



“JOSHA’s Critical Review of ‘The problem of ‘trickle-down’ science from the Global North to the Global South’ by D. Reidpath and P. Allotey”

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Abstract:

"The Problem of 'Trickle-Down Science' from the Global North to the Global South" by Daniel D. Reidpath and Pascale Allotey discusses the impact of the concentration of intellectual power, resources, and opportunities in the Global North on the quality of science in the Global South. The authors describe the phenomenon of 'trickle-down science' and its three consequences: researchers in the Global North who shift their focus away from the Global South, those who try to maintain their focus on the Global South, and researchers who return to the Global South, frustrated by a lack of enabling environment to apply their new skills. The article provides three examples to demonstrate the mismatch between research conducted in LMICs and the needs of the South. The authors emphasize the need for a more collaborative and balanced approach to scientific research that takes into account the needs and priorities of the Global South. Although the authors do not offer recommendations for improvement, the article sheds light on the issues facing the Global South and calls for changes to the current system. Overall, the article highlights the urgent need to address the problem of 'trickle-down science' to ensure that scientific research can benefit all regions of the world equally. This article was first published in 'BMJ Global Health' on July 05, 2019 (<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2019-001719>)

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The article "The problem of 'trickle-down science' from the Global North to the Global South" by Daniel D. Reidpath and Pascale Allotey discusses how the Global South suffers from "trickle-down science", explaining that the concentration of intellectual power, resources and opportunities in the Global North produces the best science, which then trickles down to the Global South. It goes on to describe three consequences of this focus: researchers in the Global North who shift their focus away from the Global South, those who try to maintain their focus on the Global South, and researchers who return to the Global South, frustrated by a lack of enabling environment to apply their new skills. The authors provide three examples that highlight the gap between research conducted in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) and the needs of the Global South.

The article explains the theory of 'trickle-down science' and its potential impact on the Global South. It discusses three findings, each with its limitations, and uses three examples to demonstrate the mismatch between research conducted in LMICs and the needs of the South. The first example describes a meeting in Malaysia where a Northern researcher dismissed research on the cause of death in settings where autopsies are rare. The second example describes a researcher in Indonesia who, unable to initiate or develop science herself, becomes a field researcher for colleagues in the US. The third example discusses how the concentration of intellectual weight, resources, and opportunities in the Global North produces sub-standard science in the Global South. While the authors do not



make recommendations for improvement, they do shed light on the issues facing the Global South and highlight the need for changes to the current system to address these issues.

The article concludes by taking a critical look at the current state of scientific research, highlighting the problem of 'trickle-down science' from the Global North to the Global South and how it is failing the latter. The authors cite several examples illustrating the mismatch between research conducted in LMICs and the needs of the Global South, as well as the concentration of intellectual power, resources and opportunities in the Global North. Overall, the article highlights the need for a more collaborative and balanced approach to scientific research that takes into account the needs and priorities of the Global South.

JOSHA's Critical Reviews focus on recent studies and discoveries in medicine and science that may impact patient care. Our editors aim to stimulate thoughts and reflections on new developments and interventions. While our opinions are subjective, we hope this service is helpful. We welcome comments from our readers!

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