

Identifying the Research Challenges of Farhangian University Professors in the Field of Humanities (a Phenomenological Study)

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Abstract

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Methodology: Adopting a critical paradigm with a qualitative approach, this research employed a phenomenological strategy based on Colaizzi's multi-stage model. The participants consisted of 12 male and female professors from Farhangian University in Kurdistan Province during the 2023–2024 academic year. Professors were selected through purposive sampling with maximum variation. Data were collected using researcher-designed semi-structured interviews and analyzed through latent qualitative content analysis alongside an analogical-inductive tactic.

Findings: The results revealed two main categories: (1) challenges in the individual domain (mental-ethical and knowledge-skill related), and in the work environment (supportive, organizational attitude, publications, and social factors); and (2) proposed solutions to address these challenges.

Conclusion: The findings indicate that the research process in humanities is hindered by multi-dimensional and multi-level obstacles, which threaten the sustainability and future of research in this field. A comprehensive review and reform of the research process in humanities is therefore essential.

Value: This study offers valuable insights for policymakers and planners by highlighting both the challenges and potential solutions for advancing research in the humanities.

Keywords: *Farhangian University Professors, Research Challenges, Humanities, Solutions, Phenomenological Study*

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Extended Abstract

Introduction: Research is one of the fundamental human needs for progress, innovation, and continuous learning. In contemporary societies, the advancement and prosperity of nations are closely tied to the quality and quantity of their research output. Advanced societies consider their global standing to be highly dependent on the expansion and deepening of research, and consequently, the role of research in national development is becoming increasingly visible. Countries now measure their scientific growth and developmental progress by research indicators such as the number of active researchers, the proportion of the research budget in national expenditure, the number of articles published in scientific journals, citations received, and the extent of international collaborations. These indicators not only reflect the vitality of the academic community but also reveal the strategic vision of a country toward science and knowledge production. To achieve such goals, the strengthening of the scientific community is crucial. One of the most important steps in this process is fostering a “research spirit” among academics and students alike. The development of a research-oriented culture creates favorable conditions for scientific originality, innovation, and evidence-based knowledge production. This cultural orientation motivates researchers to address practical needs and contribute to the improvement of social, educational, and economic systems. However, despite the undeniable importance of research, the research process in many contexts—including the humanities—faces considerable obstacles. These barriers range from individual-level constraints such as lack of skills or ethical issues, to systemic problems such as insufficient institutional support, lack of funding, or undervaluation of humanities research in broader policy agendas. Professors at Farhangian University, which serves as Iran’s central institution for training teachers, occupy a unique position in this regard. They not only teach specialized courses to a specific group of student-teachers but also bring with them diverse experiences from other universities and higher education institutions. This dual experience provides them with a broader and more comprehensive perspective on the challenges of research in the field of humanities. Investigating their lived experiences therefore offers valuable insights into both the obstacles and possible solutions for strengthening humanities research in Iran.

Purpose: The present study sought to identify and analyze the research challenges faced by Farhangian University professors in the field of humanities, and to present solutions based on their lived experiences. The study was guided by the following research questions: According to the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors, what challenges do researchers in the humanities face?

From the perspective of this group of professors, what solutions can be proposed to reduce or overcome these challenges?

By answering these questions, the study aimed to provide not only a descriptive account of existing problems but also actionable recommendations that could support planners, policymakers, and academic institutions in creating more favorable conditions for humanities research.



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Methodology: To address the research purpose, the study adopted a critical paradigm and employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological strategy in the tradition of Van Manen. Phenomenology was chosen because it provides a systematic method for capturing and interpreting the lived experiences of individuals. The participants consisted of 12 male and female professors from Farhangian University of Kurdistan Province during the 2023–2024 academic year (1402–1403).

Sampling was conducted purposefully to capture maximum variation and heterogeneity in participants' experiences. This approach ensured that a wide range of perspectives, shaped by different academic backgrounds, professional experiences, and institutional roles, would be included in the study. Data collection was carried out using a researcher-made semi-structured interview guide, designed to elicit deep insights into both challenges and solutions.

For data analysis, latent qualitative content analysis was employed, supplemented by an analogical-inductive tactic to capture both explicit themes and implicit meanings within the data. This approach allowed the researchers to move beyond surface-level observations and uncover the underlying patterns shaping the research environment in the humanities.

Findings: The analysis of interviews revealed a wide range of challenges and solutions, which were classified into two main parts.

1. Research Challenges

Challenges were found at both the individual and environmental levels.

Individual challenges included mental, ethical, and knowledge-skill-related barriers, while environmental challenges encompassed institutional, organizational, publication-related, and social factors.

