



Importance of Open Access for Pharmacological Researchers in Developing Countries

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I am an Egyptian biologist and a researcher in a UAE University and the online availability of the latest pharmacological and medical literature through my university's subscription has opened up a new world for me, helping me to improve the quality of my research and my understanding of the issues. I am already dreading the loss of this privilege when I return home. More knowledge leads to better outcomes, as President Obama noted in his 2009 address to the American Medical Association.

Pharmacological schools and research centers in developing countries often cannot pay for the high cost of online journal access, and subscriptions to print versions are limited. In many cases, researchers have access only to abstracts. It is difficult for residents on limited stipends to buy even single articles. Furthermore, internet access is limited, and safe online banking and credit card use are not available. As a result, residents and scientists use outdated sources for their research, which is reflected in the final quality. Open Access raises the profile of research performed in the developing world-locally and

globally. These innovative journals are becoming extremely successful and will change the nature of scientific publishing and increase the accessibility of science.

The initiatives promoting open access that have been undertaken by OMICS Publishing Group Journal of Biochemistry & Pharmacology (editor.bcpc@omicsonline.com) and BioMed Central (www.biomedcentral.com), among others, are laudable. However, the practice of making authors pay for online publication of their articles, as described in the OMICS Publishing Group editorial, might dissuade researchers in developing countries from sharing their research results in international journals. Special discounts will need to be worked out, and journals will need to continue exploring innovative ways to support progress in open access and offset their costs. OMICS Publishing Group experience has shown the advantages of an open-access policy. I hope that the journal continues its leadership in promoting equal opportunities and access in the global medical community.

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