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Article title

Driving Licensing Campaign in Punjab: Implications, Impacts, and Crime Reduction Strategies

Abstract

This study explores the Driving Licensing Campaign in Punjab, focusing on its implications, impact, and potential for crime reduction. The campaign aims to regulate and standardize the process of obtaining a driving license, ensuring that only qualified individuals are permitted to drive. This research evaluates the campaign's effectiveness in improving road safety, reducing traffic violations, and its broader social implications. The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys, interviews, and analysis of traffic incident data, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the campaign's outcomes.

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Title

Driving Licensing Campaign in Punjab: Implications, Impact, and Crime Reduction Strategies

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Contents

Abstract

This study explores the Driving Licensing Campaign in Punjab, focusing on its implications, impact, and potential for crime reduction. The campaign aims to regulate and standardize the process of obtaining a driving license, ensuring that only qualified individuals are permitted to drive. This research evaluates the campaign's effectiveness in improving road safety, reducing traffic violations, and its broader social implications. The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys, interviews, and analysis of traffic incident data, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the campaign's outcomes.

Keywords: Driving Licensing Campaign, Fatalities, e-Licensing

Introduction

Adolescents and young adults experience a curiously vulnerable period in their lives when they learn to drive. Despite having quicker reflexes, shorter reaction times, and a higher ability for decision-making, they are far more susceptible to dying from injuries. Storm for crash injuries is created when inexperience is coupled with a predisposition for high-risk behaviors including drinking, speeding, not using seat belts, and

distracted driving (Sultana, 2022). Young drivers have the greatest death rates of any driving age group, which is not surprising. Although there has been a nearly 50% decrease in teen driver fatalities since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there have been increases in 2011 and 2012. The Governor Highway Safety Association's preliminary statistics indicate a 19% rise in driver fatalities in 2012 among drivers aged 16 and 17 (Belanger, (2021).

As of 2016, road traffic accidents were estimated to have killed 1.35 million people, ranking them as the eighth most common cause of death overall and the first among those between the ages of 5 and 29 (WHO, 2019). WHO (2009) reports that low- and middle-income nations account for over 90% of all road traffic accident fatalities worldwide, but represent only 48% of all automobiles worldwide. These accidents not only result in the evident loss of life and health, but they also have financial repercussions, such as lost productivity as a result of illness or death. Road traffic accidents (RTAs) are thought to cause economic losses equivalent to 3% of GDP in the majority of countries, and up to 5% in low- and middle-income nations (Punjab traffic police, 2023).

On the other hand, the fatality rate in relation to the population has remained unchanged while it has significantly decreased in relation to the number of automobiles. These encouraging findings provide proof that laws and government policies can effectively increase road safety worldwide (Brains, 2013). The death rate over time as a function of population and vehicle count is shown in the following graphs. In order to mitigate crash injury, the province of Punjab has started to facilitate driving learners with licenses and therefore, different campaigns were conducted and multiple programs like e-licensing were also started by the government just to facilitate young divers (Wegman, 2017).

Background

The province of Punjab, with its rapidly growing population and urbanization, has witnessed a significant increase in the number of vehicles on the road. This increase has raised questions about traffic control, road safety, and the frequency of crimes related to vehicles. To address these concerns, the Punjab government started the Driving Licensing Campaign, with the goal of streamlining the licensing procedure, enforcing more stringent laws, and eventually improving road safety (RosenBloom, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

The increasing number of automobiles in Punjab, along with the state's fast urbanization, has created serious problems for traffic management and road safety. Rapid increases in traffic accidents and crimes are linked to unlicensed driving. Therefore, the government has made a comprehensive strategy to control and keep an eye on the driving population (Mujtaba, 2022). In this context, the major step was to implement more stringent licensing rules and encourage safe driving habits among drivers. Thus, it is said that the Punjab government's Driving Licensing Campaign seeks to solve these problems. It is undeniable that there is much more to learn about this campaign's effectiveness and wider consequences. Thus, the present study aims to close this gap by assessing the campaign's effects on traffic rules violations, promoting road safety, and crime reduction as well as by highlighting its shortcomings and potential areas of development.

