

## **Leadership and Policy Role on Grants Accessing for Publication at Haramaya University**

Maruf ABDELA ABIBAKER<sup>1</sup>  
Haramaya University

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to examine Leadership and Policy Role on Academia Grants Accessing for Research Publication at Haramaya University. To achieve this objective, an explanatory sequential mixed research design was employed. The sample consisted of 290 academic staff selected by multistage sampling and 12 academic leaders selected by purposive sampling techniques. Data was collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed by linear regression and thematic analysis. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 40.8 discovered that the role of leadership explained 40.8% variance in the accessing research grant with  $F(1,270)=187.958, P<.001$ . The Result indicated that leadership positively predicted accessing research grants ( $B=13.710, P<.001$ ). The R<sup>2</sup> value of 13.9 discovered the policy role predicting 13.9% variance in the accessing research grant with  $F(1,270)=44.887, P<.001$ . The Result indicated that policy role positively predicted accessing research grants ( $B=6.700, P<.001$ ). The study also revealed that the major challenges were a shortage of funds, a lack of technical skills, a few thematic areas preferred by staff, and a limited amount of grants allocated for research and publications. The study, furthermore, identified from document analysis College agriculture has had the most access to 457 Haramaya university grants over the past six years, and college of law has received only one grant in the six-year period. It is recommended for Haramaya University to assess the reasons behind these variations and identify strategies to provide consistent support to all types of grants and thematic areas to ensure equitable access to grants for improving academic staff's research publications.*

### **Keywords**

*Predictive analytics; at-risk students; model; pedagogical interventions; motivation; engagement.*

---

<sup>1</sup> (PhD) candidate College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, Haramaya University, Ethiopia, [asmamaruf804@gmail.com](mailto:asmamaruf804@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Research funding is essential in the academic world, as shown by research carried out by Hottenrott (2017) and Hussinger (2021). In addition, funding has a beneficial effect on the research achievements of both individual researchers and academic institutions. Grants can result in higher scientific productivity and the creation of groundbreaking research, as well as support the publication and sharing of more research (Bloch et al., 2023).

Many African countries allocate less than 1% of their GDP to research and development, which is below the target set by the African Union (Mohamedbhai, 2015). This low investment in R&D is reflected in the limited research output in Africa (Olufadewa et al., 2020). In contrast, Europe, Asia, and North America allocate significantly higher percentages of their GDP to scientific research, while Sub-Saharan Africa only contributes around 0.4% (Olufadewa et al., 2020). This insufficient financial support for research and development acts as a barrier to economic performance and growth in African nations (Simpkin et al., 2020). Similarly, Ethiopian universities also face a similar situation, with research funding accounting for only 1% of their total budget. Unfortunately, the limited resources in developing countries make it challenging for academia to access grants and funding for research publications (Saric et al., 2018). Several studies have shown that Ethiopian higher education institutions (HEIs) prioritize teaching over research (Van Deuren et al., 2016; Yallew, 2020). Despite the growth of the country's higher education system, there has been a disproportionate increase in research output (Van Deuren et al., 2016; Weldemichael, 2014). For instance, Haramaya University (HU), known for its research impact, published only 322 articles in 2020 despite having 1189 academic staff members (Yallew & Dereb, 2021).

Academics at Haramaya University face various obstacles, such as financial limitations, which hinder their research and publishing efforts (Dessie & Mesfin, 2013). Additionally, the growing higher education system in Ethiopia has become more challenging due to insufficient government funding, leading public universities to explore other means of generating income (Feleke, 2015). The distribution of research funds to academia in higher education is a multifaceted and constantly changing issue, particularly within the framework of shifting societal and economic environments (Baporikar, 2023).

Faculty members encounter various challenges when it comes to understanding and accessing grant-related information and funding sources. These challenges include

the need to grasp and adhere to grant application guidelines, addressing unexpected issues, and managing stress during the application process (Abu-Shanab et al., 2020). Effective leadership and policy directives are crucial in addressing this challenge and creating an environment that promotes faculty research. Both formal and informal leadership play significant roles in facilitating academia's access to research grants (Rifqi et al., 2019). Furthermore, Gunn & Mintrom (2017) emphasized the impact of policy on the research process, especially its non-academic effects, and the implications of funding policies on research autonomy. Hallonsten (2012) examined the prevalence of managerialism and the emphasis on excellence in current research policy, particularly in Sweden, resulting in a transition towards strategic profiling and the pursuit of research excellence.

Research leadership is essential for academia's access to research grants, as it significantly influences knowledge creation and dissemination (Rifqi et al., 2019). This is particularly crucial in public universities, where entrepreneurial strategies are increasingly important for establishing new knowledge centers (Hansson, 2008). However, challenges such as inadequate research grant writing skills, lack of information on research grants, and the politicization of proposal reviewer teams can hinder this access (Rifqi et al., 2019).

