

## Navigating M.Phil Research Challenges in Pakistan's Educational Landscape: An Islamic Approach to Overcoming Obstacles

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### Abstract

Through an Islamic perspective, this study examines the difficulties encountered by MPhil researchers in the Sociology Department at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. The study, which focused on the academic, administrative, social, and economic challenges of 10 MPhil academics, used a purposeful selection technique and qualitative research methodology. To get insights, semi-structured interviews were carried out. Based on a thematic analysis, it was found that these researchers struggled with problems such as low financing, poor supervisor-student contact, inadequate dormitory amenities, weak research infrastructure, and limited English communication skills. Supervisors also frequently lacked training in research methodology and analysis. These difficulties were made worse by the lack of current literature in university libraries, the political dynamics among academics, and restricted access to scholarly web resources. These results are consistent with widespread worries. It is imperative to highlight the quest for knowledge as a commendable undertaking from an Islamic standpoint. The research highlights the need of cultivating an academic atmosphere that is conducive to Islamic principles, promoting cooperation, and guaranteeing that academics have access to necessary

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materials. Formalizing the application procedure for research projects, improving online resources' accessibility, obtaining recent academic papers, and setting up training sessions and seminars to help teachers and students become more proficient researchers are just a few of the recommendations. In order to enhance MPhil students' academic experiences and foster a learning environment that is in line with Islamic teachings on knowledge and education, regular advisor-advisee meetings and greater institutional assistance are also crucial.

**Keywords:** Postgraduate Education, Educational Challenges, MPhil Research, Pakistan Higher Education

### **Introduction**

The pursuit of higher education is a major factor in forming Pakistan's academic environment, especially at the MPhil level. However, a variety of obstacles, including complex ones, frequently obstruct the scholarly advancement of MPhil researchers in numerous fields, including sociology. These difficulties might include everything from a lack of institutional support to socioeconomic constraints, and they eventually have an impact on the caliber of research products. It is crucial to comprehend the obstacles faced by educational institutions in Pakistan due to their limited resources and infrastructural limitations in order to create an atmosphere that is more favorable for research. As stated by Batool and Ali (2021), resolving these problems is essential to improving postgraduate education standards and guaranteeing that students may reach their full academic potential. From an Islamic standpoint, learning is seen as a religious obligation, and scholars are urged to continue learning throughout their lives. Islamic teachings place a strong emphasis on the value of a nurturing atmosphere for learning that fosters moral and intellectual development (Khan et al., 2022). Consequently, obstacles that prevent MPhil scholars from fulfilling their religious duty should be considered in addition to administrative or logistical difficulties. It is crucial to look at how these issues fit with Islamic values and principles and to find possible solutions based on these teachings. Using a qualitative research methodology, this study attempts to explore the unique difficulties encountered by MPhil researchers in the Sociology Department at the University of the Punjab, Lahore. This study will examine academic, administrative, social, and economic factors that impact MPhil scholars' studies using semi-structured interviews with a sample of twenty scholars who were chosen with purpose. In addition to offering practical suggestions that are in line with academic standards and Islamic principles, the findings will shed light on the existing situation of MPhil education in Pakistan and eventually help to enhance the nation's educational system. The process of finishing an M.Phil research thesis is frequently difficult, and it may have a negative effect on students' academic performance as well as their mental health. It is essential to comprehend these obstacles in order to create efficient support systems and enhance the entire research environment. The purpose of this study is to investigate the many issues that M.Phil students at Pakistan's public institutions encounter when working on their research theses. A variety of hurdles faced by postgraduate students are highlighted in recent work, including problems with personal obstacles, institutional assistance, and academic advising. For example, a study conducted in 2021 by Ali et al. found that two of the biggest obstacles to completing a thesis successfully are insufficient supervision and a delay in providing feedback. In a similar vein, Khan and Ahmed (2022) talk about how administrative obstacles and few resources affect the research process.