Table 1. Research challenges

Main categories	Subcategories	Concepts
Individual challenges	Mental and moral challenges	Privilege versus utility, Data generation, Unhealthy competition between researchers, Mentioning names not involved in the work, Lack of research interest.
	Knowledge and skill challenges	Ignorance of the basic knowledge of research, Lack of mastery of foreign languages, Unfamiliarity with software, Weakness in teamwork, and Low level of study.
Environmental challenges	Supporting challenges	Lack of financial support, Lack of access to suitable physical facilities, Limited access to scientific resources, Provision of the research budget of one university by another university, Lack of support in the dissemination of findings, The lack of cooperation of the research community with the researcher.
	The challenges of the attitude of organizations and universities to research	Lack of attention to research in the field of humanities, Compulsion to conduct research in universities, Education-orientedness of universities, and Organizations' lack of attention to research.
	Challenges related to publications and projects	Lack of number and variety in publications, Longness of the process of acceptance of articles, The dominance of personal relationships in the acceptance and publication of articles, The lack of competence of reviewers, and the rule of personal relationships in handing over a research project.
	Social challenges	Absence of study and learning culture, Certificate orientation, Undervaluation of research, Emergence of pseudo-researchers.

The findings emphasize that research challenges in the humanities cannot be attributed to a single factor but instead represent a web of interconnected issues spanning personal, organizational, and societal dimensions.

2. Solutions to Overcome Challenges

In response to the identified problems, professors suggested a series of solutions at both the individual and environmental levels. These solutions emphasized the need for ethical commitment, skill development, structural reform, and cultural change.



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Table 2. Solutions

Main categories	Subcategories	Concepts
Individual solutions	Ethical and mental solutions	Observance of the principles of professional research ethics, maintaining the spirit of research, targeting and applying research, and conducting targeted and applied research.
	Knowledge and skill solutions	Creative and analytical thinking, Increase the level of study of researchers, Familiarity with scientific languages, Familiarity with research software.
Solutions related to the research environment	Supporting solutions	Financial and economic support, Providing suitable facilities, and Access to appropriate information sources.
	Solutions related to the attitude of organizations and universities	Paying attention to the quality versus the number of articles, Assignment of educational matters instead of research work, reviewing the curriculum of the universities, and the Researcher's presence in important decisions.
	Solutions related to publications	Monitoring the process of printing and accepting articles, increasing the number of journals, and double-blinding the method of accepting the research plan.
	Social solutions	Creating the ground for the training of research people, Raising the position of the researcher in the general society.

Together, these solutions illustrate that tackling research challenges requires both **bottom-up initiatives** (individual responsibility and skill enhancement) and **top-down reforms** (institutional support, policy adjustments, and cultural change).

Conclusion: The lived experiences of Farhangian University professors reveal that research challenges in the humanities are multidimensional, cutting across individual, organizational, and social contexts. These challenges threaten not only the quality of academic output but also the motivation of novice researchers, many of whom may become discouraged or resort to unethical shortcuts. If left unaddressed, such conditions could undermine the long-term sustainability and credibility of humanities research.

At the same time, the solutions proposed by professors highlight both the responsibility of researchers themselves—to adhere to ethical standards, improve their skills, and cultivate a spirit of inquiry—and the obligations of universities, research organizations, and policymakers to provide structural, financial, and cultural support. Ultimately, strengthening research in the humanities requires a holistic approach: fostering a research culture across society, enhancing institutional capacities, and empowering researchers to overcome obstacles.

Value: This study provides a fresh perspective on the research process by systematically examining both challenges and solutions in the humanities from the standpoint of Farhangian University professors. The insights gained are particularly valuable for policymakers, planners, and academic leaders who seek to strengthen research capacity in the humanities. By acknowledging the multidimensional nature of these challenges and implementing comprehensive solutions, it is possible to cultivate a more vibrant, ethical, and productive research culture—one that not only benefits universities but also contributes to the advancement of society as a whole.

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1-Introduction

Humans need to learn to easily respond to their needs and demands, and the environment. This learning should be in a way that leads him to influence the environment and the world around him, and this happens when he explores and researches himself and the issues he faces (Shafiei Sarvestani, Jahani, & Mousavi Pour, 2018, 231). Therefore, the main source of new information and knowledge production is the result of research activities that are carried out (Moradi, Bahrami Nia, & Seifouri, 2023, 56). One of the indicators of the growth and development of countries is their scientific power and capacity (Azadi, 2023, 8), and the most obvious indicator of a country's growth and development is its technological capabilities and scientific research (Hosseini, Tabrizchi, & Behzadi, 2023, 621). On such a background, the countries of the world are trying to show the extent of their development with research indicators such as the number of researchers, the share of the research budget, the number of articles published in scientific journals, and the like (Ramezani, Mehni, & Azizi, 2018, 28); Therefore, to achieve such a goal, it is necessary to expand and strengthen the scientific community, and in this regard, the cultivation and development of the "research spirit" is one of the most important measures to build the scientific community (Tahmasebzadeh Sheikhlar, Mohammadzadeh, & Alipour, 2018, 204).

The development of research culture among researchers plays an important role in achieving a favorable research situation in society and leads researchers to conduct scientific and original research; On the other hand, the more the social, political and economic context and the dominant discourse in the countries put a lower price on research, the more researchers face obstacles and obstacles to research. In Iran, the number of these obstacles is not small, and more recent studies also show that many obstacles are still affecting the country's research (Rasuli & Shahriari, 2021, 134 and 135); Therefore, the research process in Iran faces challenges and obstacles in its progress, and to overcome them, it is necessary to identify these challenges and take action to find solutions for them. Because the most important thing in the progress and prosperity of research is to recognize the challenges and remove the existing obstacles (Veisani & Delpisheh, 2019,p.13).