Research policy plays a crucial role in academia's ability to access grants for research publication. Recent studies have highlighted the significance of policy directives in fostering research excellence and innovation in higher education institutions. For instance, Salimi et al. (2017) investigated the impact of research policies on research output in Ethiopian universities and discovered that universities with effective research policies demonstrated higher levels of research output compared to those without such policies.

The role of leadership and policy directives in academia is significant, especially in accessing research funds at HARAMAYA University in Ethiopia. Limited access to research funds at higher education institutions in the country highlights the importance of exploring the relationship between leadership, policy, and grant access for research publications. This study focuses on the crucial roles of leadership and policy directives in acquiring grants for research publications within the university, aiming to emphasize their significance in promoting research excellence and scholarly contributions at HARAMAYA University.

## 1.1 Research Questions

In order to achieve this goal, the researcher developed the following three research questions in the subsequent manner:

1. Does effective leadership play a significant role in determining academic staff members' access to research grants?
2. Does the influence of institutional policies significantly impact academic staff members' access to grants for research publication?
3. What are the primary challenges encountered by academics at Haramaya University that hinder their ability to secure research grants?

## 2. Theoretical Framework

According to the resource dependence theory, an organization's behaviors depend on the external resources that are available to it and are essential for its survival. This theory has been applied to the funding of higher education by several researchers, including Pilbeam (2012), and Fowles (2014) argues that resource dependence theory provides a powerful framework for understanding the behaviors of public institutions of higher education.

Moreover, Fowles (2014) proposes that the shift from receiving government funding to depending on tuition fees has led to unexpected consequences for public universities as they increasingly rely on this funding source. Resource dependence theory highlights the political aspect of institutions and their engagement with the external resource environment. It is pointed out that higher education institutions need to adjust their objectives and areas of emphasis to align with new priorities and may need to give up some of their interests in order to secure sufficient funding while avoiding potential conflicts.

Nisar (2015) conducted a study using resource dependence theory to investigate the impact of performance-based funding on HEIs. The findings suggest that the success of these policies is connected to the number of financial resources and the degree of dependence of universities on them. However, the study also revealed that the limited portion of state funding associated with performance-based models was insufficient to significantly influence institutional behavior.

### 2.1 Leadership Role on Academia's access to grants for research publication

The landscape of leadership in academia's access to grants for research publication is intricate and constantly changing. Stavrova (2022) emphasizes the evolving role of academic publishing houses in the digital era, highlighting the necessity for open access to scientific information and the safeguarding of intellectual property. Ball (2007) stresses the significance of leadership in academia, particularly in the realm of research, and the requirement for both formal and informal leadership. Hungund (2021) further examines the role of academic leadership in research performance, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and knowledge acquisition. These studies collectively underscore the significance of leadership in navigating the challenges and opportunities associated with accessing grants for research publication.

## **2.2 Policy Role on academia's access to grants for Research and Publication**

The ability of academia to secure grants is greatly affected by research policy, highlighting the significance of societal relevance and impact (Chubb & Reed, 2018). Polster (2007) found that the increasing importance of research grants for Canadian universities and scholars is shaped by federal higher education policy, resulting in shifts in relationships and potential adverse consequences. In Europe, policy is employed to improve the non-academic outcomes of academic research, indicating a move towards economic productivity (Gunn & Mintrom, 2017).

Public higher education institutions' access to research grants is significantly influenced by research policy. Gunn & Mintrom (2017) highlight the crucial role of policy in shaping the academic research process, emphasizing the need to demonstrate research relevance and impact on society. This shift in research focus may potentially overshadow traditional academic value. Ness (2010) also stresses the importance of information and evidence in the policy process, emphasizing the role of intermediary organizations and the necessity for new approaches to the research-policy-practice connection to ensure effective utilization of research in higher education policy-making.

Research policy at public universities significantly impacts academia's access to research grants. Chubb & Reed (2018) emphasize the influence of policy on the academic research process, particularly focusing on non-academic impacts and the effects of funding policies on research freedom. Caraça & Heitor (2000) propose a set of principles for public funding methodology in research universities, highlighting the importance of research activities. Hallonsten (2012) discusses the prevalence of managerialism and excellence in current research policy, especially in Sweden, leading to a shift towards

strategic profiling and the pursuit of research excellence. These studies collectively underscore the influence of research policy on academia's access to grants, with a specific importance on non-academic impacts, funding constraints, and the pursuit of excellence.

### **2.3 Overview of Grants Accessing Challenges**

Research has highlighted several challenges faced by academia in accessing grants at higher education institutions. Anthonia & Ojong (2023). Found that Nigerian lecturers struggle with poor grant writing skills, lack of information, and politicization of proposal review teams. Boyer & Cockriel (2001), identified differences in the views of tenured and non-tenured faculty, with the latter finding the grant submission process intimidating. Daniel (1990) emphasized the need for procedural information, funding source information, and a clearly defined reward system. Albrecht (1992) discussed the impact of government control over university finance, suggesting the use of buffer funding bodies to grant institutions in order to become more autonomous. These studies collectively emphasize the necessity for enhanced grant writing skills, mentorship, and institutional support to address the challenges faced by academia in accessing grants.

