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Exploring the Experiences and Views of Art and Humanities Faculty Members on Promotion Regulation

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of the present study was to explore the views and experiences of Shiraz University's Humanities and Social Sciences faculty members who are an associate or full professors and have membership in Shiraz University Promotion Committees; it focused on four dimensions of challenges and weaknesses, strengths, consequences of implementing the regulation and the proposed implications.

Methodology: In this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 14 professors in Humanities and Social Sciences faculties. After transcribing the audio files of the interviews, the data were coded through three stages of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Finally, 114 open codes, 21 axial codes, and four demanding codes concerning the Promotion Regulation were discovered.

Findings: Findings showed that the challenges of Promotion Regulation include the victimization of the humanities, great emphasis on research and exclusion of other aspects, especially education, focus on quantity and lack of attention to quality, the taste of committees concerning the Promotion Regulation, and a uniform regulation for all fields.

Conclusion: Previous research on Promotion Regulation in Iran has been quantitative research, and most of them addressed the viewpoints of faculty members generally; However, the present study was a qualitative one and, more importantly, the Promotion Regulation was inspected in terms of humanities and social sciences experts' perspectives.

Keywords: Promotion Regulation, Faculty Members, Art and Humanities, Experiences and Views, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology

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Extended Abstract

Purpose: The objective of the present study was to explore the views and experiences of Shiraz University's Art and Humanities faculty members who are an associate or full professors and have membership in Shiraz University Promotion Committees; it focused on four dimensions of challenges and weaknesses, strengths, consequences of implementing the regulation and the proposed implications.

Methodology: In this qualitative study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 14 professors in Art and Humanities faculties. After transcribing the audio files of the interviews, the data were coded through three stages of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Finally, 114 open codes, 21 axial codes, and four demanding codes concerning the Promotion Regulation were discovered.

Findings: Findings showed that the challenges of Promotion Regulation include the victimization of the humanities, great emphasis on research and exclusion of other aspects, especially education, emphasis on quantity and lack of attention to quality, the taste of committees concerning the Promotion Regulation, and a uniform regulation for all fields. In addition, the strengths of the Promotion Regulation include its general desirability, comprehensiveness through the consideration of the four dimensions, close attention to the enactments along with the regulation, and the selective appointment of faculty members of the board of directors. Moreover, the consequences of the regulation include creating an undesirable competitive environment, marginalizing the humanities, double pressure on faculty members to meet research expectations, and pushing the faculty members to produce more articles. Despite the challenges of the Promotion Regulation, some strategies have been proposed to improve the regulation. The most important ones are paying balanced attention to the humanities and basic science and engineering, separating the humanities Promotion Regulation from other areas, increasing the number of faculty members in the board of directors, and formulating a unified yet flexible regulation.

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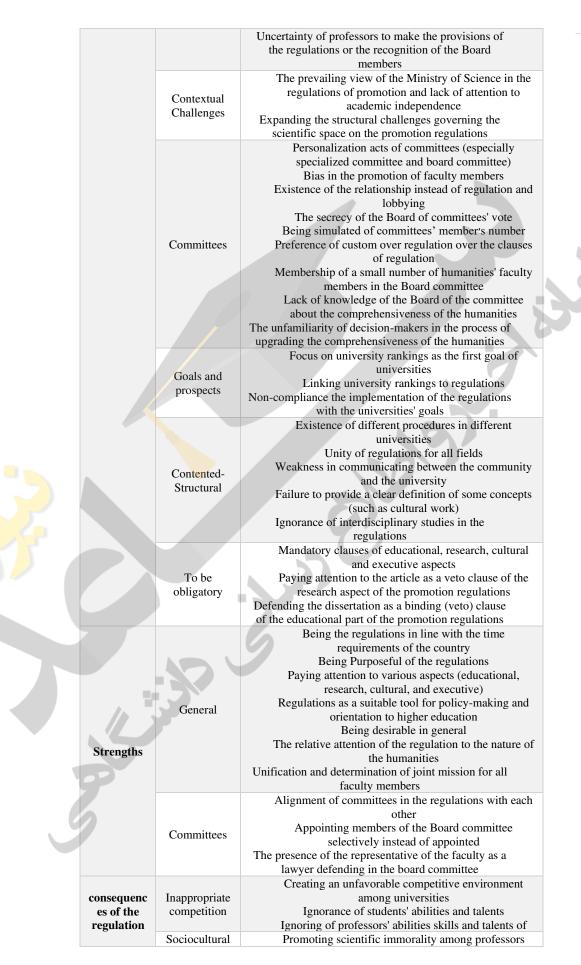
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Basic themes	Organizing themes	Comprehensive themes
Challenges and weaknesses	From humanities point of view	Low chances in the field of humanities for publishing international articles Lack of number of international publications The extent and philosophical nature of the language of the humanities The sacrifice of humanities in the regulations Second-degree view of the field of humanities in the regulations Neglecting the topics of the teacher-student relationship in the humanities
	From the research- educational aspect	High emphasis on research and neglect of other aspects, especially education The regulation emphasizes the quantity of research The dominance of technical-engineering view in the regulations The bias of regulations to ISI articles Existence of student evaluations in the educational aspect as a weakness
	From the faculty members' point of view	Young professors' concern about the current regulations for promotion Repeated changes in regulations Professors' Doubt and confusion of Prioritize between teaching and research Ignoring the training of knowledgeable and reference professors

