



Do we really need more research?

The question of whether we need more research seems to have an obvious answer, but please be aware of obvious answers – sometimes reality is more complex than what we perceive.

I personally think that too much research is currently done, but it is often done for the wrong reasons, it is not properly conducted and it is often poorly reported. If unreliable results and conclusions are generated, then research becomes useless if not dangerous when focusing on treatments which may not be the best option for our patients. Where is the problem then? Well, it is in our nature as human beings. We lack sufficient education, knowledge of the basic research principles, and independent critical skills that are badly needed to interpret and understand the huge amount of information bombarding us every day.

Too often we are blinded by our opinions and prejudices. I am not referring to laymen, but to us, dentists, who have attended university studies for at least 5 years. However, if we will realise that this is a problem then some solutions may be found. On the contrary, if we go on thinking that there are no problems and that the level of scientific information we are exposed to is adequate, then no solution can be found.

What to do to escape from the trap of ignorance? Any key player has to do its part. First the universities, which should provide reliable knowledge, but moreover the basic tools for independent critical skills, then the various scientific societies that have as a goal the dissemination of reliable knowledge that should focus more on the content and less to form. Also commercial companies, especially those that have solid budgets to invest, should contribute to this, by financing some good research for solving real patient problems and invest a bit less in 'smart marketing tools' to increase sales of useless devices and procedures. Companies, which are behind most

of our scientific activities as fundamental sponsors, could also provide reliable education, if they wish to do so, while marketing their products. Scientific journals should also do their part, selecting and presenting reliable research based on its individual and actual merits. Moreover reputable scientific journals should resist from pressures of various natures trying to adjust facts and from the temptations of selling pages hosting dubious marketing lead sponsored research. And last, but not least, we must learn to use our neurons in a more efficient way. We must read some scientific articles, including the boring, but often crucial details described in the materials and methods without following the easy short-cut to read the conclusions alone.

We need better education and more critical skills. Once we have achieved this goal, then it will be simpler to focus on relevant research questions and to generate reliable data to enable progress, and the proper use of resources, which today are sometimes wasted in useless research.

This is and will remain the main focus of EJOI. It is not as easy a task as it may look, because by trying to find and present the truth we have and we will upset more than one person. We are and we shall be criticised, befooled and marginalised, but we shall still use our brainpower as efficiently and independently as we can, and we shall not bow to research lobby interests. In other words, this editorial line is reflected in the decision of the journal to publish few articles; those we believe to be more reliable and useful for the readers, including those with negative results, keeping in mind that we learn more from mistakes and failures than from an illusionary 110% implant success rate.

Enjoy your reading,
Marco