### **2.4 Factors influence academia's access to research grants and publication**

A range of factors influence academia's access to research grants and publication. Schroeter & Anders (2017) found that tenure status, professional reputation, and consideration in tenure or promotion decisions are key motivators for grant pursuit. However, junior faculty may find the process intimidating, particularly without a mentor or prior experience. Wood (1990) identified personal characteristics, research styles, and funding dependence as influencing research performance.

Ali et al. (2010) emphasized the impact of scholarly productivity and institutional characteristics, with the latter significantly affecting grant distribution. Similarly, Jung (2017) stressed the significance of age, number of authors, and international collaboration in determining the quality of government-funded research, with effects that differ based on the journal's ranking. A number of studies have identified key barriers to faculty involvement in grant-related activities, including a lack of procedural information, funding source information, and a clearly defined reward system (Boyer, 1998). These barriers are particularly pronounced for junior faculty, who may find the grant submission process intimidating (Boyer, 1998).

There are various factors that can impact the challenges of obtaining grant access, such as institutional, individual, and environmental factors. Institutional factors encompass inadequate support and capacity for grant proposal development within the organization (Aliye, 2019). Individual factors involve limited experience and knowledge about available funding opportunities (Bhattacharya & Basu, 2018). Environmental factors encompass political instability and economic difficulties that may restrict funding opportunities (Khan et al., 2019).

Ethiopia has placed a high priority on improving research infrastructure and capacity while also establishing research universities. The government has made investments in research grants, scholarships, and infrastructure development to support these institutions. Collaboration with international universities and research organizations has been encouraged to facilitate knowledge sharing and joint research endeavors. Nevertheless, the country faces significant obstacles such as limited financial resources, inadequate research infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified faculty members. Overcoming these challenges will require sustained investment and strategic long-term planning to ensure the success of research universities (MoE, 2015, 2020).

### **3. Methods and Materials**

The research used a mixed-methods explanatory sequential approach to investigate how leadership and policy affect academia's access to research grant for publications at Haramaya University. The study involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from 290 academic staff members, 12 leaders from each of the university's 10 colleges, and two directors from the research office (Creswell et al., 2017)..

#### **3.1 Sources of Data**

The main sources of data were the academic staff and leaders, research documents of Haramaya University in 2018/2023 academic year.

#### **3.2 Sampling**

From the list of research universities identified by MoE (2022), namely BaharDar, Makalle, Gonder, Addis Abeba, Haramaya, Hawassa, Jimma, and ArbaMinch, two universities located in the Amhara administrative region (BaharDar and Gonder University) and one university in the Trigray administrative region (Makalle University) were excluded from the study due to security reasons. To ensure representative samples from the total population of five research universities, Haramaya University was selected by using a simple random sampling method, specifically the lottery technique. This method was chosen to provide an equal opportunity for all respondents selected through simple random sampling, as studying the entire population within the limited time and resources was not feasible (Brewer et al., 2019).

In the second step, the researcher used proportional sampling to choose 290 representative samples of academic staff from ten colleges. This was done while taking into account that academic staff at the university are not all spread out in the same way. The study included 290 academic staff members from ten colleges who were chosen through proportionate stratified random sampling techniques. Additionally, ten leaders from ten colleges and two directors from the research office were purposefully selected for the semi-structured interview. They are rich in experience as they are leading the program at the college level and the university's facilities-related research grants and publications.

### **3.3 Tools of Data collection**

This study used questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews to gather information from 290 academic staff and 12 leaders about the obstacles they faced in obtaining research publication grants. The interviews allowed participants to freely express their thoughts, and thematic analysis was used to identify common themes. The questionnaire, using a five-point Likert scale, assessed the challenges faced by academic staff when accessing grants, considering factors such as leadership, demographics, academic experience, and personal factors. The scale items were carefully selected for comprehensive coverage and accurate comparison of data.

### **3.4 Reliability and Validity**

Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher conducted a small-scale analysis on 25 academic staff members to assess the reliability of the questionnaire items. The items related to personal attributes had a reliability score of 0.32, while the items exploring the



role of leadership in accessing grants had a reliability score of 0.84. The items assessing policy roles had a reliability score of 0.88. Additionally, the items investigating the challenges that influence academic staff in accessing grants had a reliability score of 0.64, and the items specifically related to grants from Haramaya University had a reliability score of 0.89. The overall reliability alpha coefficient for all items was calculated to be 0.84.

To ensure content validity, three researchers or PhD students who had studied at Haramaya University and had experience in competing for grants reviewed the questionnaire. Any ambiguous or confusing items, such as those related to individual factors, were eliminated through discussions and debates.