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Moreover, there is growing recognition of the emotional and psychological cost to pupils. Research shows that MPhil students frequently experience academic stress and mental health problems, which are frequently caused by a combination of high expectations, workloads, and insufficient support networks (Tariq and Iqbal, 2023). This emphasizes how important it is to have a supportive academic atmosphere since it is essential to helping students complete their theses successfully. Certain institutional issues exacerbate these problems in the case of Pakistani public sector universities. Administrative inefficiencies and bureaucratic delays might further impede researchers' advancement, according to research by Shah and Anwar (2024). Furthermore, Rehman and Hussain (2022) have brought attention to the cultural and structural factors that also contribute to the challenges that students experience, highlighting the necessity of systemic changes and improved support mechanisms.

By delving into these topics, this study hopes to offer a thorough grasp of the challenges faced by M.Phil students while working on their research theses. Through an analysis of recent empirical data and a review of relevant literature, this study aims to further the ongoing conversation on enhancing postgraduate students' academic experiences in Pakistan. A vital component of human development, education helps mold people's attitudes and actions and equips them with the skills they need to prosper in a world that is changing quickly. It plays a crucial role in providing people with the information and abilities required to function in and make a positive contribution to a world society that is becoming more linked and complicated (Shah et al., 2020). In this sense, higher education is crucial since it not only helps people develop intellectually but also advances society by creating knowledgeable professionals and thought leaders (Abbas et al., 2022). Higher education is more important as emerging nations like Pakistan work to improve their socioeconomic standing. In order to reduce poverty and promote national development, it acts as a catalyst for scientific, technical, and industrial innovation (Ahmad, 2019).

Institutions of higher learning play a critical role in promoting innovation and tackling modern issues. These organizations are essential to the progression of scientific understanding, technical development, and industrial expansion—all of which are critical to a country's socioeconomic progress (Ahmad, 2019). Higher education has become much more important in Pakistan, with an emphasis on raising academic standards and developing research capacities. But even with these improvements, there are still a lot of obstacles that M.Phil candidates must overcome when conducting research, especially in public universities. Postgraduate students frequently face complicated and challenging research experiences that go beyond the purview of academic instruction and supervision. Zia et al. (2021) assert that strong institutional support is necessary for doing productive research, including funding, research infrastructure, and availability of vital academic resources like libraries, computers, and research seminars. These resources are insufficient at many public sector institutions in Pakistan, which presents serious challenges for research academics. A problematic research environment is a result of inadequate access to computers and internet connections, outdated facilities, and inadequate training in fundamental research skills (Farooq & Usman, 2020). These shortcomings affect M.Phil applicants' whole academic

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careers in addition to impeding the caliber of their research.

The difficulties encountered by Pakistani research researchers have come under more and more criticism in recent years. Research indicates that postgraduate research is conducted in a difficult environment due to a lack of suitable research facilities, ineffective administrative practices, and budgetary restrictions (Hassan et al., 2021). For example, Saeed and Khan (2021) draw attention to the fact that M.Phil candidates often face challenges associated with a lack of research resources, insufficient supervision, and delays in funding. The bureaucratic structure of university administration exacerbates these difficulties by frequently causing protracted delays in responding to students' concerns and offering essential assistance. Apart from hindrances related to infrastructure and administration, the expertise of supervising others has significant importance in the research process. While mentorship and advice are supposed to be given throughout the research process, many MPhil students report having little access to their supervisors because of their workload and other professional obligations (Ahmed & Latif, 2020). Insufficient supervision might impede students' advancement and lower the caliber of their research projects. According to Ahmed and Latif (2020), a lack of consistent and efficient communication between supervisors and students might result in misunderstandings, hold-ups, and less-than-ideal research results.