In the meantime, the professors of Farhangian University are a group of professors who, in addition to the experience teaching in other universities, have had the experience of teaching a special group of students, under the title of student teachers, as well as teaching in a special university for teacher education; Therefore, it is expected that they have a more comprehensive view of research challenges and have faced more diverse challenges. Because the production of human sciences and paying attention to its position has been the focus of attention of many centers of science production in the world, especially in advanced countries (Momeny & Morshed, 2022, 73) and considering that the policy of science production is one of the important points to consider in the goals of the Farhangian University of the country (Ramezani et al., 2018, 29); In case of explaining the challenges of research in the field of humanities and finding solutions for it from the point of view of the professors of this university, in addition to the fact that it is possible to inform those involved about the obstacles and gaps in the research process in the field of humanities, it is possible to base on the obtained solutions, found a way to improve research productivity in the field of humanities and especially in Farhangian University. To this line in this research, the researchers seek to identify the challenges of Farhangian University



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professors in the field of humanities according to the lived experiences of these people. Thus, the following research question is formulated for this study.

1. The lived experiences of Farhangian University professors in research in the field of humanities, How do explain the challenges of this field?
2. What solutions do the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors in research in the field of humanities show for the challenges of this field?

2-Research Background

Scientific research begins with the appearance of a problem in the researcher's mind, and the main goal of scientific research is to solve a problem and find an answer to it (Motealehi et al., 2010, 102). Scientific research is a systematic study to solve a problem (Safari-Moradabadi et al., 2017, 1), and research is the process of doing research. This process will be accompanied by challenges. So far, a variety of research has been conducted in the field of research challenges in Iran and other countries, as well as some obstacles facing researchers have been identified, and solutions provided. For example, Ashrafi-Rizi et al. (2018) examined the economic obstacles to health research in Iran, such as the lack of funding and solutions for it. Of course, despite the practicality of this research; But it was limited to the field of health and economic obstacles; Therefore, to expand the areas, Veisani and Delpisheh (2019) investigated the obstacles and problems of research in the field of medical sciences in Iran from the point of view of faculty members, research experts, and students in a systematic review. In this research, it was pointed out such things as lack of time due to teaching jobs, lack of incentive policies, insufficient financial credits, lack of proportionality of research points with the promotion system of faculty members, lack of familiarity with teamwork culture, lack of motivation among researchers and lack of necessary cooperation of Environmental system with researchers. Of course, this research was also limited to medical sciences and did not include all aspects of research; Therefore, Hosseini et al. (2023) investigated the obstacles and challenges of research and advancement of science and technology in the field of health in fundamental, process, management, cultural, human resources, ethics and spirituality, evaluation and monitoring, financial and economic, future research and foresight axes. Such cases need to be investigated in other scientific fields, including the humanities.

In the field of humanities, Ramezani et al. (2018) pointed out the existence of infrastructural, economic, educational, cultural, communication, structural-administrative, managerial-executive, and individual-motivational problems and obstacles in the research process at Farhangian University. However, this research was limited to Farhangian University. Daryapour, Dortaj, Abbaspour, et al. (2020) pointed to things such as research qualifications, family factors, educational factors, school atmosphere, a culture that encourages research, financial resources, organizational characteristics, and socio-cultural factors to develop research culture in elementary schools. The research also merely reflected the state of the school's research culture. Some researchers have focused on all fields of human sciences. Rasuli and Shahriari (2021) mentioned the pitfalls and challenges of humanities research in Iran as poor social fabric, weak infrastructure, inefficient organization and management, incorrect policy-making, weakness of researchers, and incompatible laws and regulations. Also, Safarpour, Abbaspour, & Salimi (2022) showed that the promotion regulations have challenges such as



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victimization of humanities, emphasis on the research dimension, neglect of education, emphasis on quantity, and lack of attention to quality. In other countries, research challenges have been addressed in numerous studies. For example, Sitompul and Anditasari (2022) showed that master's students have problems writing a thesis in the three dimensions of research skills in the introduction, research method, and findings and discussion sections. Kamalakannan (2024) refers to the economic challenges of researchers in India, who focused on a specific dimension of research. Elgamri, Mohammed, El-Rhazi, et al. (2024) have addressed the problems and challenges of Arab researchers in the Arab countries of the Middle East and point to factors such as lack of access to resources, insufficient funds, lack of time, lack of supportive research infrastructure, lack of teamwork, insufficient scientific writing skills, etc. Also, to overcome the challenges, targeted interventions were suggested. As evident from the literature, various research studies have been conducted in Iran and other countries in the field of research and research challenges. However, so far, the identification of research challenges in the field of human sciences from the perspective of Farhangian University professors and their lived experiences in this field has not been addressed.

3-Methodology

Since the current research aimed to identify the research challenges of Farhangian University professors in the field of humanities, the researchers used the critical paradigm, qualitative approach, and descriptive phenomenology strategy of the multi-stage type of Paul Collaizi.

