

08. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS AMONG FOREIGN MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES INTERESTED IN RESEARCH STUDY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Nnaemeka Emmanuel Mgbedo,¹ Karim Salimov,¹ Daramola Oluwatosin,¹ Eton Uduakabasi Noah Ededet,¹ Nikita Vyas,² Pragati Chhikara,³ Rupam Chaturvedi,³ Samuel Oluwatobi Odukoya,⁴ Olaniyan Ibraheem Olaniyi.⁵

¹ University of Georgia, Tbilisi, Georgia.

² East European University, Tbilisi, Georgia.

³ Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University, Georgia.

⁴ New Vision University, Tbilisi, Georgia.

⁵ Tbilisi State Medical University, Georgia.

 <https://www.youtube.com/live/fSpXH-3Xy5w?t=5379s>

BACKGROUND: Medical research holds immense significance in medicine as it propels progress, elevates patient care, and deepens our comprehension of diseases and therapies. We aimed to examine the barriers, and challenges that limit foreign medical undergraduates in conducting research studies. **METHODS:** In this cross-sectional study, 641 students from more than six Universities in Georgia participated, and the response rate was 53%. The study received ethical approval before data collection. It was conducted from 10th to 16th February 2024 in Tbilisi and Batumi City. Students were approached during classes by the research representatives to complete the questionnaire. The structured questionnaire contained demographic characteristics, attitudes, and perceived barriers to

participation in research. Descriptive analysis, such as the frequency distribution and independent t-test, was performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 software (SPSS Inc., Chicago IL, USA). **RESULTS:** The University of Georgia had the highest participants of 41.5%, followed by Batumi State University (31.7%). 56.8% of female students completed the study with a mean age of 22.19. 86.1% of students were medical students, and 17.2% were in their final year of medical school. 89.9% of students were international students from different countries across the globe. Most students "agreed" that the challenges influencing their research interest were lack of motivation and guidance (48.8%), time constraints (48.7%), lack of familiarity with research proposal (48.7%), skills, and statistical analysis (49%). Most of the male students reported that lack of access to research papers, databases, and research funding limits their interest and participation in research, which were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). **CONCLUSION:** Our study reported significant barriers and limitations encountered by international students interested in research studies. Most participants require research training and mentoring to obtain the essential skills. Research clubs and organizations are encouraged among students to help optimize the opportunities for participation in grants and projects funded by different organizations.

Key Words: Activity, Research, Medicine, Students.