

Editorial Comments

Another interesting set of papers are included in this edition of the African Journal of Medicine and medical sciences. This shows the improving quality of our journal which now publishes peer review papers from different countries around the world, though focus is still on research and practice in Africa.

The papers consist of 4 laboratory based studies on (1) Methicillin resistant *staphylococcus aureus*, (2) Solid tumour in neonates, (3) Gram stain microbiological pattern of upper extremities suppuration and (4) Retrospective histopathological review of oral squamous cell carcinoma. Two papers based on experiences in Australia and the United States of America examined biomedical science education and research in academic medical centre and low serum creatinine levels as risk factor for diabetic mellitus.

Clinical papers include (1) Outcome of skin closure with suture materials in paediatric surgical procedures, (2) Validity and test-retest reliability of the neck disability index in Nigerian clinical setting, (3) Case report on complications of chronic sinusitis on orbital sonography and craniofacial computed tomography and (4) Survival rates of two atraumatic restorative treatment types in occlusal carious permanent teeth after two years.

Two papers on medical education and research are: (1) Attitudes and perception of medical and dental preclinical undergraduates in a Nigerian medical school towards cadaveric dissection and (2) An appraisal of the process of protocol review by ethics review committee in Ibadan.

The last of these papers is a most interesting, touching on some fundamental issues in research. Many young researchers have limited appreciation of what ethics is about, but the requirement for ethics approval on research on human subjects by the universities, the West African and Nigerian Postgraduate Medical Colleges has provided learning opportunities for young researchers. Sixty-seven percent of submitted proposals had postgraduate students and residents as principal investigators, most of which were self funded. Academic staff constituted only 21%, most of who were lecturers and senior lecturers. However, this group had some support from grant awarding agencies. While International Organizations funded 9.8% of all studies, Institutional grants were 1.5%, pharmaceuticals 1.7% and other public institutions 0.4%.

As expected 54.7% of the study were based in Teaching Hospitals, probable because of limited funds. This article by O.R Eyelade *et al* raises many questions about research in this environment. Comments here are on funding, personnel and procedure. The paper gives some food for thought and it is something that should be of concern to universities, research institutions and the Nigerian government. Without good research, there will be no progress, and good research needs funding, so far the best support comes from International funding agencies, who usually have priorities that may not coincide with national needs. This situation is worrisome.