68 and SD =.749). 58% of students agreed that they have enough time to dedicate to their research activities (M = 3.65 and SD =.855). 46.2% of students agreed that they have sufficient financial support (scholarships, grants, etc.) for my research needs (M = 3.29 and SD = 1.134). These results suggest that although students are interested in research, they still have some regarding time management and financial constraints for research work.

Table 10: M.Phil Students' perception regarding Psychological Aspects and Ethical Practices (N=312)

Items	Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Mean	SD
36	I feel stressed by the pressure to complete high quality research.	44 14.1%	193 61.9%	38 12.2%	37 11.9%	--	3.78	.832
37	Stress and pressure to accomplish research work are hurdles to completing research.	29 9.3%	215 68.9%	24 7.7%	44 14.1%	--	3.73	.816
38	My institute ensures to follow the research ethics.	53 17.0%	210 67.3%	34 10.9%	5 1.6%	10 3.2%	3.93	.793
39	Plagiarism is an important issue for researchers.	81 26.0%	180 57.7%	13 4.2%	29 9.3%	2.9%	3.73	.816
40	Researchers face another challenge in determining the reliability of available	57 18.3%	212 67.9%	19 6.1%	20 6.4%	1.3%	3.95	.832

online resources.

Total	3.19	0.682
--------------	------	-------

Table 10 indicates that the mean value of statements was between 3.95 and 3.73. It demonstrates the M.Phil students' perception regarding psychological aspects and ethical practices for research work. Statement No. 40 had the highest mean value of 3.95, indicating that researchers face another challenge in determining the reliability of available online resources (SD =.832). 67.3% of students agreed that their institute ensures adherence to research ethics (M = 3.93 and SD =.793). 61.9% of students agreed that they feel stressed by the pressure to complete high-quality research (M = 3.78 and SD =.838). 57.7% of students agreed that plagiarism is an important issue for researchers (M = 3.73 and SD =.816). 68.9% of students agreed that stress and pressure to accomplish research work are hurdles to completing research (M = 3.73 and SD =.816). These findings indicate that while students have a research interest, they nevertheless exhibit certain psychological aspects and ethical practices related to it.

Inferential analysis of the students' attitudes and challenges towards research work

The following section provides an inferential analysis of the perceptions held by students. Sector, gender, and universities were considered during the comparison.

Objective No.3: to compare the students' attitudes and challenges towards research work by sector, gender, and universities in Southern Punjab

Table 11: A comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes towards research work across different sectors

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
General Perception	Public	173	32.67	3.33	310	2.183	.030
About Research	Private	139	31.76	4.07			
Attitude about Research	Public Private	173	45.86	4.84	310	2.168	.031
		139	44.58	5.63			

Table 11 demonstrates the comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes towards research work across different sectors. The public sector student was 173, M = 32.67, and SD = 3.33. The private sector student was 139, with M=31.76 and SD=4.07, df=310, and t-ratio =2.183. Both public and private students' signature values were.030, indicating that there was a significant difference in general perception about research with respect to sector. The public sector student was 173, M = 45.86, and SD = 4.84. The private sector student was 139, with M=44.58 and SD=5.63, df=310, and t-ratio =2.168. Both public and private students' signature values were.031, indicating that there was a significant difference in the attitude of students' about research with respect to sector.

Table 12 demonstrates the challenges that M.Phil students face in research work across various sectors. The public sector student was 173, M = 18.16, and SD = 2.30. The private sector student was 139, with M=17.99 and SD=2.76, df=310, and t-ratio =.570. Both public and private students' signature values were.569, indicating that there was no significant difference in academic and institutional support for research with respect to sector. Similarly, the private sector student was 139, with M=15.03 and SD=2.89, df=310, and t-ratio =.848. Both public and private students' signature values were.397, indicating that there was no significant difference in resource accessibility for research with respect to sector.