Furthermore, the academic climate at Pakistan's public institutions frequently lacks the resources and support networks needed for effective research. According to recent study, having access to modern research facilities, funding, and technology is all crucial for a well-supported academic environment (Zia et al., 2021). However, a number of Pakistani universities struggle with antiquated technology, subpar research facilities, and a lack of support services, all of which have an adverse influence on the efficiency and productivity of research scholars (Hassan et al., 2021). It is impossible to overestimate the importance of solving these problems. This study intends to offer insightful information that can guide policies and activities targeted at improving the research climate in public sector institutions by identifying and solving the challenges experienced by M.Phil scholars. To guarantee that M.Phil candidates are more prepared to contribute to the growth of their communities and the expansion of knowledge, higher education and research assistance must be improved.

The current study is to investigate the many obstacles that M.Phil scholars at Pakistani public sector universities face when doing their research. By examining the primary challenges and obstacles, the study will offer helpful recommendations for improving the research environment and supporting the academic and professional growth of M.Phil candidates. The results of this study will contribute to our understanding of the issues facing Pakistani higher education and lay the groundwork for future initiatives to raise the bar for academic support and research quality in public sector universities. In conclusion, education is essential to both individual and social growth, and higher education institutions are essential to advancement and creativity. However, there are certain obstacles that Pakistani research researchers must overcome in order to carry out excellent study. Improving the research environment and making sure M.Phil candidates can successfully contribute to the growth of knowledge and societal development need addressing these difficulties. The purpose of this study is to clarify these problems and offer doable suggestions for improving the standard of postsecondary

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education and research assistance at Pakistani public universities.

**Study Objectives:**

The current investigation has the following two goals.

1. Identify the challenges faced by MPhil researchers in the Sociology Department at the University of the Punjab and propose solutions that align with Islamic principles of education.
2. List the issues that M.Phil. candidates had with their research thesis.
3. Make workable suggestions for solving issues that M.Phil. students are facing.

**Research Questions:**

The study questions that follow were created based on the aforementioned objectives:

1. What kinds of issues did M.Phil. candidates at the University of the Punjab's sociology department face?
  - 1.1 What are the M.Phil. research researchers' academic and research-related issues?
  - 1.2 What administrative issues do research researchers for M.Phil. have?
  - 1.3 What societal issues do M.Phil. research researchers face?
  - 1.4 What financial issues do M.Phil. research researchers face?
2. What steps should be done to address the issues M.Phil. scholars are facing?

**Literature Review:**

While finishing an M.Phil research thesis is an important milestone in postgraduate study, there are often administrative, intellectual, and psychological obstacles to overcome. Numerous studies conducted locally and internationally have shown these difficulties, highlighting the necessity of structured support to promote students' academic achievement. The most important problem is insufficient academic supervision. The thesis-writing process is severely hampered, according to Ali et al. (2021), by poor communication between researchers and supervisors, a lack of timely feedback, and inconsistent instruction. These results are consistent with other research indicating that in order to improve research output, supervisory relationships should be organized and helpful (Singh & Mishra, 2021). The difficulties MPhil researchers have in Pakistan's educational system have drawn more attention in the past several years. Numerous studies demonstrate the major challenges that the research process faces as a result of poor infrastructure, financing, and academic support. For example, Rehman and Akhtar (2021) highlight that one of the most important problems facing postgraduate students is money, which frequently pushes them to look for other sources of financing or give up on their studies entirely. The absence of institutional resources—access to current literature and research facilities, for example—that is necessary for academic achievement is exacerbating the problem (Shah et al., 2023).

Apart from monetary obstacles, the interactions between mentors and pupils have a big impact on the research experience. Misunderstandings and dissatisfaction among MPhil scholars can be caused by inadequate communication and a lack of direction from supervisors. According to Khan et al. (2022), excellent supervisor-student connections are vital for building an atmosphere favorable to research. They contend that consistent

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communication and helpful criticism are crucial for students' academic growth and have a big influence on their drive and achievement. These results highlight the necessity of more organized support networks and better mentorship in educational settings. Furthermore, the sociocultural milieu of Pakistan contributes an additional level of intricacy to the obstacles encountered by MPhil scholars. Many children have expectations and societal pressures that might make it difficult for them to succeed academically. According to Ali and Batool (2021), these demands may result in tension and anxiety, which may then have an impact on the quality of research. To improve the entire educational experience, it is essential to provide a supportive atmosphere that attends to social as well as intellectual demands. Through identifying these issues and putting forth remedies based on Islamic teachings, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive comprehension of Pakistan's MPhil research environment.

