

# Supporting Proliferation of Academic Research

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Among Universities, Ziauddin University is a fledgling-only 17years old. It started with a Medical Faculty offering MBBS at the undergraduate level and M.Phil/Ph.D at the graduate level.

The purpose of starting a graduate programme from the very beginning was to build up a junior Faculty of our own. Like so many other places around the world, when we started in 1996 there was an acute shortage of teachers in the Basic Science subjects- a shortage which still persists. So it was decided that all the instructors be recruited as graduate candidates after appearing in a written test and interview. This paid off in two ways. Firstly, we had a motivated and committed junior faculty who were interested in teaching as a career and not just a stop gap job-which is what is happening in other medical colleges of the country. Secondly, it laid the foundations of a research group and culture in the University.

To date we have produced 22 M.Phils and 7 PhDs in various basic science subjects. Of these 9 are part of our Faculty, and some of who had done M.Phil are now enrolled for Ph.D.

One of the requirements of the graduate programmes before the candidates can appear for the Final defense of thesis is two (for M.Phil) and three (for Ph.D) papers in indexed journals. This also becomes an additional evaluation of the research work.

Another step taken to foster research was to ask groups of undergraduate students to undertake a small research project. This was mostly in the form of surveys.

It has been said that a research is not complete till it has been published and subjected to a wider peer review.

Most of the research done by undergraduate students is and was of local interest that will not be of interest to an international audience. Similarly, some of the work by Faculty is of local interest only and there are papers read at conferences which never get published.

For these reasons, the University has decided to start an online Journal. All the undergraduate and graduate students' projects will be peer reviewed, and then published online if found suitable for publication. Similarly we will encourage Faculty members who read papers in local and international conferences to convert them to publishable articles. This will encourage our students and Faculty to convert their findings and observations to publishable articles. Published as a quarterly the journal will also solicit articles from others, but to begin with it would largely be based on University based work.

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