Orthopaedic Clinician Scientists in Mexico: A Current Landscape.

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INTRODUCTION:
"The clinical investigator is an endangered species". Breakthrough advances in medicine result from the translation of new basic scientific knowledge into clinical practice, and from assessment, modification or refinement of current methods of diagnosis and treatment. Others have described the scarcity of clinicians with a background that develop new knowledge and have pointed out how orthopaedic surgery has struggled to recruit and retain physician scientists. [(1-4)]
Mexico has notable cultural and economic differences with high-income-countries. It is of great interest how many orthopaedic surgeons contribute to new knowledge, how many are involved in academic settings, and how many are part of National System of Investigators of Mexico (SNII), as Latin America countries may encounter similar barriers. In this survey, we aimed to describe the pattern of orthopaedic surgeons with interest in developing new knowledge.

METHODS:

We designed a survey and sent it through email correspondence to the 4200 members of the Federación Mexicana de Colegios de Ortopedia y Traumatología, AC. (FEMECOT), which is the AAOS equivalent in Mexico. The survey had the following questions: 1) Are you a member of the SNII? 2) Have you actively participated in research in your institution? 3) Have you published scientific papers? 4) Would you like to contribute to research with FEMECOT? 5) Do you have a Specialty, Masters, or Doctorate Degree? 6) Have you published peer – reviewed scientific papers in the last 5 years? 7) Have you taught in an academic facility in the last 3 years? 8) Have you directed research thesis in the last 3 years? 9) Have you participated in scientific meetings as professor in the last 5 years? 10) Do you work in a public or private institution? 11) Do you have an ORCID number?

RESULTS SECTION:

1)Members of the SNII 2%; 2) Yes 39%; 3) Yes 34%; 4) Yes 80%; 5) Yes 84%; 6) Yes 32%; 7) Yes 64%; 8) Yes 46%; 9) Yes 63%; 10) Public Institution 55.7%; 11) Yes 25%.

DISCUSSION:

In this study we found that less than 2 percent of the orthopaedic surgeons are in the National System of Investigators, nonetheless, 80 percent of orthopaedic surgeons would like to contribute to research. Most of the orthopaedic surgeons involved participate actively in public sector and have academic positions. In conclusion, despite the interest of contributing to research and academic labor, the number of formal National Investigators is low in the Orthopaedic community.

SIGNIFICANCE/CLINICAL RELEVANCE: The scarcity of orthopaedic clinician scientists in Mexico is remarkable. Further research needs to be conducted to find the leading causes of this shortage and to propose solutions to develop more and better knowledge.

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