Challenges and opportunities of medical research in Libya

Aisha Nasef1,2*

1National Authority of Natural Science Research and Technology, Libya
2Scientific Council of Laboratory Medicine, Medical Specialty Council, Libya

Medical research is needed at community, hospital and individual levels. Governments and hospitals benefit from medical research to solve problems, identify priorities, monitoring intervention, analyzing outcomes and benchmarking. Medical research help in assessment of community health status.

Research culture is not formed in Libya yet and resulted in low publication rate [1,2]. This can be attributed to the following main factors Figure 1.

Specific challenges in Libya

Challenges at strategic level

1. Lack of country well-defined strategy, vision, objectives, structure, style and values.
2. Under estimation of research value and importance by stakeholders.
3. Lack of allocation of suitable percentage from Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to fund research.

Challenges at tactic level

4. Ministry of health are not involved in scientific research even at strategic level.
5. Lack of know how in research conduction, resources allocation and skills.
6. Graduation project is not included in colleges and in high school, and it is not mandatory in all Libyan faculties and not well constructed or supervised.
7. Local funding system has a lot of shortcomings, and it’s is not justified, with no equity or personal accountability.
8. No structured research activity in universities.
9. Deans as well as teaching staffs of many medical faculties are Board certified and accepted as Ph.D. equivalence.
10. Professional, even who was assigned on the top of medical faculties, did not value the scientific background or need and importance of research in establishment of evidence based medical practice despite being western countries graduates.

Figure 1: Underlying Causes of Lack of Research Culture in Libya.

In Libya, challenges are many, and can be divided into challenges facing research in developing countries, as well as country specific challenges. The following table list all specific challenges for medical research in Libya at strategic, tactic and operational level.
Despite all these challenges, we still have encouraging factors and future opportunities as following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encouraging Factors</th>
<th>Future Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assignments of medical research consultant/adviser in National authority of natural science research and technology. This could help in setting clear objectives at strategic, tactical and operational levels and help in coordination of all centers and stakeholders.</td>
<td>1. Adoption of the proposal of health research incubators establishments in Libya, for coordination of effective and efficient research groups work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interests notices among medical students in research. Medical students established medical student research council. They had a number of very good journal clubs and scientific days. One was designated for importance of medical research in medical education, new modalities, osce exam objectivity. Libya could contain and invest in those motivated and interested potential future researchers!</td>
<td>2. Recommendation, for all countries to commit at least 0.2% of its GDP to health research, and approval of requested rise of medical research funding in constitution as to be comparable to developed countries [3].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Publication based promotion of teaching staffs in Libyan universities. Pressure to publish enough papers for promotion represent n double edge sword. and should be taken in consideration. It could motivate publication, or it could force to wrong doing research culture. So, this need to be studies and clarified and used in motivation with a well-established strategy and defined objective.</td>
<td>3. Libya could contribute to world science by focusing on Libya-specific disease. Working with UNESCO, ALECSO, African Union Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 could help a lot [4].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Increased awareness and establishments of Libyan, Arabic and international groups on social media such as Libyan medical research network, Libyan group for medical research and publication, scientific research center, researcher.</td>
<td>4. Approval and establishments of National Institute of Health (NIH) proposal by ministry of health in Tripoli, as well as establishment of Libya Research Council (LRC) in with board from burlement, ministers, universities and faculties order to set goals and objectives of medical research in Libya.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Citation: Nasef A (2020) Challenges and opportunities of medical research in Libya. Arch Community Med Public Health 6(1): 028-030. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.17352/2455-5479.000067
24. Lack of supportive teams such as statistic department, scientific writing expert, etc.

25. The most difficult research in Libya, those needs advanced technology and know-how such as in clinical pathology and clinical trials, etc.

**Conclusion**

Promotion and increase awareness of importance of academic research in making evidence based decision and in self-performance by professional and decision makers could help a lot in solving current Libyan health problems.

This article represent a first step to improve current status of medical research in Libya. Taking all these challenges and opportunities in account, and starting by workshops with all stakeholders for further identification of all other positive and negative factors, could promote medical research in Libya.

**References**