#### 4. Results

In this section, the researchers analyze and present leadership and policy role on accessing grants for research publications by academia at Ethiopian higher education focusing in Haramaya University. The qualitative data from interviews and questionnaires, along with quantitative data based on three research questions, are used to discuss.

**Table 1:** *Leadership Role on academic Staffs on Accessing HU grants*

| Model | Variable               | B      | SE    | Beta | t      | Sig  |
|-------|------------------------|--------|-------|------|--------|------|
|       | Constant               | 15.221 | 1.801 |      | 8.442  | .000 |
|       | Role of leadership     | .598   | 0,44  |      | 13.710 | .000 |
|       | R=0.64                 |        |       |      |        |      |
|       | R <sup>2</sup> =40.8   |        |       |      |        |      |
|       | F(1,270)=187.958,P<001 |        |       |      |        |      |

Dependent Variable: Grant

Note.\*P<0.05, LR: Leadership Role, HU: Haramaya university Grant Access

The table 1 indicates the role of leadership in predicting academia accessing research at Haramaya university. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 40.8 discovered that the role of leadership explained 40.8% variance in the accessing research grant with F (1,270)=187.958, P<.001. The Result indicated that leadership positively predicted accessing research grants (B=13.710, P<.001).

The regression analysis in Table 1 examined the role of leadership in predicting academia's access to research at Haramaya University. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 40.8 indicates that the leadership role variable explained 40.8% of the variance in accessing research grants.

The regression equation was found to be statistically significant, with an F-value of  $F(1, 270) = 187.958$  and a p-value less than 0.001.

Specifically, the results indicated that the leadership role positively predicted accessing research grants, with a coefficient of ( $B = 40.8$  and a p-value less than 0.001). The constant term in the model was also statistically significant, with a coefficient of ( $B = 15.221$  and a p-value of 0.00).

These findings suggest that leadership plays a significant role in facilitating academia's access to research grants at Haramaya University. The positive coefficient indicates that as the leadership role increases, there is a corresponding increase in the likelihood of accessing research grants.

**Table 2:** Policy role on academic Staffs on Accessing HU grant

| Model | Variables              | B      | SE    | Beta | T      | Sig  |
|-------|------------------------|--------|-------|------|--------|------|
|       | Constant               | 28.569 | 1.694 |      | 16.866 | .000 |
|       | Role of policy         | 0.317  | 0.47  |      | 6.700  | .000 |
|       | R=.0378                |        |       |      |        |      |
|       | R <sup>2</sup> =13.9   |        |       |      |        |      |
|       | F(1,270)=44.887,P<.001 |        |       |      |        |      |

Dependent variable: Research grant

Note.\*P<0.05, PR: Policy Role; HU: Haramaya university Grant Access

The table 2 indicated that the role of policy predicts academia accessing grants for research at Haramaya university. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 13.9 discovered the policy role predicting 13.9% variance in the accessing research grant with  $F(1,270)=44.887, P<.001$ . The Result indicated that policy role positively predicted accessing research grants ( $B=6.700, P<.001$ ).

The regression analysis in Table 2 examined the role of policy in predicting academia's access to grants for research at Haramaya University. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 13.9 indicates that the policy role variable predicted 13.9% of the variance in accessing research grants. The regression equation was found to be statistically significant, with an F-value of  $F(1, 270) = 44.887$  and a p-value less than 0.001.

Specifically, the results indicated that the policy role positively predicted accessing research grants, with a coefficient of ( $B = 6.700$  and a p-value less than 0.001). The constant term in the model was also statistically significant, with a coefficient of ( $B = 6.700$  and a p-value of 0.00).

These findings suggest that policy plays a significant role in predicting academia's access to grants for research at Haramaya University. The positive coefficient indicates

that as the policy role increases, there is a corresponding increase in the likelihood of accessing research grants.

#### **4.1 Major challenges faced by academics to access research grants**

Regarding “major challenges faced by academics to access research grants “from academics leaders most of the interviewees said the following:

*As the majority of the interviewees the main challenges for academic staff are in obtaining research grants, which have created a lack of funding for research, a lack of technical expertise in writing proposals, a lack of oral presentation skills for academic staff members, a lack of incentives for academic staff members who conduct research, a lack of facilities for conducting research, overlaps in goals between different colleges, bias in favoring some disciplines, and a lack of policy in the particular field( R1,R3,R4,5,R6,R8.R10,12/10/2022) .*

The interviewers’ narrated challenges faced by academic staff when it comes to obtaining research grants in the university in the following ways identified the key challenges:

**Lack of funding for research:** This refers to the insufficient financial support available for academic staff to conduct research projects, hindering their ability to pursue innovative studies.

**Lack of technical expertise in writing proposals:** Academic staff may struggle with the technical aspects of preparing research grant proposals, such as crafting compelling narratives and addressing the specific requirements of funding bodies.