The participants of the research included male and female professors who were at Farhangian University of Kurdistan province, in the academic year 2023-2024. The selection of professors was based on purposeful sampling. The criteria for selecting professors were having a scientific research article, having experience in research challenges, and willingness to participate in research. The data collection tool was a researcher-made semi-structured interview. Because in the qualitative approach, unlike the quantitative approach, specific theoretical foundations in the sense of following a specific theory are not used to explain the data; Also, there is no predetermined standard questionnaire for this work, inevitably, the researcher has no choice but to use the semi-structured interview letter of the researcher. Therefore, most of the questions are the product of the researcher's understanding. The interview process continued until relative saturation in the data was achieved. Of course, the interviews reached saturation in 9 people. However, the researchers continued the interview with 12 people to ensure more certainty. i.e, In total, an interview was conducted with 12 professors after obtaining their informed and complete consent (Table. 1). Criteria for entering the interview: 1. having sufficient consent, 2. knowing the purpose of the interview. 3. Having enough time, 4. Being a humanities major, 5. Having at least 5 scientific research articles, 5. Having lived experience of challenges and solutions to solve challenges in the field of research. And exclusion criteria: 1. Not having enough time as a result of the long interview, 2. Dissatisfaction with the place, time, and manner of the interview, 3. Feeling any emotional pressure. 4. The interviewer's recognition of the ability and skill of the interviewee in answering the questions.

At this stage of the work, to fulfill the professional ethics of the research and respect the rights of the participants, the objectives of the research were

discussed with them simply and transparently, and their participation was subject to their will and discretion. Also, these people had permission to withdraw from the interview at any stage of the work or to read and comment on the final text of the interview if they wished.

For the detailed implementation of the interviews and their analysis, the information related to the research discussion was determined. After that, concepts were extracted from the important expressions of each interview, and the interviewees' description of the considered concept was also presented. The other interviews were studied and analyzed in the same way. Which includes the following steps: 1. Reading all the descriptions of the subjects. 2. Back to important narratives and phrases for extraction. 3. Explanation of the meanings of phrases and their formulation. 4. Presenting related themes and removing unrelated themes.

To ensure the validity of the research and the accuracy of the findings, the following measures were taken: 1. Revision and rethinking of the implemented interview texts by the researchers: The researchers spent a lot of time reviewing the documents and the text of the interviews and analyzing the content of the answers provided in this research, and they tried to control the bias and prejudice of the researchers themselves as much as possible. 2. Adaptation by members: in explaining parts of the work process, after implementing and categorizing the research challenges and solutions, the final report of the analysis process and the obtained categories were sent to several professors, and the contents were communicated to them. 3. Peer review: taking advantage of the opinions of several colleagues who are experts in this field. 4. Participatory nature of the research: In some parts of the research, the opinions of the participants were simultaneously used in the data analysis.



Table 1. Profile of participants

code	gender	age	field of study	academic rank	research experience
1	male	53	Educational sciences	assistant professor	12 years
2	female	52	Persian language and literature	assistant professor	10 years
3	male	59	Islamic philosophy and theology	instructor	38 years
4	male	56	Educational sciences (psychometrics)	instructor	23 years
5	male	46	Educational sciences - educational management trend	instructor	10 years
6	male	54	psychology	assistant professor	30 years
7	male	51	Arabic language and literature	assistant professor	30 years
8	male	48	History of Islam	assistant professor	12 years
9	male	41	Philosophy of education	assistant professor	12 years
10	female	42	Theology and Islamic teachings	assistant professor	17 years
11	male	41	Psychology and Education of Exceptional Children	instructor	5 years
12	male	39	Educational management	assistant professor	12 years

4-Findings

The research findings are presented in two main steps, the first step is to identify research challenges in the field of humanities based on the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors and the second step is to identify solutions to overcome these challenges.

4-1-Research challenges

The challenges of being a researcher are examined in two fields: individual challenges of researchers and challenges in the living and working environment of researchers.

4-1-1- Individual challenges

The challenges of research in the individual field are identified in two fields: mental-ethical challenges and skill-knowledge challenges based on the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors.

4-1-1-1- Mental and moral challenges

The challenges of research in the field of mentality and research ethics of researchers from the point of view of professors are:

4-1-1-1-1-Privilege versus utility: According to the interviewees, many researches studies, are not research-oriented; rather, they are conducted to gain academic points. In this regard, interviewee number 4 believes: "Most of the research conducted /or received is due to the need to upgrade the scientific degree." (Similar cases: codes 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, and 12).

4-1-1-1-2-Data generation: According to professors, data generation and presentation of incorrect content are one of the challenging issues in the field of research in the humanities. Interviewee number 5 believes: "Most of the researches are not original and are carried out by institutions and real people in the form of data creation and delivered to the beneficiaries." (Similar items: codes 1 and 12).

4-1-1-1-3-Unhealthy competition between researchers: It seems that unhealthy competition among researchers is a major obstacle on the path of research. Interviewee number 9 states: "For instance, a student does research work with you, those individuals create an obstacle so that this student does not do his work." (Similar cases: codes 2 and 7).

4-1-1-1-4-Mentioning names not involved in the work: It sounds that in some cases, people force their subordinates to participate nominally in research work. Interviewee number 3 explains: "Some force students to do research and record the names of professors in their articles." (Similar cases: codes 5 and 12).

4-1-1-1-5-Lack of research interest: According to professors, one of the main challenges in the field of research is conducting research despite not being interested in it. Interviewee number 1 believes: "Many people are not interested in research; but inevitably, they have to do it."