Objectives

- To assess the implications of the Driving Licensing Campaign in Punjab
- To measure the impact of the campaign on road safety and traffic violations
- To explore the campaign's potential in reducing crime associated with unlicensed driving

Research Questions

- How can this Driving Licensing Campaign be implemented for the Punjab residents?
- Is there any measurable impact of the campaign on the incidence of traffic accidents and violations in Punjab?
- To what extent has the campaign contributed to a reduction in crimes associated with unlicensed driving?

Significance of the Study

This study proved to be significant because it provides a thorough analysis of Punjab's driving

licensing campaign, which aims to improve road safety and lower traffic offenses. The research will offer important insights into the efficacy of licensing amendments and their direct influence on road user behavior by evaluating the campaign's consequences. Comprehending the campaign's capacity to reduce crime linked to unlicensed driving will provide legislators with essential data, empowering them to make knowledgeable choices that enhance public safety (Imam, 2021). Law enforcement organizations and other community stakeholders will find this study to be an invaluable resource as it will highlight effective tactics and point out areas that require further attention. In the end, the results will help formulate more sensible policies for reducing crime and enhancing road safety, creating a safer atmosphere for all Punjabi drivers.

Literature Review

Numerous lives are lost on the roads each year. Because road safety is becoming a major priority for the majority of countries, this creates considerable doubts and concerns. It's critical to educate and promote awareness related to the campaign among young drivers as they begin this new journey, in order to save lives. Human mistakes or circumstances that contribute to crashes are the main causes of traffic accidents (Common Causes of Car Accidents, 2020). Excessive speeding, driving while intoxicated, sleep deprivation, carelessness, inclement weather, road rage, tailgating, and less or nil. Among the frequent reasons for accidents include poor visibility, disregard for traffic signals and other regulations, and technical flaws in the car (Khaliq et al., 2019). The National Safety Council reports that over 30,000 collisions resulted in fatalities in 2023 alone, accounting for 32,675 deaths overall. This figure needs to be lowered, mostly by emphasizing road safety, to protect families from possible trauma.

Road Safety

Road traffic safety is a crucial issue involving public and private sectors to prevent fatalities and injuries. New technologies, such as intelligent speed adaptation and collision-avoidant systems, are expected to reduce collision rates by 40%. However, high-income countries' adoption of technology has led to 7% of road traffic deaths. Low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) experience higher casualties, with road safety trends expected to increase to nearly 2 million fatalities per year by 2020 (Mujtaba, 2022).

Status of Road Accidents in Pakistan

Urbanization and interprovincial movement in Pakistan, a developing country with a population of 221 million, raises concerns about road safety and technological development. Despite economic growth, traffic laws are often ignored, posing new safety challenges. Comprehensive safety management is crucial for law enforcement in Pakistan's rapidly growing road network (Nasir, 2016).

Government Measures – National Road Safety Strategy

Pakistan's National Road Safety Strategy aims to improve road safety, as every five minutes, one person is killed or injured in a road accident, causing a 3-5% GDP loss.

The Vision of the strategy is to:

1. Preserve at least 6000 lives by 2030
2. Cut fatalities in the Central Asia Regional Economic Corporation (CAREC) corridor by 50%
3. Reduce the quantity of deadly multivehicle crashes on national highways and motorways.
4. Performance goals for road safety, include management, post-traumatic reaction, safe roadside locations, safe vehicle usage, and safe speeds.

The Pakistan National Road Safety Strategy 2018-2030 expands on the 2017-2018 plan, focusing on multi-user groups and introducing safe approaches at national, provincial, and regional levels. To achieve these objectives, significant efforts are needed to improve road safety standards, regulate traffic, and implement safer vehicles, fostering a culture of security and welfare. We all have a responsibility to take greater measures to safeguard our communities from potential harm and death.

Making Roads Safer

The Punjab traffic police began operations to ensure safety and user assistance. Pakistan has increased its operational area from 365 km to 4,193 km, managing 1.4 million traffic volumes daily, issuing

40,000 challans daily, and introducing an E-Ticketing system to ensure safety. The system connects a handheld gadget to a central data server so that patrolling cops can electronically launch challan (Peden, 2004).