Specifically, MPhil students often report feeling alone or ill-prepared for the challenges of research, which might cause thesis completion to be delayed. Administrative and institutional obstacles exacerbate the challenges M.Phil scholars encounter. According to Khan and Ahmed (2022), students experience extra stress as a result of bureaucratic roadblocks like the slow acceptance of research proposals and limited access to academic resources. This is made worse by the fact that many Pakistani public institutions lack enough facilities for research as well as insufficient funding. Global studies that emphasize comparable issues in underdeveloped nations, where access to necessary academic resources and materials is restricted by resource shortages, corroborate these findings (Singh & Mishra, 2021). Students' emotional and psychological toll from MPhil research is another recurrent issue in the literature. Tariq and Iqbal (2023) talk about the mental health issues that result from excessive workloads, demanding academic standards, and a lack of resources.

Their study highlights the need of providing academic help in addition to mental health services to guarantee that researchers can finish their work without experiencing undue psychological strain. Furthermore, Shafique et al. (2020) discovered that social and financial demands frequently exacerbate academic stress, particularly for students from disadvantaged families. Recent study has shown that financial obstacles are a key problem for M.Phil students. According to Ahmed et al. (2023), insufficient funding, such as scholarships and stipends, leads many students to juggle employment and school, which hinders the advancement of their research even more. Another major barrier that prevents students from accessing pertinent material for their study is the lack of current academic resources, both online and in physical libraries (Farooq et al., 2020).

Accommodation issues and hostel amenities are also frequently discussed in the literature. Students' inability to find suitable housing, especially those from rural regions, adds to their stress levels and interferes with their ability to concentrate in class (Ali et al., 2021). Bad hostel facilities and a lack of available spots make the issue worse, necessitating certain studies have identified the socio-political dynamics that exist inside university departments as a difficulty. Ahmed et al. (2023) claim that internal politics among academic staff and faculty members might impede students' academic advancement. Political partiality

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occasionally has an impact on how resources are distributed, supervisory tasks are assigned, and even how seminars are organized, which can result in students being treated unfairly. The trust between students and teachers is damaged by the absence of a merit-based system, which further demotivates academics.

All things considered, the research that is currently available emphasizes the complex issues that M.Phil students confront, emphasizing the need for more institutional support, greater supervisor-student contact, and easier access to financial and academic resources. By addressing these issues, Pakistani public sector universities may improve their research climate, which will raise the standard of postgraduate instruction and aid students as they pursue their academic goals. The most important problem is insufficient academic supervision. The thesis-writing process is severely hampered, according to Ali et al. (2021), by poor communication between researchers and supervisors, a lack of timely feedback, and inconsistent instruction. These results are consistent with other research indicating that in order to improve research output, supervisory relationships should be organized and helpful (Singh & Mishra, 2021). In particular, M.Phil scholars frequently report feeling isolated or inadequately prepared for the complexities of research, which can delay thesis completion (Farooq et al., 2020).

Administrative and institutional obstacles exacerbate the challenges M.Phil scholars encounter. According to Khan and Ahmed (2022), students experience extra stress as a result of bureaucratic roadblocks like the slow acceptance of research proposals and limited access to academic resources. This is made worse by the fact that many Pakistani public institutions lack enough facilities for research as well as insufficient funding. Global studies that emphasize comparable issues in underdeveloped nations, where access to necessary academic resources and materials is restricted by resource shortages, corroborate these findings (Singh & Mishra, 2021). Students' emotional and psychological toll from M.Phil research is another recurrent issue in the literature. Tariq and Iqbal (2023) talk about how mental health issues can be brought on by excessive workloads, demanding academic standards, and a lack of adequate support networks. Their study highlights the need of providing academic help in addition to mental health services to guarantee that researchers can finish their work without experiencing undue psychological strain. Furthermore, Shafique et al. (2020) discovered that social and financial demands frequently exacerbate academic stress, particularly for students from disadvantaged families.

