

Abstract

Background: Most medical students perceive research as a venture for a select few. This study aimed to assess students' knowledge, perceived barriers and suggestions on ways of promoting research culture.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study. Study participants were students in the Faculty of Health Sciences, Egerton University. The survey was carried out using pre-tested structured questionnaires. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula. The data gathered was sorted, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS®), version 25 (IBM. Corp).

Results: A total of 195 students were sampled; 50% (n=98 males) and 49.5% (n=97) females. 84.2% of respondents had an idea of what research entails. 60.2% had never taken part in a research project. 87.6% agreed that research was useful in preparing them for their career. 91.2% agreed research would benefit them as students. Given an opportunity, 85% agreed that they would participate in research. 85% believed research should be taught to students in their preclinical years. Lack of time, lack of funding and lack of facilities were the main obstacles hindering research, reported by 65.8%, 65.8% and 52.5% of respondents, respectively. On ways of promoting research, respondents cited the establishment of research clubs, mentorship, funding, equipping students with research skills, and creating awareness on opportunities that come with research.

Conclusion: The study revealed that students in the Faculty had a positive attitude towards research. The establishment of research clubs, mentorship from lecturers, equipping students with research skills, and funding can promote research culture.