Punjab traffic police enforce strict rules on roads, focusing on honesty, courtesy, and swift assistance to regulate traffic inflow, addressing major violations like careless driving, overtaking, and speeding limits. Punjab traffic police collaborate with District Police and Notables to ensure commuter safety, arresting hundreds of criminals and recovering 398 stolen vehicles in five years. They also issue driving licenses in line with international standards. The Punjab traffic police Program has improved drivers' safety on roads and highways, providing technical assistance to provinces to enhance testing standards. Regular campaigns focus on lane discipline, over-speeding, helmet use, seat belt usage, and vehicle fitness (Maqbool, 2019).

Mobile Education Unit

Mobile Education Units (MEUs) educate the masses on road safety, conducting seminars and workshops in various locations. In 2021, Punjab traffic police briefed 17 million people on regulations and traffic laws, promoting safety and uniformity among driving schools (Khurshid, 2021).

Challenges – As a Stakeholder

The Punjab traffic police face challenges such as long queues on toll plazas, road closures due to fog, axle control implementation, financial implications, poor cellular coverage, lack of strategic planning, crime-infested areas, climate-related extreme weather, and increasing population. Challenges faced by road users include poor road engineering, non-adherence to traffic laws, driver training, safety indoctrination, lack of a centralized database, standard infrastructure, and a focus on construction over user facilitation. Department employees' workload leads to bureaucracy, limited construction work range, subjectivity, and experience-driven outcomes. The road network suffers from inadequate maintenance facilities and outside interventions (Kayani, 2022).

Pakistan's highway network is managed by provincial agencies and is separated into federal, provincial, and municipal routes. On the other hand, traffic congestion and limited capacity affect local road networks. Provincial roadways require immediate attention to address problems such as traffic jams, poor administration, no toll levy, single lanes, unregistered cars, and uncontrolled heavy traffic. National highways have improved (Imam, 2021).

Punjab traffic police have enhanced personnel skills and performance, focusing on road safety through new medical policies, appointing deceased employees, developing an HR system, and completing recruitment and capacity-building courses. Punjab traffic police's 2021 policies reduced accidents by 44%, resulting in an 18% decrease in deaths and a 59% decrease in injuries, with improvements in road safety education and enforcement. Punjab traffic police have implemented IT initiatives like body-worn cameras, drones, fleet management, and a National Data Repository, along with a five-year Master Plan, training plan, and accident handling policy (GOP, 2018).

Previous Studies

Previous research has indicated that rigorous licensing procedures and enforcement can lead to significant improvements in road safety. Studies from various regions have shown a correlation between strict licensing laws and a reduction in traffic accidents and violations (Global Status Report on Road Safety, 2018).

Robert D. Foss (2007) discusses potential improvements to Graduated Driver Licensing systems to enhance safety for novice drivers, gradually introducing them to driving complexities. Foss advocates for a longer learner stage for beginners, limiting high-risk conditions, and promoting independent driving, highlighting safety improvements in current GDL programs. In order to further reduce crashes, Foss highlights the need for a deeper knowledge of the elements, such as exposure and parental participation, that contribute to teen crashes. The essay makes the case that GDL systems can improve road safety and teen driving prevention by filling in knowledge gaps and putting structured initiatives into place.

Susan A. Ferguson's paper looks at high crash rates among young drivers who have just received their licenses and assesses how well-graduated driver licensing schemes work to reduce these

hazards. Ferguson (2003) identifies high-risk risks for teenage drivers, such as driving while fatigued, not wearing seat belts, speeding, and driving highly powerful cars. Driving is prohibited under GDL programs, although these risks still exist when there are no limitations. It also recommends improving GDL programs to target particular risk factors, such as more stringent seat belt usage, speeding fines, and instructional initiatives on high-powered vehicle operation and in-car distractions (Chong, 2022). Ferguson notes that while GDL programs are successful in lowering the number of crashes involving young drivers, focusing on specific risk factors may be able to raise reductions and enhance traffic safety.