The literature also makes extensive reference to hostel facilities and accommodation issues. Inadequate living arrangements for students, especially those from rural areas, lead to extra stress and interfere with their ability to concentrate academically (Ali et al., 2021). Unacceptably bad hostel conditions and a lack of available spaces worsen the issue, forcing many students to commute long distances or make do with subpar living arrangements. This disturbance of the students' living environment increases their emotional burden and has a negative impact on their academic performance and research advancement (Farooq et al., 2020). According to Farooq et al. (2020), public sector universities in Pakistan frequently struggle to keep up with global academic standards due to limited funding and outdated resources. As a result, M.Phil scholars face difficulties conducting high-quality research, limiting the scope and impact of their work. Moreover, the lack of current academic literature

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in university libraries further restricts scholars' access to contemporary research materials. Scholars often cite the lack of modern facilities, including access to academic databases, research labs, and updated technologies, as major obstacles in terms of research infrastructure.

Certain studies have identified the socio-political dynamics that exist inside university departments as a difficulty. Ahmed et al. (2023) claim that internal politics among academic staff and faculty members might impede students' academic advancement. Political partiality occasionally has an impact on how resources are distributed, supervisory tasks are assigned, and even how seminars are organized, which can result in students being treated unfairly. The trust between students and teachers is damaged by the absence of a merit-based system, which further demotivates academics. Similar claims are made by Singh and Mishra (2021), who claim that these internal dynamics foster a culture of rivalry rather than cooperation and harm the educational setting. Recent literature has increasingly emphasized the importance of personal growth, especially with regard to research abilities, in addition to structural and institutional challenges. According to studies, a lack of training and experience causes many M.Phil academics to struggle with research methods and data processing. According to Khan and Ahmed (2022), workshops and training courses are essential for giving students the tools they need to carry out independent research. Insufficient instruction might cause students to feel overburdened by their thesis's technical components, which can cause delays and lower-quality work (Ahmed et al., 2023).

#### **Methodology:**

The difficulties encountered by MPhil (Sociology) students at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, were investigated in this study using a qualitative research methodology. It was noted that these difficulties were consistent with Islamic beliefs, which place a strong emphasis on knowledge acquisition. Through examining these barriers, the study hopes to offer answers based on the moral and ethical precepts that Islam upholds. The population consisted of all M.Phil students enrolled in the Department of Sociology. Using purposive sampling, 10 participants were selected based on their relevance to the study (Palinkas et al., 2015; Etikan, 2020). Data was gathered through **semi-structured interviews**, designed after a comprehensive literature review. These interviews explored academic, administrative, social, and economic challenges, allowing flexibility in responses (Kallio et al., 2016; Bryman, 2021). All interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Participants were assured confidentiality to encourage honest responses, and informed consent was obtained. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes and patterns in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This approach helped to uncover the primary difficulties faced by scholars, providing deep insights into their experiences. Through the use of qualitative research approach, this study was able to thoroughly examine the issues M.Phil scholars encountered. At the time of the study, every M.Phil (Sociology) student registered in the Sociology Department at the University of the Punjab in Lahore made up the population. The participants were chosen using a purposive sample strategy, which is frequently utilized in qualitative research to concentrate on certain features of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015; Etikan, 2020). Ten volunteers made up the sample size; they were selected according to how