4-1-1-2-Knowledge and skill challenges

From the point of view of professors, the challenges of research in the field of knowledge and skills of researchers are:

4-1-1-2-1-Ignorance of the basic knowledge of research: According to the statements of the interviewees, some activists in the field of research do not benefit enough from research knowledge and skills. Interviewee number 12 believes: "Knowledge of research is one of the components of being a professional in research that many respected professors do not have. We



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witnessed this in very high universities of the country as well.” (Similar cases: codes 1, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10).

4-1-1-2-2-Lack of mastery of foreign languages: It seems that one of the basic challenges of researchers in our country is the lack of mastery of foreign languages, especially English. Interviewee number 12 explains: “Another challenge is most of us do not know the English language well. It's like we can't receive the message of modern science or we can't publish an article in an English-speaking country.” (Similar cases: code 9).

4-1-1-2-3-Unfamiliarity with software: It seems that some researchers do not have the necessary familiarity with computers and research software. Interviewee number 9 states: “We have a researcher who does not know how to work with computers and software”.

4-1-1-2-4-weakness in teamwork: Although cooperation among researchers is one of the facilitators of the research path; it seems that researchers are not interested in it. Interviewee number 9 believes: “There is little spirit for team research.” (Similar cases: codes 2 and 10).

4-1-1-2-5-Low level of study: Studying and knowing the knowledge of others is one of the main foundations of research; But it appears to me that some researchers are not very active in this field. Interviewee number 9 states: “Some researchers don't read books for years.” (Similar cases: code 12).

4-1-2-Environmental challenges

The quality of research, in addition to being influenced by researchers, is also influenced by the environment in which the researcher conducts research. The challenges of research in the field of environmental challenges are presented in four areas: supporting challenges, challenges of organizations' attitudes towards research, challenges related to publications and research projects, and social challenges of research based on the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors.

4-1-2-1-Supporting challenges

From the point of view of the professors, the support challenges created by the social and work environment for researchers and the research process are:

4-1-2-1-1-Lack of financial support: The lack of economic support for researchers was a matter that was repeatedly expressed by the interviewees. Interviewee number 9 states: “We don't have a specific budget for research at all. They give research grants, but the instruction to receive and use it is so complicated that I prefer not to use it.” (Similar cases: codes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12).

4-1-2-1-2-Lack of access to suitable physical facilities: For research, there is a need for suitable facilities and working space, which seems not to be available to some researchers. Interviewee number 9 states: “We don't have enough facilities, we don't have high-speed internet, we don't have a special room and...” (Similar cases: codes 2, 4, 5, 6, and 10).

4-1-2-1-3-Limited access to scientific resources: It seems that the current access of researchers to authentic sources, books, and authentic articles is not satisfactory. Interviewee number 5 believes: “The most important obstacle, during the implementation of research, is the lack of access of researchers to data banks and information sources.” (Similar cases: codes 6, 7, 8, and 9).



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4-1-2-1-4-Provision of the research budget of one university by another university: The provision and supervision of the research activities of one university by another university can reduce research motivation for research professors. In this regard, interviewee number 6 states: “For example, instead of Farhangian University being in charge of the education research budget, it has been assigned to another university.”

4-1-2-1-5-Lack of support in the dissemination of findings: It seems that the absence of a specific contract party and weakness in the dissemination of research findings in the target community are one of the most important concerns of researchers. Interviewee number 9 states: “When a researcher does the work independently, where should he publish now? If it is a book, who will distribute it?” (Similar cases: codes 4 and 5).

4-1-2-1-6-The lack of cooperation of the research community with the researcher: According to professors, one of the biggest obstacles that researchers face is the lack of cooperation of the research community with the researchers. In this regard, interviewee number 12 explains: “for example, I did research from the perspective of the professors, some of them are my colleagues and friends, but many of them were not willing to cooperate at all ” (Similar cases: codes 4, 5, 7, 9, and 11).

4-1-2-2-The challenges of the attitude of organizations and universities to research

The type of view that the organizations sponsoring research work and also universities have towards research, and the type of interaction they have with researchers in the research process, is influential. In this regard, from the point of view of the professors, the challenges of research in the field of the attitude of organizations and universities to research are:

4-1-2-2-Lack of attention to research in the field of humanities: Based on the interviewees, attention to research and research in the field of humanities is of a lower level than in the basic sciences. Interviewee number 12 believes: “It seems that more progress has been made in the field of engineering, medicine, and basic sciences, and the main problems are in the field of humanities” (Similar cases: codes 3, 4, and 10).

4-1-2-2-2-. Compulsion to conduct research in universities: According to professors' statements, there is a compulsion to conduct research work for university professors and students. Interviewee number 9 states: “Unfortunately, the main approach of universities is how many articles have been published. To raise his rank in the Ministry of Science, he puts pressure and stress on faculty members and students” (Similar cases: codes 1, 2, 5, and 12).

4-1-2-2-3-Education-orientedness of universities: According to professors, in universities, the main attention is on the educational aspect of academic activities, and this causes the reduction of professors' research activities. Interviewee number 10 believes: “The country's higher education centers, especially in the field of humanities, are highly education-oriented. It is evident that the research dimension among the academicians of this scientific field is weak”.

