

## EDITORIAL

**RESEARCH STATUS IN AFRICA AND THE WAY FORWARD**

It is not news that research in the developing world is far behind what obtains in the developed world. This is particularly apt for oral health research which is still very poor judging from published articles and anecdotal observation.

Several factors are responsible for this dismal state, chiefly poor research funding and inadequate technical know-how. Other factors include poor infrastructure that are crucial for research such as electricity supply. In some countries, political instability, conflicts and wars make research activities almost impossible. Poor funding is often due to inadequate resources in the very poor countries where priorities demand that research funding gets sidelined in the face of other pressing demands for the scarce resources. Even where resources are adequate, lack of appreciation of the importance of health research funding still impairs the development of a research culture and infrastructure.

Several recommendations have been proffered to mitigate this anomaly. Firstly, the results of health care research (oral health care inclusive) should be acted upon and made to impact health outcomes thereby allowing policy makers to see the benefit of improved funding. In addition, there is a critical need for researchers in the developing world to collaborate in

interdisciplinary and international studies in order to improve their research knowledge and capacity. It is important for universities, research institutions and other similar agencies to organize local and international training for faculty and other people involved in research. If policy makers and governments are persuaded to improve on the current state of funding, the outlook will definitely improve. In the developing countries, a little effort can go a long way, after all, the developing countries bear the greater share of diseases including the unholy trio of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. In addition, the prevalence of oral diseases including caries, periodontal diseases and oral cancer is on the rise in many developing countries.

**References**

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