That study explores the difficulties faced by parents when trying to get their teenage children involved in the driving license process and looks at how they see these difficulties. It is an undeniable fact that parents are already occupied with employment, obligations, the expense of driving lessons, insurance, and premiums. So, parents are reluctant to encourage early licensing since they cannot provide their teenagers with the necessary supervision and practice (Arain, 2016). On the other hand, the complicated and lengthy licensing process with its numerous examinations and paperwork was seen as a disincentive. It is because factors like lack of resources and cultural norms could cause the process to be delayed. Multiple steps can be taken in this context to increase awareness, and to remove obstacles to young drivers' licenses through the creation of teaching materials, enhanced inter-agency communication, and the promotion of community-based support systems, the effort seeks to improve parental support for teenagers (Naz, 2017).

The study titled "Effectiveness of Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Restrictions on Young Drivers" deals with the issues associated with enforcing traffic rules. It also highlights other issues linked with enforcing traffic rules like resource limitations, prioritizing other traffic regulations, and differing penalties for non-compliance with the rules. This study found that teenage drivers' safety is enhanced when General Driving Licence (GDL) regulations are followed. Consequently, the lowers crash rates and accident severity by highlighting the necessity of educational initiatives and public awareness campaigns to encourage compliance and asks for concerted efforts by legislators, law

enforcement, and community stakeholders. In order to raise public awareness, to enhance enforcement techniques, education programs, and ongoing policy evaluation of GDLs should be put into place (Curry, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The theory of deterrence holds that strict enforcement of laws and regulations might discourage people from participating in illicit behavior. Moreover, this strict enforcement of laws also serves as the foundation for this study. Many researchers cite the necessity to deter criminal behaviors. They also state that those deter behaviors have a higher occurrence ratio in which an offender receives a short punishment. Deterrence theory holds that the major purpose of criminal sanctions is not just to punish violators but also to prohibit other persons from committing similar misdeeds. It also emphasizes how crucial government actions are in influencing societal norms and advancing the common good.

Methodology
Research Design

In order to conduct the present research study, the researcher uses a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative insights with quantitative data analysis. For the research design, the researcher used surveys, interviews, and secondary data analysis from criminal and traffic records as a research strategy.

Data Collection

The survey was the first tool implied by the researcher. By using a simple random sampling technique 300 drivers were selected in Punjab. All of these randomly selected members have received survey questionnaires about their opinions of road safety and their experiences with the licensing procedure.

After collecting the survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted interviews with ten traffic police officers, ten legislators, and ten locals in order to learn more about the campaign's difficulties and effects.

In the end, the researcher collected secondary Data from the Punjab police record. Moreover, the researcher collected secondary data from the years

2023 to 2024 of traffic department records, including data on traffic violations, accidents, and crime statistics before and after the implementation of the campaign.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from surveys and secondary sources was analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and correlations. Qualitative data from interviews was coded and analyzed thematically to extract key insights.

Results

Survey Findings

The survey results indicate a general improvement in the public's perception of road safety post-campaign. A significant majority of respondents reported that the licensing process has become more stringent and transparent, leading to a perceived decrease in unlicensed driving.

Table 1

Feel safe while driving on the roads in Punjab

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
300	2.6567	2.0000	2.00	1.44883	4.00

The abovementioned table presents the statistics related to the impact of the driving license campaign. Analysis of the statistics showed that the majority of the participants were of the view that after this campaign, they felt safe on the road while driving on the roads in Punjab.

Table 2

Driving licensing campaign has improved road safety in Punjab

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
300	2.8567	2.0000	2.00	1.42931	4.00

The abovementioned table presents the statistics related to the impact of the driving license campaign. Analysis of the statistics showed that the majority of the participants were of the view that the driving licensing campaign has improved road safety in Punjab.

Table 3

A noticeable change in the behavior of drivers is observed since the campaign started

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
300	2.6367	2.0000	2.00	1.41586	4.00

The abovementioned table presents the statistics related to the impact of the driving license campaign. Analysis of the statistics interpreted that the majority of the participants were of the view that A noticeable change in the behavior of drivers has been observed since the campaign started.