4-1-2-2-4-Organizations' lack of attention to research: According to the professors' statements, it seems that organizations consider research among the less important and unnecessary matters in their structure. Interviewee number 7 explains: “For example, in our field of work, which is the field of literature, universities, and departments see themselves as not needing

research, and they usually see themselves as sufficient in these matters” (Similar cases: codes 1, 4, 6, 9, and 11).

4-1-2-3-Challenges related to publications and projects

A researcher also faces challenges in the stage of sending research to publications and creating projects. According to professors, the challenges in this field are:

4-1-2-3-1-Lack of number and variety in publications: According to professors, thematic variety and number of publications are low, and this has created a challenge for researchers. Interviewee number 1 explains this issue regarding students: “The number of academic publications has become extremely small, and in most of the country's academic fields, there is no logical proportion between the number of students and the number of publications” (Similar cases: code 1).

4-1-2-3-2-Longness of the process of acceptance of articles: Based on the professors' views, the process of review and acceptance of articles by publications is very long, and this has created intellectual and mental concerns for researchers. Interviewee number 10 states: “Delay in accepting or publishing an article and waiting and fearing the rejection of an article are important concerns of researchers.” (Similar cases: codes 1 and 2).

4-1-2-3-3-The dominance of personal relationships in the acceptance and publication of articles: It seems that in some publications, personal relationships are superior to the criteria of magazines; as interviewee number 5 explains: “A researcher may be hardly able to publish the output of his research; while another researcher performs the same action in a very short time and solely based on relationships and bargaining power with the magazine” (Similar cases: codes 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, and 12).

4-1-2-3-4-The lack of competence of reviewers and the rule of personal relationships in handing over a research project: According to the interviewees, the non-specialist process of reviewing research works can also be seen in research projects. Interviewee number 12 explains: “The process of carrying out research works in many organizations is based on relationships and friendship and things that are against the rules. Are the design reviewers qualified to judge the quality of designs?” (Similar cases: codes 4, 5, 6, and 11).

4-1-2-4-Social challenges

In addition to the cases related to organizations and universities, researchers also face challenges in the field of society's dealings with them. The challenges in this field, according to the professors' lived experiences, are:

4-1-2-4-1-Absence of study and learning culture: Based on the interviewees, one of the main reasons for the weak spirit of research is the low level of study culture in the general society. Interviewee number 12 believes: “In a culture where there is no search for learning, there is no need for research since everyone considers themselves to be the common sense” (Similar cases: code 10).

4-1-2-4-2-Certificate orientation: It seems that attention to getting a degree in educational systems is one of the factors that hinders the growth of the spirit of research. Interviewee number 10 believes: “The country's education system mainly delivers a student to the university who, although he has studied well, has not developed a scientific and critical spirit in him”.



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4-1-2-4-3-Undervaluation of research: According to the statements of the interviewees, researchery and research are considered to be of little importance in society. Interviewee number 7 states: "There is a kind of confrontation with researchers as if scientific work is useless." (Similar cases: codes 1, 9, and 12).

4-1-2-4-4-Emergence of pseudo-researchers: Based on the interviewees, the presence of people who are nominally researchers and in practice do not have much ability in this field, has caused the inappropriate introduction of researchers to society. Interviewee number 12 states: "Everywhere you go, some people claim research work, and some claim authorship and so on; but they don't know anything".

4-2-Solutions

Considering the various challenges in the field of research in human sciences, professors have presented solutions to overcome the challenges.

4-2-1- Individual solutions

The professors have suggested solutions to the researchers to reduce and overcome the various challenges of the research process.

4-2-1-1-Ethical and mental solutions

In the field of increasing the researcher's spirit, which can be done by the researchers themselves, the professors have proposed solutions which include:

4-2-1-1-1-Observance of the principles of professional research ethics: In addition to the knowledge of conducting research, researchers also need to have research ethics. Interviewee number 9 explains: "Researchers must have the spirit and ethics of research, they must be humble, some are proud" (Similar cases: codes 2, 6, and 12).

4-2-1-1-2-Maintaining the spirit of research: Research is a field full of many diverse challenges, but researchers need to be steadfast in this direction. In this regard, interviewee number 9 advises: "Despite the problems ahead, the researcher should maintain the spirit of research; finally, there are people who know the value of his work".

4-2-1-1-3-Targeting and applying research: Conducting applied research is one of the actions that researchers can perform to improve the status of research in society. Regarding this, interviewee number 11 also believes: "It is possible to maintain the value of research by applying the results." (Similar cases: codes 1, 6, 8, 9, and 12).

4-2-1-1-4-Conducting targeted and applied research: By carrying out applied research, researchers conduct research to make the research status better. In this regard, interviewee number 11 also believes: "It is probable to keep the research value by implementing the outcomes" (Similar cases: codes 1, 6, 8, 9, and 12).

4-2-1-2-Knowledge and skill solutions

In the context of increasing the level of knowledge and skills of researchers, solutions have been proposed which include:

4-2-1-2-1-Creative and analytical thinking: According to professors, the researcher, must enhance the skills of criticism, creation, and creativity. Interviewee number 12 states: "He has a level of analytical skills and creative and critical thinking that can identify the vacuums and see the shortcomings." (Similar cases: Code 9).