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well they fit the goals of the study. The main method of gathering data was a semi-structured interview, which gave participants and the interviewer flexibility to explore important topics (Kallio et al., 2016; Bryman, 2021). The interview questions were formulated by the researchers following a comprehensive assessment of the literature, and their relevance and reliability were confirmed by expert judgments (Nowell et al., 2017). The academic, administrative, social, and economic difficulties that the researchers faced were covered by these open-ended inquiries. To ensure the authenticity and depth of the replies, all interviews were tape-recorded in order to get correct data (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The interviews were individually conducted by the researchers, who also made sure the participants felt at ease and secure in their answers by providing clarification where necessary. Confidentiality was guaranteed to participants in order to promote transparency and allay any worries about potential dangers related to the study. Thematic analysis, a commonly used technique for finding, examining, and summarizing patterns in qualitative data, was used to examine the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The researchers were able to identify the main difficulties faced by the participants and provide insightful interpretations of their experiences thanks to this methodology.

### Results

The data were subjected to a systematic, thematic analysis procedure. At first, verbatim transcriptions of every interview tape were made. The interview notes were subsequently used to further edit these transcriptions. Based on the main questions asked during the interviews, preliminary themes were found in the first stage of the analysis. The topics were then combined into more general core themes in a second phase of analysis to capture the main areas of concern. The technique of theme reduction facilitated the identification of patterns and correlations within the data, so enabling a more profound comprehension of the research issues of the study. The following list of topics and sub-themes gives a thorough summary of the research findings.

**Table 1: Research and Academic Issues Facing M.Phil Research Scholar**

Major Theme	Sub-themes	Frequency
Academic Problems	Issues in gathering data	4
	Issues with data analysis	5
	Having trouble finding and approving the topic	2
	Supervisor's inability to provide adequate time due to his or her task	8
	supervisor's delayed feedback	3
	Lack of the supervisor's research experience	3
		4

	The issue with academic writing	
	The attitude of the supervisor	1

The study's research questions are used to guide the discussion of the findings, with an emphasis on [naming topics or sub-themes such as "challenges faced by scholars," "institutional support," etc.]. The bulk of the interviews consistently revealed these themes to be noteworthy, highlighting their significance in comprehending the difficulties M.Phil academics encounter.

The results of the thematic analysis showed that [briefly discuss the themes' associated findings]. This method, which is in line with current research that highlights the value of theme analysis in qualitative studies, allows for a detailed examination of the many facets of the academics' experiences (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2020; Nowell et al., 2019). Scholars have identified a noteworthy obstacle in data gathering, which is the participants' lack of collaboration. This problem was especially noticeable for the academics who encountered pushback from staff members and teachers when gathering data.

Wang et al. (2021) claim that a male researcher hampered the study's advancement by stressing the fact that "teachers and staff do not cooperate in the data collection process". In reference to the rapport between scholars and their supervisors, a few participants expressed that their supervisors were overly preoccupied with their academic duties to dedicate sufficient time to provide quality supervision. According to one academic, "teachers were overloaded because there was a problem with a lack of faculty at the M.Phil level" (Alghamdi et al., 2020). Additionally, a few respondents mentioned that their supervisors had prejudices against them based on caste and gender, which made it harder for them to finish their study. These prejudices increased the stress that the scholars felt by creating a communication chasm between them and their supervisors. A number of respondents also voiced worries over the strict actions of their bosses. This communication barrier made it hard for students to have open discussions about issues related to their studies. "My supervisor's harshness sometimes creates problems for me as I remain unable to discuss my research work properly," a female investigator stated. Another male student revealed that his supervisor's negative attitude caused health issues: "His attitude toward me was unbearable." My prolonged suffering caused me to get excessive blood pressure (Kassim et al., 2022). A difficulty mentioned by a few researchers was the supervisors' lack of experience in research, especially when it came to data processing. A graduate student commented, "I am conducting my own research for my degree; if I want to consult with my supervisor, she accepts the work without offering feedback" (Gupta et al,2021)The study process was made much more difficult by this lack of direction. Some respondents also acknowledged that they had experienced difficulties in the classroom, especially when it came to writing academically in English. Their grammatical and lexical errors affected the caliber of their theses. According to one academic, "I have a lot of issues because of my poor academic writing skills and poor command of the English language" (Norton & Toohey, 2021). Furthermore, several academics found it difficult to dedicate enough time to their research projects due to household duties. These findings demonstrate the variety of academic difficulties M.Phil candidates have, from problems with supervision and data analysis to individual difficulty with academic writing

