Veterinary Educational Research in Asia – Potential Way Forward

A webinar organized by AAVS Working Group on Veterinary Education Research (VER-WG)

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Panel Discussion Summary

Q1: Do you think there is a need for a more defined platform for publishing veterinary education research?

> A: (Prof. Ayona Silva-Fletcher) Journal of Veterinary Medical Education (JVME) is a very well defined and the best platform for veterinary educational research. Some veterinary educational research is also published in educational, ethics, and policies section of BMC Veterinary Research. However, there is room for another journal platform.

> A: (Prof. Liz Chan) I completely agree with Prof. Ayona that we need more than one journal. It is challenging but we need a new one as the quantity and quality of submissions is increasing. Now articles are published online as soon as they are accepted. There is a lot of interest in publishing from a more expanded geographical region (for example Asia and Africa). There are discussions on how to support that.

Q2: Educational research seems to be very contextual as different schools and countries have different challenges. So how important is generalizability when setting out to answer questions specific to your context that might not be so applicable elsewhere?

> A: (Prof. Liz Chan) I think it's really important when you start off to think what your generalizability is going to be or who else is going to be interested in this. We have to be very cogniscent about context as educational research is very contextual. Just because something is published and works well in medical education doesn't mean it will work well in our context. Equally, it doesn't mean that we should just reject it. We can often learn pieces of valuable information from other people's research. That is no different with clinical research. So when you are planning, you have to think about the

"so what" to other people. Otherwise, it just turns into a course evaluation which is for useful in-house monitoring, but it isn't going to be publishable. There is a transferability element, but we have to think about it from the beginning and not leave it at the end to think who else this is going to be relevant for.

A: (Prof. Ayona Silva-Fletcher) I completely agree with Liz. There's always generalizability in good research. In good piece of work there are always lessons one can learn to further answer any research question that you want to ask. Contextualization is particularly important in a local context. For example, when I show the milk quality improvement slide, there are so many generalizable parts of that research in understanding the biosecurity point. Even though it is done in that (specific) context, it is the robustness of the research that makes it generalizable.

Q3: On the discussion about assessing tangible and nontangible skills, are there any fundamental differences in the educational research that can be conducted about the assessment of these two kinds of skill?

A: (Prof. Ayona Silva-Fletcher) How do we assess skills and how do we know what we are assessing are very challenging areas in research. At the moment when assessing skills, we are moving more and more towards objectively structured clinical examination where we assess technical and soft skills. I think we are moving to the point where skills will be assessed objectively. I would say there is a difference between the assessment of technical and nontechnical skills. Professionalism is a huge area and Liz is very competent in this area, she will be able to comment how challenging it is to assess those areas.

A: (Prof. Liz Chan) I heard that in North America they are embedding a curriculum design that is leaning toward programmatic assessment, so there will be multiple assessments of skills taking place over the course of the year, rather than a single opportunity to demonstrate skills (for example clinical rotation). Professionalism is a perfect example; student professionalism is greatly challenged by the environment they are in. So if we are assessing them in an easy environment it is going to be easier for them to look professional than if they have been challenged (for example if they are tired or stressed).