

## Efficiency And Effectiveness of Theses and Dissertations in The Field of Higher Education in Solving the Higher Education Issues and Responding to The National Needs: Obstacles and Solutions

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### ABSTRACT

This study was conducted with the aim of identifying the obstacles of efficiency and effectiveness of theses and dissertations in the field of higher education in solving the higher education issues and responding to the national needs, and also providing solutions to remove those obstacles. This applied research used the qualitative method of content analysis and the Delphi technique. The data collection tools were interviews and questionnaires obtained from the content analysis of the interviews. The participants were experts in the field of higher education, including academic staff members and higher education managers, and graduates of higher education fields. In the Delphi section, after completing 3 rounds, a consensus was reached regarding the obstacles, as well as the solutions for the efficiency and effectiveness of graduate theses and dissertations in the field of higher education in solving the higher education issues and responding to the national needs. SPSS software was used for data analysis. The results indicate that the existing obstacles for the effectiveness and efficiency of theses and dissertations in the fields of higher education and their solutions are divided into 6 categories. The first category is related to the student and the preparation of theses and dissertations (researcher). The second category is related to the supervisor, advisor, and referee (they are the guiding and monitoring team of the research). The third category is related to the (educational and research) department, faculty and university. In the fourth category, the obstacles and solutions related to the higher education system (extra-academic factors) and in the fifth category, there are factors outside the institution of higher education. Finally, in the sixth category there are obstacles and solutions related to dissertations and theses. Based on the results of the research, among the best solutions for the effectiveness and efficiency of the results of theses and dissertations, includes: strengthening the research capabilities of students and their ethical education, monitoring the completion of reforms requested by referees, and supervisors' and advisors' awareness to the issues and needs of higher education.

**Keywords:** efficiency, effectiveness, thesis, dissertation, higher education, national need.



## Introduction

Universities, as the most prominent scientific organizations, have an important position in the progress and excellence of the society through fulfilling its special mission including education, research and services. The main characteristic and prominent activity of a graduate student in all fields is writing a thesis or dissertation (Amiri et al. 2023). Academic research is expected to solve problems and be efficient and effective. But not using the findings of researches and their application can cause to eliminate all the efforts and costs of the students and the activities of the university and the higher education system. So, this study was conducted with the aim of identifying the obstacles of efficiency and effectiveness of theses and dissertations in the field of higher education in solving the higher education issues and responding to the national needs, and also providing solutions to remove those obstacles.

## Methodology

This applied research used the qualitative method of content analysis and the Delphi technique. The data collection tools were interviews and questionnaires obtained from the content analysis of the interviews. The participants were experts in the field of higher education, including academic staff members and higher education managers (8 individuals), and graduates of higher education fields (3 individuals). In the Delphi section, after completing 3 rounds, a consensus was reached regarding the obstacles, as well as the solutions for the efficiency and effectiveness of graduate theses and dissertations in the field of higher education in solving the higher education issues and responding to the national needs. SPSS software was used for data analysis.

## Findings

The results indicate that the existing obstacles for the effectiveness and efficiency of theses and dissertations in the fields of higher education and their solutions are divided into 6 categories. The first category is related to the student and the preparation of theses and dissertations (researcher). The second category is related to the supervisor, advisor, and referee (they are the guiding and monitoring team of the research). The third category is related to the (educational and research) department, faculty and university. In the fourth category, the obstacles related to the higher education system (extra-academic factors) and in the fifth category, there are factors outside the institution of higher education. Finally, in the sixth category there are obstacles related to dissertations and theses. Based on the results of the research, among the best solutions for the effectiveness and efficiency of the results of theses and dissertations, includes: strengthening the research capabilities of students and their ethical education, monitoring the completion of reforms requested by referees, and supervisors' and advisors' awareness to the issues and needs of higher education.

## Conclusion

The results showed that the main dimension in the field of obstacles of the effectiveness and efficiency of theses and dissertations are in the items related to the internal factors of higher education system, not in the external factors of the university. In the internal factors, the main pillar of the work is the researcher, who is a master's or doctoral student, followed by a team of supervisors, advisors, and referees, who are responsible for the important task of monitoring and guiding students. If a student does not have the necessary research ability or if his research skills is weak, the work results will not be of the necessary quality for efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, a student who does not have the necessary research ability may unconsciously fall into the issues such as failure to research ethics. As a result, the originality and quality of the work will not be suitable for efficiency and effectiveness. Also, when the students are busy with other jobs while conducting the thesis and dissertation, they will not find the adequate opportunity to develop the problem and research. This will directly affect the quality of work. Student's lack of interest in research work is another issue that can affect the pursuit of the research problem as well as the methods and the quality of the research work. Therefore, it can be said that the primary obstacles that are related to the field within the educational system are actually related to the student in preparing theses and dissertations. The researcher, who is the student, must have extensive interaction with his supervisors and advisers while doing his/her thesis or dissertation and