**Lack of oral presentation skills for academic staff members:** Effective communication of research findings is crucial for securing research grants. Academic staff may face challenges in presenting their work convincingly during grant application processes .**Lack of incentives for academic staff members who conduct research:** The absence of appropriate rewards or recognition for engaging in research activities can motivate academic staff from pursuing research opportunities .**Lack of facilities for conducting research:** Inadequate access to research facilities and resources can impede the progress of academic staff in conducting high-quality research projects.

**Overlaps in goals between different colleges:** Differences in research priorities and objectives among various academic departments or colleges can lead to conflicting interests and hinder collaborative research efforts .**Bias in favoring some disciplines:** Certain academic disciplines may receive preferential treatment or greater support in

terms of research funding, leading to disparities in opportunities for academic staff across different fields. Lack of policy in the particular field: The absence of clear guidelines or policies within a specific research field can create uncertainty and obstacles for academic staff in navigating the grant application process effectively.

Furthermore, according to the report, although some departments provided that the majority of interviewees replied about the challenges that encounter the academic staff accessing the grant for research, a lack of budget, a lack of experience, a lack of coordination among the academic staff, no attention given to research by the academic staff, and a lack of coordinated response from the leaders of the university become problems for the academic staff not engaging in the research activities. It is worth noting that academic staff from the Sport Academy and School of Law did not have any experience competing for and winning HU grants in 2019 and 2020 for unknown reasons.

Haramaya University in Ethiopia has encountered difficulties in securing grants for research publications, which are essential for fostering research excellence and innovation. In response to this issue, a research office was established in 2014, and strategic priorities were identified and aligned with national policies (HU Research Thematic Areas, 2014). A research fund is based on thematic areas of priority, as shown in tables 3.

**Table 3:** *Status of Colleges Access to Haramaya University Grant*

| No | College | Status  | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | HU grant |
|----|---------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| 1  | CAES    | Applied | 73   | 72   | 83   | 79   | 76   | 74   | 457      |
|    |         | Awarded | 36   | 26   | 29   | 17   | 11   | 9    | 128      |
| 2  | CBE     | Applied | 9    | 20   | 6    | 7    | 9    | 4    | 55       |
|    |         | Awarded | 4    | 5    | 1    | 2    | 3    | 2    | 17       |
| 3  | CCI     | Applied | 9    | 13   | 8    | 10   | 16   | 11   | 67       |
|    |         | Awarded | 5    | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 20       |
| 4  | CEBS    | Applied | 0    | 5    | 7    | 4    | 6    | 3    | 25       |
|    |         | Awarded | 0    | 1    | 2    | 0    | 2    | 1    | 6        |
| 5  | CHMS    | Applied | 52   | 44   | 31   | 28   | 26   | 34   | 215      |
|    |         | Awarded | 13   | 5    | 7    | 8    | 4    | 9    | 46       |
| 6  | CNCS    | Applied | 35   | 21   | 24   | 19   | 27   | 21   | 147      |
|    |         | Awarded | 12   | 5    | 7    | 4    | 6    | 4    | 38       |
| 7  | CSSH    | Applied | 11   | 10   | 12   | 14   | 11   | 10   | 68       |

|    |                             |         |     |     |     |     |     |     |      |
|----|-----------------------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
|    |                             | Awarded | 3   | 3   | 4   | 6   | 3   | 2   | 21   |
| 8  | COL                         | Applied | 0   | 0   | 3   | 0   | 2   | 0   | 5    |
|    |                             | Awarded | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 1    |
| 9  | CVM                         | Applied | 17  | 24  | 14  | 12  | 16  | 13  | 96   |
|    |                             | Awarded | 8   | 4   | 4   | 5   | 7   | 4   | 32   |
| 10 | IOT                         | Applied | 21  | 32  | 19  | 23  | 16  | 19  | 130  |
|    |                             | Awarded | 6   | 6   | 6   | 7   | 4   | 8   | 37   |
|    | Total of six years Hu grant | Applied | 218 | 241 | 207 | 196 | 205 | 189 | 1265 |
|    |                             | Awarded | 87  | 56  | 62  | 52  | 45  | 44  | 346  |

Source: HU Research Grant and partnership Report of 2018 and 2023

Please find the abbreviations in Table 3 accordingly: CAES: College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies; CBE: College of Business and Economics; CHMS: College of Health and Medical Science; CNCS: College of Natural Computing Science; CSSH: College of Social Science and Humanity; COL: College of Law; CVM: College of Veterinary Medicine; CCI: College of Computing and Informatics; and IOT: Institute of Technology.

Table 3 shows the number of grants received by different colleges over the past six years. The College of Agriculture and Environmental Science (CAES) received the highest number of grants with 457, followed by the College of Health and Medical Science (CHMS) with 215 grants. On the other hand, the College of Education and Behavioral Science (CEBS) received only six grants, making it the college with the lowest number of grants. The College of Law (COL) received just one grant in the same period.

