



Role Of Research

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A couple of weeks ago I read two news stories related to medical sciences – one was about Guru Prasad Khanal's, the newly appointed Rector at BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences (BPKIHS), determination to heavily prioritise research work and the other was about five KU doctors being blacklisted internationally for plagiarising research findings. While the first one gives the general public hope -- BPKIHS conducts research on more than 300 diseases and treatment systems every year -- the second one is shameful and no proud citizen can take it just like that.

Doesn't a professional as prestigious and responsible as a doctor realise the importance of research work? How can they cheat others' work and proudly claim it as theirs? Other people may do it due to their ignorance but this should not be the case with doctors.

In the context of Nepali people not having a strong presence in the international platform, this blacklist pushes us further backwards. One should not forget that we have got all this worldly knowledge because of the efforts of different researchers who devoted their time to create knowledge. Research is only a weapon to satisfy people's curiosities and questions.

For instance, if our ancestors had not been curious to learn about the vast and dark sky, we would not have been able to gain the knowledge of "space" that we have now. According to Cali Simboli, without research, we would not go forward. We would be a bunch of curious humans who would leave this world without knowing the things we wanted to know. When it comes to constructing knowledge, research is equally important in all fields.

Since it is related to people's health, life and wellbeing, medical research can be considered to be the most important field of knowledge. Its importance can be summarised in the words of the Minneapolis Medical Research Foundation as, "The high quality of medical care we enjoy today is built upon years of effort by physicians, physician-scientists, PhDs, and other medical professionals investigating the causes of and potential treatments for disease. The tireless effort of these professionals has made many once life-threatening diseases and conditions just a memory." It is obvious that such research work must be purely original to contribute in the already available mass of knowledge.

In contrast, research is taken just as a formality in most of the cases in Nepal. Otherwise, those blacklisted doctors would not dare to plagiarise other people's findings. In other cases, a substantial number of university students can also be seen to copy other students' thesis and defend it as theirs. What is more ridiculous is that the supervisors or examiners also do not pay attention to this plagiarism practice. What can we say about the quality of education of that university where the Vice Chancellor himself has been accused of being a plagiarist?

It is high time for intellectuals like doctors, university teachers and students to consider research as an entirely original study which deserves to be held in high regard. They should always remember that their hard work to find new knowledge can bring forth findings that are not only revolutionary for their respective fields, but for humanity as a whole.

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