Table 12: A comparison of the challenges faced by M.Phil students in research work across different sectors

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Academic and Institutional Support	Public	173	18.16	2.30	310	.570	.569
	Private	139	17.99	2.76			
Resource Accessibility	Public	173	15.29	2.53	310	.848	.397
	Private	139	15.03	2.89			
Supervisory Support	Public	173	12.29	1.72	310	.464	.643
	Private	139	12.19	2.11			
Time Management and Financial Constraints	Public	173	14.64	2.21	310	.984	.326
	Private	139	14.38	2.45			
Psychological Aspects and Ethical Practices	Public	173	19.62	2.35	310	2.169	.031
	Private	139	19.01	2.56			

Moreover, the public sector student was 173, $M = 12.29$, and $SD = 1.72$. The private sector student was 139, with $M=12.19$ and $SD=2.11$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .464$. Both public and private students' signature values were .643, indicating that there was no significant difference in supervisory support for research with respect to sector. Similarly, the public sector student was 173, $M = 12.29$, and $SD = 1.72$. The private sector student was 139, with $M=12.19$ and $SD=2.11$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .464$. Both public and private students' signature values were .643, indicating that there was no significant difference in supervisory support for research with respect to sector.

Furthermore, the public sector student was 173, $M = 14.64$, and $SD = 2.21$. The private sector student was 139, with $M=14.38$ and $SD=2.45$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .984$. Both public and private students' signature values were .326, indicating that there was no significant difference in time management and financial constraints for research with respect to sector.

Moreover, the public sector student was 173, $M = 19.62$, and $SD = 2.35$. The private sector student was 139, with $M=19.01$ and $SD=2.56$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = 2.169$. Both public and private students' signature values were .031, indicating that there was a significant difference in psychological aspects and ethical practices for research with respect to sector.

Table 13: A comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes towards research work with respect to gender

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Perception about Research	Male	127	32.36	3.55	310	.392	.695
	Female	185	32.19	3.81			
Attitude about Research	Male	127	45.64	5.32	310	.976	.330
	Female	185	45.05	5.18			

Table 13 shows a comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes toward research work with respect to gender. The male student was 127, $M = 32.36$, and $SD = 3.55$. The female student was 185, with $M=32.19$ and $SD=3.81$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .392$. Both male and female students' signature values were .695, indicating that there was no significant difference in general perception about research with respect to gender.

Furthermore, the male student was 127, $M = 45.64$, and $SD = 5.32$. The female student was 185, with $M=45.05$ and $SD=5.18$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .976$. Both male and female students' signature values were .330, indicating that there was no significant difference in attitude of students' about research with respect to gender.

Table 14: A comparison of the challenges faced by M.Phil students in research work with respect to gender

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Academic and Institutional Support	Male	127	18.16	2.30	310	.431	.666
	Female	185					
Resource Accessibility	Male	127	15.03	3.01	310	-.769	.443
	Female	185	15.27	2.46			
Supervisory Support	Male	127	12.58	1.79	310	2.588	.010
	Female	185	12.02	1.94			
Time Management and Financial Constraints	Male	127	14.65	2.57	310	.806	.421
	Female	185	14.44	2.13			
Psychological Aspects and Ethical Practices	Male	127	19.20	2.42	310	-.907	.365
	Female	185	19.45	2.49			

Table 14 demonstrates the challenges that M.Phil students face in research work across various sectors. The male student was 127, $M = 18.16$, and $SD = 2.30$. The female student was 185, with $M=18.03$ and $SD=2.65$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .431$. Both male and female students' signature values were .666, indicating that there was no significant difference in academic and institutional support for research with respect to gender. Similarly, the male student was 127, $M = 15.03$, and $SD = 3.01$. The female student was 185, with $M=15.27$ and $SD=2.46$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = -.769$. Both male and female students' signature values were .443, indicating that there was no significant difference in resource accessibility for research with respect to gender.

Moreover, the male student was 127, $M = 12.58$, and $SD = 1.79$. The female student was 185, with $M=12.02$ and $SD=1.94$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = 2.588$. Both male and female students' signature values were .010, indicating that there was a significant difference in supervisory support for research with respect to gender. Furthermore, the male student was 127, $M = 14.65$, and $SD = 2.57$. The female student was 185, with $M=14.44$ and $SD=2.13$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = .806$. Both male and female students' signature values were .421, indicating that there was no significant difference in time management and financial constraints for research with respect to gender. Moreover, the male student was 127, $M = 19.20$, and $SD = 2.42$. The female student was 185, with $M=19.45$ and $SD=2.49$, $df=310$, and $t\text{-ratio} = -.907$. Both male and female students' signature values were .365, indicating that there was a significant difference in psychological aspects and ethical practices for research with respect to gender.

