

RESEARCH IN MEDICAL COLLEGE: RAISON D'ETRE

Emran Bin Yunus¹

Research is an essential component of any day to day activities and so also for the progress. This is the only way to customize life with nature and vice versa if taken globally. Since antiquity mankind is involved in research. This may be formal and informal as well, and, may be overt or covert. Again the endeavor may individual, collective and or institutional. Every now and then we are researching. The purpose of any research is to make the outcome more appropriate, prudent and justified besides capturing the empowerment to predict the end. Research is no doubt a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting and revising human knowledge on different aspect of the world. Scientific method is a body of techniques for investigating phenomena, acquiring new knowledge, or correcting and integrating previous knowledge in a structured manner to avoid wrong end up. It is based on gathering observable, empirical and measurable evidence subject to specific principles of reasoning, the collection of data through observation and experimentation, and the formulation and testing of hypotheses. Research is usually customized to time, resource, space and the need. In this context any research at the institutional level like that of a medical college should have some fixed agenda. The agenda on priority should be targeting the mission theme of the institution, the motive and the motif. There is no controversy on the mission theme of the medical college that is the production of 'Safe doctors and scientists for the nation'. There should not be any obfuscation on this issue.

The basic frame work and strategy of production of safe doctors and scientists are in the curriculum and in the manner of the conduction of course and assessment. The research therefore should be primarily aimed at critical analyzing the appropriateness, the achievement, the feasibility, validity, operability and matters arising out of these. In an extended manner this should encompass the personnel, the setup, the logistics and the quality assurance of the whole process and quality control of the product. The research outcome should have the actuarial potential for implementation on orthodox scientific evidence base. In an expanded

manner this should also cover the other essential part of the medical education exercise the patient management and operation of the service delivery. None the less this should also an edge for developing capable research groups at the end that can able to continue the endeavors on particular issue culminating ultimately in to resource persons nationally and globally. The whole process should be able to continue consistently to earn the credibility.

Credible research needs intention of widening knowledge base to be fuelled by adequate funding. The public money to be spent behind research should not be under or mal utilized for non targeted research. In this behalf there are some step-by-step imperatives which should begin with situation analysis followed by identification of issues or factors to proceed further around hypothesis testing; that is a clear 'Road Map'. After initial descriptive studies other advance studies should be planned and be embarked on. This should be molded into continuing operational research on relevant academic matters like attendance in classes, performance in lessons delivery, exam questions validity and reliability, examiners showing up and outcome in examinations, attitude of students and teachers towards attaining curriculum and course targets, identifying hurdles of academic exercises, management and related issues, aptitude tuning of students and teachers and many others. The flow should be towards more and more enhancement of the standard of the medical education.

One of the major factors for continued and consistent progress with credibility is the grooming up of research groups in the institute. With appropriate research questions and welcoming team works advances for leading to the production of resource persons on particular issues, at present there is regrettable lack or absence that in our domains. With proper propelling in appropriate direction one may envisage that there may develop resource groups on particular issues, like, exam questions, course conduction, quality control and assurance, curriculum reviewing, student molding in commensurate with the course and curriculum and others. The ultimate gain will be the empowerment of the faculty members to be able to see and tackle the unforeseen on the basis of knowledge base

1. Professor of Nephrology
Chittagong Medical College, Chittagong

gained through the research. This is also useful in fine tuning over the time the course and curriculum and the dispensation there of with the ultimate attaining of the institutional theme. More over there is a need to groom up students by encouraging them to familiar with research through simple research questions there by sparking inquisitiveness among the students which will surely go long for developing future credible research workers for solving the problems in the relevant fields that is self sufficiency in this behalf.

On the very day in the antiquity when our ancestors for the first time try to reveal 'Who am I?', possibly that is the beginning of research. Following that they passed through the phases of queries, 'where', 'when', 'how', 'what' and 'whom', which through the renaissance ultimately packaged as what we call now 'the science'. The train and terrain of this process has not stopped rather has been progressing through more and more refinements and scholastic exercises.

The raison d'etre of research in medical college therefore should be the catching up of this train and terrain of the process to cruise through the highways and byways of medical education and service dispensation to remove the cob web of unknown to reverse the state of 'unconscious unknown' to the 'conscious known' through the phase of 'conscious unknown'. This demands as once our ancestors did to identify first 'I don't know' that 'I need to know'.