

# Emerging Research Interest in Medical and Dental Undergraduates

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Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter to highlight the current encouraging and commendable rise in the involvement of undergraduate medical and dental students in research across Pakistan. A positive surge was detected among the medical and dental institutes reflecting increasing interest and contribution in research activities. A study in Saudi Arabia reported the relationship between rising research trends and its contributing factors, henceforth, stating that admission into residency (56.8%), interest in research (41.8%), and aid in clinical decision-making (31%) were the top three factors for research interest<sup>1</sup>.

The curiosity of undergraduates towards research projects and their outcomes not only enriched their learning experience but also fostered a culture of critical thinking along with evidence-based practice during different stages of their academic journey hence contributing to the healthcare field<sup>2</sup>. Developing the rising cadre of healthcare professionals involves more than theoretical knowledge; it requires the practical application of skills addressing real-world medical and dental problems. The growing emphasis on research and undergraduates reflected a hanging support system in educational institutions, with the faculty and mentors playing a pivotal role in guiding these students. Mentorship ensures ethical research practices, and adherence to global standards and reinforces the importance of practical learning in healthcare education<sup>3,4</sup>. A survey was conducted at 5 prestigious medical institutes in the United States, known for their strong research programs, and included 328 participants. The primary motivations for students taking extended research breaks were to enhance their competitiveness in residency applications (32%), to explore numerous opportunities (24%), and were driven by a strong academic interest (23%) hence demonstrating a keen inclination of undergraduates towards research<sup>5</sup>. The opportunity to cultivate their research capabilities through global publications and conferences enhanced self-assurance among the undergraduates of medical and dental institutions encouraging them to consider research as a fundamental part of their career.

To sum up, this increasing engagement of undergraduate medical and dental students in research is a positive shift for the healthcare education landscape in Pakistan. It reflects the students' dedication, the commitment of their mentors, and the changing educational paradigms. This must nurture devotion and channel it toward meaningful contributions to the healthcare field.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

## AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

NJ, KAK, and AS contributed to the manuscript writing and editing. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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