

Identifying the Influential Factors on Students' Research Attitude at Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani University

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the factors that influence students' research attitude. The dependent variable is the students' research attitude. Independent variables include individual factors, organizational factors, and teacher-related factors. The statistical population consists of all 215 fourth-year students of the Faculty of Education at Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani University in 2024. According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, 132 students were selected for the statistical sample using simple random sampling with no imposed conditions. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS at both descriptive and inferential levels. The results show that individual, organizational, and teacher-related factors significantly affect research attitude. Regression analysis revealed that individual factors had the strongest influence, with an impact level of 91.8%.

Keywords: Research, Students, Organization, Motivation

Introduction

One of the main objectives of educational institutions in the developed world is to guide students in exploring relationships among phenomena, events, and realities, and to develop the ability to discern cause and effect. Achieving such objectives is a great educational accomplishment and cannot be realized without research. A lack of motivation for academic and research activities often stems from the absence of a research-oriented mindset, which is considered a key human need. The hope for progress in a society is realized when intellectual capacity develops and people take an interest in investigation and inquiry. A research mindset is closely linked to individual motivation. Every activity begins with motivation and is directed by it. Several factors including material and moral incentives, rewards, organizational support, personal will and experience, research resources,

and timely feedback from guiding instructors can play a crucial role in strengthening research spirit. This research was conducted to identify the factors that influence the research attitude of students at Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani University. The study identifies three main categories of influencing factors: individual, organizational, and teacher-related. The findings of this research can be beneficial in the fields of research and education.

Research Problem

Today, the training of innovative, creative, and research-oriented human capital is among the top goals and aspirations of any nation. Research plays a crucial role in achieving this aim by identifying solutions to societal problems and expanding knowledge. One of the most important aspects in the field of research is the researcher's belief and perspective. These perspectives significantly affect whether or not research activities are undertaken.

Currently, students view research work as a burden and find it exhausting. Tasks performed with low motivation and weak research mindset are generally of poor quality. To address this problem, the researchers considered it essential to explore the factors that strengthen students' research attitude and to identify the most influential among them.

Significance and Necessity of the Study

The importance of the topic is reflected in the Holy Qur'an in Surah Al-Hujurat (verse 6), where the word "fatabayyanu" highlights the need for careful examination and inquiry. In Islam, one of the educational objectives is to strengthen the spirit of research, study, innovation, and creativity in all scientific, cultural, and technical domains. Researchers and experts believe that one of the goals of education is to train a creative, innovative, and research-minded generation. Today, research spirit is defined as the inclination to access information and develop critical thinking abilities. In Afghanistan, research and academic activities are generally underdeveloped in both quality and quantity. Compared to neighboring countries, students spend significantly less time on research and study. The reasons may include lack of research resources, absence of well-equipped libraries, limited emphasis on research by instructors, lack of internet access, economic issues, and more. However, individual factors also play an important role. It is possible that students lack strong internal motivation and understanding of the value and importance of research. Without internal drive, external factors have limited impact on behavior. If students do not possess a strong research

spirit, their academic work will lack quality. Therefore, identifying the factors that strengthen research spirit is necessary.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors influencing students' research attitude?
2. What is the level of influence of the influential factors on students' research attitudes?

Research Objectives

1. To identify the factors that influence students' research attitude.
2. To determine the extent of influence of the influential factors on students' research attitudes.

Background of the Research

The Association of American Universities has identified four reasons for conducting research activities: 1) research leads to the expansion of knowledge, 2) research serves as an essential and effective tool in teaching, 3) research contributes to the growth of information repositories in specialized fields, and 4) research is considered necessary for personal discipline, order, and self-awareness (Arji et al., 2019). Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasizes the use of active methods in education and adds that learners should be prepared to observe and reflect on the transformations in nature, thereby awakening their curiosity and investigative spirit. Issues should be placed within their control. Knowledge should not merely be taught—it should be discovered (Aamir, 2022).

Hamid Izadi and colleagues (2021) state in their study that various factors contribute to the weakness in conducting research. Among the most critical are access to an advisor and the advisor's mastery over the research topic. They further note that the experience of failure can create a sense of weakness in the individual, whereas positive motivation can enhance research spirit.

