

Marching Ahead towards Good Science

Sandip K. Mishra*

Institute of Life Sciences, (An autonomous Institute of Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India), Orissa, India

I am not intending to say that we were not doing good science. But as we are refining ourselves on several fronts, I am trying to extend my view that we are marching towards good science in a redefined manner. I am still using the word "Good" as I believe that we were never engaged in bad science. The previous works were published in peer reviewed journals and the current findings are also getting published in the peer reviewed journals. I guess, my message will be diluted if I do not use the word "marching towards good science". We were marching towards good science and now also we are trying to march ahead to perform good science.

Research should be viewed as one of the best public services. In my opinion research on a dreaded disease like cancer definitely needs serious and focused attention on the basis of the cancer trends progress report (2011/12 updates) by National Cancer Institutes (NCIs), USA. We must salute the commendable job being done by the NCIs, USA by doing the extraordinarily difficult assignments with the aim to combat cancer. It is reported that in 2010, more than one-half of all new cancers were cancers of the prostate, female breast, lung, and colon/rectum. According to American Cancer Society projections, there were 1,529,560 new cases of cancer in 2010, including 217,730 cases of prostate cancer; 209,060 cases of female breast cancer; 222,520 cases of lung cancer; and 142,570 cases of colon/rectum cancer (www.cancer.gov).

Why only cancer? Yes, admittedly there are many dreaded diseases for which the struggle to make them history is on. We must extend our salutations to USA for taking up many serious global responsibilities. I am a scientist from India. My salutation also goes to India for its dedicated efforts to fight not only cancer but several other dreaded diseases by allocating substantial funding for research to make them history.

Being a researcher of basic science, I feel it is also my responsibility to send out a message to the global community of researchers through our open access Journal that we need to be together to take our fight to the net level against different types of life threatening diseases to a logical end. Being a person who is associated with research in basic sciences, I shall now talk about something, which is happening recently in a more visible manner. In recent years many research findings have been proved to be wrong. But research findings on the basis of concrete data cannot be wrong in real sense. As a result of availability of better tools such as better calibrated equipments, reagents, analytic procedures,

data bank on academic resources, those old findings have been found to be wrong, partially wrong or they need little additional interpretations. On the same token, I also do believe that the current findings may also prove to be wrong after few years, as I guess we shall be having more refined tools for validating our findings. But research is never wrong. The point, what I am trying to make is that the research is a continuous process of searching for something, which has already been searched.

But for sure we need to look at the points or factors, which will make our science become good in the sense that it reaches the common people, to it is an accepted fact that there was a communication gap between the clinicians and the basic research scientists. That factor is almost is fixed as in many outstanding research papers we can see that there are strong collaborations between the above two groups. This is kind of very encouraging and talks about bright future for challenging dreaded diseases like cancer and of course many other dreaded diseases.

One more communication also needs to be established, which is open talks between general public and basic research scientists. I will not opine that this communication is absolutely lacking. But in most of the cases the communication is through the clinicians. I believe that the direct communication between the patients or their caretakers and the basic scientists is also something, which should be given lot of importance for marching towards better science.

Despite the above positive and less positive analysis of different factors for better science I would like now to tell something about the fact that robust tools have been discovered which are enabling the entire scientific world to march towards better research (good science). As for example, Meta-analysis is an innovative analytic tool which is giving the researchers an option of either to discard or to accept those findings which scientists have never ever thought of challenging. Meta-analysis has enabled the researchers to prove some strong age-old beliefs are either not significant or less significant. On the other hand Meta-analysis also has also validated many old research findings to be highly significant.

I believe, consortium should be started at global level, which should have public representatives, clinicians and also basic researchers. They need to discuss all the time how to march forward for good science. The communication gaps, which have been discussed above, should be totally eliminated. I would like to conclude with the remarks that this approach will enable us to march victoriously towards good science.

***Corresponding author:** Sandip K. Mishra, Scientist-E, Institute of Life Sciences (An autonomous Institute of Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India), Nalco Square, Bhubaneswar, Pin: 751023, Orissa, India, Tel: 91(674)2300702 (Direct); Epabx: 91 (674)2300137; 2301460, 2301476 (Extn: 234); Fax: 91(674)2300728; E-mail: sandipkmishra@ils.res.in; sandipkmishra@hotmail.com

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