

Tenth International

Literature

Science Park Amsterdam, The
Netherlands December 8-9, 2008

Knowledge and the use of The
Grey Medical Literature by The
Medical and Paramedical Staff of
University and Research
Associated Medical Institutions in
Developing Countries

T

Organizations

- Emmanuel.U.Onyekwelu,Joan Carlos
- Rodriguez David,Margarita Gonzalez
- Organizations: Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital ,Independence Drive,P.O.Box 1515,Banjul,The Gambia West Africa.
- Telephone:220/9908295
- Fax:220/9908295
- E-mail:euonyekwelu@hotmail.com.

Background

- Introduction: Anecdotally a good body of the medical literature used for systematic review is usually derived from a regression or substantive meta-analysis of well controlled adequately powered multicentric studies to generate a level 1 grade A evidence of best practice, presumably these are in the primary sources in the form of publications as original articles in peer reviewed indexed journals and bibliographies and this could be accessed through search engines such as medline, pubmed central, Cochrane controlled trials registers, embase, current contents search, science citation index to mention but as few. However recent senior data has shown that a significant body of the medical evidence up to 60% in some series is in the grey medical literature (ie publications not available through the primary sources as outlined above, given that medical research scientists and clinicians are compelled by exigency to produce documents for use in making timely, rational, technical and detailed informed decisions, it is imperative for them to devise appropriate alternatives for effective communication within specialized research or interest groups.

Background Continued.

- Grey medical literature includes internal medical research reports, medical technical reports, medical institutional bulletins, memoranda, non-indexed refereed medical journals, final reports of grants received, proceedings of specialized medical conferences,
- Ephemerals, referenced, instructed and directed non-indexed journals, teaching material, internet communications, personal communications, other unpublished sources known to the specialty specific experts, raw data from unpublished trials and preliminary interim analysis from ongoing trials, sources operational protocols, guidelines from laboratory techniques, translations or information leaflets for very practical aims, newsletters, drug patents, thesis and dissertations.

Goal, Objectives and Aims

- Traditional classical teaching is that less body of medical evidence is in the grey medical literature except in the 5 ps(Philosophy,Psychology,physiotherapy,pharmaceuticals and of course public health which appears to be reasonably well represented in the grey literature in relation to the other medical disciplines. Various medical authors have postulated that peer reviewed indexed medical journals have always been the established much welcomed means of scholarly academic and professional communication for health personnel. The aim and objective of this study is to undertake an empiric investigation of the knowledge and the use of the grey medical literature among the medical and paramedical staff in the university/research affiliated teaching health institutions in developing countries. Existing data intimates that a standard methodologic study of this body of medical literature is not replete in the developing countries.

Methodology and Setting

- A triangulated methodology involving a reactive strategy through multimodal standardized pre-piloted questionnaire administration ,non-obtrusive less reactive methodology using citation analysis of the grey medical literature in medical journals and bibliographies of developing countries as a surrogate of use of the grey medical resource and a methodological study of the accessible medical institutional repositories, open access archives and online thesis and dissertations as proxy estimates of the knowledge and the use of the grey medical literature in academic and research biomedical communities.

surveys and Interim data presentation and analysis

- Of the minimum sample size of 384 using the estimated sample size theorem for proportions for pilot surveys, 176 (45.31%) questionnaires were administered, 154 (87.5%) completed and returned their questionnaires, of these 15 (9.74%) were senior public health physicians,
- 30 (19.48%) were senior clinical nurses, 15 (9.74%) were public health nurses and senior public health officers, 23 (14.94%) were laboratorians/senior laboratory technologists, 5 (3.25%) were medical librarians and archivists, 2 (1.30%) were medical statisticians, 3 (1.95%) were optometrists, 5 (3.25%) were radiographers, 4 (2.60%) were physiotherapists.

Survey and Interim Data Presentation and analysis

- Analysis of the respondents use of the grey medical literature according to their designated specialties, 11 (73.3%) of the public health physicians and clinical epidemiologists uses the grey medical literature. CI $\pm 7.01\%$ (65.99-80.01%) where as 9 (17.31%) of the other physicians uses the grey medical literature CI $\pm 5.93\%$ (11.07-22.93%), 4 (13.3%) of the senior clinical nurses CI $\pm 5.31\%$ (7.69-18.31%),
- 4 (17.39%) CI $\pm 5.93\%$ (11.07-22.93%) of the medical archivists and librarians, 5 (100%), of the medical statisticians 1 (50%) CI $\pm 7.9\%$ (42.11-57.90%) of the optometrists, 1 (33.3%) CI $\pm 7.43\%$ (25.57-40.43%), of the radiographers 1 (20%) CI $\pm 6.32\%$ (13.68-26.32%) of the physiotherapists 1 (25%) $\pm 6.84\%$ (18.16-31.84%)

surveys and Interim data presentation and analysis

- Analysis of the use of the grey medical literature amongst the physicians according to their specialty of interests.
- Internal Medicine, psychiatry and dermatology 2(11.76%) CI±5.13%(6.87%-17.13%), Paediatricians 3(21.42%) CI±6.43%(14.57-27.43%), Surgical Specialties 1(9.09%) CI±4.52%(4.48-13.52%) Pathology specialties 2(18.18%) CI±6.07%(11.93-24.07%)
- Obstetrics and gynaecology 1(20%) CI±6.32%
- (13.68-26.32%), Public health physicians and clinical epidemiologists 11(73.33%) CI±7.01%(65.99-80.01%).
- Results of the use of different sources of the grey medical literature hospital reports 34(22%), peer peer reviewed non-indexed journals 30(20.81%), proceedings of specialised medical conferences 20(12.90%), academic thesis/dissertations 25(16.10%), other unpublished sources 8(5.10%)
- Awareness of the nomenclature the grey medical literature 21(13.63%)
- Knowledge of the grey research network 7 (4.54%)