

The Vague Position of the Dissertations in the Curriculum of the General Medical Doctorate Course

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Although in the general medical doctoral training program approved by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education in 2017, one of the professional duties of the graduates of this field is to participate in all educational and research activities approved by the competent authorities. However, in the main competencies and skills expected by the graduates of this field, there is no reference to research competencies [1]. In this program, there are 293 credits, of which six are related to the dissertation. The study of this program shows that only the courses “Research Methods and Evidence-Based Medicine”, “Medical Statistics”, and “Principles of Epidemiology” are about how to conduct research, search for articles, basic principles of vital statistics, and types of studies [1].

It is suggested that the following issues be considered before the next review of this program:

1- Is it necessary to submit a dissertation in the general medical doctorate course? Can it be deleted or defined as an optional unit? There are different approaches to this in different countries and universities. For example, in Germany, although it is necessary to perform a research project and write a thesis to obtain the title »Doctor«, it is not necessary to work as a physician [2]. But at Yale University, for example, students have to submit a dissertation for a doctorate in medicine for more than a hundred years ago [3].

2- Does the current program prepare the student to do research and submit a dissertation? It is important to note that the courses that prepare the student for research are offered in the basic sciences and clinical preparation stages, which of course is a long time between the time when the student starts writing the proposal of the dissertation and is often theoretical [1].

3- Is the purpose of the dissertation to acquaint the student with the research work process? and for this purpose can he be involved in a research project? or should the research be done under the supervision of the relevant professor but entirely by the student?

4- Should the research question be such that the result of the study can be published as an article or the student can research a simple question and there is no need to publish the article? In the latter case, who will be the supervisor of the dissertation?

5- If the results are to be published as an article, is there a need to write a written report in addition?

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