

## Translational research versus promotional research; basic conflict in Iran

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Madam, In the latest issue of the Journal of Pakistan Medical Association, Jawad F well described the medical research and science culture in Pakistan in a brief editorial.<sup>1</sup> To some extent, the atmosphere is the same in Iranian science culture. By the growing number of graduated specialists who are scattered throughout the country, has been the achievement of the major goal of the health policy which focuses on treatment of the sick. Presently, most of the university hospitals have a large number of specialists in various fields of clinical medicine. But what is lacking is a research system, which is still insufficient in universities and affiliated hospitals in Iran. Physicians are spending too much of their time in treating the large number of patients in both public and private clinics and have no time for scientific research. The situation is the reverse in China.<sup>2</sup>

Iran has a fast growth of scientific publications in the world especially in the field of medical science. The rank is among the highest in the middle-east which is evident from the databases.<sup>3</sup> But, what is observed is that a great deal of research products in Iran are more for adornment and promotional reasons instead of being profitable and productive or providing an advantage to the industry. The opinion, that research is more of a luxury than necessity

still exists among many clinicians. So that, the cost-beneficence of research for most of the experienced clinicians is not worthy of participation. On the other hand, researches based on promotional objectives are not cost-effective for the society.

Similar to Pakistan, Iran is a country with a unique social and geographical status and could provide opportunities for interesting epidemiological and clinical research. Engaging the doctors, particularly the young clinicians to interdisciplinary, translational, and community-based participatory research requires systematic education of research materials in training programmes. Such programmes should be provided for the students-who are future clinicians- during their academic period so that they gain experience in hypothesis, study design, critical thinking, analytical skills, information technology, laboratories and clinical practice. It is therefore suggested that policy makers in the ministry of health and medical education should reevaluate national programmes based on research and development which are the main indicators for progress in science and technology.

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