In the realm of research, experience, a supportive research environment, academic motivation, the relationship between instructor and student, verbal encouragement, and physiological motivation are considered influential factors on the research attitude (Izadi et al., 2021). Majid Arji and colleagues (2019) write that the researcher's personality, the educational

environment, and self-confidence are factors that influence research activities. The findings of the study by Mehrai et al., (2017) show that in universities, factors related to institutional support—including support from the university, family, and society—affect students' research attitude. Academic major, interest in the field of study, the nature of the relationship between students and instructors, and the opinions of peers and others regarding the student's field of study are also influential factors on research attitude (Ghasemi & Jarollahi, 2014). Organizational climate, the scientific and ideal nature of research, scientific authority, and innovation are considered to be influential as well (Mehrai et al., 2023). Faeli et al., (2006) showed that the availability of research facilities, the financial status of the researcher, and the scientific competence of advisors significantly influence students' participation in academic activities. Factors related to faculty members, institutional characteristics, and student traits all play a role in shaping research attitude (Mansouri & Ebrahimi Darcheh). Generally, to increase motivation, there needs to be serious and scholarly evaluation of performance, provision of feedback in various ways, creation of equal growth opportunities, and competent leadership (Hazavehei & Samadi, 2005). Self-confidence and hope for the future greatly impact students' academic drive (Rabiei & Sedighi, 2014).

Teachers' behavior can either stimulate or suppress motivation among students. A teacher's primary responsibility is to clearly and precisely define general objectives. Moreover, their initial presence in the classroom is considered highly effective. Creating appropriate and healthy competition among students can generate motivation, while extreme or inappropriate competition can lead to resentment, hatred, and reduced interest in social engagement (Badri, 2002). John Dewey (1896–1952) believed that learning occurs through experiences acquired by the learners themselves. He advocated for experiential learning over learning through books or teachers. Dewey argued that research is an exact and active process that leads to precise outcomes (Aamir, 2022)

Theoretical Foundations of the Research

Studies and research in psychology and human development show that individuals use only a small portion of their innate abilities. Scholars believe this is primarily due to differences in individuals' natural capabilities and environmental conditions. Creating motivation in people is a complex task, as every person is unique. These differences stem from their interests, beliefs, needs, goals, and learning (Ghanji, 2013). Among the factors that influence the development of a research spirit, one key factor is the type of motivation a person has regarding conducting research and achieving goals. Having positive motivation strengthens the research spirit (Izadi et al., 2021). There are various theories related to motivation, interest, and mindset, which include:

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

According to Maslow, every person has five types of needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. Based on this theory, when we want to motivate someone, we first need to understand which level of need the individual is at, so that their needs can be identified and efforts made to satisfy them (Robbins, 1943).

Reinforcement Theory

This theory posits that any behavior accompanied by a good response or positive reinforcement is more likely to be repeated. Behavior, therefore, depends on the outcomes it generates and the reinforcements it receives (Robbins, 1943). This theory follows a behaviorist approach, asserting that reinforcement conditions behavior and that behavior is shaped by the environment (Badri, 2002; Hazavehei & Samadi, 2005).

Research Methodology:

This study is descriptive in terms of purpose, quantitative in nature, survey-based in terms of data collection method, applied in terms of the use of results, and non-case-based in terms of the unit of analysis. The theme of the study is to identify the influential factors affecting students' research attitude. In this study, the dependent variable is students research attitude, while the independent variables include individual factors, organizational factors, and teacher-related factors.

Population: The target population includes all 215 fourth-year students of the faculty of education at Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani University in 2024.

Sample: According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, 132 students were selected from the 215-student population using simple random sampling.

Data Collection Tool:

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used to collect data. Initially, operational definitions were provided for each variable to clarify their dimensions. Subsequently, each dimension was transformed into a set of questions formatted using a five-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from "very low" to "very high."

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire: A questionnaire is considered standardized when it possesses both validity and reliability. To determine the validity (i.e., the extent to which the questionnaire measures the intended variables), the instrument was reviewed and approved by

university professors and subject matter experts. To evaluate reliability (i.e., the extent to which the questionnaire yields consistent results under similar conditions), a Cronbach's alpha test was conducted. A pilot test was administered using 30 preliminary questionnaires to calculate Cronbach's alpha and eliminate weak items. The resulting coefficient was 0.87, indicating strong reliability.

