PhD education and research at Tbilisi State University (TSU) Faculty of Medicine in the dimension of International collaboration

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ABSTRACT

Higher education system of Georgia has been in a process of extensive reforms since 2004. The International cooperation aims to harmonize PhD education with ECTS and Bologna process that will enable students and young researchers to gain the advanced knowledge, skills and experience they require to successfully pursue their professional career. In conjunction with the International cooperation, PhD research projects at the TSU Medical Faculty strive to fully comply with the International standards of study methodology, statistical reporting, publication and principles of good scientific and ethical conduct. The article offers a brief overview of some of the ongoing PhD projects with emphasis on expected results and significance.

Introduction

Higher education system of Georgia has been in a process of extensive reforms since 2004. Georgia joined the Bologna Process in May 2005 and committed itself to become a constituent part of the European Higher Educational Area. Since that, higher education system consists of three cycles, including new paradigm of PhD education.

Scientific research in Georgia is regulated by the following laws: the Georgian Law on Higher Education, the Georgian Law on Science, Technologies and their Development, the Georgian Law on Georgian Academy of Sciences and the Georgian Law on State Grants.

The law on Higher Education was adopted in December 2004 and according to this Law: “The doctoral program is the third level of higher education, which is a combination of educational programs and research activities aimed at preparing the research workforce, and completed with awarding the academic degree of Doctor of Science”.

One of the main priorities of the state policy is to assure academic freedom of study and research, provide and develop the necessary conditions for research and approximate the Georgian research system with the European standards.

The TSU key priorities are establishing and developing close links between TSU and world leading universities, scientific research institutions and educational centers mostly through the joint projects and exchange programs involving students, young scholars, academics and administrative staff. Surely, this cooperation is inclined towards sharing the experience gained by the students and improvement of the competencies of the faculty.

International cooperation for Education and Research

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) has funded the project - Doctoral Programme in Health Science: Norway Experience of Third Cycle Studies for Georgia for the period 2012-2015. The project was led by University of Tromso, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of community medicine.

The project aims to harmonize PhD education with ECTS and Bologna process that will enable public health and related professionals to gain the advanced knowledge, skills and experience they need to operate effectively within the changed and changing environment, to respond to the existing challenges, including governmental strategy requirements. The project focuses on modernization of doctoral education through upgrading and modernizing teaching and research components.

In the framework of this project, participant universities aim to bring together educators, experts, researchers, professionals and students to have a role in the creation, formation, support and delivery of third cycle studies and thus, contribute to the current and future developments and capacity building in health care interventions that respond to local, national and regional needs of society.

Based on close cooperation with University of Tromso, TSU PhD students, post-docs and academic staff, have an opportunity to participate in exchange and joint international educational programs. They have a possibility to exchange the experience and best practices that will modernize the PhD Curriculum and teaching approaches, develop new teaching modules and teaching materials.

The project helped young researchers to gain valuable knowledge and experience, enhance their research skills. Participants were taught to evaluate medical research critically, analyze data, and interpret the reliability of positive or negative test results. They were able to conduct and develop their own researches with the solid understanding of issues they were addressing in terms of epidemiology. The teaching course explored different research techniques, as well as when and how they should be applied. The statistical component of the course covered all the major statistical methods and gave hands-on experience in using these methods in practice.

Research priorities and expected outcomes

According to TSU research policy, research conducted at TSU must be of high quality and reliability. When approving PhD re-
chronic conditions which are characterized by the heart’s prima-
use in the last decade. CRS involves both - the acute and the
renal dysfunctions.

Acute or chronic systemic disorders can cause both cardiac and
renal dysfunctions.

The prevalent of moderate to severe renal impairment (de-
Tive and diastolic functions of LV; reduction of frequency of
size of MI, prevention of LV remodeling, improvement of sys-
tolic and diastolic functions of LV; reduction of frequency of
anginal pain occurrence during in hospital stay and the number
of complications after myocardial infarction12.13.

It is expected that the results of this research will add awareness
and important information to the management and treatment
strategies for the patents with diagnosis of Acute Coronary syn-
drome.

Research 4: Untintended pregnancy, its termination and prior
usage of contraception in Georgia. The aim of study is to deter-
mine the prevalence of unintended pregnancy, its outcome and
prior usage of contraception in women who terminated their
unintended pregnancy with an induced abortion, and to estab-
lish the association with area of residence, age, level of educa-
tion and ethnicity17.

It is expected, that by detection of the prevalence of unintended
pregnancies, its outcomes (induced abortion or prolonged preg-
nancy) and prior usage of contraception (modern vs. tradition-
al) in women who terminated their pregnancy with an induced abortion, and to establish the association with area of residence, age, level of education and ethnicity17.

Conclusion
International collaboration plays a significant role in improv-
ing research skills of young researchers and developing research
standards that come in line with the International standards.
As a result, strengthening and supporting research at Universi-
ties will imply significant socio-economic impact and benefit to
whole society of Georgia.
REFERENCE