

Summary recommendations from the Sixth National Summit of Health and Population Scientists in Nepal



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Background

- Interdisciplinary research is evolving in the context of LMIC, and Nepal is no exception
- Opportunity to invest resources for better public health outcomes
- Essential component for translation of scientific evidences generated to policy implications and implementation
- Sixth Annual summit highlighted on the importance of the interdisciplinary research with a theme “Addressing emerging public issues through interdisciplinary research”
- Integrated approach is pivotal for addressing emerging public health issues





- Message from Hon. Prime Minister, remarks from Hon. State Minister, Hon. Chief Minister Bagmati Province, Hon. Health and Population Minister, Secretary MoHP, WHO representative to Nepal , and key note address by Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist, WHO
- Participation of National and International scientists and scholars in health research
- 262 abstracts received, 86 selected for inclusion (32 oral presentation and 54 poster presentation)
- Panel Discussion on Responsible Conduct of Health Research
- Different awards to researchers including life time achievement award to senior scientist

Summit Highlights



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Definitions

Table 1: Mixing disciplines in research

Approach	Definition& example
Cross-disciplinary	Relating to more than one discipline, this can be using disciplines alongside each other (i.e. multidisciplinary) to more integrative approaches (i.e. interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary).
Multidisciplinary	Drawing on two or more different disciplines in an additive way to address a common problem as defined within one discipline. For example, Nursing researchers working with Computing Science colleagues to improve digital health record systems.
Interdisciplinary	Research between fields, addressing a specific topic, integrating insights from (unrelated) disciplines resulting in higher levels of integration. For example, a collaboration between clinicians, public health researchers, and statisticians to develop a prevention model.
Transdisciplinary	Different disciplines working jointly to create new conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and translational innovations that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem not defined in one specific discipline. For example, researchers from different disciplines working together define and address issues around 'migration health'.

van Teijlingen, E., *et al* (2019). Interdisciplinary Research in Public Health: Not quite straightforward. *Health Prospect*. 18(1), 4-7. <https://doi.org/10.3126/hprospect.v18i1.19337>



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Summit Thematic sessions



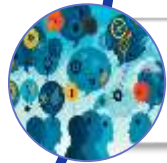
Research and development in COVID-19 context (6)



COVID-19 Research in Nepal (8)



Neglected Tropical Diseases (4)



Interdisciplinary and Implementation Research (4)



Health Governance, Economics and Financing (5)



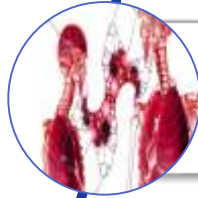
Summit Thematic sessions



Digital Health, Environmental Health and Bio-Medical Research (4)



Mental Health, Disabilities and Emergency (3)



Non-communicable Diseases (6)



Nutrition, Maternal and Child Health (4)



Recommendations on COVID-19

- More research on COVID to better understand the clinical and epidemiological aspect
- Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese medicine effectiveness research on COVID-19
- More RCT research is recommended (Solidarity trial, convalescent plasma)
- Surveillance system should be strengthened.
- Communication of policy decision to target audience should be strengthened and digitalization of the information
- Ensure university medical researches to meet the need of people worldwide
- Continue Study on impact of COVID-19 on Mental health of Migrant population.
- Government should be prepared to deal with returnee migrant workers
- Political leadership and right policy at right time to combat COVID-19
- Ensure access and affordability of Vaccine from production to distribution
- The reduction of stigma among health workers working in COVID-19 response should be prioritized through the mobilization of mass media and community engagement strategy.



Responsible Conduct of Health Research

- ERB should adapt relevance on guidelines/procedure needed to be followed for conducting research during pandemics.
- Awareness should be enhanced among researchers on the legal aspect for conducting research.
- Dialogue on responsible conduction of health research should be continued.



Health Governance, Economics and Financing

- Awareness program needs to intensified at the community level to increase awareness about the health insurance program.
- Better preventive and curative services and better health financing mechanism need to promote which will help to improve health related quality of life, reduce financial hardship, achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and thus achieve SDGs.
- Insurance scheme should focus to prevent them from poverty line and financial hardship of health care expenditure which was also focused by universal health coverage.
- Regularize staff meetings, progress reviews, recording/reporting feedback mechanisms and allocating adequate resources for health information management especially those institutions located in remote areas.



Neglected Tropical Diseases

- Nepal is now endemic for many tropical disease, it is needed for inter-sectoral collaboration in the control and elimination of NTDs.
- Planning and policies need to be update regularly in according to the burden and distribution of NTDs.
- Interdisciplinary and implementation research is needed for understanding holistic approach of NTDs control and elimination of these diseases



Mental Health

- To increase awareness and accessibility to mental health services:
 - Forming mental illness support group in communities
 - Inclusion of mental health education in the curriculum
 - Availability of comprehensive mental health services in PHC facilities
- Health and safety of workers at both countries of origin and destination should be ensured.
 - Provision of full insurance package to each worker
 - Provision of language interpreter to access health services in the destination countries who have language barriers.
 - Pre-departure training
- Encouraging toxicology laboratories to identify the individual pesticide compound in suicidal cases to enable early recognition of poison in the Emergency Department.



Mental Health and NCDs

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- Need to conduct yoga related trial in larger scale in different setting for strong level of evidence.
- Emphasis should be made on mental health aspect of non-communicable disease patient.
- Estimation of burden of non-communicable diseases in sub-national level.



Nutrition, Maternal and child health

- Health Programs should focus on addressing the health needs of mothers of ≤ 19 years or ≥ 30 years as they belong to higher-risk groups in terms of maternal health related risks and complications.
- Efforts should be made to better understand and address underlying causes of perinatal mortality in high-risk groups and effective interventions are needed to improve perinatal health in Nepal and to achieve predetermined targets.
- Although there is a low prevalence of double burden of malnutrition (DBM) in Nepal, nation-wide effective implementation of maternal health promotion interventions and nutrition education programs would be a good strategy to prevent DBM in Nepal in the future.
- Innovative interventions are required to address barriers of HMGs along with specific innovative interventions targeting the disadvantaged women are essential to improve participation and increase the use of this important service delivery platform.



Overall Recommendations

- Emphasize research on infectious disease control and prevention along with NCDs, Environmental Health, Mental Health, Health Governance, etc..
- Promote interdisciplinary and implementation research in collaboration and partnership in the country
- Enhance and promote research culture in local context
- Expand NHRC structure in provinces
- Foster digital platform for research related events and activities
- Develop central data base system and data sharing guidelines for health research





Summit Declaration

1. Advancing interdisciplinary and implementation research in health with involvement of federal, provincial and local government for contextually tailored evidence to inform policy
2. Continue to promote health research networking and alliance among academia, healthcare institutions, scholars and researchers, with different stakeholders in National and International Level
3. Facilitate to enhance knowledge and skills to conduct health research by young researchers and scientists by increasing capacity, building opportunities, and availability of research grants especially for the provinces
4. Strengthen the mechanism to promote maximum use of digital technologies in research process including dissemination
5. Strengthen translation of locally generated evidence into policies and practice through closer collaboration with policy makers
6. Promoting responsible conduct of health research in academic and non-academic research
7. Promote health research in COVID-19 pandemic as per national guideline for strengthening evidence generation on COVID-19



A call to action



Build partnership at national and international levels



Promote responsible conduct of health research



Increase the dissemination and use of evidence based decision making in health sector



Promote use of evidence in policy and planning



Thank You! We Appreciate your Queries...



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