There has been a decline in the number of applied and awarded grants over the years. In 2023, only 45 grants were awarded, compared to 87 in 2019. This decrease could be attributed to a reduction in available funds or a decrease in the number of eligible applicants. Colleges should analyze their performance to improve their chances of accessing grants from HU. This includes enhancing research capabilities, fostering collaboration, and identifying priority research areas. Data shows that many academic staff members at the university face challenges in securing HU research grants, indicating unequal opportunities. Universities play a vital role in providing research funding, creating research-based learning environments, mentoring researchers, and facilitating the development of new knowledge (Banal-Estañol et al., 2023).

Finally, from document analysis, the researcher observed that some thematic areas and grant types had higher demand and approval rates in certain years, while others

experienced decline. The College of Agriculture and Environmental Science (CAES) has had the most access to HU grants in the six-year period, and the total number of grants has been decreasing over the years, with only 45 grants awarded in 2023 compared to 87 grants in 2019 at Haramaya University.

## 5. Discussion

HU grant preference for certain disciplines: The analysis indicates that there is a significant difference in grant preferences between different disciplines at Haramaya University ( $F = 2.675$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This suggests that certain disciplines may have a higher likelihood of receiving research grants compared to others.

This finding aligns with recent literature on the challenges of accessing research grants from academia. A study by Höylä et al. (2016) found that grant allocation processes often favor certain disciplines due to various factors, such as funding priorities, research trends, and institutional strategies. This can create disparities in grant opportunities for researchers from different disciplines. In addition, a study by Abet and Lehal (2019) investigated the influence of leadership support on research grant accessibility among academic staff in Ethiopian universities. The findings revealed that supportive leadership, characterized by active engagement, provision of resources, and encouragement of research activities, significantly enhanced the ability of academic staff to access research grants.

HU grant preference for group researchers: The analysis also reveals a significant difference in grant preferences between group researchers and individual projects at Haramaya University ( $F = 1.604$ ,  $p = .043$ ). This suggests that the university's grant allocation process may be more inclined towards supporting group research efforts than individual projects.

This finding is consistent with the findings of a recent study by Lyall et al. (2013), which highlighted the increasing emphasis on collaborative research and interdisciplinary projects in grant funding decisions. The study noted that funding agencies and institutions often prioritize projects that involve multiple researchers working together, as they are perceived to have a higher potential for impact and knowledge exchange.

Furthermore, leadership is widely acknowledged as a critical factor in enhancing research performance (Evans, 2014). It encompasses both formal and informal leadership, as well as self-leadership and relationship patterns (Evans, 2014). The research policies

implemented by public universities play a significant role in determining the availability of grants for academic research. The research highlighted that proactive leadership involvement, coupled with supportive policy frameworks, positively affected the ability of academic staff to access research grants. This suggests that a combination of effective leadership and well-crafted policies is essential for addressing grant acquisition challenges.

Overall, these results show the problems academics have getting research grants at Haramaya University, such as biases based on discipline and a preference for group research projects. It is important for leaders of institutions to be aware of these challenges and advocate for a fair and inclusive grant allocation process.

## **6. Implications**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the present study has the following implication.

- Effective leaders foster innovation and promote knowledge pursuit within organizations. They equip researchers with tools, funding, and support while facilitating collaboration and networking. This cultivates a culture of research and development, contributing to the university's growth and success.
- A strong policy role is important for securing grants, funding, and resources to support research and publication activities. Additionally, efforts should be made to improve policy awareness of researchers as to how to access grants at university levels, encourage diversity in research topics, and increase the number of grants available for research and publications.
- It highlights the importance of establishing a supportive institutional framework that enables researchers and organizations to effectively access and utilize grant opportunities provided by higher education institutions.

## **Data Availability**

On request, the correspondent author will provide the datasets that were used to support the study's conclusions.

## **Conflicts of interest**

As a correspondent author, I hereby declare that I am not involved in any financial or personal ties.

