

EDITORIAL

Importance of Publishing

Dear Colleagues,

Publishing is an art of presenting one's ideas, views, and or research findings in a written agreed format usually in a brochure, newspaper, pamphlet, newsletter, journal or a book. The motives behind one's desire to publish vary from person to person, institution to institution, and from time to time. Some of the motives revolve around the following:

1. Making ideas, views or research findings known to other people,
2. A means of communicating for learned people,
3. Advancing the knowledge in the field of interest,
4. Improving quality of life,
5. Getting to be known, thus gaining recognition by other people,
6. Improving ones curriculum vitae,
7. Identifying ones self with a particular branch of science,
8. Contributing to the objectives of parent institution,
9. Raising esteem to the parent institution,
10. Part of job description, and
11. A sole pathway to getting promoted in many institutions of higher learning, MUCHS included.

Many people feel satisfied when they have their ideas, views or research findings written and published. Communicating in writing ensures that many people read ideas, views and research findings over long time because writings can be kept and passed over to several generations. In this way knowledge is advanced because readers can scrutinize the written message, retest them and modify for the betterment of mankind.

Many writings in any media, be it newspaper, newsletter, or journal carry with it a message that contributes to the well being of mankind. Even cartoons carry powerful messages that aim at improving life of the target community. In health sciences, research findings aim at improving the health of people of the target population and other people at large. The only way to have research findings benefit as many people as possible is to ensure that your research findings are published.

Maslaw's hierarchy of needs put survival needs at the top (food, shelter, clothing), and recognition needs as second. Yet in modern world - the world of globalization, especially to people who earn their living through employment by organizations other than themselves, needs classified by Maslaw as second are now taking an important top position. A person who is publishing will have better employment opportunities than the other person of equal basic qualification who never publish. This is because publishing improves ones curriculum vitae, gets someone known to the rest of the world, improves ones international recognition, and identifies a person with specialties or branches of science/field.

In many institutions especially higher learning institutions, publishing is part of the job description of the employees. This is because published materials are used to gauge the quality of performance of higher learning institutions. Therefore publishing in higher learning institutions raises the esteem of the parent institution. For that matter publishing is part of the job description of employee of higher learning institution, and undertaking research is one of the main objectives of many such institutions and the individual. As an incentive to fulfilling this objective of the institution, in many universities including University of Dar es Salaam, and Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS) in particular, promotion of a staff member from one rank to another is based on the predetermined number of publications. It is therefore not surprising to encounter two people employed at MUCHS on the same date and to the same post/job with the same starting salary differing in pay package after some years to the extent that one gets double the salary of the second.

It can be concluded that publishing, in this century of globalization and in higher learning institutions in particular, is a key to success. Since publishing is an art that needs to be learned through practice, I call upon all dental professionals to strive and publish at least one

article every year in our local journal "The Tanzania Dental Journal" through which we can assist each other to reach excellence in publishing and gain the massive benefits of publishing as briefly described in this communiqué.

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