

## *From Chairman's Desk*

Designing a research protocol is most important step in any scientific research. Writing the protocol is rather more important to convince the reviewers about the goal of research and approaches to achieve that goal. This needs analysis of scientific principles and their extension to a research methodology which will obtain desired results to gather proof of evidence in support of the research hypothesis. Thus, approaches in scientific research should be very sound. These may be either time tested methods invented and utilized by others or an improvement on the reported methods or an altogether new method which is optimized and validated to yield statistically significant results. For a new researcher these steps are important to make a sound beginning and succeed in research endeavour. A well planned research is almost half done because it has sound theoretical and practical basics and thus results obtained are directly linked to the variables. The results which can be easily correlated to the experimental variables are easy to interpret and draw inferences.



The researcher must ensure that sufficient background material in the area of research has been consulted on the basis of which proposed research is planned. The proposal must convince the scientific community that

- a scientific problem has been identified;
- a theoretical background and a methodical approach to solve the problem is in place;
- the research can be performed within a time frame and at reasonable cost; and
- it will add a new aspect to the existing scientific knowledge.

The researcher must be precisely aware of the current state of research that is directly connected with the proposed work. The previous reports must be perused extensively to draw ideas for the new proposal. The objective of the research must be well focused and the possible social and commercial implications should justify the need for research. A sound proposal is key to approval of the project and every researcher must try to draft his project properly.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) had analyzed the reasons for rejection of large number of research proposal applications. The findings revealed that

- 18% of the applications were rejected because of doubtfulness that new or useful information will result from the project or the basic hypothesis was unsound.
- 39% of the application lacked sound approach to the research problem.
- 38% of the Investigators lacked competence in the particular field of research.
- 5% of the projects lacked proper research environment due to academic and administrative commitments.

Another study conducted by the Bureau of Occupational and Vocational Education(USA) based on a sample of 353 research grant applications concluded that 20% failed to list the objectives of the project, 81% had no abstract, 92% failed to provide resumes of proposed consultants, 25% had no resume for the principal investigator, 66% included no plan for project evaluation, 17% forgot to identify the project director by name, 18% forgot to number the pages, 73% forgot to include a table of contents.

Such defects in large number of research protocols speak volumes about competence and sincerity among budding researchers. The developing countries have to be more methodical in dealing this problem and should offer useful guidance to graduates and post-graduates, so as to enable them to compete in the highly competitive world.

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