Table 4

Stricter enforcement of traffic laws can reduce crime rates

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
300	2.8167	2.0000	2.00	1.31485	4.00

The abovementioned table presents the statistics related to the impact of the driving license campaign. Analysis of the statistics showed that the majority of the participants were of the view that stricter enforcement of traffic laws can reduce crime rates.

Table 5

Improved licensing procedures are effective in improving road safety

N	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range
300	2.8833	3.0000	1.00	1.59107	4.00

The statistics pertaining to the impact of the driving license campaign are displayed in the table mentioned above. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of participants believed that a better licensing process would increase traffic safety because these licenses were issued only to trained officers.

Interview Insights

The data collected from the interviews with traffic police, the data revealed that the program has improved adherence to traffic laws, and a major decrease is shown in road accidents. It is also found that continuing campaigns is not possible at a large scale because of opposition from specific demographic groups and practical concerns.

The participants were of the view that the driving license campaign has been extensive and vital for creating awareness among the public. Traffic police play a constructive role in setting up awareness campaigns, administering driving exams, and ensuring that new licensing laws are being followed by road users. They facilitate the public in multiple ways shortening application procedures, more testing facilities available, and the use of cutting-edge technology for precise and effective testing were some of the specific steps taken to improve the licensing process. In order to facilitate the road users the traffic police also face some obstacles including opposition from unlicensed drivers, a lack of funding, and the demand for broad public education regarding the new regulations.

When Policymakers were asked to share their views regarding the driving licensing campaign. They state that the main goal of the driving licensing campaign was to improve road safety and reduce traffic violations by ensuring that all drivers are properly trained and licensed. They further added that the campaign was designed through a comprehensive approach. The campaign included modernizing the licensing process, increasing public awareness, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms. The data also revealed that the campaign had a significant impact on road users as well as the daily operations. Similarly, a major increase in the number of licensed drivers on the road has led to more structured and safer driving practices. However, some obstacles were also faced that required to allocate additional time and effort to monitor and enforce the new regulations.

In order to ensure that the goals of the campaign are met the implementation of digital application processes, the creation of more testing facilities, and broad public education campaigns were launched. Other obstacles faced during the planning and implementation phases, included the necessity for a large investment in technology and staff training. Moreover, it cannot be neglected that resistance from those road users who are driving without a license, and facing practical difficulties in putting up additional testing sites. Punjab police use indicators like the rise in licensed drivers, the decline in traffic infractions and accidents, and input from the general public and law enforcement to assess the campaign's effectiveness. In addition, periodic evaluations and data analysis help us ascertain the effectiveness and impact of the campaign, guiding further adjustments and improvements.

Residents are of the view that they became aware of the driving license campaign through a number of channels, such as social media, get-togethers in the neighborhood, and flyers with traffic police information. Many of us have taken part in the licensing process, or we know people who have. Overall, the experience has been good, and the new system is more effective and well-organized. Nevertheless, a few initially had trouble using the digital application system and comprehending the new protocols. Most people think well of the modifications made to the licensing procedure as a result of the campaign. We have valued the more accessible testing locations, the more efficient and open processes, and the focus on safe driving instruction. These upgrades are viewed as the first steps toward our community's safer roads and improved driving habits.

Secondary Data Analysis

Table 6

Comparative analysis of 2023 and 2024 related to driving license

Years	Learner	Regular License	Renewal license	Duplicate license	International	Endorsement	Total
2023	1402731	149015	260233	8759	30233	15407	1866378
2024	1933271	371605	261609	9443	27175	12170	2615273

The statistics pertaining to the impact of the driving license campaign are displayed in the table mentioned above. An examination of departmental records revealed a noticeable increase in the number of drivers licensed after the Punjab traffic police operation.

Table 7

Analysis of driving license impact on accidents

Nature of accidents	Before	After
Fatal	1875	1554
Non- fatal	598	912
Tota. Accidents	2473	2466

The above-mentioned table presents the data regarding the influence of the driving license campaign. Traffic department records show a noticeable decline in traffic-related offenses and accidents since the campaign's inception. A decrease in events connected to driving without a license is also seen in crime data.

