

Does access to an online educational resource change practice for orthopaedic surgeons in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)?

 **Oji NM**, Reilly AL, Coughlin RR, Sabatini CS

BACKGROUND

- Orthopaedic surgery education resources with the most relevant information are now available online
- Despite the ubiquity of the internet, orthopaedic surgeons and trainees in many LMICs are unable to access peer-reviewed scientific resources due to various barriers
- This prospective study aims to evaluate the use and impact of US-based online resources by orthopaedic surgeons and trainees in LMICs

METHODS

1. Developed a survey inquiring about the use of learning resources and desire for additional resources
2. Collected surveys from orthopaedic surgery trainees and attendings from ten pre-selected institutions
3. Granted 12-months of access to the Orthopedic Trauma Association (OTA) online learning platform to half of the institutions
4. Collected another survey after 12-months to assess and compare learning resource utilization across groups

RESULTS

- 82 participants completed the pre-intervention survey (3 medical officers, 19 junior residents, 38 senior residents, 7 attendings with <5 years of practice, 11 attendings with 5+ years of practice)
- 37% selected educational resources based on accessibility; 20% selected resources based on quality
- 50% of participants in West Africa, 51% in East Africa, 80% in Southeast Asia, and 39% in Afghanistan have sufficient internet bandwidth for accessing orthopaedic websites at their hospitals
- 73% anticipated having access to desired resources would change their ability to operatively manage conditions

DISCUSSION

- Accessibility is a more important driver of educational resource utilization than quality
- Internet bandwidth is a significant barrier to accessing desired educational resources
- Still receiving post-intervention survey responses, which will be analyzed later

Less than half of orthopaedic surgeons and trainees in LMICs have sufficient internet bandwidth at their hospital for accessing orthopaedic websites.

