

Educational Research- The Need of the Hour

Treville Pereira*

Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology and Microbiology, Dr DY Patil Dental College & Hospital, India

*Corresponding author: Dr. Treville Pereira, Professor, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology and Microbiology, Dr DY Patil Dental College & Hospital, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, Tel: +919821281458; Fax: +912227709590; E-mail: trevillepereira@gmail.com

Received date: September 22, 2015; Accepted date: January 10, 2016; Published date: January 15, 2016

Abstract

Everyone has a vested interest in the educational system when you think about it. Educators want to assist their students and teach material in a more comprehensive and effective manner. Even institutions have an interest in educational research because aside from investing money in the educational system, they generally understand that students are the future. Identifying a research problem, reviewing literature, collecting and analyzing data and forming an interpretation of the information are all important parts of developing good research that can be then evaluated and used in the educational community by teachers and students alike.

Keywords: Research; Education; Dental

Mini Review

Over the past decades, many institutions have undertaken initiatives to put mechanisms in place in order to improve and give a better account for use of resources and the quality of education. There is evidence for these mechanisms - including quality assessment - in institutions of higher learning in many developed countries however, this is not necessarily the case in the developing world. A World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) booklet states that only a handful of the over 1,600 medical schools globally undergo regular accreditation [1].

Measuring quality is essential for continuous improvement of study programs, teaching and support services [2,3]. This letter highlights the purpose of research for students and rationale of developing a rapid appraisal tool for measuring quality of higher education.

Research can help teachers to understand what works and why, what the short and long term implications are, provide a justification and rationale for decisions and actions, help to build a repertoire to help deal with the unexpected, identify problems and so forth.

The purpose of the research is to seek true knowledge with the avoidance of error. It leads us to a better understanding of and a deeper appreciation for the discipline under investigation thereby establishing a strong infrastructure, which improves the living conditions of society and encourages

progressive thoughts. The quality of dental care we enjoy today is built on years of research and tireless efforts by various universities, general dental practitioners and post graduate students. Yet, there is so much to be done. Beyond doubt, the quality of post graduate students decides the future of that specialty and a spirit of research must be instilled. Students benefit from wisdom, knowledge and experience of a mentor. It is important for faculty to support and groom them in the process of advancing medical knowledge and improving patient care. Students who learn from lifelong learners may even be more likely to discover their own innate thirst for knowledge.

Students must be made to realize the beauty of the subject and to "seek deeper". Only active research removes the cobwebs of ignorance and doubts in their minds thus improving the chances of achieving specific objectives.

Is the quality of research measurable? It is, if the variables to be measured - both quantitatively and qualitatively are well-defined. Quality assessment in higher education entails defining what quality is, setting assessment standards and comparing the latter with the real outcomes, and deciding to what extent standards are met [4,5].

However it is very important that research be conducted ethically. Since it involves great deal of co-operation and co-ordination among many different people in many different disciplines, ethical standards promote the value that are essential to collaborative work. Furthermore fabricating, or misrepresenting research data damages the core of research. Integrity must be focused upon and the students must be made very clear of the implications of their research. The institution, in turn, does what it promised and periodically allows inspection from within or by a third party [6,7].

So you see, research is important for a number of reasons when you consider how many people have an interest in it in general. Research can serve as a way to improve the practice of teaching and learning. Instead of having a single practice in educating post graduate students; research can suggest ways of adapting to different types of people. Also, research is important because it adds on to what we know about how people learn and what we can do to help facilitate people's learning processes. Research can also address areas in which little is known about a teaching technique or a learning pattern or perhaps the effects of online learning which seems to be becoming quite popular in comparison to what we call, traditional classroom teaching. Lastly research can add voices to individuals who were otherwise not considered in research,

and thus further our knowledge of how to make a better educational system.

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