

Empowering tomorrow's healers: Pioneering approaches in South Asian family medicine practice and research

Dear Editor,

We am writing to extend our gratitude for publishing the enlightening editorial titled "Promoting South Asian primary care research and projecting family medicine practitioner-scholars: A matter of critical importance"^[1] in your esteemed journal. The editorial provided a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by South Asian nations in the realm of primary care and family medicine research. We commend the authors for their valuable insights, which have prompted me to explore this crucial topic further.

We wish to expand upon the editorial's themes, emphasizing specific areas that warrant attention and proposing potential solutions for enhancing primary care practice and research in the South Asian region.

1. Collaborative Partnerships and Interdisciplinary Research: Collaboration lies at the heart of scientific progress. Strengthening partnerships between academic institutions, healthcare organizations, policymakers, and the communities they serve is vital. By fostering these collaborations, we can pool resources, share expertise, and promote innovative interdisciplinary research approaches.^[2] Integrating perspectives from diverse fields such as public health, social sciences, and technology can lead to holistic solutions to the intricate challenges primary care practitioners face.
2. Leveraging Technological Advancements: The integration of technology offers transformative possibilities. Electronic health records, telemedicine platforms, and artificial intelligence can streamline data collection, analysis, and dissemination.^[3] Embracing these technological advancements enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of primary care research, ensuring that evidence-based practices are grounded in robust data and analysis.
3. Mentorship and Capacity Building: Investing in the next generation of family medicine practitioner-scholars is paramount. Establishing mentorship programs, research fellowships, and capacity-building initiatives will empower young doctors and researchers.^[4] Nurturing their skills and knowledge equips them to contribute meaningfully to primary

care research. Continuous learning and mentorship create a sustainable ecosystem for research and innovation.

4. Dedicated Research Grants and Scholarships: Establishing dedicated research grants and scholarships specifically tailored for family medicine scholars can significantly boost research endeavors.^[5] These grants should be accessible to both aspiring and established researchers, providing them with the financial resources needed to conduct rigorous studies, attend conferences, and publish their findings. By easing financial constraints, we can encourage more individuals to pursue a career in primary care research.
5. International Collaborations and Exchanges: Facilitating international collaborations and academic exchanges can expose family medicine scholars to diverse research methodologies, perspectives, and healthcare systems.^[6] Collaborative initiatives with renowned institutions and researchers from different countries can broaden their horizons, foster cross-cultural understanding, and enhance their research skills. Exchange programs can also encourage the sharing of best practices and innovative approaches in primary care research.
6. Integration of Family Medicine and Community Medicine Curricula: One promising avenue to optimize primary care is the integration of family medicine and community medicine curricula. By combining these disciplines, aspiring healthcare professionals can acquire a comprehensive understanding of both individual and community health. This integrated approach emphasizes the importance of preventive measures, community engagement, and primary care interventions. It equips healthcare providers with a broad skill set, enabling them to address health challenges at both individual and population levels effectively.
7. Recognition and Awards: Recognizing outstanding contributions to primary care research through awards and honors can motivate young scholars and acknowledge their achievements. Instituting awards for innovative research projects, impactful community interventions, and academic excellence can inspire family medicine scholars to strive for excellence and contribute meaningfully to the field.

Lastly, We urge the WONCA, academic and healthcare communities, along with policymakers and funding agencies, to embrace these multifaceted approaches. By cultivating collaborative partnerships, leveraging technology, nurturing talent, and integrating curricula, we can catalyze a paradigm shift in South Asian primary care research. These efforts are not only imperative for the present but also essential for building a sustainable and resilient healthcare system for the future.

Thank you for your dedication to promoting discourse on this vital issue.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

Sheikh Mohd Saleem¹, Shah Sumaya Jan²

¹National Consultant, Public Health Expert, Health Section, International NGO, New Delhi, India,

²Department of Anatomy, Govt. Medical College, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India

Address for correspondence: Dr. Sheikh Mohd Saleem, National Consultant, Public Health Expert, Health Section, International NGO, New Delhi, India.
E-mail: saleem.900@gmail.com

References

- Hina J, Ramakrishna P. Promoting South Asian primary care research and projecting family medicine practitioner-scholars: A matter of critical importance. *J Fam Med Primary Care* 2023;12:2197-200.
- Ahmed F, Fattani MT, Ali SR, Enam RN. Strengthening the bridge between academic and the industry through the academia-industry collaboration plan design model. *Front Psychol* 2022;13:875940.
- Stoumpos AI, Kitsios F, Talias MA. Digital transformation in healthcare: Technology acceptance and its applications. *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 2023;20:3407.
- Association of Departments of Family Medicine; Jaén CR, Borkan J, Newton W. The next step in building family medicine research capacity: Finding the way from fellowship. *Ann Fam Med* 2006;4:373-4.
- Rollins LK. Enhancing your scholarship as a family medicine junior faculty member. *Fam Med Community Health* 2020;8:e000426.
- Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Health Research and the Privacy of Health Information: The HIPAA Privacy Rule. Beyond the HIPAA Privacy Rule: Enhancing Privacy, Improving Health Through Research. Nass SJ, Levit LA, Gostin LO, editors. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2009.

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Received: 15-10-2023

Revised: 19-11-2023

Accepted: 21-11-2023

Published: 22-04-2024

Access this article online

Quick Response Code:



Website:

<http://journals.lww.com/JFMPC>

DOI:

10.4103/jfmpe.jfmpe_1690_23

How to cite this article: Saleem SM, Jan SS. Empowering tomorrow's healers: Pioneering approaches in South Asian family medicine practice and research. *J Family Med Prim Care* 2024;13:1568-9.

© 2024 Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care | Published by Wolters Kluwer - Medknow