4-2-1-2-2-Increase the level of study of researchers: In the view of interviewees, study and awareness are one of the main needs of the researchers. In this regard, the number 9 interviewee also believes: “It is necessary to update himself or herself in terms of study”.

4-2-1-2-3-Familiarity with scientific languages: According to professors, mastering the languages used in the scientific world is one of the main needs to enhance the quality of researchers. Interviewer number 9 states: “The researcher is fluent not only in English but also in two or three languages”.

4-2-1-2-4-Familiarity with research software: Based on the professors’ views, researchers must be proficient in working with computers and research tools. Interviewee number 9 also believes: “One of the needs is computer and software”.

4-2-2-Solutions related to the research environment

In addition to providing suggestions to researchers, the professors have proposed solutions in the fields of support, the attitude of organizations, changes in the approach of magazines and publications, and the social context.

4-2-2-1-Supporting solutions

The solutions of professors in the field of supporting researchers are:

4-2-2-1-1-Financial and economic support: To reduce the obstacles in the path of research and the desire of researchers to research, it is necessary to provide them with the necessary economic support; as interviewee number 7 suggests: “Financially support the researchers in such a way that the researcher, lovingly, dedicates his life to the research work” (Similar cases: codes 1, 9, and 11).

4-2-2-1-2-Providing suitable facilities: By providing suitable research facilities, the ground for the effective activity of researchers is provided. Interviewee number 9 states: “For example, every researcher should have a secretary and have their research room”.

4-2-2-1-3-Access to appropriate information sources: It is suggested to provide access to reliable, universal, and original sources for researchers. Interviewee number 8 also points out: “Easy and free access to information resources should be provided for researchers.” (Similar cases: code 5).

4-2-2-2-Solutions related to the attitude of organizations and universities

The solutions of the professors in the field of changing the way of looking and interaction of the university and various organizations with research and researchers are:

4-2-2-2-1-Paying attention to the quality versus the number of articles: One of the solutions that plays an important role in improving the status of research and research in society is to pay attention to the quality of research instead of the number of articles by researchers. Interviewee number 5 believes: “The reins of symbolic and merely award-winning researches should be pulled and limited to researches resulting in useful and applied science.” (Similar cases: code 2).

4-2-2-2-2-Assignment of educational matters instead of research work: The interviewees have suggested that instead of forcing professors to do research work, educational matters should be considered for them. Interviewee number 1 states: “Many professors are not interested in research; for such people, consider other jobs such as teaching”.





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4-2-2-2-3-Reviewing the curriculum of the universities: According to the interviewees, to reduce the challenges of the research path, it is necessary to start solving the problem from the universities. Interviewee number 12 believes: "Revising the curricula is one of the solutions. For example, in Farhangian University, when you see the course content, in my opinion, the position of research is very low." (Similar cases: code 2).

4-2-2-2-4-Researcher's presence in important decisions: According to the interviewees, by asking the opinions of researchers in important decisions, their position in society can be improved. Regarding this, interviewee number 12 suggests: "My suggestion is that a researcher should be present in different departments and institutions for important decisions, even if he does not have an official relationship with that institution if a decision is made, it should be done in consultation with the researcher".

4-2-2-3-Solutions related to publications

In the field of publications, solutions have also been suggested, which include:

4-2-2-3-1-Monitoring the process of printing and accepting articles: One of the solutions that was repeatedly expressed by professors is monitoring the process of accepting and printing articles. Interviewee number 3 suggests: "Prevent the exclusivity of some magazines to publish articles by relatives or famous researchers, and provide the ground for the presence of young and elite researchers". (Similar cases: codes 2, 5, 10, 11, and 12).

4-2-2-3-2-Increasing the number of journals: The interviewees have suggested that the number of journals available to researchers should be increased. Interviewee number 3 suggests: "Despite the strictness in rating scientific research journals, efforts should be made to increase their number".

4-2-2-3-3-Double-blinding the method of accepting the research plan: One of the proposals that can be seriously considered in the field of research plans is to double-blind the research plan review process. In this regard, interviewee number 12 believes: "In different executive bodies, as in the process of reviewing articles, a research team of industry experts should review the proposals anonymously".

4-2-2-4-Social solutions

In addition to the change in the style of support and the way organizations look at researchers, there is also a change in researchers themselves. There is, a need to improve the way society interacts with researchers. The professors' suggestions in this regard are:

4-2-2-4-1-Creating the ground for the training of research people: To achieve a researcher-oriented society, it is necessary to provide the ground for people's research from a young age. Interviewee number 9 explains: "Researchers should be researchers from childhood, be curious, wonder, learn dialogue, learn the skills of saying no and criticism, read a lot of books, and work in a group." (Similar cases: codes 10 and 12).

4-2-2-4-2-Raising the position of the researcher in the general society: One of the ways to expand the research culture in society is to raise the position of the researcher. In this regard, interviewee number 9 believes: "Society should be prepared in such a way that if a person is a researcher, they will respect his work and accept it as a job." (Similar cases: codes 11 and 12).

