

Charitable Organizations for Science Advancing in Iran and Other Countries

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Non-governmental organizations and charitable foundations for the advancement of science are institutions which operate independent of the state, and fulfill their mission by receiving financial assistance from people. These institutions play a crucial role in promotion of science and technology in society and extending it to the areas where the state cannot provide funding. The current research investigates the status of scientific charitable foundations in Iran, the United States, Germany, Britain, and India from the perspective of scientific, technological and innovative development.

The aim of current research is to do a comparative analysis of the status of non-governmental and charitable organizations whose aim is the advancement of science in the targeted countries, while delving into the issue of discovering the most suitable policies and strategies for the establishment and the continuation of such institutions. Without any doubt, experience and success of the targeted countries concerning the functions of such organizations can be used as a guide by the policy makers in the areas of non-governmental and charitable organizations, to discover the best approaches and procedures about the establishment, as well as the mode of activity, and the successful performance of these institutions. The methodology of this paper is based on descriptive analysis approach.

Our findings show that only a few charitable foundations are active in areas of science, production and science promotion. We have identified various reasons to explain the discrepancy in this area between Iran and other countries. It seems that if we change the limiting factors (that we have discussed in this research), it would be possible to establish scientific charitable foundations.

The current research shows that charitable foundations in the studied countries (with the exception of Iran) function according to their established frameworks and provide funding for fundamental and basic research. Unfortunately, charitable foundations in Iran perform within traditional frameworks. It is worth mentioning that there is a huge gap between the reality of Iranian scientific charitable foundations and how their counter parts in other countries operate. Scientific potential of Iranian scientific charitable institutions at best is to provide educational opportunities and health care to the needy people. As a result, science in its true sense does not play a role in these institutions. This is against the backdrop of the experience of institutions such as Nezammyehs, and Darolhekmehs, in our history. Sadly, we have neglected this rich experience, while other countries have used these institutions as a model to develop their scientific charitable institutions.

Keywords: Scientific Charitable Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Advancement of Science, Innovation, Nezammyehs, Darolhekmehs, Scientific Donation, Iranians' Interest in Science.

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