and time management. To tackle these obstacles, it could be necessary to implement institutional changes, improve supervisor education, and provide more assistance to academics in areas like research methods and academic writing.

**Table 2: Administrative Problems of M.Phil Research Scholars**

Major Theme	Sub-themes	Frequency
Administrative Issues	Issues with research academics as a result of teacher politics	5
	Insufficient seminars, workshops, and conferences are held by the administration to foster a research-oriented mindset and proficiency.	6
	Issues with lodging in the dorms at universities	3
	Fewer recent books available in libraries, and restricted access to internet resources	8
	The administration's lack of collaboration with academics	5
	Scholarship awarded too late	1

Overall, the results point to internal politics, poor seminar organization, inadequate housing alternatives, and restricted access to crucial academic resources as the main obstacles faced by M.Phil researchers (Abid et al., 2021; Fatima & Rehman, 2020; Khan et al., 2022). These problems have a substantial influence on the caliber and advancement of their research, highlighting the necessity of improved support networks and institutional changes.

**Table 3: Financial Problems of M.Phil Research Scholars**

Principal Idea	Sub-themes	regularity
Financial problems	Not being able to purchase books	4
	Joblessness	2
	Spending too much money on books, photocopies, and prints	2
	not having enough money for other activities	1
	Having trouble rushing home and studying at the same	5

time

The results demonstrate that financial constraints were a significant barrier for many M.Phil. scholars. Most claimed they were unable to purchase essential books and other school materials due to their limited financial resources. One of the participants stated, "I need to go home and study for a while. I was unable to purchase several essential books. This demonstrates the financial strain that students have in juggling personal and academic obligations, which frequently forces them to make concessions in terms of their educational goals. One such element influencing M.Phil researchers' financial difficulties was unemployment. A number of individuals disclosed experiencing unemployment during their education, which further exacerbated their financial struggles. Furthermore, a few respondents mentioned that they were compelled to postpone buying crucial academic tools because they had to balance managing home finances and paying their education. Scholars frequently felt overburdened and unable to devote themselves entirely to their study as a result of the overlap of their personal and academic financial demands. The financial struggles that Pakistani M.Phil academics experience are validated by recent studies; many of them find it difficult to pay for necessities like books, tuition, and other resources. Their well-being and academic success are adversely affected by these financial restraints (Shah, 2020; Khalid & Nasir, 2021). Moreover, as several examples have shown, delays in the payment of financial help or stipends exacerbate the financial concern experienced by scholars (Naveed et al., 2021; Zia et al., 2022).

**Table 4: The Issues Need to Be Addressed and Solutions Found**

<b>Principal Idea</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>regularity</b>
Actions should be done to address the issues	More scholarships should be offered by the government.	7
	Every step of the coursework and research process has to have a schedule.	3
	A routine gathering between the supervisee and the supervisor	5
	Resources for online education have to be expanded.	5
	Books and research journals are available	3
	There should be more conferences, workshops, seminars, and training courses organized.	3
	It would be wise to employ more highly competent foreign educators.	4
	A suitable lab ought to exist for M.Phil academics.	3
	Appropriate supervision and therapy	1