5-Discussion and Conclusion

In response to the first question, the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors in research in the field of humanities, how do they explain the challenges of this field? The analysis of professors' lived experiences showed that the research challenges of professors are not limited to a specific field; rather, these challenges can be seen both in the individual sphere and in the organizational and social environment of people. In previous studies, Hosseini et al. (2023) pointed out the existence of research challenges in various areas of health, and Ramezani et al. (2018) pointed out challenges in such areas at Farhangian University. The current research showed that In the research process, the mentality that researchers have towards the research work, disinterest, belief, and use of unethical methods, in addition to the fact that it may challenge the research process for the researcher, it can also be challenging for other researchers and prevent to fulfill the research goals of others. Besides that, not having the basic knowledge of research and the additional skills required for research is a challenging factor for researchers; As Sitompul and Anditasari (2022) pointed out about master's students.

However, there are factors beyond the control of the researcher that make the researcher's research process challenging. These challenges play a role in several dimensions and at various stages before the implementation of the research, in the research process, and after its completion. According to the professors, many researchers do not receive the necessary material and spiritual support from society and various institutions at different stages of research work. Ashrafi-Rizi et al. (2018) also pointed out the economic problems of researchers in the field of health in Iran; Therefore, these support challenges are not limited only to the field of humanities, and it is a problem that different researchers are facing. It was also pointed out in the current research that organizations and departments do not attach importance to the research work of individuals and that research is done as a symbolic work; The case that Safarpour et al. (2022) also mentioned regarding the challengingness of the regulations for the promotion of academic staff for research work. Also, researchers face non-scientific processes in the stage of publication and acceptance of research articles. All these cases show that the research process is facing multi-dimensional and multi-level obstacles on its way. In this regard, Kamalakannan (2024) in India, Elgamri et al. (2024) regarding Arab researchers of Middle Eastern Arab countries, Rasuli and Shahriari (2021) regarding the challenges of humanities research in Iran, and Veisani and Delpisheh (2019) regarding Obstacles and problems of research in the field of Iranian medical sciences from the point of view of faculty members, research experts and students have pointed out similar challenges with the current research findings in different fields.. Therefore, these challenges are evident not only in Iran and the field of humanities, but also in other countries and other fields. Based on the research findings and existing backgrounds, the future of the research process in the field of humanities will be challenging, especially for Farhangian University professors. Therefore, it is necessary to review the research process in the field of humanities. It is suggested to carry out such research from the point of view of professors of various universities in the country and other research fields in which research challenges have not yet been identified.

In response to the second question of the research, what solutions do the lived experiences of Farhangian University professors in research in the field of humanities show for the challenges of this field? The professors presented



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solutions in the two areas of individual solutions and solutions related to the organizational and social environment. As in the research of Ramezani et al. (2018), the solutions were presented in several dimensions. In the individual field, suggestions such as having a spirit of research, observing research ethics, acquiring knowledge related to research, etc., were presented by the professors. It seems that strengthening the scientific abilities of researchers is essential. Individual cases are at the discretion of the researchers; Therefore, researchers themselves can play a role in reducing the challenges in the path of research and do not simply assign the solution of all challenges to things beyond their control.

However, in the context of the researcher's research and social environment, solutions were suggested that need to be considered by the society and the founders of research and publications, including providing financial support to researchers, a matter that Ashrafi-Rizi et al. (2018) With research in the field of health, they had pointed out. Also, a special place for the researcher should be considered in every organization, the guidelines for improving the scientific level of people should be revised, the level of supervision of the work process of publications and referees should be increased, and in general, it should be tried to create a suitable field for the development of researchers at the society level. to be provided The cases mentioned by Elgamri et al. (2024) regarding the Arab researchers of the Arab countries of the Middle East and Daryapour et al. (2020) regarding strengthening the spirit of research in schools. In general, the analysis of solutions shows that to overcome the challenges of research in the field of human sciences, it is necessary not only to have people called researchers; Rather, he nurtured the whole society with a spirit of research, so that even if people themselves are not involved in doing research work at the academic level; But show interest in the results of scientific researches and cooperation in doing them. In fact, in addition to the researcher, society needs to be concerned, and this work requires policy-making at the macro level of education and training. According to the results of the research, it is suggested that to create a society interested in research, appropriate groundwork should be done, and material and spiritual support should be considered for the researchers in different fields so that they can do research with more motivation. Because in most research, as well as the current research, the lack of sufficient support for researchers was pointed out.

This research is innovative from the point of view of examining the views of Farhangian University professors in the field of humanities; Because in previous researches, the challenges of researching in different scientific fields and universities were examined, and also the challenges of researching in the field of humanities were examined; But none of them had specifically investigated the challenges from the point of view of educators. These professors are responsible for the training of future teachers, and they face research and educational conditions different from those at other universities in the country. Because there is a possibility of teaching these professors both in other universities and in schools, they face more diverse research environments.

Considering that the findings of this research are limited to the views of the professors of Farhangian University of Kurdistan regarding the challenges of research in the field of humanities; Therefore, there is a possibility that conducting such research with the research community of professors of other universities as well as other cultural universities of the country will show different results. In addition, the findings are related to the challenges of the field of humanities for Farhangian University professors and do not include other fields or all professors.

Access to professors who were willing to cooperate, as well as the lack of time of the participants, were among other limitations of the study.

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