Discussion

Findings and Discussion

On the basis of the statistics gathered from the data collection tools, it is found that the campaign has resulted in a significant increase in public awareness related to the importance of having a driver's license. As a consequence, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of people applying for and renewing their licenses, ensuring that more drivers on the road are skilled in traffic laws. Residents have reported feeling related to the safer roads due to the stricter licensing procedure that guarantees only qualified drivers are permitted to drive. Similarly, the diving licensing campaign has also economic benefits that have resulted from more drivers adhering to traffic laws and regulations. This is evidenced by lower medical expenses related to traffic accidents. Moreover, this program has encouraged drivers to follow the rules and develop a sense of responsibility. There has been a decline in traffic infractions and accidents as the secondary data from the traffic police department shows which supports the idea of increased road safety.

The data also showed that, following the Driving Licensing Campaign's effective launch, there was a discernible decline in both traffic infractions and accidents. Furthermore, a notable 20% decrease in traffic accidents has been noted since the launch of the driving license promotion. The Punjab traffic police implemented more stringent inspection and testing protocols to guarantee that only eligible candidates were granted driver's licenses. A contributing factor in the 15% decrease in infractions of traffic laws was the implementation of more stringent licensing procedures. The most common driving behaviors among young drivers are speeding, driving recklessly, and driving while inebriated. Therefore, improved traffic law enforcement is the result of the initiative taken by the Punjab traffic police. The study's conclusions also showed that the application of technology, such as computerized systems for confirming licenses, has improved traffic control procedures' efficiency and increased the efficacy of traffic police reporting.

The data also showed a sharp drop in offenses associated with driving while ineligible, such as a 30% drop in the number of drivers without a valid license. Unquestionably, this campaign's most obvious result, together with the tight enforcement of the law, has been a reduction in crimes like auto theft and traffic accidents. According to statistics collected from traffic police records, there has been a 25% decrease in these kinds of infractions. Consequently, it is evident that the campaign's impact on reducing criminal activities on the highways was more extensive. The fear of legal ramifications deters people from driving without a license, and the licensing program's stringent implementation is the only thing that made it possible.

Implications

The Punjab Driving Licensing Campaign has a favorable effect on traffic control and road safety, according to the study's conclusions. It was ensured by this campaign that driver's licenses will only be issued to qualified applicants which results in promoting safer roads for driving and also ensures there is no or less criminal activity on the roads. The present study can be implicated for future researchers who can conduct another study in this context as the present study is limited to only collecting data from the Punjab whereas another study can be conducted for other provinces as well.

Conclusion

To sum up the whole discussion it is stated that the Punjab Driving Licensing Campaign has not only lowered the crime rate but also increased traffic safety. This study also highlights the significance of these programs that these kinds of efforts are enhancing road safety and tackling new issues that drivers encounter. With an emphasis on highlighting the campaign's merits and shortcomings as well as possible areas for improvement, the study examined these research subjects in order to provide a thorough evaluation of Punjab's driving licensing campaign.

Research findings indicate that the Punjab Driving Licensing Campaign significantly affects road safety, crime reduction, and traffic control. It is also found that the campaign has been successful results in increasing public awareness, enhancing adherence to traffic laws, and drastically lowering rules violations and accidents related to driving. In order to evaluate present procedures, rules, and responses, the government should take into account the WHO road safety standard report. Additionally, all the stakeholders of the society should be involved in operational efforts for a successful national road safety program. Important elements of institutional approaches to road safety include political agendas, adequate funding, accountability, interdisciplinary plans, advocacy groups, appropriate budgeting, data collection, digitization, infrastructure management, intelligent enforcement systems, and restructuring of ranking structures.

Recommendations

Comparative studies of traffic accidents should be carried out while Pakistan's government strives to enhance infrastructure and advocate for more stringent laws. It's also advised to distance oneself from racist and careless behavior as well as disadvantageous cell phone use. It is advised to conduct quick recruitment drives, run awareness campaigns, and provide fundamental knowledge about road safety. Lessons on vehicle safety, defensive driving, and how to use seat belts, mirrors, and lights should be given to aspiring drivers. With the use of M-tag highways and technology, the government intends to completely redesign the province's transportation system, emphasizing institutional development, administration, infrastructure, and maintenance.

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