Type of Data Analysis: The data collected from the field was analyzed using SPSS software at two levels i.e., descriptive and inferential. At the descriptive level, quantitative indices were calculated and analyzed for each variable. At the inferential level, regression analysis was applied to examine the relationships among the main variables of the study.

Findings:

In this study, fourth-year students of the Faculty of Education at Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani University in the academic year 2024 participated. After analysis, the research findings are briefly summarized in the following two tables.

Influential Factors on Students' Research Attitude

Three variables—individual factors, organizational factors, and teacher-related factors—were assessed as influential elements on students' research attitude. Table 1 presents the quantitative indices for these variables. The data in this table show that the mean score for individual factors is 3.80, for organizational factors 3.03, and for teacher-related factors 3.70. Based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, these values suggest that all these factors have a relatively strong role in strengthening research attitude. Except for organizational factors, the skewness values for the other two variables are negative, indicating that most respondents' answers were above the average level (mean). Additionally, the negative kurtosis values across all indices suggest a distribution with considerable variability among responses.

Table 1 shows the Answer of the RQ1, Quantitative Indices of Influential Factors on Research Attitude

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Research Attitude	Individual Factors	Organizational Factors	Teacher-Related Factors
Valid Responses	132	132	132
Missing Responses	0	0	0
Mean	3.7563	3.8030	3.0386
Variance	0.701	0.731	1.509
Skewness	-0.381	-0.316	0.124
Kurtosis	-0.454	-0.560	-1.347
Minimum Value	1.50	1.67	1.00
Maximum Value	5.00	5.00	5.00

To determine which of these factors plays the most significant role in strengthening research attitude, a multiple linear regression test was applied. The test results indicated that only the variable for individual factors was included in the regression equation, showing that individual factors play a decisive role in strengthening students' research attitude.

Table 2 shows the answer of RQ2, Regression Test Results – Effect of Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Degree of Freedom (F)	Level of Significance (Sig)
1	Regression	2.958	1	2.958	4.328
	Residual	88.842	130	0.683	
	Total	91.800	131		
a. Dependent Variable: Research Attitude					
b. Predictor: (Constant), Individual Factors					

From the contents of Table 2, it is evident that 91.8% of the variance in students' research attitude can be attributed to individual factors. Furthermore, the significance level ($Sig = 0.03$) confirms that the findings are generalizable to the broader population.

Conclusion

In the academic field, research activities are considered among the most important and necessary endeavors, the execution of which depends on individual will and motivation. However, students often do not undertake such activities with the required spirit or intensity, due to a variety of underlying factors. This study examined the influential factors contributing to the strengthening of students' research attitude. Three independent variables—individual factors, organizational factors, and teacher-related factors—were considered as potential influencers of the dependent variable, i.e., research attitude. The analytical assessment in Table 1 showed that the respondents' answers ranged between 1 and 5 on a Likert scale, and the responses tended to cluster toward the higher end of the spectrum. This indicates that all three independent variables have a relatively strong influence on enhancing research attitude.

In Table 2, the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable was examined through regression analysis based on the intensity of their influence. The data in this table revealed that the index for individual factors plays a key role in strengthening the research attitude, accounting for 91.8% of the variance. The other two variables were excluded from the final regression model due to their lower impact. Furthermore, the statistical significance level ($Sig = 0.03$) confirms that these findings are generalizable across the broader population.

In conclusion, individual, organizational, and teacher-related factors all play important roles in enhancing students' research attitude. However, among these, individual factors—such as self-confidence, research experience, foreign language proficiency, and computer skills—have the greatest impact, with an influence level of $P = 91.8\%$

Recommendations

This study examined the factors influencing students' research attitude. By the end of the research, three categories of factors—individual, organizational, and teacher-related—were identified as having a significant impact on research attitude. Therefore, three types of recommendations can be made:

To Students:

Since individual factors were found to have the greatest impact on research attitude, it is recommended that students enhance their personal skills by learning international languages and computer programs.

To Organizations:

Organizations and institutional environments play a vital role in supporting research activities. Therefore, academic institutions should create incentive programs and provide research facilities to encourage research. To implement this, each faculty and department should select and recognize an exemplary research project (monograph), and benefit from experienced professors by organizing seminars on research-related topics.

To Teachers:

The guidance of supervising professors is considered essential in research. Thus, teachers should emphasize the implementation of research projects, provide timely feedback, and be diligent in evaluating student work. A standardized evaluation format should be used for assessing research projects.

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