



DO MEDICAL RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN SHARPENING THE CAMPUS LEARNING

Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Research presentations and meetings are supposed to fulfill a critical role in the ongoing education of health science students, lecturers, technicians, nurses, and other health care educators. There are many functions which these conferences meet in addition to imparting education: sharpening the skills, ability to interact with peers, trying new equipment, evolving novel and locally relevant ideas, developing consensus in contentious areas all leading to improvement in medical education, health-care delivery, and patient outcomes. However, at the moment, the research presentations by health science students are too little and not very effective in delivering the purported benefit. Further, there is need to reconcile the entanglement of interests between the organizers (usually Campus lecturers) and the fund donors (Panel).

KEYWORDS

Conference, Meeting, Students, Research

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly changing world of university education under corona lockdown, and students participation, continuing medical education (CME) programs are considered in eliminable requirement. In current era of online information, there are so many great ways to learn and sharpen skills: one can read blogs, listen to podcasts, watch how-to videos on YouTube, and attend webinars, just to name a few. Then why bother with the time and expense of an in-person campus conference or students workshop? The matter of fact is that while these activities add to knowledge bank, there is no substitute for live campus events like a conference, workshops, seminars, research project presentations and symposiums that provide unique learning and career building opportunities that just cannot be found anywhere else, particularly in local settings and current class-room curriculums Mishra S (2015). The congresses enable medical students to keep up-to-date with important research, learn directly from experiences and "trials and errors" of other senior students, share best practices, and develop new skills and techniques. All of these have a direct impact on daily biomedical lab practice, helping to improve safety and quality of research and patient care. However, for all these purposes, one or two meetings every semester may suffice.

THE REALITY OF RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Why do we attend medical project presentations?

To meet peers

Campus networking - to project self

To spend quality time with student entertainment

To update on recent advances and develop a new skill

Gain deeper knowledge on medical projects in community

Indeed, if a conference is done to update biomed students on recent advances, to help them gain deeper knowledge, or enhance their skill, then the aims are credible. However, in Copperbelt university, School of medicine campus, in the year 2021, November, at least one major (students delegates >40) research presentation in biomedical stream and its subspecialties was held. These meetings should have catered to each and every professional in medical arena but the matter of fact is that it was only a select group of biomed program students who attended.

The purpose of this paper then, was to observe and examine emerging trends in biomedical research and also in the themes and topics being studied in this area. To achieve this, the objectives of the study were to identify and observe 1) topics currently under study by biomed research students, 2) topics considered to be comprehensive study, 3) topics for future research and 4) underpin the development of a future research agenda for medical university.

The need for medical conferences

On the other hand, medicine (more so biomedical) is a profession at the

cutting edge of laboratory science. Practically, every single day some new innovation comes to fore in this Covid era, some new path-breaking study is published, and some new guideline is released. It is quite perplexed for a busy student to be updated with what is going on. Thus, medical students need to update themselves frequently to accommodate the radical changes: advent of new technologies, changes in health care delivery, changing community demographics and patterns of local diseases. CME fulfills this critically important role in the ongoing education of health science students at campus.

So, what is the way that was done?

The following research projects were presented, titled as,

1. Stability study of two routine biochemical analytes in serum
2. The prevalence of Plasmodium falciparum in pregnant women attending antenatal at Chipokotamayamba clinic in Chifubu, Ndola
3. Prevalence of bacterial urinary tract infections among patients at Ndola Teaching Hospital
4. Prevalence of Proteus infections among women with urinary tract infections at Ndola Teaching Hospital
5. Prevalence of Gonorrhoea at Ndola Teaching Hospital
6. Common pathogens isolated from pus and their antimicrobial susceptibility profile at Kitwe Teaching Hospital
7. Prevalence of Nematode infections in school going children in Kalulushi District
8. Prevalence and risk factors associated with Taenia solium in pigs in Mukwela village, Kalomo, Zambia
9. Seroprevalence and risk factors associated with toxoplasmosis in pregnant women attending antenatal clinic at Namwala District Hospital in Namwala, Zambia
10. Prevalence of candidiasis in women of child bearing age from 18 to 34 years at Ndola teaching Hospital
11. Prevalence of anaemia and associated risk factors among pregnant women at Chipokotamayamba clinic, Ndola District
12. Isolation of candida species from urine samples from hospitalised patients and anti-fungal susceptibility testing at Ndola Teaching Hospital
13. The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on antibiotic resistant pattern
14. Comparison of Haematological changes in HIV patients receiving Zidovudine or Atripla HAART regimens at Ndola Teaching Hospital
15. Prevalence of anaemia among under 5 children and its associated risk factors at Chambishi Government Clinic
16. Prevalence of precancerous lesions and cancerous lesions among HIV positive women attending HAART clinic at NTH
17. Prevalence of transfusion transmissible infections in donated blood at Mansa General Hospital in Mansa, Luapula, Zambia
18. Prevalence of urinary Schistosomiasis among children in Mungwi

District

19. Assessment of the antibacterial activity of natural honey on *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* and *Streptococcus pyogenes* isolated from wound swabs
20. Prevalence of trichomoniasis in pregnant women at Chipata Central Hospital
21. Investigating the prevalence of Rifampicin resistance in tuberculosis patients at Ndola Teaching Hospital using Gene Xpert
22. Prevalence of Methicillin (cefoxitin/oxacillin) resistance *staphylococcus aureus* from clinical samples isolated at Ndola Teaching Hospital
23. The prevalence of anaemia in diabetic adult patients at Ndola Teaching Hospital

More than 10 lecturers attended this event.

These presentations were held as a prerequisite for our BSc. Biomedical Science students to graduate. Even though trivial, some refreshments were provided to the lecturers present, but not to students. Past studies on refreshments indicate commercially sponsored meetings to be of good-excellent quality Andersson SJ, Troein M and Lindberg G (2005), Carney SL et al (2001). This is the first cohort of Bsc. Biomedical Sciences set to graduate from CBU School of Medicine, Ndola, Zambia. All research topics presented were conducted by the students under the supervision of assigned lecturers and students were expected to respond to various questions arising from their presentations.

The aim of this exercise was to train the students in public speaking skills and also introduce them to the field of scientific research which they are about to venture into as they begin their careers.

CONCLUSION

Research presentations are an integral part of learning for health-care professionals. While learning is possible "at distance" in this Covid era, real life meetings do have their own significance. There is need to regulate the number of meetings and to make them more focused and directed rather than "me too" ones.

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