## References

- Abu-Shanab, E. A., Samara, J., & Ayari, M. A. (2020). Challenges facing faculty members when Using a learning management system. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education (IJICTE)*, 16(4), 35-47. [https://www. DOI: 10.4018/IJICTE.2020100103](https://www.doi.org/10.4018/IJICTE.2020100103).
- Albrecht, D., & Ziderman, A. (1992). *Funding Mechanisms for Higher Education: Financing for Stability, Efficiency, and Responsiveness*. World Bank Discussion Papers. World Bank, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED344518>
- Ali, M. M., Bhattacharyya, P., & Olejniczak, A. J. (2010). The effects of scholarly productivity and institutional characteristics on the distribution of federal research grants. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 81(2), 164-178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2010.11779047>
- Aliye, A. A. (2019). The challenges of management research in Africa: A study of selected Ethiopian higher education institutions. *African Journal of Business Management*, 13(14), 456-464. <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJBM2019.8753>
- Anthonia, L., & Ojong, E. A. (2023). Assessment of lecturer's access to research grants in Nigerian Universities. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2023.19.1.1463>
- Ball, S. (2007). Leadership of academics in research. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 35(4), 449-477. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143207081058>
- Banal-Estañol, A., Jofre-Bonet, M., Iori, G., Maynou, L., Tumminello, M., & Vassallo, P. (2023). Performance-based research funding: Evidence from the largest natural experiment worldwide. *Research Policy*, 52(6), 104780. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2023.104780>
- Baporikar, N. (2023). Critical Issues Influencing Higher Education Systems in Emerging Countries. In *Improving Higher Education Models Through International Comparative Analysis* (pp. 169-180). IGI Global. [https:// doi: 10.4018/978-1-66847327-6.ch010](https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-66847327-6.ch010)
- Bhattacharya, S., & Basu, A. (2018). Grant Writing: Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Countries. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(16), 53-57. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1293015.pdf>
- Bloch, C., Kladakis, A., & Sørensen, M. P. (2023). Size matters! On the implications of increasing the size of research grants. In *Handbook of Public Funding of Research* (pp. 123-138). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800883086.00014>.
- Boyack, K. W., & Börner, K. (2003). Indicator-assisted evaluation and funding of research: Visualizing the influence of grants on the number and citation counts of research papers. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 54(5), 447-461. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.10230>




- Boyer, P. G., & Cockriel, I. (2001). Grant performance of junior faculty across disciplines: Motivators and barriers. *Journal of research administration*, 2(1), 19. <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA80350493&sid>
- Brewer, D. J., & Hunter, A. B. (2019). *Foundations of Multimethod Research: Synthesizing Styles*. Sage Publications. <https://books.google.com.et/books>
- Caraça, J., Conceicao, P., & Heitor, M. V. (2000). Towards a public policy for the research University in Portugal. *Higher Education Policy*, 13(2), 181-201.
- Chubb, J., & Reed, M. S. (2018). The politics of research impact: academic perceptions of the Implications for research funding, motivation and quality. *British Politics*, 13, 295-311. [The politics of research impact: academic perceptions of the implications for research funding, motivation and quality | British Politics \(springer.com\)](https://www.springer.com/journal/11344/issue/13)
- Daniel, L. G., & Gallaher, I. (1990). Impediments to faculty involvement in grant-related activities: A case study. *Journal of the Society of Research Administrators*, 22(2), 5-14. <https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA9280578&sid>
- Dessie, Y., & Mesfin, F. (2013). Researchers' challenges: findings from in-depth interview among Academicians in Haramaya University, Ethiopia. *Herald Journal of Education and General Studies*, 2(2), 69-71. <http://www.heraldjournals.org/hjega/archive.htm>
- Evans, L. (2014). What is effective research leadership? A research-informed perspective. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(1), 46-58 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2013.864617>
- Feldman, M. S., & Khademian, A. M. (2002). To manage is to govern. *Public Administration Review*, 62(5), 541-554. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6210.00236>
- Feleke, K. M. (2015). Revenue diversification strategies in Ethiopian higher education system: A Brief reflection. *Bahir Dar Journal of Education*, 15(1). <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/bdje/article/view/249050>
- Fowles, J. (2014). Funding and focus: Resource dependence in public higher education. *Research in Higher Education*, 55(3), 272-287. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11162-013-9311>
- Gunn, A., & Mintrom, M. (2017). Evaluating the non-academic impact of academic research Design considerations. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 39(1), 20-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2016.1254429>
- Hallonsten, O., & Silander, C. (2012). Commissioning the University of Excellence: Swedish research policy and new public research funding programmes. *Quality in Higher Education*, 18(3), 367-381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2012.730715>
- Hansson, F., & Mønsted, M. (2008). Research leadership as entrepreneurial organizing for Research. *Higher Education*, 55, 651-670. [Research leadership as entrepreneurial organizing for research | Higher Education \(springer.com\)](https://www.springer.com/journal/11344/issue/55).
- Haramaya University, Facts and Figures. (2019). Haramaya University Press. [Facts and Figures – HU \(haramaya.edu.et\)](https://www.haramaya.edu.et)
- Haramaya University, Haramaya University Research Policy. (2014). Haramaya University.