Table 15: A comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes towards research work with respect to universities

Factor		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attitude about Research	Between Groups	66.360	4	16.590	.602	.662
	Within Groups Total	8465.678	307	27.575		
		8532.038	311			
General Perception about Research	Between Groups	115.820	4	28.955	2.143	.075
	Within Groups Total	4148.629	307	13.513		
		4264.449	311			

Table 15 indicated a comparison of M.Phil students' attitudes toward research work with respect to universities. The sum of squares between groups was 115.820, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 28.955. Within groups, the sum of squares was 4148.629, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding

13.513. The estimated F value was 2.143, and the estimated sig value was.075. This result depicted that no statistically significant differences were found between the general perceptions about research with respect to universities.

Furthermore, the sum of squares between groups was 66.360, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 16.590. Within groups, the sum of squares was 8465.678, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 27.575. The estimated F value was .602, and the estimated sig value was.662. This result depicted that no statistically significant differences were found between the attitudes of students' about research with respect to universities.

Table 16: A comparison of the challenges faced by M.Phil students in research work with respect to universities

Factor		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Academic and Institutional Support	Between Groups	31.448	4	7.862	1.250	.290
	Within Groups	1930.386	307	6.288		
	Total	1961.833	311			
Resource Accessibility	Between Groups	83.029	4	20.757	2.932	.021
	Within Groups	2173.625	307	7.080		
	Total	2256.654	311			
Time Management and Financial Constraints	Between Groups	32.290	4	8.073	1.508	.200
	Within Groups	1643.505	307	5.353		
	Total	1675.795	311			
Psychological Aspects and Ethical Practices	Between Groups	76.998	4	19.250	3.276	.012
	Within Groups	1803.922	307	5.876		
	Total	1880.920	311			
Supervisory Support	Between Groups	13.396	4	3.349	.929	.448
	Within Groups	1107.104	307	3.606		
	Total	1120.500	311			

Table 16 indicated a comparison of challenges that M.Phil students face in research work with respect to universities. The sum of squares between groups was 31.448, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 7.862. Within groups, the sum of squares was 1930.386, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 6.288. The estimated F value was 1.250, and the estimated sig value was.290. This result depicted that no statistically significant differences were found between academic and institutional support with respect to universities.

Furthermore, the sum of squares between groups was 83.029, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 20.757. Within groups, the sum of squares was 2173.625, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 7.080. The estimated F value was 2.932, and the estimated sig value was.021. This result depicted that statistically significant differences were found between the resource accessibility about research with respect to universities.

Similarly, for supervisory support the sum of squares between groups was 13.396, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 3.349. Within groups, the sum of squares was 1107.104, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 3.606. The estimated F value was .929, and the estimated sig value was .448. This result depicted that statistically no significant differences were found between the supervisory supports about research with respect to universities.

Furthermore, for time management and financial constraints, the sum of squares between groups was 32.290, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 8.073. Within groups, the sum of squares was 1643.505, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 5.353. The estimated F value was 1.508, and the estimated sig value was .200. This result depicted that statistically no significant differences were found between the time management and financial constraints about research with respect to universities.

Furthermore, for psychological aspects and ethical practices, the sum of squares between groups was 76.998, $df = 4$, and the mean square was calculated by dividing the sum of squares with df , which was 19.250. Within groups, the sum of squares was 1803.922, $df = 307$, and we calculated the mean square by dividing the sum of squares with df , yielding 5.876. The estimated F value was 3.276, and the estimated sig value was .012. This result depicted that statistically significant differences were found between the psychological aspects and ethical practices about research with respect to universities.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been drawn from this study. According to the findings of the study, it was concluded that the perspectives of M.Phil students regarding the attitudes and obstacles associated with research activity did not significantly differ based on the university sector, gender, or university that they attended. On the other hand, they did not demonstrate any substantial changes in their judgments of the difficulties, attitudes, or difficulties associated with the Master of Philosophy degree based on the kind of university they attended. The findings concluded that the institution does not significantly influence the students' perceptions of research work.

