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Are African universities joining the genomic revolution? Emergence of postgraduate programs in genetics

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Statement of Problem: Postgraduate education is considered important as it provides educational institutions opportunities to build their research capabilities, enhance academic reputations and financial gain. In developed countries, with vast programs, postgraduate education contributes to the body of knowledge available per time. This often translates to innovations and societal development. Genetics is a leading aspect of science and research in the world today that affords numerous opportunities, particularly in the identification and understanding of the nature of diseases, with the possibilities of eradication of such diseases. Postgraduate programs in genetics are therefore pivotal, especially in this Genomic Revolution era, to serve as an instrument for development of targeted therapies. Consequently, the more such programs, the greater the tendency for innovation. We investigated if African universities are offering postgraduate programs in Genetics using the database <http://www.university-directory.eu>.

Methodology: Through an online search query titled “Postgraduate programs in genetics in Africa” over “university-directory.eu”, which is an online world university directory, data was extracted.

Findings: There are 54 countries in the African continent. The database investigated, www.university-directory.eu, indicated that postgraduate programs in genetics was offered in five (9%) African countries. The database listed these as 13 universities and twenty one postgraduate programs in total. African countries offering postgraduate programs in genetics: Two South African universities (15%) offered a total of seven programs (33%); three Egyptian universities (23%) together offered four programs (19%); two Algerian universities (15%) together provided three programs (14%); four Kenyan universities (31%) offered five programs (24%) altogether; and two Nigerian universities (15%) together offered two programs (10%).

Conclusion: Postgraduate programs in genetics are emerging in African universities.

Biography

Luther A Agaga is a final (6th) year Medical student of Lagos State University College of Medicine, Nigeria, who has a very keen interest in Genetics as a tool for medical transformation and hopes to pursue it as a career path through postgraduate study. He currently participates actively in research with mentors from different departments in the College of Medicine.

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