



It is time to Leap beyond Limits: The Physician, the Advocate in Medical Journalism – Translating Research into Policies in Nigeria.

Kalio DGB¹, Aaron FE², Eli S³, Briggs NCT⁴, Kua P¹

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.¹

Department of Surgery, Rivers State University.²

Mother, Baby and Adolescent Care Global Foundation.³

Department of Community Medicine, Rivers State University.⁴

ARTICLE INFO.

Article No.: 020321019

Type: Letter to the Editor

Accepted: 01/03/2021

Published: 22/03/2021

***Corresponding Author**

Dr Eli S MBBS, FWACS

E-mail: elisukarime@gmail.com

Keywords: Medical journalism; Research; Policies, Nigeria

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This article is borne out of the fact that the value system of our nation has been misplaced.¹ We have failed in virtually every area as a nation, as it relates to nation building.^{2,3} We have celebrated mediocrity and left out the things that should matter most; in this context health.⁴

As a nation, hard work and excellent are no longer rewarded; hooliganism, kidnapping and banditry are means of extorting resources and funds from our government.⁵ Those that pursue excellence have been neglected.⁶ No wonder the nation- Nigeria has one of the worst health indices globally. An examples is the alarming maternal and perinatal mortalities in Nigeria. In addition, brain drain amongst health professional in Nigeria is indeed worrisome because, majority of the workforce in the health sectors are migrating outside the shores of the country for various reasons. Some of these reasons include better remuneration, security and better quality of life for them and their families.¹⁻²

With Nigerian population of over 200million, health professionals are in short demand to meet the health challenges of the nation.¹⁻⁴ This cuts across community medicine, dentistry, orthopaedics, psychiatry, paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology and all other specialties.^{1,3-7}

It is pathetic that most of our junior and senior colleagues can no longer attend conferences, both home and abroad as a result of sponsorship or lack of funds.¹⁻⁴ Grants for research are near impossible to access because the governments are not interested in research funding.⁸⁻¹¹

The government of Nigeria should implement the following

- Through the legislature pass bill to favour grants for research in health care.
- Enable health professionals to have access to funds to attend conferences locally and internationally to be abreast of international best practices.

- Pass bills in favour of safe motherhood; targeting reduction of maternal and perinatal mortalities.
- Make the hinterlands accessible and safe for community health worker in terms of security and conducive working environment.
- Make funds accessible to epidemiologist and clinical researchers who are interested in carrying out researches with regards to outbreak and prevention of communicable diseases.
- Partnering with non-government organizations, community health workers in dissemination of health information and prevention of disease conditions.
- Encouraging specialization and subspecialization by releasing funds for training and retraining of health personnel in all medical fields.
- In this covid-19 pandemic, government of Nigeria should partner both at the local and international levels to encourage the production of covid-19 vaccines locally to meet up with international standards.
- Equipping of health facilities across the country making them affordable, accessible for all and sundry. This saves funds from medical tourism elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion if the above recommendations are welcomed by policy makers, with a strong political will by the government of Nigeria then most of the alarming health indices in Nigeria beginning with the high maternal and perinatal mortalities will drastically be reduced. Furthermore, the outcome of these local researches will invariably be transformed into national health policies with positive health impact.

Acknowledgement;

Mother, Baby and Adolescent Care Global Foundation
(Previously Mother and Baby Care Global Foundation)

REFERENCES

1. Onota CA, Hanson K, Hanefield I. Towards universal coverage: a policy analysis of the development of National health insurance scheme in Nigeria. *Health Policy Plan* 2015; 30: 1105 – 17.
2. Ojo TO, Akinwumi AF. Doctors as managers of health resources in Nigeria; evolving roles and current challenges. *Niger Med J* 2015; 56: 375.
3. Alubo O, Hundah V. Medical dominance and resistance in Nigeria's health care system. *Int J Health Serv* 2017; 47: 778-94.
4. Adeoye D, David RA, Olaogun AA et al. Health workforce and governance: the crisis in Nigeria. *Human Resources Health* 2017;15:32.
5. Alubo SO. The political economy of doctors' strikes in Nigeria: a market interpretation. *Soc Sci Med* 1986; 22: 467 – 77.
6. Nancarrow SA. Six principles to enhance health workforce flexibility. *Human Resource Health* 2015; 13:9.
7. Kuhmann E, Batenburg R, Dussault G. Where health workforce governance research meets health service management. *Health Serv Manage Res* 2016; 29:21.
8. Boyce R. Emerging from the shadow of medicine: allied health as a 'profession community' subculture. *Health Sociology Review* 2006; 15: 520 – 34.
9. Badejo O, Sagay H, Abimbola S, Van Belle S. Confronting power in low places: historical analysis of medical dominance and role - boundary negotiation between health professionalism in Nigeria. *BMJ Global Health* 2020; 9:5
10. VanRonsbury AJ, Ram A, Foune P ET AL. Power and integrated health care: shifting from governance to governmentality. *Int J Integr Care* 20;16:17.
11. Reeves S, Goldman J, Gilbert J et al. A scoping review to improved conceptual clarity of inter-professional intervention. *J Interprof Care* 2011; 25: 167 – 74.

Cite this Article: Kalio DGB; Aaron FE; Eli S; Briggs NCT; Kua P (2021). It is time to Leap beyond Limits: The Physician, the Advocate in Medical Journalism – Translating Research into Policies in Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Medical Sciences*, 11(1): 22-23.