Table 1. Challenges of Promotion Regulation Coding

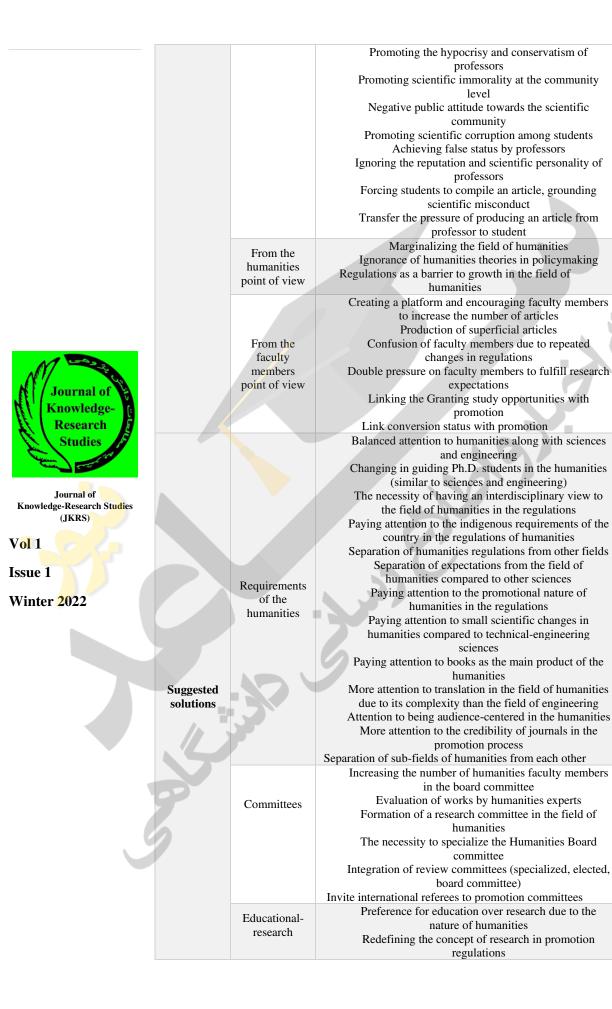


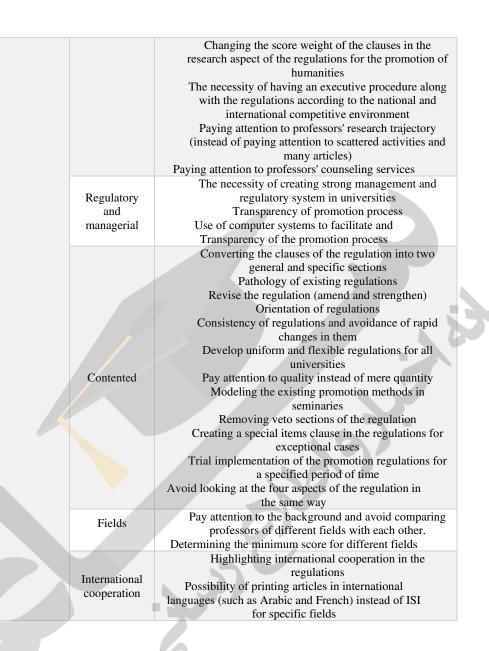


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Conclusion: Previous researches on Promotion Regulation in Iran have been quantitative research, and most of them addressed the viewpoints of faculty members generally; However, the present study was a qualitative one and, more importantly, the Promotion Regulation was inspected in terms of humanities and social sciences experts' perspectives. According to the research findings, it can be concluded that from the viewpoint faculty members of the Art and humanities, the promotion regulations still have many challenges and negative consequences that should be considered by those involved and managers of higher education and universities. Perhaps the most important and effective solution proposed to solve most of these problems is to separate the promotion regulation of the humanities from basic science and engineering.

Keywords: Promotion Regulation, Faculty Members, Art and Humanities, Experiences and Views, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology Journal of Knowledge-Research Studies

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