



# Quality versus Quantity

*The quality of research in Nepal has to be revamped when it comes to original article.*

|By Rajesh Chaudhary

**A**gree or not, as the time progresses, the thin demarcation line between the clinical sciences and the basic sciences is fading away, and this is because of the assimilation of medical disorders which are linked to the molecular ground.

We have been bickering on the fact that who is to be called a medical biochemist, medical microbiologist, medical physiologist, immunologist, pharmacologist or pathologist — either the one who have pursued the basic science or those who are into the medical science since the beginning of their undergraduate work — I mean those who are completely into the medical science.

I think it is inane to bicker on the issues that doesn't hold any significant value in itself. And, this can only be realized when we have some sort of exposure to the real scientific world. I mean, who have that time to just keep on arguing something which doesn't have any productive value? It's just like killing time instead of getting engaged into something productive. After all, we all have our own area of expertise and it has not to be judged from any side.

The ground reality is that both of these fields are not separable as both requires the expertise of another to reach to a common goal, which is to find a tangible solution to the existing baffling several diseased conditions of the world.

Now, again, this fact of finding a common solutions to the existing problems has another hurdle — which is to find the resources necessary to initiate the work of research. Forget about even initiating a research work without external funding source, it is really difficult to even say that, "I

want to do a molecular research work which will have some potential to turn the table to those who wants a desperate answer to the existing problems in the health sector" — specially when we have been downgraded from "developing nation" to "least developed nation" on earth.

This might be the reason why we are getting indulged into some sort of research work which is considered as a sub-standard research work whose data are often flawed or manipulated. The only thing we care of today is to somehow get paper published in some national journals, if not a

descent international journal having impact factor. Because, after all we all need some sort of paper for getting promoted if we are into pure academic sector.

As I have figured out, if I am not wrong, Nepal has over 12 scientific journals which includes : Kathmandu University Medical Journal, Journal of Nepal Health Research Council, Journal of Institute of Medicine, Journal of Nepal Medical Association, Nepal Medical College

Journal, Journal of Nepal Dental Association, Journal of Nepal Pediatric Association, Journal of the Nepal Nursing Council, Journal of Kathmandu Medical College, Nepal Journal of Biotechnology and many more like these.

Now, from all these piles of journals, there are hardly any scientific evidence which have potential to influence on the decision of Nepal's National Planning Commission — obviously, on the health sector. I mean, as a Biotechnologist, Biochemistry, Microbiologist et cetera, what we are engaged in, today, is not a real research work. Most of the research works are basically finding the prevalence rate of disease, infection, effect of certain drug on the health of an individual or the pH of their digestive system or the influence of that diseased condition in life of an individual.

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What I have to say is, all those things have already been researched before introducing some sort of drugs. I mean as a person in the basic science who have more molecular touch than any other filed, and thus, it is our responsibility to be a little bit descent and honest in our work when it comes to the quality of research work.

On this run-and-melee for number of publications we are our selves trying to subvert our own field by not being honest to it. My point is that either we should seriously get involved in the quality research work or just leave it rather than bungling it up with something none sense.

I think we are either not sure what we want to do and how we want to do while longing for increasing number of research publications in our curriculum vitae or either we are just trying to fool people. But, ironically, this has become a trend! Even those who are capable to give a tangible scientific output are also being involved in this act.

I am really baffled to the researches going on in Nepal and it's all because the line of separation between the subjects has turned out to be too hazy. Take for example, a microbiological research work about the prevalence of some sort of microbial infection – what it has to do with the anatomy filed? I mean, we are still correlate things if we want but I don't see there is any point in correlating a superficial work of microbiology to anatomy. And, even after that, how can a microbiologist take the survey data of infection and call it a research without getting to the root cause of the infection? How can we separate it from community medicine, public health and the microbiology?

As a microbiologist, biochemist we have to get down to the root cause of the disease which has to be on the molecular level. Our research can't just rely on the fact whether or not to change a perception just based on the superficial data which might vary depending on the several different factors, for example, environmental factor, diet, genetic make up of an individual, their immunity and so on.

The genuine research works have a potential

to influence a country's economy and that is what Japan is now heading towards – reviving its economic strength based on the research work. Japan is calling for the international researches to its country and for that Japan is going to provide a complete free and fair environment so that researches can brood without a boundary – either monetary, language or cultural barrier which is thought to be the biggest hurdle for the researchers around the world.

The cultural dissimilarity has created big confusion between the researchers from different backgrounds and culture, which is thought to be the biggest hurdle when it comes to reaching a common goal of finding solution. In fact, it is true. How can somebody work freely and concentrate on their work while they are being judged based on their country of origin and their past background?

This is not only the case of Nepal, the problem seems overwhelming as it has engrossed even US system of research work and therefore, Arthur J. Ammann, a founder of Global Strategies and clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center, San Francisco, California, USA writes, “**US clinical-research system in need of review**” in nature journal. Though, it has been more focused on the ethical background, it along with other such articles still holds a notion about the research works being published every now and then.

Today, we are longing for the number of research proposal rather than focusing on the quality of paper and this is becoming a serious problem of today, and there doesn't seem any sign of it abating soon.

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