

OBITUARY



Dr. Shakeel R. Farooqi
(1960 - 2021)

Dr. Farooqi was born on July 20th, 1960 in Hyderabad (Sindh). He studied at Sindh University Model School and completed matriculation from the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Hyderabad in 1975. He then attended the Government National College in Karachi and completed intermediate in 1978. He obtained a bachelor's degree in Botany from the University of Karachi and also completed a post-graduate diploma in Statistics in 1984. He obtained a master's degree in Genetics from the University of Karachi and went to the United States for a Ph.D. on the highly prestigious Rotary Foundation scholarship. He completed his Ph.D. from Kansas State University in 1994, where he studied the effect of Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus infection on Absciscic acid levels in Wheat for his thesis.

Dr. Farooqi began his association with the University of Karachi as a teacher in 1988 when he was appointed as a lecturer in the Department of Genetics. He became assistant professor in 1995 and remained associated with the university for a little over three decades till he retired in July 2020. He trained and supervised a number of research students in the field of molecular genetics. Throughout his career, Dr. Shakeel Farooqi was passionate about teaching, and improving the quality of higher education in Pakistan. He organized countless workshops and seminars on diverse topics ranging from, but not limited to, molecular genetics techniques, using various statistical software, career planning, to science communication. He also organized Staff Development courses under the auspices of the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) a couple of times. His love for accurate scientific dissemination and communication is reflected in the numerous articles he wrote to explain the dangers and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic towards the end of his life. He also hosted various television shows including *Meezan*, which is one of the longest-running programs on PTV from 2006 to 2015.

Dr. Farooqi was also a staunch supporter of the right of students and teachers. He was elected president of the Student Union in 1982-83 and was the last elected president at the time of dissolution of student unions in the '80s. He also played an active role in teachers' politics and was elected as the president of Karachi University Teachers Society (KUTS) twice. He also served as a member of the University of Karachi syndicate, vice-president and secretary of the Federation of All Pakistan Universities Academic Staff Association (FAPUASA). He was a fiery orator and spent his life advocating for the rights of teachers. He was also a prolific writer and poet and was actively engaged in the activities of the Arts Council of Pakistan. He organized many literary and social programs.

During his life, Dr. Shakeel Farooqi inspired and motivated hundreds of students and colleagues. He was very generous with his time and resources and always went out of his way to help others. His sudden death has saddened all who had the pleasure of knowing him. His students, colleagues, and friends will always miss him.

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