

FACULTY PROMOTIONS IN MEDICAL TEACHING INSTITUTIONS (MTIS) OF THE KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA - A SWOT ANALYSIS

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Before 2015, the faculty in the teaching hospitals of the province used to be promoted based on tenure and research papers publications. Upon the introduction of health reforms in KP and promulgation of the MTI act 2015, the promotion of faculty in institutes started to include many other competencies apart from tenure and research. This included excellence in teaching, clinical performance, aptitude for personal and professional development, attending continuous medical education (CME) activities, participation in institutional and administrative activities, feedback, and personal reputation.

These promotion rules have been divided into 2 tracks, a regular and a clinical track. In both of these, there are 2 subdivisions, a normal track, and an accelerated track. The standard set for marks in these 2 tracks was set to be 60% and 70% respectively.

It was observed that the clinical track promotions were only meant for clinical faculty, and there were no clear-cut rules for basic sciences faculty attached to medical schools. Another challenge was the incorporation of giving more weightage to those research papers which are published in the impact factor journals while giving only 1/16th of weightage to those papers which are published in Pakistani journals. A few challenges in such cases are lack of research training among the existing faculty, lack of funds for submitting research papers to impact factor journals, and lack of infrastructure for clinical, educational, and public health research in the existing setups. This is one of the most important factors where the faculty is struggling.

There is a perception by the faculty that the basic sciences faculty has been ignored in clinical track promotions. Rather, the amended rules have incorporated that all basic sciences faculty need to have level III qualification (Ph. D) and supervisor-ship of Ph. D students to be promoted to the next position. Challenges for pursuing a doctorate degree include lack of slots in the existing universities, financial challenges, and a ban by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to stop M. Phil and Ph. D training in undergraduate medical institutions except in

universities. Moreover, most of the faculty have already passed the necessary tenure for the current post. This has created unrest in the basic sciences faculty as many faculty have either left the public-sector institutions or planning to leave.

There are many strengths of the new promotion rules in the MTI act. These include awareness of the faculty to excel in personal and professional development, research, participation in institutional services, and ultimately improving the overall educational and clinical environment of the colleges and hospitals. This has created an awareness amongst the faculty that mere tenure and 2-3 research papers in a local journal are not sufficient to promote a faculty to the position of a professor.

Faculty that is promoted on the current criteria will be an asset to the current institutions where they are working. Moreover, such faculty can work in other public and private sector institutions where they can produce more effective young professionals, both undergraduate and postgraduate.

However, it is important to mention that many private sector medical institutions are having an eye on competent faculty who feel these criteria as a hindrance and are looking for a suitable job there. The main reason is that the MTI promotion criteria are not aligned with the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) criteria that are followed in Non-MTI institutions.

The policy board should come up with addressing the challenges faced by the faculty, institutions, and administrators in this regard. Some of these challenges include developing a policy for basic sciences faculty keeping the HEC rules in mind, addressing the issue of impact factor publications, and developing a transparent rubric for clinical track criteria of excellence in education, clinical work, and health service management, as weightage given to this section is unclear and are interpreted differently by different individuals and institutions.

Moreover, the leadership of these MTIs needs to develop trained individuals to guide the departmental and

other promotion committees to guide them in the implementation of the existing criteria. Faculty promoted via these set standards will be an asset for the institution in particular and for the country in general.

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