

A Report Card: View From Academia On Training Enhancements



for International Medical Graduates Gouri Gupta, MHA and Katrina Graham, MBA

Background/Motivation

- ◆ In 2006, out of 902,053 physicians, 228,665 IMGs received medical degrees from 127 different countries, accounting for 25.3% of the total physician count. (AMA, 2007)
- ◆ IMGs make up approximately 25% of the U.S. physician population. (AMA, 2007)
- ◆ IMGs were distributed more or less like USMGs across poverty and non-poverty areas. (Stephen, 1999)
- ◆ Demand side: (Salsberg, 2006)
 - ◆ Growing U.S. population
 - ◆ Rapid growth in persons over the age of 65
 - ◆ Rising expectations of Americans, population growth, aging of the population, public expectations
 - ◆ Economic growth
 - ◆ Changes in diagnosis and treatment
 - ◆ Cost containment efforts
 - ◆ Changes in organization and financing of services
 - ◆ Boutique medicine
 - ◆ Advances in genetic testing
- ◆ Supply side: (Salsberg, 2006)
 - ◆ Aging of the physician workforce (1 of 3 active physicians over the age 55 and they are likely to retire by 2020)
 - ◆ New generation of physicians
 - ◆ Current levels of training, the physician-to-population ratio will peak by 2020 and then decline

Purpose

Systematic review of available literature to determine key research done on the enhancement of training of future IMGs working in the US healthcare system.
Secondary intentions were to identify whether there has been a quality improvement in the matriculated IMGs based on the evolving assessment and gaps in research of the same.

Research Design

Search Parameters:
Keywords: "IMGs", "FMG", "ECFMG", "International Medical Graduate", "Brain drain", "Foreign medical graduate" (Citation and Abstract) & "United States" and "Canada" (Document Text)

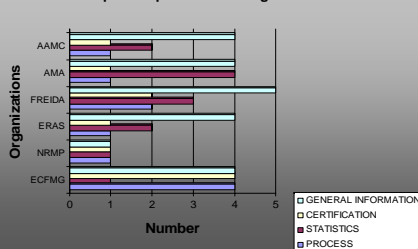
Databases Searched:
ABI/Inform Complete, ProQuest, JSTOR and PubMed
Standard ABI/Inform database, featuring "nearly 4,000 journals", inclusive of (20) sub-databases Initial Search limited to scholarly (peer-reviewed) journals only (**Limitation**)

Document Results found for:
Results yielded: 3700 entries, when readjusted and the data was cleaned based upon the categories, the field was narrowed to 220

Review/Categorization Methodology

Article Bibliography Imported into Endnote 9® (2 yr. Increments)
Review Process (Each Segment Independently Reviewed/Two Reviewers)
Primary Themes and Secondary Topics Identified
(Hierarchical Mechanism of Categorization)
-1st Degree (Author Supplied Keyword)
-2nd Degree (Article Title)
-3rd Degree (Abstract Content)
Irrelevant Articles Eliminated*
Third Review Completed – Jointly Reviewed and Condensed by Two Reviewers
Descriptive Statistics Generated on Themes and Topics
*Note: During the classification and analysis process, the documents were further limited, excluding literature from "countries other than US and Canada."

Graph 1: Reports at IMG Organizations



Graph 2: Published Categories

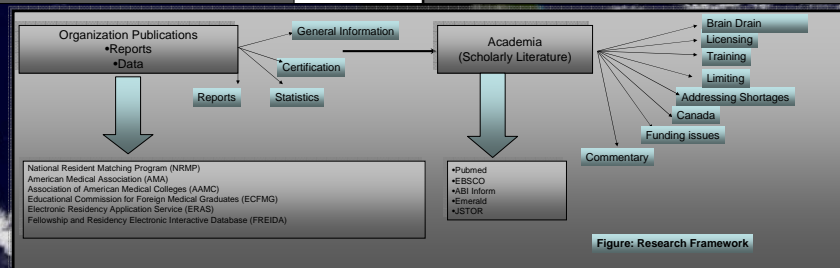
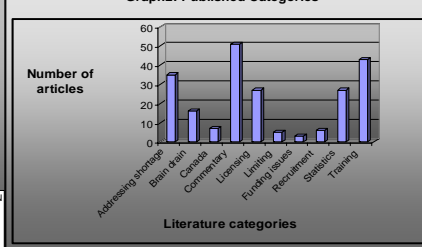
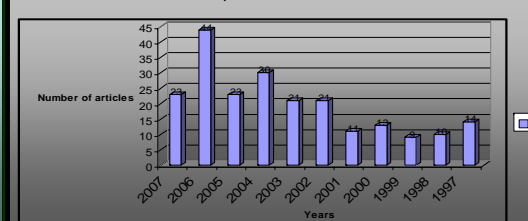


Figure: Research Framework

Graph 3: Number of Articles



Discussion

In our analysis of 10 years (1997-2007) of scholarly research about international medical graduates, we have identified the main research directions in the field. Through a content analysis of this literature we studied the relationships between the fields of interest about researching IMGs.
Based on article categorization and mapping of topic trends so far, we suggest that there has been a literature void in regards to providing a good link between training and addressing physician shortages. In spite of the literature being published, there is still little relevant literature available.
The extent of literature reflect the policy decisions being made to address the shortage of physicians in the United States and the training being provided to address the same. As a whole, the literature trends we have observed raise some questions about future directions.
Additionally during the review process, we were able to observe the break down of topics within the primary themes (for example, the emphasis on journey of an IMG rather than professional development).

Recommendations

- ✓ Additional academic attention should be paid to addressing the shortage of physicians through adequate training on IMGs.
- ✓ Suggest continued classification (or reclassification) of historical literature further breaking down trends to analyze in context of concurrent issues.
- ✓ Additional meta-analysis, should be undertaken to compare the results from general academic journals to those generated from commercial publications – directed specifically towards IMGs.

Limitations

- Keyword Selection
 - Author Supplied Keyword (Limited or Absent)
 - Article Title (Not representative of abstract content)
 - Abstract (Doc. Text Not Screened, nor Selected Articles Reviewed for Additional Topics)
- Scholarly Journal Limitation
 - Excludes popular press and trade journal in the consideration
 - Can be subjective to an extent.

References

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