Almost all of the researchers stressed how crucial it is to follow deadlines for different academic tasks, such as assigning supervisors, turning in summaries, and taking final exams. Strict deadlines are seen to be essential for keeping students on track and guaranteeing smooth academic development, which is in accordance with findings from recent research (Ahmad & Iqbal, 2020; Hussain et al., 2021). Some participants emphasized the necessity of supervisor's meetings being planned, stating that having a documented schedule would assist create an organized work pattern and give direction. It was also suggested that progress be reported continuously, allowing academics and supervisors to monitor developments and pinpoint areas that require more focus (Ali et al., 2022). It was suggested that the department head conduct sporadic inspections to guarantee the caliber of Interviewees also talked on how important it is for online learning tools to be accessible. They recommended that appropriate direction be given to scholars in order to assist them in navigating and locating pertinent research materials. This is consistent with current studies that demonstrates the importance of having access to digital resources for raising research output, particularly in poor nations (Rehman et al., 2020). A few academics also argued in favor of more seminars and training courses that would improve the research abilities of both researchers and supervisors. Targeted training programs are crucial for developing research abilities and raising academic achievement, claim Farooq et al. (2021).

Seminars and workshops are essential for improving research expertise, English writing, communication, and presenting abilities, according to several academics. Research has demonstrated that such activities have a substantial positive impact on M.Phil students' academic performance (Khan et al., 2023). Some have proposed hiring foreign-trained educators to provide more sophisticated academic help and supervision. Last but not least, a number of participants demanded the creation of a special lab for M.Phil. candidates in addition to advice and counseling to help with both academic and personal problems. Recent research showing the beneficial effects of such services on students' well-being and academic outcomes (Hassan et al., 2020; Nawaz & Aslam, 2022) supports the necessity for academic and psychological assistance.

**Conclusion:**

As a result of this study, MPhil applicants encounter a variety of difficulties in the academic, administrative, social, and economical domains. The lack of time research supervisors have for effective mentoring because of their busy teaching schedules and other obligations is a major problem in academia. Furthermore, a lot of supervisors lack the research experience required to properly mentor their students, sometimes because the study topics are outside of their areas of expertise. The academics' poor academic writing abilities, especially in English, are another significant barrier that prevents them from successfully communicating the results of their study. Islamic belief holds that seeking knowledge is a basic responsibility, and that achieving this goal is necessary to fulfill this duty. Islam urges educators to give their pupils enough assistance and direction, emphasizing the value of mentorship and information transfer. Consequently, it is critical to support an environment of cooperation and ongoing education in academic settings, making sure that supervisors are trained to

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improve their mentoring skills. Furthermore, educational institutions have to give top priority to enhancing students' academic writing abilities by providing them with specialized courses and tools. We can foster a more encouraging and stimulating atmosphere that helps MPhil scholars succeed in their research activities and make valuable contributions to society by tackling these issues in accordance with Islamic principles. Based on these findings, several recommendations are suggested to improve the doctoral research experience and the overall quality of higher education:

1. **Increased Scholarships:** The government should provide more indigenous scholarships to support doctoral students financially, reducing their economic burdens.
  2. **Structured Timelines:** A strict timeline should be implemented for completing key phases of the doctoral process, including coursework, comprehensive exams, supervisor allocation, and synopsis submission. This would ensure timely progress.
  3. **Supervisor-Supervisee Meetings:** Meetings between supervisors and students should follow a formal, documented schedule to track progress systematically. Regular reports should be made to evaluate what has been achieved and what tasks remain, overseen by the department heads to ensure accountability.
  4. **Access to Online Learning Resources:** The availability of online resources for research should be expanded, with easier access for scholars to stay updated with the latest knowledge and methodologies.
  5. **Training and Development Programs:** Supervisors and M. Phill scholars should both have access to further training courses and seminars. These workshops would improve the research competences of supervisors and assist students in gaining the fundamentals of academic writing, communication, presentation, and research techniques.
  6. **Workshops and Seminars:** Regular workshops and seminars should be held to improve scholars' understanding of research methodologies, English writing skills, and the ability to present and communicate their research effectively.
- Implementing these recommendations could significantly reduce the academic and administrative challenges faced by doctoral students and enhance the overall quality of research output.

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