

# Creating a Research Culture in Medical Colleges of Bangladesh- an Issue Needs to be Discoursed

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The future of healthcare in Bangladesh is heavily influenced by the country's undergraduate Medical Colleges. Accordingly, undergraduate medical education has been designed in such a way that the next generation of doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals will be capable of handling the nation's common illnesses and health issues, eager to serve the community, particularly the rural community, and have a strong foundation for future training, service, and research at the national and international levels.<sup>1</sup> Only clinical knowledge, professionalism, communication skills, and the ability to be a member and leader of the healthcare team have been considered to be the desirable qualities of the future Bangladeshi physicians. Unfortunately, research in undergraduate medical institutions in Bangladesh has not yet been given proper importance. The capacity to conduct research is still not considered as a separate quality to be required for the medical graduates in Bangladesh.

However, research is an essential component of medical education and practice. It enables medical practitioners to stay abreast of medical advances, get a deeper understanding of the diseases they treat, pinpoint public health issues and priorities in their nation, and participate in the formation of evidence-based national policy. Research also helps to identify gaps in current medical knowledge and practice, leading to improvements in patient care.

It is now well established that undergraduate medical students should be taught the value of research, its process, the research methodologies, the priorities of health research in their countries, and also be able to comprehend the research findings in order to be persuaded to engage in evidence-based practice.

Future physicians should have the information and skills necessary to feel confident pursuing further education and training, to contribute effectively to the development of evidence-based public policy when they are involved, and to initiate and carry out research in the course of their careers for the benefit of humanity. Even the importance of scientific research for physicians goes beyond the evolution of their scientific skills. Those students who do research are more likely to publish scientific articles of better quality, have professional satisfaction, and have better economic and academic stability.<sup>2</sup> In this order of ideas, it is imperative that all medical students understand and get involved in a committed manner in the field of research and thus, as a future professional, manage to keep themselves always updated and supported by evidence of the best quality.


It has been found that medical students have a very positive outlook on scientific research, but they face multiple barriers that limit their participation in the approach and development of scientific projects, so they do not conceive of ever assisting in a scientific study.<sup>3,4</sup>

Therefore, it is crucial to promote a learning environment that offers knowledge and skills for patient management as well as in establishing a culture of research so that students develop a strong interest in research.

Creating research culture is an attitude of administrators, teachers, students, and other stakeholders in medical institutions that recognizes the value of undergraduate research, is interested in fostering a research atmosphere, and encourages all other stakeholders, including students, to participate in research. This means that encouraging research at the undergraduate level requires the support of

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everyone, from top policymakers to staff members on the ground. The issue of fostering research at undergraduate level needs to be discussed at all levels including Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Directorate General Medical Education, Directorate General Health Services, BMDC, BMRC, post graduate institutions, teachers association, professional organizations. The importance of research and their involvement should also be discoursed at the student forum.

There are several steps that can be taken to promote research in undergraduate medical institutions in Bangladesh. First and foremost, there needs to be a greater emphasis on research in the curriculum. Medical students need to be taught the importance of research and how to conduct it effectively. This has to be done from the 1st year itself.

Capacity building on creating research environment at undergraduate medical institutions is also a crucial issue. It needs a clear planning to develop the teachers as an investigator, mentor, and research guide. The process of involving students in research should also be included in the plan. Establishing a strong research mentoring program is necessary where faculty members actively engage with students on research projects. Expert researchers can help students at every stage of the research process, from developing research questions through publishing the results. This mentoring program helps students to motivate them to engage in research, and also enhance their skills.

It is important to establish an institutional research support system by allocating dedicated funding, resources, and infrastructure for research activities. This includes research laboratories, access to scientific journals and databases, statistical software, and funding opportunities for student research projects. A dedicated research office or committee can streamline the research process and facilitate research-related administrative tasks.

In addition, there need to be a cultural shift in the medical community in Bangladesh. Instead of seeing research as an afterthought to their clinical duties, healthcare practitioners need to be taught to embrace it as an essential component of their work. This may be accomplished by creating career paths for medical professionals that emphasize research, providing chances for professional growth, and offering rewards for those who participate in research activities.

Finally, collaboration between medical institutions, both within Bangladesh and internationally, can also help to promote research in undergraduate medical colleges. This will provide access to a wider range of resources and expertise, as well as opportunities for joint research projects and knowledge sharing. In conclusion, including health research into undergraduate medical courses is crucial for creating lifelong learning, strengthening the practice of evidence-based medicine, addressing regional health concerns, enhancing research capacity, and improving medical education. It provides aspiring healthcare professionals with the abilities and information required to deliver high-quality patient care and advance medical science.

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