Considering the results and recommendations, the study suggested that:

1. Universities and DAIs should organize various research workshops, conferences, and seminars in higher education institution to enhance students' attitudes toward conducting research and acquire the skills to overcome challenges.
2. Students should be provided opportunities to engage in small-scale research projects in order to cultivate their expertise.
3. Further investment planning and execution are recommended to enhance students' understanding and engagement in research. Effective research facilitation should be provided researchers to focus more on their studies

REFERENCES

- Alduraibi, K. M., Aldosari, M., Alharbi, A. D., Alkhudairy, A. I., Almutairi, M. N., Alanazi, N. S., & Almosa, M. S. (2024). Challenges and Barriers to Medical Research Among Medical Students in Saudi Arabia. *Cureus*, 16(5).
- Anbari, Z., & Jadidi, R. A. (2013). Comparing of barriers to research activities among students of Arak University of Medical Sciences, and appropriate strategies for student research management. *Iranian Journal of Medical*

- Ashrafi-Rizi, H., Zarmehr, F., Bahrami, S., Ghazavi-Khorasgani, Z., Kazempour, Z., & Shahrzadi, L. (2014). Study on research anxiety among faculty members of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. *Materia socio-medica*, 26(6), 356.
- Bocar, A. C. (2009). Difficulties encountered by the student–researchers and the effects on their research output. *Available at SSRN 1612050*.
- Chong, Z. X. (2015). Elective Undergraduate Medical Research: A Medical Student Experience. *International Journal of Medical Students*, 3(2), 115-116.
- Dadipoor, S., Ramezankhani, A., Aghamolaei, T., & Safari-Moradabadi, A. (2019). Barriers to research activities as perceived by medical university students: A cross-sectional study. *Avicenna journal of medicine*, 9(01), 8-14.
- Education*, 13(5), 435-448.
- Farzaneh, E., Amani, F., Taleghani, Y. M., Fathi, A., Kahnamouei-aghdam, F., & Fatthzadeh-Ardalani, G. (2017). Research barriers from the viewpoint of faculty members and students of Ardabil University of Medical Sciences, Iran, 2014. *Int J Res Med Sci*, 4(6), 1926-32.
- Jan, S., & Jabeen, Z. (2021). AN INVESTIGATION INTO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND ANXIETY TOWARDS RESEARCH AND THEIR RESEARCH SELF-EFFICACY AT A LOCAL UNIVERSITY IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN, PAKISTAN. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 3(4), 491-502.
- Kamali, M. B. (2018). Participatory research: approaches, experiences and suggestions. *Village and Development*, 9(4), 217-248.
- Komba, S. C. (2016). Challenges of writing theses and dissertations among postgraduate students in Tanzanian higher learning institutions.
- Leydesdorff, L. (2010). Knowledge-based innovation systems and the model of a triple helix of university-industry-government relations. *arXiv preprint arXiv:1001.1308*.
- Ramsden, P., Prosser, M., Trigwell, K., & Martin, E. (2007). University teachers' experiences of academic leadership and their approaches to teaching. *Learning and instruction*, 17(2), 140-155.
- Safari, Y., Navazeshkhah, F., Azizi, M., Ziaei, M., & Sharafi, K. (2015). The effective factors on the postgraduate students' interest and participation in performing research activities-case study: Kermanshah University of Medical Science. *Future of Medical Education Journal*, 5(2), 3-9.
- Waas, T., Verbruggen, A., & Wright, T. (2010). University research for sustainable development: definition and characteristics explored. *Journal of cleaner production*, 18(7), 629-636.
- Yousefi, A., Bazrafkan, L., & Yamani, N. (2015). A qualitative inquiry into the challenges and complexities of research supervision: viewpoints of postgraduate students and faculty members. *Journal of advances in medical education & professionalism*, 3(3), 91.