



EDITORIAL

Life Happens

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I have heard it said many times, that life is what happens to us while we are busy making other plans. Does this strike a chord with you? Has 'life happened' to you recently? Are you going through something you really could do without right now? Are you wondering the usual 'why me' anthem because the life happening is not what you expected to be going through? Well, believe me, that feeling is more common than most of us realize. On a global scale life is happening to all of us right now. Coming through the pandemic with post COVID-19 effects for survivors, emotional trauma for those impacted, recessions, economic downturns, and inflation on a global scale as well as supply chain disruptions that no one saw coming nor can manage easily, life is indeed happening. The message I have for every researcher is something I picked up from the first University of Lagos Faculty of Pharmacy Scientific conference in 2021 and the 2022 Congress of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), "Never waste a crisis". I dug around on this phrase a bit and found that it has been around for a while. It was the title of a Report on the British construction industry's performance in 2009 and much earlier by Churchill soon after World War II to mean that dramatic change usually offers an opportunity for fresh insight to be gained leading to opportunities for increase and growth. So what insights have we gained with all this life happening around us on a daily basis? The first of the insights for me is that indeed there is nothing as constant as change. Things will change whether we like it or not. And because things can change dramatically in a short time, we need to be flexible and ready to pivot to new learnings and new ways. There was a time when it would have been unheard of to conduct examinations and project defence virtually, but COVID-19 has made these constant realities in our lives. Research was almost always planned to be face-to-face, with time and money dedicated for travel, accommodation, and the trappings of moving out of your home in the name of data collection or implementing an intervention. Again, the new realities have brought deployment of data collection tools via various online platforms, use of video conferencing to conduct training interventions and other synchronous or asynchronous means of getting what is needed without going anywhere. Life happened to the world in the name of COVID-19 but the world got something out of it, too.

Another insight is to know your limits thus the need to surround yourself with a community. In much of Africa, the saying was ‘it takes a village to raise a child’. It’s still a true statement though the villages seem to have more or less disappeared. As a researcher, you are but one person. Your expertise is limited to what you know thus a very small part of the overall problem your research should be solving. So find members for your ‘village’ and build your network. Making sure you have a good person to write and put it all together is an important and often overlooked part of the research team. Having a team to look at issues from many different angles, bringing their own expertise to bear on the research effort thus helping to bring forth innovative solutions that really meet the needs of the population is certainly not wasting a crisis. With COVID-19, research teams, pharmaceutical companies, research organizations, regulatory bodies and the general population came together in unprecedented ways to provide vaccines in a timeframe never achieved before. And another beauty of this coming together is that the world will not ever need to go back to the basics of bringing new vaccines for ongoing or future diseases/pandemics again. The technology, the means, the networks, all are available and can be utilized again and again. My last insight for this piece is that waiting for the perfect time never solved any problem; and that is the very definition of wasting a crisis. Life will happen again and again to the man/woman waiting for the perfect time to act. Time is moving at its own steady pace, one second per time and by the time you look back, a week, a month.....ten years is gone. What you must contribute needs to be contributed ASAP. The work that needs to be done, should be started now as the next best time to act is spelt N-O-W. Nobody envisaged a COVID-19. Even though history had captured pandemics in the past, our minds couldn’t have conjured it up if it did not happen. While some of the other things happening globally including recessions, disruptions and inflation can find its root in the pandemic, they don’t give us an excuse to sit on our oars. Life must not win. By gaining necessary insight and pivoting we call the shots and grow. So let’s get to work. Let’s not waste this crisis. I’ve got cheering news. Folks, this is our 10th edition. I almost can’t believe it. At the beginning we said we’d be pursuing COPE membership and we have done our best to keep to the tenets of the organization. So come 2023 we are going to start that processing. Though we have currently hit a snag in the renewal of the Crossref registration by the University Library because of some financial policy, we are hoping this will be resolved soon so we can get digital object identifiers assigned for the articles not yet assigned, we are going ahead with our plans to make JBSPR truly international. So as always, I welcome you to this edition of JBSPR, and we continue to be grateful to our authors and reviewers. We look forward to more successful interactions in future.

I believe I do not say this enough; we are open to receiving letters to the editor or editorial pieces which can be sent to the journal emails for appropriate processing. We also welcome responses or comments to any of the issues raised in any of the editorials which can help us to initiate a blog post on the issues. These can also be sent via email. We look forward to having robust and engaging discussions with the research community. Finally, a reminder that we are looking to populate a Traditional Medicines Supplement for which we are still collecting manuscripts. If you have research work in this area, we request that you consider JBSPR as a worthy outlet for your work. To ensure conformity, do ensure you adhere to the instructions to authors in preparing your manuscript and we will be glad to receive and process it.

Thank you and have a great day.

SIGNED

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