<http://researchaffairs.haramaya.edu.et> > 2017/09

- Hottenrott, H., & Lawson, C. (2017). Fishing for complementarities: Research grants and research Productivity. *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, 51, 1-38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijindorg.2016.12.004>
- Hungund, S., Annigeri, A. R., Pandey, I., & Hiremath, G. (2022). Academic leadership and Research performance: a study among engineering academicians in emergin nations. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 36(1), 81-94. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-04-2021-0169>
- Hussinger, K., & Carvalho, J. N.(2022).The long-term effect of research grants on the scientific Output of university professors. *Industry and Innovation*, 29(4), 463-487. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13662716.2021.1990023>
- Hussinger, K., & Carvalho, J. N.(2022).The long-term effect of research grants on the scientific Output of university professors. *Industry and Innovation*, 29(4), 463-487. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/taf/indinn/v29y2022i4p463-487.html>
- Jung,H.,Seo, I., Kim, J., & Kim, B. K.(2017).Factors affecting government-funded research quality. *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation*, 25(3), 447-469. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.20113.92008>
- Khan, M. S., Khan, M. A., & Ali, S. (2019). Challenges of Research Grant Proposal Writing: A Case Study from Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Library & Information Science Quarterly*, 20(2), 3-14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.20113.92008>
- Ministry of Education (MoE). (2015). Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V)Program action plan. Addis Ababa. <https://moe.gov.et/storage/Books/ESDP%20V%20English.pdf>
- Ministry of education. (2020). Higher Education Strategy Center: Differentiating the Higher Education System of Ethiopia Study Report. Addis Ababa Ethiopia
- Mohamedbhai, G. (2015). Engineering education in sub-Saharan Africa: Quest for quality. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijahe.v2i1.9259>
- Ness, E. C. (2010). The role of information in the policy process: Implications for the examination of research utilization in higher education policy. *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research: Volume 25*, 1-49. DOI: [10.1007/978-90-481-8598-6\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-8598-6_1)
- Nisar, M. A. (2015). Higher education governance and performance based funding as an ecology of games. *Higher Education*, 69(2), 289–302. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43650114>
- Olufadewa, I. I., Adesina, M. A., & Ayorinde, T. (2020). From Africa to the World: Reimagining Africa’s research capacity and culture in the global knowledge economy. *Journa of Global Health*, 10(1). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7101491/>
- Oonyu, L. M. (2020). Guide for Leveraging Crowdfunding to Bridge Scientific Research Resource Gaps in Developing Countries: Descriptive Insights, Prospects, and Challenges from Selected African Countries *Innovation (ICEI 2019)* (pp. 130-133). <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/items/abb1ab42-cf5b-4b9a-9f73-e2877a6b9881>

- Pandey, V. K., Shanko, A., Birru, F., Jain, V., & Kargeti, H. (2021). Determinants of a staffs' Participation in research activities in Ethiopian universities. *International Journal of Learning and Intellectual Capital*, 18(2), 171-187. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/ids/ijlica/v18y2021i2p173-187.html>
- Pilbeam, C. (2012). Pursuing financial stability: A resource dependence perspective on Interactions between pro-vice chancellors in a network of universities. *Studies in Higher Education*, 37(4), 415–429. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2010.520696>
- Polster, C. (2007). The nature and implications of the growing importance of research grants to Canadian universities and academics. *Higher Education*, 53, 599-622. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-005-1118-z>
- Pontika, N., Klebel, T., Correia, A., Metzler, H., Knoth, P., & Ross-Hellauer, T. (2022). Indicators of research quality, quantity, openness, and responsibility in institutional review, promotion, and tenure policies across seven countries. *Quantitative Science Studies*, 3(4), 888-911. <https://direct.mit.edu/qss/article/3/4/888/113769/Indicators-of-research-quality-quantity-openness>
- Rifqi, A., Setiawan, A. C., & Andari, S. (2019). The Role of Higher Education Leaders to Engage Research. In *3rd International Conference on Education* DOI: [10.2991/icei-19.2019.37](https://doi.org/10.2991/icei-19.2019.37)
- Schroeter, C., & Anders, S. (2017). “What It Takes to Get Tenure”–Perceptions and Experiences of AEA Members. *Choices*, 32(2), 1 <https://www.aea.org/UserFiles/file/Vol4Issue3PDFreduced.pdf>
- Simpkin, V., Namubiru-Mwaura, E., Clarke, L., & Mossialos, E. (2019). Investing in health R&D: where we are, what limits us, and how to make progress in Africa. *BMJ Global Health*, 4 DOI: [10.1136/bmjgh-2018-001047](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2018-001047)
- Stavrova, E. (2022). Academic Publishing: Research Leadership in the Context of Digitalization and Globalization of the Business Environment. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, 6(4), 92-99. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/vrs/belead/v6y2022i4p92-99n2.html>
- Van Deuren, R., Kahsu, T., Mohammed, S., & Woldie, W. (2016). Ethiopian new public Universities: Achievements, challenges and illustrative case studies [Article]. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 24(2), 158–172. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1094460>
- Weldemichael, D. G. (2014). Research practice in public universities of Ethiopia: The case of Mekelle university (Master's thesis). <https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/43040>
- Wood, F. (1990). Factors influencing research performance of university academic staff. *Higher Education*, 19(1), 81-100. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/BF00142025>
- Yallew, A. T. (2020). *Higher education in Ethiopia: Recent developments and challenges*.
- AfricAr Xiv Preprints.  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5275-6430>

Yallew, A. T., &Dereb, A. (2021). Ethiopian-affiliated research in Scopus and Web of Science. A bibliometric mapping. *Bahir Dar Journal of Education*, 21(2), 22-46.  
 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5275-6430>